COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

CB6990

TO:

AGENCY COMMISSIONERS

FROM:

JERRY SCHARLIN, ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT:

ADOPTION OF DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT PROHIBITING THE CONSTRUCTION OF BILLBOARD STRUCTURES AND PROVIDING STANDARDS FOR OTHER SIGN STRUCTURES IN THE CITY CENTER

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

CITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, CD 9 and 14

RECOMMENDATION

That the Agency adopt the attached resolution approving a Design for Development ("DFD") prohibiting the construction of Billboard Structures and providing standards for other sign structures in the City Center Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area").

<u>SUMMARY</u>

On May 15, 2002, the City Council adopted City Center Redevelopment Project, which necessitates Agency Board approval of the proposed DFD to address the issue of billboards and other sign structures in the newly created City Center Redevelopment Project Area.

1. The Problem in the Project Area

The City Center Project Area encompasses approximately 879 acres roughly bounded by the 110 and 10 Freeways, 2nd and San Pedro Streets, and Stanford and Griffith Avenues ("Attachment A" hereto). The Project Area contains a mix of land uses, including commercial, retail/office, industrial, as well as residential, but is predominately commercial and industrial in character. The land use pattern consists of commercial or industrial areas interspersed with multi-family residences, hotels, and community parks/facilities.

Agency staff worked on the proposed DFD for the Project Area by: (i) surveying the Area to determine the number and location of billboard structures there; (ii) drafting a DFD which addresses the unique blight and other negative impacts created by such billboard and other sign structures; (iii) presenting the draft DFD to the affected public in the Project Area for review and feedback; and (iv) finalizing the DFD into the form of a resolution attached hereto as "Attachment B" ("Proposed DFD") from which the proposed DFD for the Project Area was modeled.

There are at least 87 billboard structures located in the Project Area.

The physical characteristics or Agency redevelopment activities in the Project Area that may be impacted by billboard and other sign structures are:

- a. Historic Resources
- b. Scenic views, vistas, corridors
- c. Recent public investments in streetscape/landscape
- d. Recent public investments in façade improvements, and
- e. Significant public buildings and spaces

Proposed DFD To Deal With Problem

The proposed DFD would prohibit the construction, or reconstruction, of Billboard Structures in the Project Area, but allow for the construction of Other Sign Structures subject to standards for their placement, design, and operation. The proposed DFD also contains standards for all sign structures in the Project Area.

a. <u>Prohibition of Certain New Signs</u>

The proposed DFD for the Project Area would prohibit new "Billboards" defined therein as sign structures that accommodate a sign larger than 40 square feet and are placed on or affixed to one or more poles, columns or posts, and are structurally independent from a building or structure, or are placed on the rooftop of a building or structure. The proposed DFD would also prohibit "Supergraphic Signs" in the Project Area. A "Supergraphic Sign" is defined as "a sign consisting of an image projected onto a wall or printed on vinyl, mesh or other material with or without written text, supported and attached to a wall by an adhesive and/or by using stranded cable and eye-bolts and/or other materials or methods, and which does not comply with the provisions in Section 91.6201 et seq. of the Los Angeles Municipal Code relating to Wall Signs, Mural Signs, Off-Site Signs and/or Temporary Signs."

b. Standards for Pole Signs

The proposed DFD would allow the construction of "Pole Signs" defined as a sign structure placed on or affixed to one or more poles, where the pole exceeds 8 feet in height, measured from the existing or artificial grade to the bottom of the sign.

c. <u>Standards For All New Signs</u>

The proposed DFD contains standards affecting all signs in the Project Area. These standards are geared towards making signs an integral part of a well-designed urban landscape and keeping signs and the areas around signs well maintained and safe. For example, the proposed DFD contains provisions that: (i) all signs shall be designed as an integral part of the building or site on which they are located; (ii) all signs shall be properly maintained and free from damaged sign material and graffiti; and (iii) no sign may contain flashing, rotating or hazardous lights or any rotating, revolving, or other moving parts.

The proposed DFD also contains standards and guidelines for skyline signs in the Project Area.

d. Application To Existing Signs

The proposed DFD would apply to existing billboards and signs in the Project Area if the cost of "proposed changes" to such structures exceeds 25% of the replacement value of the sign support structure. Among the proposed changes covered by the DFD are reconstructions, redesigns and renovations of billboard and other sign structures.

e. Limitations

The above-discussed DFD provisions address only the most significant problems and conditions created by billboards and other sign structures in terms of proper urban design, aesthetics, and distractions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The proposed DFD expressly does not address the content of (or message on) any sign, in order to comply with First Amendment principles. Moreover, the proposed DFD would apply only to the City Center Redevelopment Project Area, and not to other areas of the City of Los Angeles. Even if other project areas adopt similar DFDs, there still remain many areas within the City of Los Angeles without such regulations, as can be seen by the map appended as "Attachment C" hereto. As such, there are ample alternative means of and opportunities for communication, both within the channel of signage and through other methods of communication.

RE

May 15, 2002 City Council adoption of the City Center Redevelopment Project.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

No funds are required for this action.

PROGRAM AND BUDGET IMPACT

Approval of the recommended action is in conformance with the City Center Redevelopment Plan. Activities of this nature are provided under Objective CB6990, Response to Development Opportunities.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The recommended action is Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308.

BACKGROUND

1. The Problem

During 1999-2000, Agency staff received an increasing number of permit applications for the construction of billboards in many redevelopment project areas. Concurrently, there was an increasing concern about the impacts of billboards and other types of signage on the Agency's efforts to achieve its redevelopment plan goals in these project areas. These goals commit the Agency to, among other things, achieve higher quality architectural and urban design principles, create pleasing and livable environments, and improve general visual and aesthetic conditions in its redevelopment and revitalization efforts in the communities it serves. These goals are

stated in Section 105 of the City Center Redevelopment Plan ("Plan"), and direct the Agency to eliminate blight and create a setting conducive to attracting re-investment into the Project Area.

Prior Agency Action to Deal With Problem

The Plan contains provisions that authorize the Agency to adopt design guidelines called Designs for Development ("DFDs") that establish, among other things, design criteria and other details necessary for proper development of the Project Area. Section 514 of the Plan authorizes the Agency to develop sign and billboard standards.

On December 7, 2000, the Agency Board adopted an Interim Design for Development for 21 redevelopment project areas that directed staff to review billboard applications under the Interim document's rules that prohibit billboards. On that date, the Agency Board also directed staff to prepare individual DFDs for billboards in these 21 Project Areas. The Interim Design for Development expired on December 19, 2001.

In adopting the Interim Design for Development and preparing the proposed DFD, the Agency is carrying out its mission of improving the conditions of blighted communities determined by both the Agency and City to be in need of the special attention and tools provided by redevelopment.

Aesthetics as a Legitimate Goal of Agency Action

The adoption and implementation of a redevelopment plan reflects a comprehensive and coordinated effort to make the designated project area more attractive, both to private investment and to the people who live, work and visit in this area.

Additionally, the successful redevelopment of blighted project areas involves more than just generating additional tax revenues. It includes creating or recapturing visual environments where people want to be and feel comfortable. A major portion of the Agency's work focuses on the proper design of the urban landscape in its broadest sense, since the visual environment has a major impact on how a project area looks and "feels." This look and feel contributes to the ability to attract and retain the type of investment that stabilizes and ultimately improves the project area.

Accordingly, most redevelopment plans include specific language either in their Goals and Objectives or elsewhere that acknowledge a concern for aesthetics, the importance of creating a pleasing environment, and the need for traffic safety. Also, redevelopment plans often contain specific language authorizing the Agency to develop additional standards for signs and billboards, through Design Guidelines, Designs for Development, or other vehicles. The Plan contains such provisions, at Section 514.

In response to dramatic increases in 1999-2000 in requests to review billboard permit applications for conformity to the redevelopment plans, the Agency adopted an Interim Design for Development affecting 21 project areas, including the subject Project Area. (See part 2 of SUMMARY.) Concern had been expressed over the cumulative impacts of such an increase in signage on the Agency's redevelopment efforts, as well as impacts to the community in terms of visual clutter, distractions, and negative aesthetic appearance. A general consensus was formed among Agency staff and the communities in which they work, that specific DFDs needed to be adopted for each project area. (See part 1 of SUMMARY.)

4. Council Office and Public Review of Proposed DFD

The proposed DFD was properly noticed, and was reviewed by the affected public as well as the Council Office. The Council Office recommends adoption of the proposed DFD before the Agency Board today.

5. How Proposed DFD Relates to Ongoing City Billboard Reduction Efforts

On April 30, 2002, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 174547, which states in Section 1, 7(I) that "No off-site sign shall be allowed in any zone, except when off-site signs are specifically permitted pursuant to a legally adopted specific plan, supplemental use district, or an approved development agreement. Further, that legally permitted existing signs shall not be altered or enlarged."

Since off-site signs may be permitted under said Section 1, 7(I) of the new ordinance, new billboard applications could arrive at the Agency for processing. Thus, there is the need for the proposed DFD to strictly regulate such potential streams of applications to construct or rehabilitate billboard or other sign structures so they conform to the Redevelopment Plan.

Jerry A. Scharlin,

There is no conflict of interest known to me which exists with regard to any Agency officer or employee concerning this action.

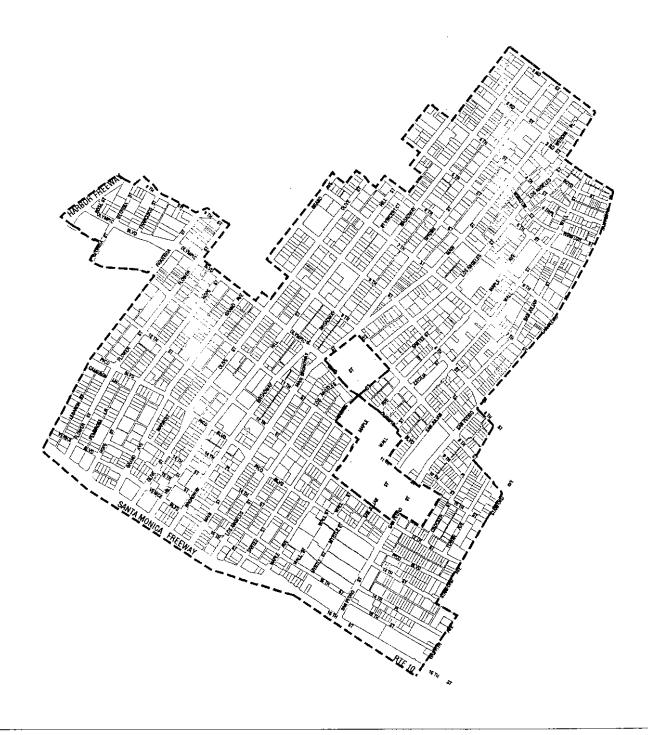
City Center Redevelopment Project

Parcel Line Base Map

Redevelopment Project

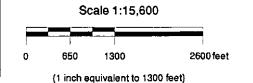
CRA/LA

Community Redevelopment Agency City of Los Angeles





Prepared by CRA GIS Team 05/30/02 ► Legend ✓ Project Boundary





THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CA

RESOLUTION NO. 6089

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT PROHIBITING THE CONSTRUCTION OF BILLBOARD STRUCTURES AND PROVIDING STANDARDS FOR OTHER SIGN STRUCTURES IN THE CITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of redevelopment is to eliminate and prevent the spread of blight and deterioration; and

WHEREAS, to accomplish this purpose the Redevelopment Plan for the City Center Redevelopment Project ("Redevelopment Plan") includes goals to enhance the environment, with a high level of concern for architectural and urban design standards, and to conserve, rehabilitate and redevelop the affected City Center Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area") in accordance with that plan; and

WHEREAS, Section 514 of the Redevelopment Plan permits signs in the Project Area only if they conform to local codes and ordinances, including the Redevelopment Plan; and

WHEREAS, Section 522 of the Redevelopment Plan authorizes the Agency to prepare and adopt designs for development that establish design criteria and other development and design controls necessary for proper development of both private and public areas within the Project Area; and

WHEREAS, Section 523 of the Redevelopment Plan prohibits the issuance of building permits or other land use entitlements without the prior review and determination by the Agency that the proposed structure conforms to the Redevelopment Plan, including any adopted design for development; and

WHEREAS, a preliminary survey of the Project Area indicates there are at least 87 Billboards in the Project Area; and

WHEREAS, a proliferation of Billboards is detrimental to the purpose of redevelopment to eliminate and prevent the spread of blight and deterioration and the goals of the Redevelopment Plan to enhance the environment, including a high level of concern for architectural and urban design standards, and to conserve, rehabilitate and redevelop the affected Project Area; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to design and maintain future Pole Signs, Skyline Signs and Mural Signs in this Project Area so as to minimize their environmental impacts on the surrounding community in the Project Area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA AS FOLLOWS:

The Agency adopts the following Design for Development affecting the location of any Pole Sign, Roof Sign, Skyline Sign or Mural Sign, as well as the modification, alteration, redesign, reconstruction or renovation of existing Billboards, Pole Signs, Roof Signs, Skyline

Signs and Mural Signs within the Project Area that require a permit or other land use entitlement from the City of Los Angeles:

- 1. Except as stated herein, all applicable State, County and City of Los Angeles regulations and code requirements shall apply.
- 2. No provision of this Design for Development shall operate to restrict or prohibit any ideological, political or other non-commercial message on any Billboard, Pole Sign, or other sign structure otherwise permitted by the standards set forth herein.
- 3. If not defined herein, the meaning of words is the same as in Chapter 62 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code ("City Sign Ordinance" or the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code. As used in this Design for Development, the following definitions apply:
 - a. "Billboard" means any sign structure that accommodates a sign larger than 40 square feet that is placed on or affixed to one or more poles, columns or posts or is attached to a building or other structure.
 - b. "Supergraphic Sign" means a sign, consisting of an image projected onto a wall or printed on vinyl, mesh or other material with or without written text, supported and attached to a wall by an adhesive and/or by using stranded cable and eyebolts and/or other materials or methods, and which does not comply with the provisions in Section 91.6201 et seq. of the Los Angeles Municipal Code relating to Wall Signs, Mural Signs, Off-Site Signs and/or Temporary Signs.
 - c. "Pole Sign" means any sign structure that is not a Billboard and that is placed on or affixed to one or more poles or posts and the pole or post of which exceed(s) a height of 8 feet as measured from the existing or artificially created grade to the bottom of the sign.
 - d. "Skyline Sign" means a wall sign which is located within the top 24 feet of a building that is at least 150 feet tall.
- 4. No Billboards shall be permitted in the Project Area.
- 5. Pole Signs may be permitted in the Project Area if they meet the following criteria:
 - a. Lots having a street frontage of at least 50 feet may have one Pole Sign for each 200 feet or fraction thereof of street frontage, if such frontage does not contain an existing Pole Sign or Projecting Sign. If that frontage contains an existing Pole Sign or Projecting Sign, no additional Pole Signs are permitted.
 - b. The Sign Area of a Pole Sign shall not exceed 40 square feet.
 - c. The top of a Pole Sign shall not exceed 25 feet or the height of any building or structure on the same lot as the Pole Sign, whichever is lower.
 - d. No Pole Sign shall be permitted on a lot having less than 50 feet of street frontage.

- e. Any sign panel of a Pole Sign shall be perpendicular to the front of any building or to the property line if there is no building on the property.
- f. A Pole Sign may be either single-faced or double-faced. If double faced, the faces must be parallel.
- g. No pole or support structure of a Pole Sign shall exceed 9 inches in diameter.
- h. The placement and design of a pole, column, or post of a Pole Sign shall appear integral to either the design of the sign structure it supports or, if the pole or support is adjacent to a building or structure, the design of the adjacent building or structure, and shall reflect a high level of architectural design and construction quality.
- i. The pole or support structure of a Pole Sign shall be painted or otherwise treated to appear compatible with any landscape screening or decorative walls located in the same front or side yard setback as the pole or support structure if any portion of the pole or support structure can be seen from the public street or sidewalk.
- j. The sign or advertising panel of a Pole Sign shall be set back at least 3 feet from all property lines that abut a public street or sidewalk.
- k. The opening between parallel sign panels visible from a public street or sidewalk shall be in-filled with opaque or solid material to eliminate public view of internal structural supports.
- The support structure, internal framework, and advertising panels shall be kept at all times in repair and maintained in a safe and sound condition and in conformance with all applicable codes.
- 6. No Roof Signs, including signs on sloping roofs, shall be permitted in the Project Area.
- 7. Skyline Signs may be permitted in the Project Area if they meet the following criteria:
 - a. Minimum Building Height. A building must be at least 150 feet tall to have a Skyline Sign or Signs.
 - b. Skyline Sign Location. On a flat topped building, Skyline Signs must be located between the top of the windows on the topmost floor and the top of the roof parapet or within an area 24 feet below the top of the roof parapet. On buildings with stepped or otherwise articulated tops, Skyline Signs may be located within an area 24 feet below the top of the building or within an area 24 feet below the top of the parapet of the main portion of the building below the stepped or articulated top. The Skyline Signs must be located on a wall and may not be located on a roof, including a sloping roof, and may not block any windows.
 - c. Maximum Sign Area. A Skyline Sign may not occupy more than 80% of the area in which the sign may be located on a single building face or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less, and may include only a single line of text including, but not limited to, symbols, text and logos.

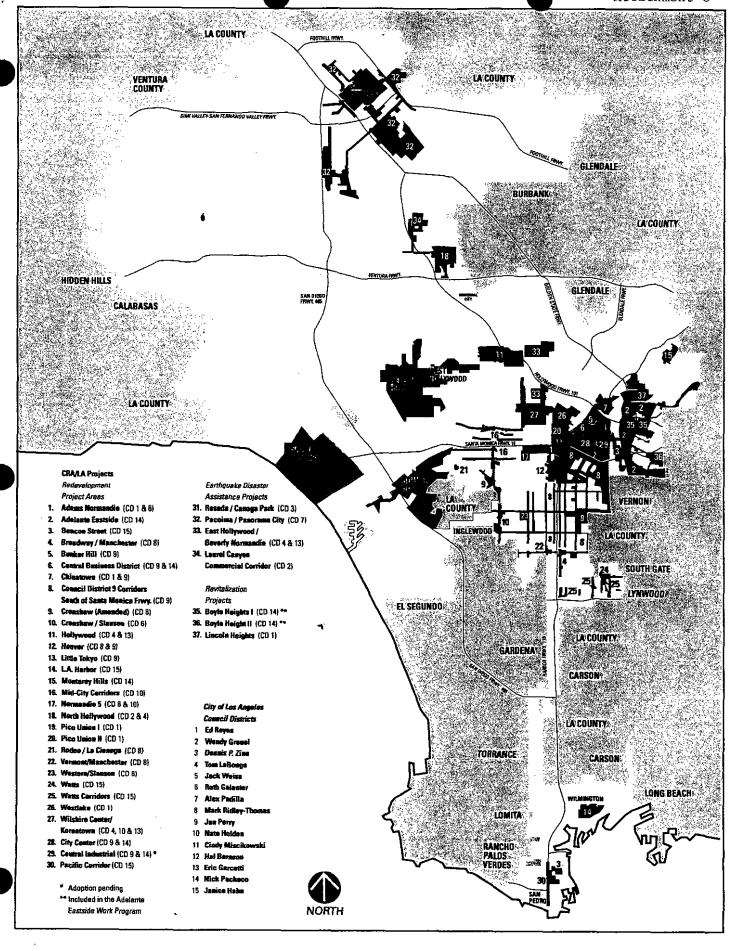
- d. Number of Skyline Signs. A building may have no more than two Skyline Signs on opposite sides of the building, only one of which is visible from any single vantage point. Both Skyline Signs on a building must be identical.
- e. Materials. Skyline Signs must be constructed of high quality, durable materials that are compatible with the building materials. Cut-out letters that are individually pin-mounted and backlit are encouraged. Box signs are prohibited.
- f. Other Guidelines. Skyline Signs are encouraged to meet the following guidelines:
 - 1) The use of symbols, rather than names or words, is encouraged.
 - 2) Skyline Signs should be integrated into the architectural design of the building.
 - 3) Skyline Signs should be designed to be changed over time.
 - 4) Nighttime lighting of Skyline Signs, as well as of distinctive building tops, is encouraged and the two should be integrated. Lighting of Skyline Signs should include backlighting that creates a "halo" around the Skylight Sign. Backlighting may be combined with other types of lighting.
- 8. Mural Signs may be located in the Project Area if they meet the following criteria:
 - a. No window or other opening may be within the area of a wall on which the Mural Sign is painted.
 - b. Mural Signs shall be reviewed and approved by the Downtown Arts Design Advisory Panel (DADAP).
- 9. No Supergraphic Signs shall be permitted in the Project Area.
- 10. All signs in the Project Area shall meet the following criteria:
 - a. No sign shall be located or mounted on a rooftop or on poles or other structures that pass through a rooftop.
 - b. No sign structure shall be cantilevered over rooftops or otherwise encroach into the airspace above any building or other structure.
 - c. The building and ground area around signs shall be properly maintained at all times. All unused mounting structures, hardware and wall perforations from any previous sign shall be removed and building surfaces shall be restored to their original condition.
 - d. All sign structures shall be designed as an integral part of the sites on which they are located, and shall reflect a high level of architectural and construction quality.
 - e. All signage copy shall be properly maintained and free from damaged sign material and other unsightly conditions, including graffiti.

- f. Any sign structure shall be at all times kept in good repair and maintained in a safe and sound condition and in conformance with all applicable codes.
- g. Razor wire, barbed wire, concertina wire or other barriers preventing unauthorized access to any sign, if any, shall be hidden from public view.
- h. No sign structure may contain flashing, rotating or hazardous lights. The direction and intensity of all lighting shall not be such as to cause nuisance or traffic hazard.
- i. No sign structure may contain rotating, revolving, or other moving parts intended to attract motorist or pedestrian attention. Moving parts for the purpose of bird control are permitted.
- j. No sign structure shall encroach over or upon a public right-of-way.
- k. Night lighting of any sign shall be directed onto the sign face with no glare onto adjacent properties. Any light source used to conjunction with a sign shall be baffled or otherwise screened from view.
- 1. The signage copy must be replaced immediately upon tearing, ripping, or peeling or when marred or damaged by graffiti.
- m. No access platform, ladder, or other service appurtenance shall be installed or attached to any sign structure.
- 11. All existing Billboards, Pole Signs, Skyline Signs, Roof Signs and Mural Signs not in conformance with these design standards shall be deemed non-conforming uses pursuant to Section 506 of the Redevelopment Plan. Accordingly, any modification, alteration, redesign, reconstruction or renovation of an existing non-conforming sign shall conform to these standards if the cost of the work exceeds 25% of the replacement value of the sign supporting structure of a Billboard, Pole Sign or Roof Sign or 25% of the replacement value of the sign itself for a Skyline Sign or Mural Sign. Notwithstanding the foregoing, there shall be no increase in the overall size or dimensions of any existing sign or increase in sign area.
- 12. The Agency may permit minor variations to these design standards, and/or adopt other sign design standards for sign structures for development projects that are subject to a Disposition and Development Agreement or an Owner Participation Agreement with the Agency.
- 13. Proposals and applications for permits or other land use entitlements for Billboards, Pole Signs, Skyline Signs, Roof Signs and Mural Signs shall be reviewed for compliance with this Design for Development, the Redevelopment Plan, and requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA], and the Agency's Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, and be approved or disapproved in the first instance by designated Agency staff.
- 14. Any proposal or application disapproved or denied by Agency staff may be appealed by the proponent or applicant, or any other party, to the Agency Board of Commissioners.

- 15. Should any portion of this Design for Development be challenged and determined to be improper for any reason, such provision or application may be severed and the rest of the Design for Development remain in effect.
- 16. If there is an existing agreement with the Agency affecting any sign or any property on which a sign is proposed, which agreement is more restrictive than these design standards, that existing agreement shall apply.

ADOPTED: AUGUST 15, 2002

CC Sign DFD v4



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Community Redevelopment Agency / Los Angeles ACTENEDA RECVIERVI TRANSMINITALL POA: Agenda Review on: July 18, 2002 Board Meeting on: August 1, 2002 Author: Karen Yamamoto/Ken Moye Ext: 1753 Project Manager: Ayahlushim Hammond Originating Dept: Professional Services Director: Don Spivack Presenter: Ayahlushim Hammond Title: Adoption of Design for Development Prohibiting the Construction of Billboard Structures and Providing Standards for Other Sign Structures in the City Center Redevelopment Project Area City Center Redevelopment Project Area, CD 9 and 14 Project Area: This Item is submitted for: Consent Report Executive Session Presentation This Will require City Council Action: This will require City Council Action: Explain if there is a time urgency to be acted upon by City Council: Was your item reviewed by Loan Committee? Additional review that may be needed: __Kip_Rudd__ By ... Date: Pauline Lewicki Ke Keur Budget Environmental **Equal Opportunity** Contracts Approval as to Form, Content & Legally Submitted by Project Manager, if applicable Department Head/ Deputy Administrator ended CBP Board Men. Attachment Checklist: Check if attachments are ready or put "to follow" if the attachments will accompany the final Board memo.

Resolution (s):

Map:

Others: