



December 5, 2014

Mayor Bill Bogaard
Pasadena City Council
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109
VIA E-MAIL

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Pasadena City Council Members,

The Pasadena Chamber of Commerce appreciates the effort to examine and improve the development, entitlement and permitting processes of the City of Pasadena. While we would appreciate a more robust effort, we view the current recommendations as a good step in the right direction.

At the Chamber, we are very pleased to see that efficiencies have been introduced that lead to shorter review and approval processes. We do note, however, that this is not always the case and further improvements could be made. We remain very supportive of the measures proposed to decrease the time it takes for processing of applications.

The Chamber is very interested in the changes as they pertain to the Design Commission, which is universally viewed as an impediment to permitting of projects. Removing one of the steps in the process is a tremendous move in the right direction. It does not, however, address the greater issue of necessity. Does the Design Commission bring an added value to the City of Pasadena? We would hope that future considerations might include folding design review into the planning process and giving that responsibility to your Planning Commission, as is done in many other places. This would not decrease the design oversight as your Planning Commission is appointed by the Council because of their expertise, experience and perspective as it related to building and development. Why not also give that commission oversight over design? It would not remove design oversight, but could significantly shorten the review process while protecting the interests of the City and its citizens in the appearance of our built environment.

If the Design Review Commission is to be maintained, The Pasadena Chamber is also supportive of reducing the number of commissioners and requiring some level of expertise, as proposed here. We would also suggest that, once the commission makes a determination, that determination should not be able to be re-reviewed by the commission and modified in the future. Consistency is important for those investing significant time and resources in Pasadena.

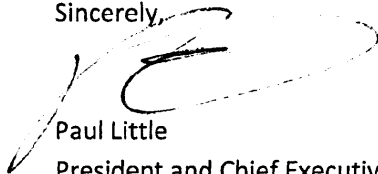
We also should note that there are still instances where inspectors at all levels are requiring changes that exceed the requirements approved during the permitting process. These 11th hour requirements place an unfair burden on anyone doing work within the city. If a project has met all the requirements of its permit, further changes should not be allowed, unless the city is willing to pay for the changes and compensate the applicant for lost income that results from any such delays.

At the Pasadena Chamber, we view the current recommendations as a step in the right direction and encourage you to adopt the recommendations. The City's interests, and those of its citizens, are being protected, while the application process is having some unnecessary impediments removed.

At the Chamber, we would welcome further study and review and look forward to working with the City to further examine the review processes at all levels and in all relevant departments.

Thank you for considering our comments as you deliberate development review processes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Little', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Paul Little
President and Chief Executive Officer