

PRESS RELEASE

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Greig Smith Council District 12



LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMAN GREIG SMITH

Councilman Smith Introduces Motion to Address Blighted Foreclosed Homes

Los Angeles – Councilman Greig Smith introduced a motion Wednesday, June 11, that would develop a substantive framework requiring owners and banks to maintain foreclosed properties in order to avoid deterioration of neighborhoods.

The current home foreclosure crisis has made the sight of abandoned homes, with signs of disrepair such as overgrown weeds, dead lawns, half-empty pools and boarded-up windows an increasingly common sight.

“This phenomenon has the potential to destabilize our neighborhoods by reducing home values, luring squatters and vandals and degrading the beauty of well-tended neighborhoods,” Councilman Smith said. “This is more than an eyesore. As a City, we must develop new tools to deal with the skyrocketing number of vacant, foreclosed homes that are hurting the quality of life in our neighborhoods.”

Moreover, the swimming pools of vacant homes can become a serious health problem by becoming breeding grounds for mosquitoes that can spread illnesses such as West Nile Virus.

The current crisis is not expected to slow down any time soon, and the number of foreclosed homes will continue to rise. In light of this, it is necessary for the City Council to review its existing resources and enforcement tools, and create new ways to effectively address the proliferation of foreclosed homes negatively affecting neighborhoods.

The motion would have the Department of Building and Safety create a Task Force on Vacant Foreclosed Homes to coordinate the use of existing City tools and resources, and develop new enforcement strategies to curb blight in neighborhoods affected by foreclosed properties.

The motion also calls for the Task Force to present a report to the City Council in 45 days outlining the various strategic options.

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