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City Unveils Green Building Proposal

Program Would Transform L.A. Standards to Lessen Impacts of Built Environment

Council President Eric Garcetti joined the general managers of several city departments and the environmental group Global Green to unveil a wide-ranging green building proposal to dozens of real estate developers, environmental advocates, and builders in a participatory workshop. The workshop commenced a process that advocates hope will result in a transformation of the way Los Angeles's built environment affects the global environment, based on the work of the mayor's office, various council offices, and environmental and business partners such as Global Green and the Los Angeles Business Council.

"With innovative new technologies and practices, L.A. will set the green standard for sustainability," said Mayor Antonia Villaraigosa of the workshop. "The actions we take today towards greening our buildings will have lasting effects tomorrow."

"As a city, the single greatest impact we can have on climate change is through our buildings," said Council President Garcetti. "Los Angeles can create a green city that will be a healthier place to grow up, an easier place to do business, and an all-around better place to live." Garcetti added that the proposal included the commitment of additional city resources to make it easier to build green.

The proposal includes a stronger environmental baseline for building in the city, expedited processing for developers and builders that commit to a higher level of environmental design, and a new sustainability team dedicated to finding obstacles in the city's code to building green. Other elements of the program, including the city's case management process and a public education component, are still in development.

Buildings consume 36% of America's total energy output and account for more than 40% of raw material consumption worldwide. Los Angeles's greatest contribution to fighting climate change can come through ecologically sustainable building.

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“The Los Angeles Business Council wants to congratulate the City of LA and related departments for creating this program,” said Mary Leslie, president of the LABC, at whose UCLA sustainability summit in July the new standards will be presented to a wide array of business groups. “The proposed ‘sustainability teams’ will be critical to allowing the private and non-profit sectors to partipate effectively in the program.”

The green building proposals were developed in response to direction from the city council and the mayor. City staff held focus groups with environmental advocates and builders over the past several months. This proposal is a product of those meetings, designed to help the city meet its environmental goals while encouraging new sustainable technologies and practices.

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