



JOSE HUIZAR
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNCILMEMBER JOSE HUIZAR WINS BATTLE FOR PROJECT AFFECTED BY INDUSTRIAL LAND USE POLICY

LOS ANGELES (Jan. 18, 2008)— Councilmember José Huizar, District 14, received unanimous City Council support today to grant an appeal for a project at 695 Santa Fe Avenue. The Council action entitles the project to move forward. The City Council asserted jurisdiction on the project when the City Planning Commission deadlocked in a split vote becoming the lightning rod for the City Planning Department and CRA/LA's proposed policy regarding the conversion of industrial lands.

"I believe this project will be a model for the future development of downtown, because it will help us continue to build a community in an area, which is already largely converted to residential and mixed-uses, and it will also support the Los Angeles River Master Plan revision for 7th Street as a regional gateway between downtown and the Los Angeles River," Councilmember José Huizar said. Councilmember Huizar championed the effort to bring the matter to Council and considers the project to be a model for downtown development in an industrialized zoned area.

"This is the first project in the downtown Arts District that will voluntarily offer affordable housing; and will provide existing residents of the area with retail and amenities that they currently have to travel elsewhere to obtain. I'm proud to have it in my district."

The approved AMP Lofts project on Santa Fe Ave. features an award-winning design for 180 live-work units and 5,000 square feet of commercial/retail which will provide amenities to the residents of the Arts District. It also incorporates numerous environment-friendly construction elements, and offers significantly more open space than required for a project of its kind.

The case was originally recommended for approval by City Planning staff, but when it came to the zoning administration, it was denied, likely due to directives included in a proposed Planning Department Industrial Land Use Policy. On December 13, 2007, the City Planning Commission heard the appeal and deadlocked on a 3 to 3 vote about whether to reverse a denial from Zoning Administrator that would put a stop the AMP Lofts project.

The Commission had many positive comments on the proposed project, which also has widespread community and council district support. However the issue that prevented approval was a boundary line for where conversions of industrial uses to live and work and other uses will be allowed within the yet-to-be-approved industrial lands policy. Due to the lack of five votes in favor or against the project, the underlying project denial by the Zoning Administrator was deemed the decision of the Commission.

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