



# City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council  
Chambers  
9770 Culver Blvd.  
Culver City, CA 90232

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 22-315, **Version:** 1

**Item #:** C-14.

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**CC - (1) Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.02 of the Culver City Municipal Code by Adding Subchapter 15.02.500, Mandatory Seismic Strengthening Provision for Existing Wood-Frame Buildings with Soft, Weak or Open-Front Walls (Soft Story Seismic Retrofit); and (2) Adoption of a Resolution of Express Findings Pertaining to Local Climatic, Geological or Topographical Conditions.**

**Meeting Date:** September 27, 2021

**Contact Person/Dept:** Timothy Koutsouros, Building Division  
Sol Blumenfeld, CDD

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-5700  
(310) 253-5802

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**General Fund:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**Public Hearing:** ☐

**Action Item:** ☐

**Attachments:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**Commission Action Required:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (09/22/2021)

**Department Approval:** Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (09/16/2021)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.02 of the Culver City Municipal Code by Adding Subchapter 15.02.500, Mandatory Seismic Strengthening Provision for Existing Wood-Frame Buildings with Soft, Weak or Open-Front Walls (Soft Story Seismic Retrofit); and (2) adopt a Resolution of express findings pertaining to local climatic, geological or topographical conditions.

### **DISCUSSION**

On September 13, 2021 by a unanimous 5-0 vote, the City Council, after a public hearing, introduced an Ordinance providing for the mandatory seismic strengthening of existing wood frame buildings in the City, with soft, weak, or open-front walls. The Ordinance is being brought back at the September 27, 2021 Council meeting for adoption. In addition, pursuant to the requirements of state law when a

municipality adopts measures more stringent than the state Building Code, staff recommends the Council adopt a Resolution of express findings pertaining to local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.

In addition to introducing the Ordinance, at the September 13, 2021 meeting City Council directed staff to investigate incentives, cost sharing, and fee waivers related to the Ordinance, and return to City Council by the end of the year to discuss the findings. Items that were to be investigated included capital improvement pass through as part of the Rent Control Ordinance, the percentage of cost and aggregate cap, reimbursement of a percent of plan check and/or permit fees for expeditious completion of a retrofit, deferment of plan check and/or permit fees, and a percent reduction in plan check and/or permit fees.

It is important to note that the time clock for the Ordinance starts when the Building Division sends out the notice of compliance to building owners. Notification scheduling is based a building's priority level, which, will give smaller 'mom and pop' owners for up to 4-unit buildings the longest duration of time prior to receiving a notice. Staff will return with a report on the requested information before end of the year.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

The introduction of the proposed Ordinance does not create a fiscal impact. However, if adopted, there will be City overhead costs for implementing the Soft Story Ordinance that may be offset through the plan check and permit process.

1. Implementation - \$75,000 - consultants services to assist with outreach, implementation, permitting systems GIS updates, and technical inquiries
2. Staff for 5 years - one (1) plan check engineer (\$143,340) and one (1) building inspector (\$116,500) per year.
3. Impact on CDD/Housing Division - \$75,000 per year. Forms, application, review process and enforcement measures such as the Tenant Impact Mitigation Plan will need to be developed to ensure compliance with the recently adopted Tenants Protections Ordinance and the Rent Control Ordinance. This annual expense can be offset with the implementation of new fees for the review and enforcement of these Ordinances.

There are also cost impacts for impacted property owners that may be mitigated with some of the measures discussed above. Should the City Council decide to reduce or waive plan review and permit fees, the impact to the General fund will be proportional to the percentage of the \$1.5M estimated fee.

Upon the adoption of the Soft-Story Seismic Retrofit Ordinance, Staff will return to the City Council with a budget amendment request for additional program cost and new positions as outlined herein, if required.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2021-09-27\_ATT1\_Proposed Soft Story Seismic Retrofit SWOF Ordinance

2. 2021-09-27\_ATT2\_Resolution of Express Findings Pertaining to Local Climatic, Geological or Topographical Conditions.

## **MOTIONS**

That the City Council:

1. Adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.02 of the Culver City Municipal Code by Adding Subchapter 15.02.500, Mandatory Seismic Strengthening Provision for Existing Wood-Frame Buildings with Soft, Weak or Open-Front Walls, and waive further reading; and
2. Adopt a Resolution of Express Findings Pertaining to Local Climatic, Geological or Topographical Conditions.