

# Item No. 20

# Supplemental Material

For  
**City of Sacramento**  
City Council  
Housing Authority  
Redevelopment Agency  
Economic Development Commission  
Sacramento City Financing Authority

## Agenda Packet

**Submitted:** September 12, 2006

**For the Meeting of: September 12, 2006**

- Additional Material
- Revised Material

**Subject: Design Review Report Back: Citywide Residential Design Review (M06-049)**

**Contact Information:** Luis R. Sanchez, AIA, Design Review Director, (916) 808-5957; William Crouch, Urban Design Manager, (916) 808-8013; and David Kwong, Current Planning Manager, (916) 808-2691, Development Services Department.

Please include this supplemental material in your agenda packet. This material will also be published to the City's Intranet. For additional information, contact the City Clerk Department at Historic City Hall, 915 I Street, First Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604 B (916) 808-7200.



DEVELOPMENT OVERSIGHT  
COMMISSION

**CITY OF SACRAMENTO**  
CALIFORNIA

915-I STREET  
NEW CITY HALL,  
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SACRAMENTO, CA  
95814

September 12, 2006

Mayor Heather Fargo  
Sacramento City Hall  
915 I Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

***Re: 9/12/06 City Council Meeting (2:00 p.m.): Item 20. Design Review Report  
Back: Citywide Residential Design Review (M06-049)***

Dear Mayor Fargo:

The Development Oversight Commission recognizes the great potential benefit of Citywide Design Review in increasing the quality and character of our built environment. We do urge caution, however, in proceeding in this complex policy area so that risks and benefits can be understood and balanced. In our brief discussion of this topic on September 11, 2006, we touched on some of the issues which must be considered prior to implementing major changes:

1. We must avoid creating disincentives to private investment which is the ultimate engine for revitalization of our neighborhoods and commercial corridors. We note that any new process, fee, or delay has the potential to become a disincentive to investment.
2. Staff resources and administrative tools must be developed and in place prior to a widespread rollout of any new standards.
3. All stakeholders must be identified and fully engaged in vetting out standards that potentially could affect properties throughout the City. Stakeholders include residents, property owners, investors, developers, the business community, policy makers, City staff, design professionals and organizations such as the AIA and the BIA.
4. We encourage application of the DOC-endorsed and Council-adopted policy of 'regulatory restraint'. New regulations should be as few in number as possible, and as simple to understand, implement and enforce as possible.
5. The City's Design Review system is currently being streamlined. This is a work-in-progress and should be completed before imposing a major expansion of the program.

6. As new tools for Design Review are developed, they should be location-appropriate, and at the same time be widely applicable. *This is one of the key dilemmas of implementing Citywide design standards.*
7. Clearly articulated objectives must be defined before creating new guidelines. Without measures of success, there will be no way to gauge effectiveness.

In summary, we advise proceeding with caution in the complex area of Citywide Design Review. We would like to offer our assistance to the Council and City staff in addressing this important issue over the coming months.

Sincerely,



**JOHN NUNAN, CHAIR**  
Development Oversight Commission

JN/MM:cf

cc: Members of the City Council  
Members of the Development Oversight Commission  
Ray Kerridge, City Manager  
Marty Hanneman, Assistant City Manager  
Bill Thomas, Development Services Director  
Bill Crouch, Urban Design Manager

## **Urban Design Manager/Planning Manager Recommendations for Next Steps for Citywide Design Review for Residential Projects and Projects in Commercial Corridors**

### **Step 1 : Ministerial Checklist Process**

- Modify and update existing residential checklist with more comprehensive ministerial checklist to provide design review for all residential projects, including massing and context criteria. These can be tailored for each Council District to allow for specific criteria unique to a particular District.
- Expand Design Review in Commercial Corridors with a new Urban Design Checklist for review of projects in Commercial Corridors based upon the "Commercial Corridors Design Principles" document.
- Provide Design Review for multi-family projects with a new Multi-family Checklist based upon the "Multi-Family Design Principles" document with a ministerial review process that can be integrated with planning entitlement reviews of multi-family projects.

### **Step 2 : Expand Discretionary Design Review Process**

- Expand Design Review citywide with discretionary review process, utilizing the initial checklists as a basis to develop more comprehensive design guidelines for project reviews.

### **Phasing and Time Frame**

- Staff recommends that Step 1 changes be made after ordinance amendments to the Design Review and Preservation process are completed after January of 2007 before making Step 2 changes to the process once new commissions are fully engaged in the process. This will allow additional staff to be hired, as well as new notification and review procedures to be put in place, allowing a more streamlined review of residential projects.
- Outreach to various user groups is necessary as checklists are modified with additional design criteria. Staff will also coordinate with the various commissions, as well as bringing back to Council for final approval of modified and new checklists.

### **Staffing Implications**

- The impact to staffing in Step 1 is estimated to require a minimum of 3 additional staff
- The impact to staffing in Step 2 is estimated to require a minimum of an additional 3 new staff to handle project reviews.
- In summary, it is currently estimated that expanding to a citywide design review process will require a total of 6 additional staff members to appropriately administer this program.