

Questions over Industry land uses brought to District Attorney's attention

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Questions about Industry's financial and land dealings have been brought to the attention of the District Attorney's Office, officials said Friday.

Although no official investigation into the city has been opened, the chief of the D.A.'s government watchdog office said attorneys there have caught wind of "issues" with Industry.

"There's not an open investigation, but we have heard there are some issues," said Dave Demerjian, chief of the D.A.'s Public Integrity Division.

Sources inside county government said county officials have questions about land uses that came up in recent public hearings regarding Industry's former redevelopment agency.

Industry is without a permanent mayor after Dave Perez resigned last week, citing health concerns. Councilman Jeff Parriott has been named acting mayor until the City Council decides how to choose Perez's replacement.

Parriott could not be reached for comment Friday, and calls to Industry City Hall were not returned. Like cities and counties all over the state, Industry is in the process of unwinding its redevelopment agency.

The unwinding process is being governed by an oversight board made up of officials from Industry and appointees from school districts and the county.

Oversight Board Chairman Santos Kreimann, who also is the interim Los Angeles County Assessor, said the board has not found any irregularities with Industry's finances.

There are some questions about properties that have been transferred from the former redevelopment agency to the city, he said.

Redevelopment agencies were legal mechanisms that allowed cities to capture additional property taxes to use for community improvement projects.

The agencies were abolished last year by Gov. Jerry Brown and the legislature in an effort to use the former redevelopment agency money and property to help plug the state's budget hole.

The law that did away with the agencies asked cities to create new accounts that would hold all the assets of the former redevelopment agencies, commonly called successor agencies.

The law also calls for the eventual transferring of properties owned by the redevelopment agencies to the state.

Industry had recently moved ownership of many redevelopment properties from the agency to the city.

The oversight board is moving many of those properties from the city back to the successor agency. The city willingly transferred many of the properties back to the successor agency, but there is a lack of clarity over whether a handful of properties qualify to remain in the city's possession, Kreimann said.

The oversight board is seeking legal advice to clear up the issue, Kreimann said.

"The city has made some determinations that some of the properties are public properties but they are being used in more of a commercial nature," he said.

The process of sorting out redevelopment agency property has had a rough start, with city officials all over the state complaining that the state government is rushing the process and making up rules as it goes along.

State officials have admitted there was "no way in hell" they would be able to police the process properly.

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