

MOTION

Increasingly, Los Angeles is becoming two cities: one rich, and one poor.

Recent studies have shown Los Angeles to be the most economically segregated city in the United States. Wealthy neighborhoods are growing wealthier while poorer communities are growing poorer. A mere 28 percent of our neighborhoods are mixed-income.

Such polarization tears at the fabric of our community, and of our civic culture. It undermines our shared values, our sense of place, and our common bond as fellow residents of Los Angeles. It promotes division, misunderstanding, and an imbalance in civic power.

One significant and dramatic factor in the economic and social polarization of our neighborhoods is the rapid and dramatic loss of affordable housing units, particularly through the conversion of rental housing units to more expensive condominiums.

This reduction in the City's stock of affordable rental housing has been particularly acute on the Westside. The Mello Act was created to stem the loss of affordable housing in the City's coastal zone, but its impact has been woefully inadequate. Additionally, the Mello Act has had little impact on the practice of converting rental units to condominiums, which is exacerbating the affordable housing crisis on the in Council District 11.

The City has not adequately protected its existing rental housing stock. Policy coordination by the City's departments has been inadequate to respond to the housing market, which has resulted in the loss of thousands of affordable rental housing units on the Westside and in Council District 11.

The problem of the loss of rental housing, both affordable and market-rate, has been particularly acute in District 11. Between 2001 and July, 2006, 1,051 rental units were lost to condo conversions, a full 25.6% percent of the number of units converted to condos citywide. Additionally, 3,058 rent controlled units were lost since 2001, which represents 33.5% of the rent controlled units lost in the entire City. Council District 11 is one district out of 15 and yet it accounts for more than a quarter of the condo conversions and more than a third of the rent controlled units lost citywide. This has resulted in the tragic and frequent scenario of longtime, often elderly, residents being forced from their homes and neighborhoods to search for increasingly scarce affordable rental housing in unfamiliar neighborhoods.

To address this crisis, the Planning Department, Housing Department, Community Redevelopment Agency and City Attorney's Office should work together to develop policies, amendments to the Los Angeles Municipal Code, and funding mechanisms to prevent the loss, and instead increase the supply of additional affordable rental housing units.

In the meantime, to combat this crisis, we urgently need a moratorium on condominium conversions in the 11th Council District.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department, with the assistance of the Office of the City Attorney, to prepare and process an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO), to prohibit the issuance of Parcel Maps and Tentative Tract Maps, for projects of three (3) or more dwelling units on residentially zoned land within Council District 11, except in cases where at least 30% of the project's units are permanently set aside for low-income families; and

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council instruct the Planning Department to review the tools used by other California municipalities to protect and increase their affordable housing stock, and report back in 60 days on these various land use measures and controls, including, but not limited to an annual cap on condominium conversions, inclusionary zoning, and community land trusts; and

I FURTHER MOVE that the ICO include an Urgency Clause making it effective upon publication; and,

I FURTHER MOVE that the ICO shall run for one year with two six-month extensions by City Council Resolution, or until adoption of the appropriate land use regulatory controls have been prepared by the Planning Department, adopted by City Council and become effective, whichever occurs first; and,

I FURTHER MOVE that the Planning Department prepare and present the ICO for the review and consideration of the Planning and Land Use (PLUM) Committee.

PRESENTED BY _____

Bill Rosendahl
Councilmember, 11th District

SECONDED BY _____