Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead

Richard J. Bruckner
Director

July 23, 2013

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

HEARING ON AMENDMENT TO COUNTY CODE (TITLE 22 -- PLANNING AND ZONING) REGARDING A PROPOSED AMBULANCE SERVICES ORDINANCE COUNTYWIDE (ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

The proposed modification to Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code (Zoning Ordinance) modifies ambulance services as a permitted or conditionally permitted use in Zones C-H (Commercial Highway), C-1(Restricted Business), C-2 (Neighborhood Business), C-3 (Unlimited Commercial), C-M (Commercial Manufacturing), M-1 (Light Manufacturing), M-1.5 (Restricted Heavy Manufacturing), M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing), and M-3 (Unclassified).

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Close the public hearing and consider the attached Negative Declaration, together with any comments received during the public review process, find on the basis of the whole record before the Board that there is no substantial evidence the project will have a significant effect on the environment, find that the Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board, and adopt the Negative Declaration.

2. Approve the recommendation of the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) to amend Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code relating to ambulance services as reflected in the draft ordinance.

3. Indicate the intent to instruct County Counsel to prepare an ordinance to amend Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code, noting recommendation and concerns of the RPC and include any changes directed by your Board, and bring back to your Board for consideration.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On July 17, 2012, your Board approved a motion instructing the Department of Regional Planning (Department) to prepare an ordinance to amend Title 22 of the County Code to:

1. Provide definitions of different types of emergency and non-emergency ambulance service facilities;

2. Permit appropriate types of emergency ambulance service facilities to be located in specified commercial and manufacturing zones subject to a ministerial process;

3. Provide appropriate permitting standards and processes applicable to non-emergency facilities in specified commercial and manufacturing zones; and

4. Direct the Regional Planning Commission to conduct a public hearing and forward its recommendation on the proposed ordinance revisions to the Board for its consideration.

The Board of Supervisors recognized that to improve emergency response times for ambulance services in the unincorporated areas of the County, the Zoning Ordinance should be amended. Adequate locations need to be identified for emergency ambulance service providers so the health and safety needs of the various communities can be met, while minimizing any potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods.

EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS

The Zoning Ordinance lists "ambulance services" as a service use in several commercial and industrial zones, but does not provide a definition of the use. Ambulance services require a conditional use permit in zones Unlimited Commercial (C-3), Commercial Manufacturing (C-M), and Light Manufacturing (M-1). Ambulance services are permitted in zones Restricted Heavy Manufacturing (M-1½), Heavy Manufacturing (M-2), and Unclassified (M-3).

DRAFT ORDINANCE

The proposed amendment to Title 22 contains definitions of ambulance services facility, and ambulance emergency services facility, and provides zones where the uses are permitted or conditionally permitted. The uses will be permitted or conditionally permitted in the respective zones as follows:

Ambulance Services:

Not Permitted in Zones C-H, C-1, and C-2
Conditional Use Permit in Zones C-3, C-M, and M-1
Permitted in M-1.5, M-2/M-4, and M-3

Ambulance Emergency Services:

Conditional Use Permit in Zones C-H and C-1
Permitted in Zones C-2, C-3, C-M, M-1, M-1.5, M-2/M-4, and M-3

Although ambulance emergency services are permitted in Zones C-2, C-3, C-M and M-1, these uses are subject to Section 22.55.2800 (Ambulance Emergency Services – Development Standards). This use is permitted in Zones M-1.5, M-2 and M-3, but compliance with Section 22.55.2800 is not required in these zones. Section 22.52.2800 requires the following: no more than two ambulances may be located on-site at any one time; a dedicated parking space shall be provided for each ambulance located on-site; the Director shall send copies of the application to the County Departments of Health Services, Fire, Public Works and Sheriff for their comment on the proposal, and a site plan approved by the Director is required. In making a decision on the application, the Director shall consider any written comments that he receives from the notified Departments. In addition, ambulance service facilities and ambulance emergency service facilities have been added to the commercial uses not permitted in a mixed use development.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed ordinance promotes Goal 1 of the County's Strategic Plan pertaining to "Service Excellence" and Goal 3 pertaining to "Community and Municipal Services" through the development of an amendment to the County Code that is responsive to the health and safety needs of citizens by improving emergency response times of ambulance services.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Implementation of the proposed ordinance will not result in any loss of revenue to the County or in significant new costs to the Department of Regional Planning or other County departments. Adoption of this ordinance will not result in the need for additional departmental staffing.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

A public hearing is required pursuant to Section 22.16.200 of the County Code and Section 65856 of the Government Code. Required notice must be given pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth in Section 22.60.174 of the County Code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Section 6061, 65090, and 65856 of the Government Code relating to notice of public hearing.

The RPC conducted public hearings regarding the proposed ordinance on February 20, 2013, and April 24, 2013. Two testifiers spoke in favor of this request at the February 20, 2013 public hearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The attached Initial Study disclosed that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before your Board, that the adoption of the proposed ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, a Negative Declaration was prepared in accordance with Section 15070 of the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines.

Copies of the proposed Negative Declaration were transmitted to the County Clerk, six County departments, and six libraries for public review. In addition, a public notice was published in one newspaper of general circulation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092.

Based on the attached Negative Declaration, adoption of the proposed ordinance will not have a significant effect on the environment.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the proposed ordinance will not significantly impact County Services.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Bruckner
Director

RJB:JG:BD:kl

Attachments:

1. Board Motion
2. Project Summary
3. Summary of Regional Planning Commission Proceedings
4. Resolution of the Regional Planning Commission
5. Recommended Ordinance for Board Adoption
6. Environmental Document
7. Regional Planning Commission Staff Reports
8. Legal Notice of Board Hearing
9. List of Persons to be Notified

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Assessor
Auditor-Controller
Chief Executive Office (Rita Robinson, Anthony Baker)
County Counsel
Public Works