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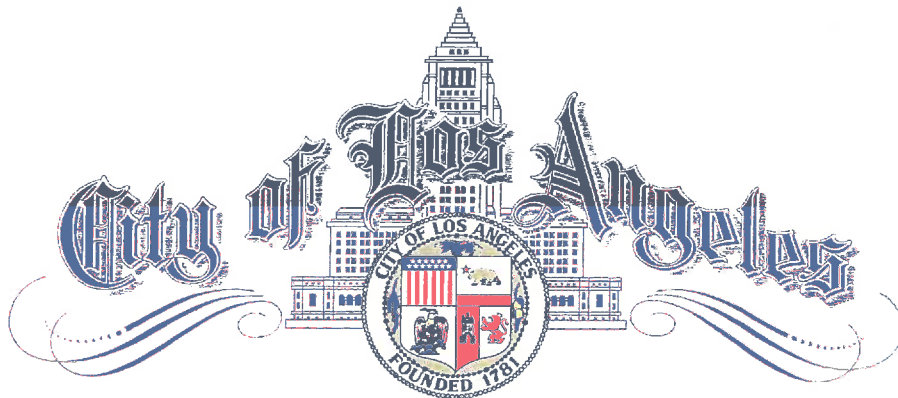
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September 12, 2016

PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, Fifth District

Honorable Jose Huizar
Chair, Planning and Land Use Management Committee
City Hall, Room 465
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Item 2, September 13, 2016; Council File 16-0422; EIR Consultants

Dear Councilmember Huizar:

I am writing to offer comments on the proposal for the Department of City Planning to take a larger role in the choice of environmental impact report (EIR) consultants for development projects within the City of Los Angeles.

First, let me thank and congratulate both the Mayor and the Committee for taking on the challenge of implementing the important planning reforms covered in the report before you. While my primary interest at this moment is the question of how EIR consultants are chosen and managed, all of these issues are crucial to the City's effort to improve its land use planning processes.

Regarding EIR consultants, looking at the options offered in the May 2016 report, Option 3 quickly emerges as the most desirable alternative from my perspective. The concept of having the City make the actual choice of consultants from a pre-qualified list has been discussed among policymakers for more than a decade-and-a-half. Only now will the Council have the opportunity to formally consider the idea. Looking at the situation realistically, I believe little could do more to bolster the integrity of our CEQA process than taking a firmer hand in choosing and managing the consultants who prepare EIRs.

Option 2, which both the May and August reports list as the preferred option, allows the developer to choose the consultant from the pre-approved list. This, frankly, is not much of a change from business-as-usual. At this moment in the City's history, business-as-usual is the last thing we can afford to settle for. Therefore, I strongly urge the Committee to choose Option 3 and send it to the full Council as part of your recommendations on this item.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Paul Koretz'.

PAUL KORETZ

Councilmember, 5th District

