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City Council Supports Huizar's New Broadway Overlay Plan

Will create new building guidelines that will enhance the Historic Corridor's appearance, while encouraging pedestrian-friendly entertainment and retail use

LOS ANGELES (Sept. 1, 2009) – The Los Angeles City Council supported a new ordinance today that will officially adopt design guidelines along the Historic Broadway Corridor to help rehabilitate existing buildings and storefronts, while preserving architecturally significant structures and encouraging pedestrian-friendly entertainment, art, cultural, theater and retail uses.

The Broadway Theater and Entertainment Community Design Overlay District was developed over the last year by a public-private working group as part of Councilmember José Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative, a 10-year plan to revitalize the Historic Broadway core. Bringing Back Broadway aims to increase commercial space use, restore Broadway's classic theaters and return the Streetcar to Downtown Los Angeles by 2014.

"Since announcing Bringing Back Broadway in January 2008, we have made leaps and bounds in revitalizing the Historic Broadway Corridor," said Councilmember José Huizar. "I want to thank all the members of the working group who put in long hours each and every month for more than a year to make sure we had a plan that will provide design guidance and direction to protect Broadway's historic character, while helping invigorate the area and usher it well into the future."

This ordinance incorporates and expands upon long-standing Historic Downtown L.A. Design Guidelines and Historic Lighting Guidelines developed by L.A. Conservancy, CRA and others, which, until now, were not made official public policy. Other aspects of the ordinance were developed based on Secretary of Interior Standards and special needs within the Broadway Theater and Commercial National Register Historic District, as well as best practices in other cities, including the highly successful San Diego Gaslamp Quarter.

(more)

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Huizar led a delegation of Bringing Back Broadway trustees and committee members to San Diego in August 2008 for a tour and meetings with city and redevelopment experts arranged by Director of Los Angeles City Planning Gail Goldberg, formerly of San Diego.

Mike Buhler, Director of Advocacy for the Los Angeles Conservancy, chairs the Bringing Back Broadway Preservation, Planning and Infrastructure Committee, which oversaw the overlay working group. The group included Jessica Wethington McLean, Executive Director for Bringing Back Broadway, members from the CRA, L.A. Conservancy, Downtown L.A. Neighborhood Council, business improvement districts, the City's Planning and Community Development departments, downtown law, design and land use firms, as well as downtown residents and property and business owners. Hundreds of stakeholders provided feedback and input during various stages of developing the plan at public workshops, a public hearing and at the City Planning Commission.

The Los Angeles City Council approved the ordinance on August 11, 2009. The official second reading for adoption was implemented today.

Information about Councilmember José Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway can be found at www.BringingBackBroadway.com.

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