



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMITTING PROCESS FOR THE OPERATION OF SCRAP METAL YARDS IN L.A. COUNTY

LOS ANGELES – At the request of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who cited community concerns regarding the potential safety and operational hazards that a scrap metal processing yard in the unincorporated area of Florence-Firestone may pose, the Board today delayed its decision on whether to grant a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to the facility until October 26, when the public hearing process is completed.

The County's Regional Planning Commission approved the CUP request on April 14, 2010, but outstanding concerns remain because of the small size of the lot and the lack of clearly outlined conditions and substantial enforcement protocols to demonstrate the efficacy of the operations.

The Board heard testimony from a variety of community stakeholders, including Florence-Firestone residents, environmentalists and representatives of the scrap yard industry.

“This issue is reflective of a more significant concern along the Alameda Corridor, which is home to a multitude of major industrial and manufacturing businesses. Over 20 of these businesses currently operate as junk and salvage yards,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas stated in his request to the Board.

“While these facilities provide a critical environmental benefit to the County through the processing and handling of recyclable materials, a recent review of these businesses revealed that over 80% do not have valid permits.”

While the Department of Regional Planning has become familiar with these types of uses, the Supervisor emphasized that additional coordination with its state and federal counterparts may be necessary in order to assure that the appropriate conditions and enforcement procedures are applied.

The Board directed the County Department of Regional Planning to continue the public hearing process until October 26 in order to allow adequate time for it to provide recommendations on additional conditions to the CUP that address the potential safety and operational hazard concerns, including parking and traffic issues.

The Board also directed the Department to work with County Counsel to complete a comprehensive review of CUP requirements for scrap yards, evaluating existing standards and best practices currently utilized by other urban local jurisdictions.

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