



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0160, **Version:** 2

Recommendation to declare ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by amending Section 21.25.502; and by adding Sections 21.15.064.5 and 21.45.500, all related to adaptive reuse, read and adopted as read. (Citywide)

In October 2011, the City Council directed the City Manager to develop an adaptive reuse incentive program and ordinance that recognizes the economic, environmental and cultural value of preserving older and/or historic landmark buildings within the City of Long Beach.

Staff explored creating a new adaptive reuse ordinance to provide a clear process for reviewing and approving a range of different types of adaptive reuse projects. Adaptive reuse projects can come in a variety of forms and result in a range of new uses. The City seeks to encourage adaptive reuse as the greenest form of development, and to maintain the existing character of the urban form, providing guidance for the reuse of existing buildings without stifling creativity.

Key to the success of an adaptive reuse program is the ability to provide guidance for code modifications and/or full use of the Historic Building Code for eligible buildings, and to grant relief from parking standards, setbacks, height limitations, and other development standards on existing structures, which will allow reuse projects to be economically feasible while ensuring adequate health and safety protections. Complying with present day building and fire codes and parking standards is the major barrier in creating an adaptive reuse ordinance that provides adequate incentives for innovative projects.

Every three years, the State of California adopts new construction codes, known collectively as the California Building Standards Code, to establish uniform standards for the construction and maintenance of buildings, electrical systems, plumbing systems, mechanical systems, and fire and life safety systems. The City Council adopted amendments to Title 18 to address these code changes on November 5, 2013, becoming effective January 1, 2014. As part of this update, Title 18 was amended to provide additional flexibility for adaptive reuse projects and to adopt language for the administrative manual discussed in Section 18.63.

The Planning Commission conducted a study session on adaptive reuse in June 2012. The discussion included providing incentives for adaptive reuse projects, especially those that will provide more job-generating uses through the conversion, including provisions for accommodating original or unique signage and building features, and how best to creatively reuse institutional buildings such as schools or churches. In September 2012, the Planning Commission took a tour of adaptive reuse projects in Downtown Los Angeles during a special

meeting. On November 21, 2013, the Planning Commission recommended the adoption of the attached ordinance (Exhibit A - Planning Commission staff report).

Adaptive reuse regulations are contained in Title 18 (Building) as discussed above, and would be amended in Title 21 (Zoning) of the Long Beach Municipal Code if approved by the City Council. In addition, staff will be creating an administrative manual specifically for adaptive reuse building and fire/life safety code modifications based on recent changes to Title 18. The manual will include specific code modifications, which could be considered and approved upon request of an applicant. These three components collectively (Title 18, Title 21, and the adaptive reuse manual) would comprise the City's adaptive reuse regulations. In addition, staff will be creating online materials to encourage property owners and developers to undertake adaptive reuse projects.

The primary goal in crafting adaptive reuse regulations for both Title 18 and Title 21 was to establish a clear process, and find a way to accumulate code provisions to allow the types of existing buildings present in Long Beach to be safely reused in appropriate circumstances. The regulations establish a consistent and efficient process to review conversions of a range of appropriate types of structures for adaptive reuse.

The Planning Commission recommended the following revisions to Title 21:

Provide a new definition for adaptive reuse.

Allow uses in adaptive reuse projects that are consistent with the Neighborhood Commercial and Residential (CNR) mixed-use zone.

Establish a requirement for Site Plan Review for most adaptive reuse projects, and allow waiver of project-specific requirements.

Provide special development standards for adaptive reuse projects including reasonable accommodation of setback and height of existing buildings, and limited relief from parking requirements.

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, a Categorical Exemption (CE 13-100) was issued for the proposed project (Exhibit B).

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael Mais on February 12, 2014, and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on February 6, 2014.

City Council action is requested on March 4, 2014, for consistency with the recently adopted changes to Title 18 of the LBMC.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with the submission of this report.

Approve recommendation.

AMY J. BODEK, AICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE BY AMENDING SECTION 21.25.502; AND BY ADDING SECTIONS 21.15.064.5 AND 21.45.500, ALL RELATED TO ADAPTIVE REUSE