



# MIKE BONIN

## City of Los Angeles

### Councilmember, Eleventh District

June 15, 2016

Vince Bertoni, Director of Planning  
Los Angeles City Planning Department  
200 N. Spring Street, 5th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

*Via email*

**Re: Pacific Palisades – The Need for Tailored BMO and BHO Regulations**

Dear Vince,

Back in 2014, your staff was challenged to revise the Citywide rules governing mansionization to better ensure that houses being built were compatible with the neighborhoods where they were located. In response to concerns from many neighborhoods throughout the City, the City Council directed Planning staff to prepare amendments to the City's Baseline Mansionization Ordinance ("BMO") (and later to the Baseline Hillside Ordinance ("BHO")) to close perceived loopholes that were allowing for much larger homes to be built, overwhelming existing, smaller scale single-family neighborhoods.

I want to thank your staff for the tremendous amount of hard work put into crafting updated BMO and BHO standards aimed at addressing the most common concerns your Department and many Council offices have heard about mansionization – namely that new development was simply too big for existing neighborhoods. However, I think this effort highlights again how one size does not fit all when it comes to land use regulations in Los Angeles. In a City the size of Los Angeles, with single-family neighborhoods as diverse as they are, BMO and BHO rules that solve a problem in one part of the City may create unintended issues in others.

I have heard from countless residents in the Pacific Palisades that the proposed BMO and BHO amendments are doing just that – creating an issue for Palisades neighborhoods that are happy with the current rules. Rather than assuming the Palisades neighborhoods have the same issues as other single-family neighborhoods in the City, the residents are asking for BMO and BHO rules that take the characteristics of the Palisades into consideration.

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The Pacific Palisades is a community of primarily single-family homes on R1-zoned property. While the lots may be a relatively standard size and shape, the development patterns on those lots often does not match the development on similar lots in other areas of the City. For example, in areas of the Palisades subject to the BMO, the majority of the lots on a given block are already developed with homes that meet the size allowed by the current BMO regulations. It's the smaller houses that are actually "out of scale" or "not in character" with the development on the rest of the block. The residents of these areas support allowing such houses to be redeveloped to the same size as the rest of the block. Additionally, many neighborhoods in the Palisades are covered by conditions, covenants, and restrictions that have over the years proven to be compatible with the City's existing BMO and BHO regulations. These rules have led to the redevelopment of neighborhoods that meets the expectations of Palisades residents.

The proposed amendments to the BMO and BHO, however, significantly change what would be allowed in the Palisades, in many instances restricting potential development well beyond what the community would like to see. Therefore, I am asking that the Planning Department work closely with my office and the Palisades community to identify development standards that will allow the neighborhoods of the Palisades to continue developing in the manner they expect and desire. I would ask that these tailored rules be applied to the Palisades in lieu of the Citywide BMO and BHO where the community believes that new or different regulations better match the needs of the Palisades.

I understand that regulating an issue such as mansionization in the City is complicated, and I greatly appreciate the Department's willingness to find the right set of rules for our Palisades community.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Bonin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Bonin" clearly distinguishable.

MIKE BONIN

*Councilmember, 11th District*