

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance adding Section 56.31 to Article 6 of Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to impose community-based safety requirements on the operation of Model Aircraft and to impose restrictions consistent with certain Federal Aviation Rules on the operation of both Model Aircraft and Civil Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs), commonly known as drones.

WHEREAS, the operation of Unmanned Aircraft such as Model Aircraft and Civil UASs can at times pose a hazard to full-scale aircraft in flight and to persons and property on the ground; and

WHEREAS, imposing community-based safety requirements on the operation of Model Aircraft and imposing restrictions on the operation of both Model Aircraft and Civil UASs consistent with Federal Aviation Rules is necessary to mitigate such risks and to protect the public from the hazards associated with the operation of Unmanned Aircraft.

NOW, THEREFORE,

**THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. A new Section 56.31 is added to Article 6 of Chapter V of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

SEC. 56.31. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) For purposes of this section:

1. **“Unmanned Aircraft”** shall mean an aircraft, including, but not limited to, an aircraft commonly known as a drone, that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

2. **“Unmanned Aircraft System”** shall mean an Unmanned Aircraft and associated elements, including, but not limited to, any communication links and components that control the Unmanned Aircraft.

3. **“Person”** shall have the same meaning as set forth in Subsection (a) of Section 11.01 of this Code.

4. **“Model Aircraft”** shall mean an Unmanned Aircraft or Unmanned Aircraft System operated by any Person strictly for hobby or recreational purposes.

5. **“Civil UAS”** shall mean an Unmanned Aircraft or Unmanned Aircraft System operated by any Person for any purposes other than strictly

hobby or recreational purposes, including, but not limited to, commercial purposes or in furtherance of, or incidental to, any business or media service or agency.

6. **“Public UAS”** shall mean an Unmanned Aircraft or Unmanned Aircraft System operated by any public agency for government related purposes.

(b) The following shall apply to the operation of any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles:

1. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles and within 5 miles of an airport without the prior express authorization of the airport air traffic control tower.

2. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles in a manner that interferes with manned aircraft, and shall always give way to any manned aircraft.

3. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles beyond the visual line of sight of the person operating the Model Aircraft. The operator must use his or her own natural vision (which includes vision corrected by standard eyeglasses or contact lenses) to observe the Model Aircraft. People other than the operator may not be used in lieu of the operator for maintaining visual line of sight. Visual line of sight means that the operator has an unobstructed view of the Model Aircraft. The use of vision-enhancing devices, such as binoculars, night vision goggles, powered vision magnifying devices, and goggles or other devices designed to provide a “first-person view” from the model, do not constitute the visual line of sight of the person operating the Model Aircraft.

4. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles other than during daylight hours defined as between official sunrise and official sunset for local time.

5. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles more than 400 feet above the earth’s surface.

6. Excluding takeoff and landing, no Person shall operate any Model Aircraft within the City of Los Angeles closer than 25 feet to any individual, except the operator or the operator’s helper(s).

(c) The following shall apply to the operation of any Model Aircraft or Civil UAS within the City of Los Angeles:

1. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft or Civil UAS within the City of Los Angeles in a manner that is prohibited by any federal statute or regulation governing aeronautics.

2. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft or Civil UAS within the City of Los Angeles in violation of any temporary flight restriction (TFR) or notice to airmen (NOTAM) issued by the Federal Aviation Administration.

3. No Person shall operate any Model Aircraft or Civil UAS within the City of Los Angeles in a careless or reckless manner so as to endanger the life or property of another. The standard for what constitutes careless and reckless operation under this section shall be the same as the standard set forth in any federal statutes or regulations governing aeronautics including but not limited to Federal Aviation Rule 91.13.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any Person to violate or fail to comply with this section. Any Person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to the provisions of Subsection (m) of Section 11.00 of this Code.

(e) This section shall not apply to any Public UAS operated pursuant to, and in compliance with, the terms and conditions of any current and enforceable authorization granted by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Sec. 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and have it published in accordance with Council policy, either in a daily newspaper circulated in the City of Los Angeles or by posting for ten days in three public places in the City of Los Angeles: one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; and one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Los Angeles County Hall of Records.

I hereby certify that this ordinance was passed by the Council of the City of Los Angeles, at its meeting of _____.

HOLLY L. WOLCOTT, City Clerk


By _____
Deputy

Approved _____

Mayor

Approved as to Form and Legality

MICHAEL N. FEUER, City Attorney

By 
JANET KARKANEN
Deputy City Attorney

Date SEP 16 2015

File No. _____