

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:14 PM
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Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_2.21.18 PRESS RELEASE
LA Faith leaders support stronger building codes



A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

2.21.2018

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Los Angeles Faith Leaders Support Stronger Building Codes

Grant AME Church, Bethel LA AME Church, and The Row Church call on City Council to endorse efforts to protect communities from fire

Silver Spring, MD – Earlier this month, the leaders of the Grant and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Churches in Los Angeles, as well as The Row Church in Los Angeles, sent letters to the LA City Council calling on the councilmembers to support efforts that would strengthen the city’s building codes for fire safety reasons.

The efforts include a draft ordinance that would encourage the use of the safest and most durable materials in the construction process in order to protect Los Angeles’ most vulnerable communities.

“We live in a city with great threats of natural disaster, such as fires and earthquakes, and making sure that our people have the best possible chances of survival is a righteous and grave responsibility,” said Pastor Michael Eagle of the Grant AME Church in the letter. “By requiring new developments to use the safest and most durable materials in the construction process, you are improving the potential for a longer and safer life for the thousands upon thousands that live in such buildings, and also for the many righteous folks who work in the building process and those who come in to help in the case of an emergency.”

At a time where mid-rise housing developments have been increasingly the site of large, spectacular fires, Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire service professionals, architects, engineers and industry experts, has stepped up efforts to mitigate the dangers of fire for communities across the country. In reviewing current building and fire safety codes, the coalition is working to identify areas in need of improvement, particularly in updating building codes by including the use of non-combustible materials to minimize the risk of fires.

“With continuous, positive growth taking place across Los Angeles, new regulations that protect and embrace the diverse communities living and working throughout the city will provide broad and long-term benefits to the many collaborative interests involved in these developments,” said Pastor Cue Jn Marie of The Row Church.

In addition to the three churches, the Build with Strength – Los Angeles coalition includes a number of organizations, including: the LA Housing Partnership, Asian Americans in Commercial Real Estate (AACRE), California Black Chamber of Commerce, and Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce, Churches in Action, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE), Temple Kol Tikvah, The Los Angeles Civil Rights Association, Los Angeles Shmira Civil Safety Patrol, Los Angeles Urban League, and the Southern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

As the nation’s urban population centers become more crowded, the demand for housing is continuing to grow. In order to safeguard these communities, Build with Strength is working to ensure the safety of new buildings, particularly those intended for communities at risk such as low- and moderate-income residents.

I am concerned about the safety and welfare of my parishioners and of all people within the broader community,” added Reverend Bobbie Lee Anderson of the Bethel AME Church. “I urge city leaders to move forward and pass an ordinance as soon as possible.”

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com.

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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:16 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_12.13.18 Fire Safety Ordinance Letter to Blumenfield and Staff



December 13, 2018

Subject: Fire Safety Ordinance

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield and Staff,

As members of *Build with Strength*, and leaders from across the City of Los Angeles, representing faith, labor, business, social justice and other organizations, we want to thank you for your leadership during this very difficult time for our communities. We are reaching out to you in solidarity and support in this crisis time after fires have ravaged our neighborhoods and across California. Especially as many people within your own district, and neighboring areas have been affected. These tragic events tend to shine light on the true heroism and leadership around us, and as such, we salute your entire District 3 office and dedicated staff members for their diligence, compassion and the direct impact you have had on the thousands of individuals and families that are enduring the fear, disorientation and tragedy of the Woolsey fire.

Out of this devastation comes a call to action, and we strongly encourage you now, more than ever, to move forward with the Fire Safety ordinance and the *Build with Strength* effort. This is a critical step forward for a much safer Los Angeles, a city we know all too well is at a significant risk for devastating fires. For residents of multi-story and multi-family housing, building materials used and their rate of combustion can be the difference between life and death. So many people are disproportionately impacted by the risk of fire, including seniors, the disabled, and those less fortunate.

In the wake of this ongoing tragedy, there is much work ahead to ensure that new developments and multi-family construction in our city have the safest standards of fire endurance possible. Your leadership on this fundamental and urgent fire safety standard is a powerful statement of responsibility, vision and stewardship, toward the people you serve and all the residents of Los Angeles. As you know, we have been working closely with City staff on a method to protect residents in Fire Hazard Severity Zones throughout the City of Los Angeles. We trust that you will move forward with a proposed ordinance now, while the reality of fire risks is so evident.

If you have any questions, please let us know. We look forward to working with you to keep Los Angeles safe throughout this year and into the future.

Regards,

Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee, David Kersh

Churches in Action, Bishop Juan Carlos Mendez

CLUE, Reverend Jim Conn

Da'at Torah, Rabbi Israel Barouk

Ecuadorian and Guatemalan Chamber of Commerce, Gloria Colazo

Los Angeles Civil Rights Association, Pastor Eddie Jones

Southern California Building Trades Council, Ron Miller

Southern California Hispanic Chamber, Teressa Barahona

The Soldiers Project, Michael McDowell

***California Black Chamber**, Aubry Stone

Build with Strength, Los Angeles (Supporters)

Asian Americans in Commercial Real Estate (AACRE), Aden Kun, Founder

Bethel AME Church, Reverend Bobbie Lee Anderson

Los Angeles Housing Partnership, David Grunwald

Los Angeles Shmira Patrol

Los Angeles Urban League

Row Church, Pastor Cue Jn Marie

Grant AME Church, Pastor Michael Eagle

Tarzana Property Owners Association, David R. Garfinkle, President

*Mr. Aubry Stone, and the Black Chamber signed on to this letter supporting this effort prior to his passing.

cc Chairman Harris-Dawson
 Councilman Price
 Councilman Cedillo
 Council President Wesson

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:17 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Applauds LA City Council
Ensuring Safer Building 12.3.19

BUILD WITH STRENGTH

A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

12.03.2019

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

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Build with Strength Applauds Los Angeles City Council for Ensuring Safer Buildings

Unanimous 4-0 vote moves "Building a Safer Los Angeles" ordinance forward

Los Angeles, California —Today, Councilmembers Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Bob Blumenfield led the Public Land Use and Management (PLUM) Committee to take the next step in passing an ordinance that would enact safer building practices. Blumenfield, alongside Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, a co-sponsor of the ordinance, announced the initial release of the Motion in June.

A number of Build with Strength coalition members in Los Angeles testified in support of the ordinance, including The Los Angeles Urban League, The Los Angeles Building Trades Council, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Southern California, The California Conference of Carpenters, Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County and the National Latino Evangelical Coalition.

"It was an honor to stand alongside members of Build with Strength and the local Los Angeles community at today's meeting with the Council," said Michael Lawson, CEO of the Los Angeles Urban League. "The communities that we represent are at risk for fire and disaster, so passing this ordinance would have a tremendously positive impact on their well-being and safety. I trust and hope that the City Council will do what is right and see this ordinance to its passage."

There are already measures in the city of Los Angeles that address increased fire risk in densely populated communities through the City's Building Code and Fire District 1. This code dictates that developers and construction crews use enhanced fire protections and fire-resistant materials during the building process. However, Fire District 1 only covers a small percentage of the City.

Blumenfield's motion specifically instructs the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) to prepare and present an ordinance to expand Fire District 1 to include all areas within the City covered by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Very High Fire Severity Zone and City's High Wind Velocity Zone as well as high density population centers with a population density of at least 5,000 residents per square mile. It also instructs LAFD and LADBS to:

- Update Fire District 1 to reflect population growth based on the U.S. Census;

- Present an ordinance to require a Fire Protection Plan, as allowed under Chapter 33 of the Los Angeles Fire Code, for all new and significantly altered projects over 150,000 square feet and/or 100,000 square feet if the building is over 30' in height;
- And make recommendations to ensure proper enforcement.

“Following another series of fires in the Los Angeles area this year, we set out to work within the community in support of taking a step forward to address public safety. Councilmember Blumenfield’s ordinance is a significant step in the right direction and we are encouraged by its movement for all residents,” said Walter Contreras, Community Engagement Coordinator for Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County.

Build with Strength works with communities, lawmakers, and industry employees to advocate for safer, sustainable building materials. Strengthening local and national building codes is among the organization’s top priorities.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com

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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:19 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Applauds LA City Council
Motion Strengthen Building Codes 6.5.19



6.5.2019

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

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202-253-6401

Build with Strength Applauds Los Angeles City Councilmembers in Motion to Strengthen Building Codes

Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez Address Fire Crisis Prevention Head On

Los Angeles, CA – On Wednesday, Los Angeles City Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, along with Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez, introduced “Building a Safer Los Angeles,” a motion to strengthen fire safety standards. On the heels of devastating fires throughout the area in recent years, the motion calls upon the City to “ensure that our growing multifamily housing stock is being constructed safely with skilled labor and is resilient in the face of growing threats from wildfires and other natural disasters.”

“The impact of Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez’s motion on fire prevention cannot be overstated,” says Kevin Lawlor, spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association. The coalition consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing. “By ensuring that new mid- to high-rise construction can’t be built with stick framing in high-risk areas, this measure will make the entire city safer,” Lawlor said.

The motion calls for the expansion of Fire District No. 1, an existing planning and zoning overlay with provisions prohibiting certain types of construction, such as combustible framing. According to the motion, “it is time to revisit this tool and expand its reach to ensure that it captures the changing and growing regional centers and neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles.”

Under the measure, Fire District No. 1 would expand to include three pre-defined areas: very high fire severity zones, high wind velocity areas, and areas with a population density of more than 5,000 persons per square mile, updated to reflect population growth every ten years according to the latest census results.

A study released by Urvashi Kaul, Consultant and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia University, addresses the economic impact of wood-framed residential fires, particularly multi-family wood-framed structures. One of the two fires cited in the study, a 2014 blaze at the 1.3 million square foot Da Vinci apartment complex in Los Angeles, required 250 firefighters to extinguish and shut down the northbound 101 highway for several hours. At least four surrounding buildings were damaged by the fire, including some owned or leased by the City Government.

"Los Angeles could lose \$22.6 billion in wood-framed residential fire losses over the next fifteen years," Professor Kaul estimates. While property damage accounts for roughly \$20.5 billion of this figure, potential city expenditures could amount to \$132.5 million, with \$70.1 million going to police, fire, and sanitation departments, and another \$62.4 million of indirect costs, such as remediation, insurance, and planning.

Build with Strength Los Angeles points to the devastating economic and human impact as reason for urgency in passing the ordinance to update the community's building codes.

"Every person in the city has felt the economic and human impact of recent wildfires," says Lawlor. "Each day this ordinance remains in City Council is another day that leaves residents and families without its protections. Los Angeles needs action now."

Build with Strength Los Angeles includes a number of California organizations from a wide range of communities, including Asian Americans in Commercial Real Estate, the California Black Chamber of Commerce, Churches in Action, Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice, Kol Tikvah, the Los Angeles Civil Rights Association, the Los Angeles Housing Partnership, the Los Angeles Shmira Civil Safety Patrol, the Los Angeles Urban League, The Soldiers Project, the Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce, and the Southern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com

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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:23 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_David Kersh Statement at PLUM Committee Hearing 12.3.19

David Kersh – Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee Hearing,
December 3, 2019

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today about the importance of this motion. My name is David Kersh, representing the Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee. As an organization we are committed to quality development as well as quality construction jobs here in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

We support this motion in an overall effort to create safer multi-family buildings for city residents as well as to create decent well-paying jobs for workers in the construction field. Building with non-combustible materials, fire treated lumber, steel and concrete, will further enhance the safety on construction sites and in the final product of constructing more affordable housing for the expanding population here in Los Angeles. As Los Angeles continues to grow, we need to create more multi-family buildings that offer a safe and resilient home for families.

Thank you Councilman Blumenfield and Chairman Harris-Dawson for recognizing the need for protecting families as well as providing good jobs for our skilled labor force.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:25 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_de la Torre Statement
PLUM Committee Hearing12.3.19

Oscar de la Torre - Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee Hearing, December 3, 2019

My name is Oscar de la Torre and I am the founder and executive director of *Pico Youth & Family Center*, as well as head of the Latino School Board Association.

I am here today as a representative and activist from an underserved community in Los Angeles that knows all too well what happens when multi-family affordable housing isn't built safely.

Instead of neglecting vulnerable communities by using materials that put them at risk, *Building a Safer Los Angeles* ensures that as we look to find ways to protect our communities from the year-round risk of fire, that we do it by putting in place regulations that allow for construction of resilient structures and fire safety regulations that will be a model in our state for safety.

Pico Youth and Family Center serves youth and families from very densely populated areas of Los Angeles and the surrounding communities, many of whom live in affordable housing. There is great need in my community, and so many others around the city, for construction standards that will protect communities of color, and provide safe and resilient, affordable housing. This motion is a first step to support the needs of at-risk communities who often deal with the repercussions of living in buildings whose construction codes haven't evolved with the times. But the issue here isn't just construction. We all know that building homes and apartments in this city won't stop. However, what we build, and the materials we build with, is the most important issue. We live in a city and state that now has a 12-month fire season, it's time that the materials we build with reflect that reality.

We believe that the city needs to maintain its commitment to building safe affordable housing, and this motion will encourage that by creating resilient housing that is going to withstand the potential dangers of fire. Dangers that impact families that in many cases *don't* have insurance. Unlike the wealthier suburban communities.

It is for these reasons, and for others that those who spoke before me have mentioned, that I ask this committee to support *Building a Safer Los Angeles*.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:27 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Dodge Data Analytics
Affordability of Non-Combustible Construction LA

This document is intended to show the affordability of non-combustible construction in the Los Angeles mid-rise, multifamily, and commercial markets. The data comes from:

Dodge Data & Analytics

- A technology-driven, construction project data analytics and insight provider, Dodge tracks building projects awarded as they move through the different stages of planning, bidding, and construction in real time, creating statistical analysis of the construction industry with actual contract award numbers using real-life data. With more than half a million real projects tracked annually in North America, Dodge Data & Analytics is the most comprehensive and econometric model ensuring insight and forecasting confidence and consistency.
- **Average cost per sq. ft. for one- to seven-story buildings (all building types excluding parking garages) in Los Angeles (City and County) between 2013 and 2016, representing over 630 projects:**



RSMeans

- The world's leading provider of construction cost data, software, and services for all phases of the construction lifecycle, RSMeans data provides accurate and up-to-date cost information to help owners, developers, architects, engineers, contractors, and others carefully and precisely project and control the cost of both new building construction and renovation projects.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:29 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Larry Williams Statement at PLUM Committee Hearing 12.3.19

Larry Williams – Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee Hearing,
December 3, 2019

Good afternoon Chairman and members. My name is Larry Williams, Executive Director, of the Steel Framing Industry Association. My association has many members in the City of LA who have been deeply involved in the city's fabric and overall development.

Sometime after the 2014 Da Vinci fire that consumed the apartment project just a few blocks from here I was contacted by Councilman Blumenfield who was investigating ways to prevent the type of massive structure fire and resulting damage that caused between \$20 million and \$30 million in monetary damage to the Da Vinci complex and an additional \$50 million in damage to the main DWP building here in downtown, according to the Los Angeles Fire Department. The apartment complex's owner also suffered approximately \$100 million in lost potential revenue as a result of the fire, according to the news.

As you can tell there is a large 'community cost' to these types of fires. Including the shutting down of streets, freeways, the use of millions of gallons of water, water contamination, smoke/ash filling the local air, the displacement of residents, loss of commerce to nearby businesses as well as the risk of harm to our first responders and the residents they are helping to protect.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you about the importance of providing resilient multi-family housing to the residents of the City of Los Angeles.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:33 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Losing 22.6 Billion for LA Communities That's a Lot of Money to Burn_fact sheet

LOSING \$22.6 BILLION FOR LA COMMUNITIES? THAT'S A LOT OF MONEY TO BURN.

Changes in the 2006 model building code have enabled the use of combustible framing material in the construction of mid-rise residential buildings in Los Angeles County. Recent history in both Los Angeles and in dozens of cities across the state and nation suggests that such framing increases the risk of fires, which has an adverse economic impact, primarily borne by the local government, businesses and residents.



Fires in mid-rise residential buildings with combustible frames could have a negative impact of

\$22.6 BILLION OVER 15 YEARS

including \$17.14 billion in direct losses from property damage.



These fires could cost the County between

\$347.9 AND \$410 MILLION

in foregone tax revenues over 15 years.



On average, fire in a mid-rise residential building constructed using combustible framing material could cost the Los Angeles County a total of

\$141.81
IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

&

\$2.38
IN LOST TAX REVENUES,
PER SQUARE FOOT.



Potential impact the County may face in a single year could be

\$1.7 BILLION

including \$1.3 billion in direct property damage.



The County could lose

\$28.9 MILLION

in tax revenue
in one year.

Potential Economic Impact of Fires from Use of Combustible Material Frame Construction in Mid-Rise Residential Buildings in Los Angeles County, California, Urvashi Kaul, Consultant and Adjunct Assistant Professor, Columbia University, May 2018

Communication from Public

Name: Build A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:34 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Build A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Michael Lawson Statement at PLUM Committee Hearing 12.3.19

Michael Lawson – Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee Hearing,
December 3, 2019

Good afternoon Chairman Harris-Dawson and councilmembers. My name is Michael Lawson, President and CEO, of the Los Angeles Urban League.

Thank you for taking the time to allow me to discuss the importance of this critical motion, *Building a Safer Los Angeles*.

As you know the Urban League is committed to empowering communities and changing lives. We focus on social advocacy, entrepreneurial enrichment, and workforce development. It's in this vein that we support this motion for the constituency we represent as well as the diverse population in Los Angeles that is in need of safe, affordable housing and well-paying jobs.

We cannot be short-sighted in the construction of multi-family housing by building unsafely and not for the long-term just to meet the demand for housing. We need to build resilient and safe housing which has been shown to cost no more using non-combustible materials.

The Urban League is committed to economic self-reliance and advocating for issues, like this motion, which will benefit all our communities across the great City of Los Angeles.

Thank you for allowing me to voice our support for this common sense Motion.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:38 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Reverend Walter Contreras
Statement PLUM Committee Hearing 12.3.19

Reverend Walter Contreras - Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM)
Committee Hearing, December 3, 2019

Good afternoon. My name is Reverend Walter Contreras, and I am here on behalf of the National Association of Latino Evangelicals and Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles.

As a faith leader and community advocate, passing *Building a Safer Los Angeles* is deeply meaningful to my work and to the people I serve. As Vice President of the National Association of Latino Evangelicals, and in my capacity as Community Coordinator for Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles, I believe this motion is critical in ensuring that much needed low-income housing is built safely across the city.

In fact, NHSLA is currently working on a major low-income development in CD 8, a project we are incredibly proud of. But my concerns about this project is that it is in CD8, an area with high population density that could be at high risk for fire. I believe that this motion will not hinder construction of other projects like ours, rather, it would encourage the development of more safe and affordable housing in more areas across Los Angeles.

I know first-hand how expensive large construction projects can be, this motion is not about eliminating certain materials rather it is about creating safer, longer lasting construction that will have significant cost savings in the long run - with savings in costs to the community and to name a few.

Land is also at a premium throughout the state and so cities often look to build affordable housing in areas where fire danger is more likely. Therefore, it just makes sense to have the safest construction materials when building these large, multi-family buildings.

As you are likely aware, lower income housing comes with increased risks. Parents work longer hours and many times have 2 and 3 jobs, individual apartment units are often home to multiple generations and extended family, and these factors increase the risk of accidental fire and also pose challenges in the event of an emergency evacuation. It goes without saying that when you have a higher density of residents, the risk is greater as well as the number of people at risk increases.

As leaders in the community, we speak to you on behalf of so many, and ask that you, our elected city leaders, move forward with this essential motion and pass *Building a Safer Los Angeles*.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:40 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_Ron Miller Statement at PLUM Committee Hearing12.3.19

Ron Miller – Statement at Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee Hearing,
December 3, 2019

My name is Ron Miller and I stand here before you as executive secretary representing *the Building Trades and Construction Trades Council in Los Angeles and Orange Counties*. Building more safe and resilient multi-family mid-rise structures with skilled labor here in Los Angeles is of paramount importance especially during this time of homelessness and affordability.

We cannot forget about all the fires that regularly occur in Southern California. The motion introduced by Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriquez and seconded by Chairman Harris-Dawson offers an important first step in protecting residents who live in multi-family housing. Non-combustible building materials will help prevent the expansion of fires in those structures. Additionally, the skilled labor used in the construction will provide good paying jobs with benefits.

As I wrote in a recent editorial, this motion prioritizes safety which is also a good thing for skilled labor. Creating more jobs and safer construction for workers, families and the community should be the top priority for all of us.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you on behalf of all my local unions and the many members we represent.

Communication from Public

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Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Carpenters Contractors
CC_Support LA Fire Safety Ord. 6.7.19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2019

Contact: David Kersh

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Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee (C/CCC) ***Supports LA Fire Safety Ordinance***

Los Angeles, CA—The Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee (C/CCC) joins community leaders and Los Angeles City Councilmember Bob Blumenfield in supporting a new proposal to make Los Angeles safe and resilient as we face continued threats from wildfires and other disasters. The Ordinance “Building a Safer Los Angeles” aims at curbing urban and suburban housing fires in the City.

“Councilmember Blumenfield deserves to be commended for his leadership,” says David Kersh, Executive Director of the Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee (C/CCC), “and for authoring an ordinance that would dramatically improve the safety of city residents in the face of a deepening crisis of wildfires.”

The C/CCC, along with other industry stakeholders, is concerned about the future of Los Angeles and the need for sensible regulations that will encourage safe construction standards with reliable, trained labor. Mr. Kersh has been an active member of Build with Strength Los Angeles, a coalition of construction industry and community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

Councilmember Blumenfield’s proposed ordinance would expand Fire District 1, and would restrict certain combustible types of construction in the most dangerous areas of our community. The motion proposes that “it is time to revisit this tool and expand its reach to ensure that it captures the changing and growing regional centers and neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles.”

Mr. Kersh, a longtime member of the construction industry, points to the expansion of multi-unit residential construction and the need to address our housing crisis as critical factors in the Committee’s endorsement of the Ordinance.

“The timeliness of this issue could not be more striking,” says Kersh. “We are building the future now, and we have to make sure we get it right.”

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The Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee (C/CCC) is a non-profit watchdog organization established pursuant to the Federal Labor Management Cooperation Act of 1978. The C/CCC is committed to quality development and quality construction jobs.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
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Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Churches in Action Press
Release_Stand Behind LA Fire Safety Ord. 6.13.19



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BISHOP JUAN CARLOS MENDEZ – FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

Churches in Action Stands Behind Newly-Proposed LA Fire Safety Ordinance

Bishop Juan Carlos Mendez applauds effort to protect the less fortunate in our community

Los Angeles, CA (June 13, 2019)—Churches in Action, a Christian community service organization founded by Bishop Juan Carlos Mendez, endorsed a new Los Angeles ordinance aiming to increase fire safety standards in residential, multi-unit construction. The ordinance, introduced by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez and titled “Building a Safer Los Angeles”, is a direct response to increased fire incidents across the county. Churches in Action focuses its advocacy on the humanitarian elements of community service, disaster relief, and environmental education in the South California area as well as internationally.

“Our community in Los Angeles and all across California has suffered due to these incredibly devastating fires, and I stand with all those who have lost loved ones or their homes to the flames,” says Bishop Mendez, a nationally-recognized humanitarian who has worked with the likes of Mother Theresa.

“As a faith leader in a city facing increasing threats of natural disasters, I urge our elected leaders to join Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez and make prevention and mitigation essential parts of fire safety.” Bishop Mendez is also a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, which consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

The ordinance focuses specifically on limiting the ways flammable and combustible materials can be utilized in new construction. According to Councilmember Blumenfield, it is the city’s responsibility to “ensure that our growing multi-family housing stock is being constructed safely with skilled labor, and is resilient in the face of growing threats from wildfires and other natural disasters.”

The aforementioned growing multi-family housing stock refers to Los Angeles’s recent population surge, and the ever-increasing housing necessary to accommodate a growing population. A recent study outlining population growth in relation to fire damage and loss suggests that without appropriate safety measures, Los Angeles could face catastrophic fiscal loss. The study, released by Columbia University’s Urvashi Kaul, estimates fires could cost the city \$22 billion by the year 2023 if the threat remains unaddressed.

Churches in Action has worked with Build with Strength and other groups like the Los Angeles Civil Rights Association, the State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the California Black Chamber and others to promote fire safety for business owners, and residents in Southern California. The prevalence of fires last year was alarming and now the LA City Council has the opportunity to help prevent other tragedies in the future.

“As wildfires become a more regular part of our reality, we must do everything in our power to protect the safety of our neighbors and first responders,” says Bishop Mendez. “It is now, and always will be, our moral and ethical responsibility to protect and advocate for society’s most vulnerable.”

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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
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Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_CLUE Support Letter_Build with Strength LA 8.8.17



Clergy & Laity United
for Economic Justice

Board of Directors

Rev. Norman Copeland
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So Cal AME Church

Robert A. Branch
SEIU-USWW/Security Division

Rabbi Dr. Aryeh Cohen
Professor, American Jewish
University

Rev. Jim Conn (Ret.), **Dev't**
United Methodist Church

Rabbi Stephen Einstein
Founding Rabbi Emeritus,
Congregation B'nai Tzedek

The Rev. Francisco Garcia
Treasurer
Rector, Holy Faith Episcopal
Church, Inglewood

Father Mike Gutierrez
St. John the Baptist Catholic
Church, Baldwin Park

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Fairview Community Church,
Costa Mesa

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Church, North Hollywood

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Disney Worker, UNITE-HERE

Rev. William Smart
Vice Chair, Secretary
SCLC of Greater Los Angeles

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Against the Stream Buddhist
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Church (ret.)

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Gabriella Rosco
Rev. Andy Schwiebert
Guillermo Torres

August 8, 2017

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember, Third District
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring St. #415
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) is excited to join a coalition representing community-based organizations, businesses, unions and other organizations throughout Los Angeles, to ask Los Angeles City Council to pass an ordinance to move our city toward a safer and more sustainable standard for low-rise building developments in Los Angeles.

We support the efforts of Councilmember Bob Blumenfield to ensure the safety and reliability of multi-family residences in Los Angeles. Requiring development that utilizes the safest and most reliable processes in the construction of multi-family housing is essential for the future and health of our city. We hope that new developments will meet or exceed existing building codes, and that the City of Los Angeles will encourage the use of non-combustible materials, which will heavily reduce the risks associated with fires and earthquakes; major concerns for our city.

These concerns are compounded by high density in our city's buildings, which increases concerns for safety and results in a need for safer standards to address them. The benefits of safer standards are important to all communities, and communities at higher risk, such as low and moderate income neighborhoods and small and medium size businesses that often occupy many mixed use low-rise developments, need the city to respond to these real safety risks.

With continuous, positive growth taking place across Los Angeles, new regulations that protect and embrace our diverse communities living and working throughout the city will provide broad and long-term benefits to the many collaborative interests involved in these developments. The critical safety measures of the Build with Strength effort do not only apply to residents, but also impact workers involved in the associated development, management and emergency response programs.

We encourage Councilmember Blumenfield and his fellow council members to move forward aggressively to support these efforts and to support the Build with Strength - Los Angeles campaign to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles.

Blessings,

Rabbi Jonathan Klein
Executive Director

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:49 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_CLUE_Endorses-LA-Fire-Safety-Measure 6.26.19



Clergy & Laity United For Economic Justice

Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice Endorses LA Fire Safety Measure

City Council ordinance, "Building a Safer Los Angeles," will tighten fire codes in multi-unit, residential construction

Los Angeles, CA (June 26, 2019)—This week, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) announced its support for City Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez's recently-proposed LA fire safety ordinance, "Building a Safer Los Angeles." CLUE is an organization that brings together clergy and leaders of all faiths alongside workers, immigrants and low-income families in the cause of a just economy that works for all and protects those most vulnerable.

"Over the last decade, as cost of living rises, Los Angeles has seen a rapid increase in socio-economically disadvantaged populations," says Reverend Jim Conn, Chair of the Board of CLUE. "Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez's proposal would help to ensure that the communities we serve can live and work without the threat of poor and unsafe construction."

CLUE is also a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, which consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation's building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

The proposed ordinance seeks to prioritize the mitigation and prevention of residential fires by restricting the use of flammable materials in new construction projects. The ordinance would also expand zones flagged as particularly susceptible to fires. Sponsored by Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez, the ordinance emphasizes the urgency to prioritize public safety in new construction, and suggests this urgency is "even more so when a natural disaster affects our city such as the recent wildfires."

Los Angeles's recent population uptick coupled with its recent fires has cast a shadow over the future of residential fire safety. It has also burdened LA taxpayers and according to one study, could develop into an economic disaster. The study authored by assistant adjunct professor Urvashi Kaul of Columbia University estimates Los Angeles's losses as a direct result of fire damages to be \$22 billion by 2023.

"We can't afford to wait any longer," says Reverend Conn. "Every minute we waste could be a future life lost, a future community center destroyed, a future livelihood ruined. The fires were a wakeup call. It's time to stand up, and to raise our voices, and to do it now."

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:50 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Coalition Letter BWS 2.24.2020

February 24th, 2020

Councilmember Monica Rodriguez
Los Angeles City Hall, Room 455
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Rodriguez,

As community leaders in Los Angeles, we are deeply concerned about the need for safe, affordable housing in our city. We recently worked very hard to see that the proposed ordinance, *Building a Safer Los Angeles*, introduced by Councilman Blumenfield and yourself, was approved by the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) committee on December 3rd. Now is the time to enact fire safety standards that will protect all citizens, including those living in affordable housing, from the devastating threat of year-round fires.

We encourage you to hear the motion in the Public Safety Committee quickly, approve it, and move to start the process of developing the proposed ordinance. We cannot wait for another fire season, or for another disaster to befall the most vulnerable members of our community.

We are asking the Department of Building and Safety and the Fire Department to work swiftly to move this ordinance along. Much has been done to strengthen the Municipal and Building code for single family homes, particularly in high risk hillside areas. But more must be done for the rest of our city to protect the growing number of new multi-family structures across our city.

Building a Safer Los Angeles calls for:

- Updating Fire District 1 to reflect population growth based on the U.S. Census, to include all areas within the city covered by the existing Very High Fire Severity Zone and the High Wind Velocity Zone as well as high density population centers with a population density of at least 5,000 residents per square mile.
- Presenting an ordinance to require a Fire Protection Plan, as allowed under Chapter 33 of the Los Angeles Fire Code, for all new and significantly altered projects over 150,000 square feet and/or 100,000 square feet if the building is over 30' in height;
- And making recommendations to ensure proper enforcement, such as by utilizing the most fire-resistant materials in the construction process.

As it stands today, Fire District 1 only covers a small percentage of the city, namely Downtown Los Angeles and parts of Hollywood, to mitigate the risk of fire in its population centers. This overlay is enabling safer construction today, but only in that area. Considering the very imminent risk of continuous fires throughout the region, the expansion of Fire District 1 will offer critical protections that all of our residents deserve.

We should state unequivocally, this is not about eliminating one product, or favoring one or more industry over another – this is about fire safety. *Building a Safer Los Angeles* has the support of

organizations and leaders across all demographics because it is undeniably the right thing to do. This measure enhances the safety of residents, construction workers, first responders and firefighters and also increases the durability and long-term sustainability of multi-family developments.

Our hope and expectation is that the Public Safety Committee and all relevant agencies will work expeditiously to enact the tenets of the motion to help protect the future of our great city and residents.

Sincerely,

Pastor William Smart, Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Gloria Colazo, Ecuadorian and El Salvadoran Chambers of Commerce, St. Jude's Health Center

Rabbi Jonathan Klein, HOPE (Helping Others Prosper Economically)

Reverend Walter Contreras, National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NALEC)

Oscar De La Torres, Pico Youth & Family Center

Pastor Thembekila Smart, Christ Liberation Ministries



Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:51 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Gloria Colazo_St. Jude Health Centers_El Salvador Chamber 6.10.19



Gloria Colazo, St. Jude Health Centers and El Salvador Chamber of Commerce Leader, Applauds New Fire Safety Measure

Colazo says city ordinance is a critical step in protecting at-risk communities

Los Angeles, CA (June 10, 2019)— Gloria Colazo, Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors, St. Jude Health Centers and International Director - Business Associations for the El Salvador Chamber of Commerce, endorses a new fire safety ordinance introduced by Council members Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez. The Ordinance titled; “Building a Safer Los Angeles” aims at addressing the up-tick in fires across the county by strengthening building codes to restrict the use of combustible materials.

“This ordinance is going to make a big difference in the lives of those in the city of Los Angeles, particularly those in at-risk communities,” said Gloria Colazo. “Residents can rest assured that their safety is a top priority thanks to the work of Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez.”

Colazo is also a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, which consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

In addition to banning the use of combustible materials in new construction, Blumenfield and Rodriguez’s ordinance seeks to expand Fire District 1. According to the ordinance, “it is time to revisit this tool and expand its reach to ensure that it captures the changing and growing regional centers and neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles.”

Housing fires in Los Angeles have been on the rise in recent years, and without addressing building codes, the city could not only leave residents in harm’s way, but hemorrhage city resources and funds. According to a study by Urvashi Kaul, Consultant and Adjunct Professor at Columbia University, L.A. could lose upwards of \$22.6 billion to residential fires.

Gloria Colazo couldn’t stress the importance and timeliness of the ordinance enough. “The people of Los Angeles have a right to feel safe in their homes and in their communities. The sooner the city takes action, the better. Introducing this ordinance is a critical first step.”

###

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:52 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_HOPE-Release_Support LA Fire Safety 6.25.19

HOPE - Helping Others Prosper Economically

Local Non-Profit HOPE Announces Support for Los Angeles Fire Safety Ordinance

Organization's Co-Founder Rabbi Jonathan Klein says measure is critical to city

Los Angeles, CA (June 25, 2019)—A recently introduced ordinance in Los Angeles is garnering a large array of support from community leaders for its proactive approach to fire safety and lax building codes. The measure, titled “Building a Safer Los Angeles,” was introduced by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez.

Rabbi Jonathan Klein, a community leader representing Helping Others Prosper Economically (HOPE), vocalized his support for the measure. “We’ve seen the Los Angeles wildfire problem grow and become increasingly out of hand—we simply cannot afford to wait to take action. Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez have taken a great first step toward bolstering the safety of our community.”

Helping Others Prosper Economically (HOPE) is a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, which consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

Blumenfield and Rodriguez’s ordinance is a twofold plan—banning the use of combustible materials in new construction and expanding Fire District 1. According to the motion, “it is time to revisit this tool and expand its reach to ensure that it captures the changing and growing regional centers and neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles.”

The measure was informed by a recent study authored by Columbia University Adjunct Professor Urvashi Kaul. The study found that the city of Los Angeles is at risk of losing \$22.6 billion to residential fires if the use of combustible materials and building codes remain unaddressed.

Rabbi Klein reiterated his support for the measure. “I can’t overstate how important this measure is. ‘Building a Safer Los Angeles’ is going to do wonders to ensure that the city’s residents feel much safer in their homes, their places of work and worship. This ordinance also provides growth and economic opportunity for residents and workers of our city- it’s a win-win for everybody.”

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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:54 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Jewish Community Leaders
Support Fire Safety_Da'At Torah_6.14.19



Da'At Torah Jewish Education Center of Los Angeles

Los Angeles City Ordinance Bolstering Building Codes Backed by Jewish Community Leaders

Rabbi Israel Barouk Joins other community organizations in support of recent fire safety measure

Los Angeles, CA (June 15, 2019)—A recent ordinance introduced by Los Angeles Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez has garnered support from a multitude of community organizations across the county. The measure seeks to enact stricter building codes in new construction to curb the city's growing residential fire problem.

Rabbi Israel Barouk of Da'at Torah Jewish Education Center of Los Angeles praised the Councilmembers' initiative, saying, "It's a relief to know the safety of Los Angeles residents is being made a priority. With fires on the rise, the city needs to act immediately. The members of our community should feel safe at home, at synagogue, and all throughout LA."

The new ordinance, titled "Building a Safer Los Angeles", is a direct action response to the recent fires we have seen in our region of California.

Rabbi Barouk is a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, which consists of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation's building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

The ordinance introduced by Blumenfield and Rodriguez has two primary goals—banning the use of combustible materials in construction and expanding Fire District 1. According to the motion, "it is time to revisit this tool and expand its reach to ensure that it captures the changing and growing regional centers and neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles."

With housing fires on the rise throughout the county, building codes must be addressed to prevent further harm to residents as well as the severe economic damage that will ensue. According to a study by Urvashi Kaul, Adjunct Professor at Columbia University, Los Angeles stands to lose more than \$22.6 billion to residential fires.

Rabbi Barouk and Da'at Torah Jewish Education Center are joined in the push for safer buildings and a safer city by Build with Strength Coalition members such as Temple Kol Tikvah, the California Black Chamber, the Los Angeles Civil Rights Association and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE), among others.

"This ordinance is a great start, and I urge the Los Angeles City Council to act quickly to move the measure forward. It's what LA residents deserve," said Rabbi Barouk.

###

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:56 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Kol Tikvah Support Letter_Build with Strength LA 9.11.17

Rabbi
Jonathan Hanish

September 11, 2017

Associate Rabbi and
Religious School Director
Rabbi Rebecca Hoffman

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember, District 3
City Hall
200 N. Spring St. #415
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Cantor
Noa Shaashua

Executive Director
Tiffany Kosloy

Early Childhood Center Director
Ana Yaghoobia

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

Business Manager
Lauren Waterman

Thank you for your help with Shabbat in the Park. You have shown support for all six years that this program has run. It is always an honor to work with you and your office on this event and to have you greet the 1000+ community members that come together to celebrate Shabbat. You are a truly wonderful community leader.

Experiential
Education Coordinator
Samantha Duenas

Of course, the responsibility of community leaders is multi-faceted. I can only hope for a society where our biggest concern is the organization of a fun and spiritual Shabbat. As Senior Rabbi of Temple Kol Tikvah in Woodland Hills, I am reaching out to support our City Council in moving toward a safer and more sustainable standard for low-rise building developments in Los Angeles.

Administrative Assistant
Debbie Shayer

President
Carol Fischer

By requiring developments to utilize the most reliable and safest materials in the construction process, leaders of Los Angeles are taking a powerful and important step toward the health and sustainability of our city and our communities. It's important that the City of Los Angeles encourages the use of non-combustible materials which heavily reduces the risks associated with fires and earthquakes, and that new developments meet or exceed the existing building codes.

Board of Trustees
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Eran Peery
Glenn Rabney
Rachel Rapport

With dense populations in such buildings, the risks to safety are increased, and I am concerned about the safety of residents, and encourage elected leaders to address and manage those concerns and apply stricter standards of safety.

I strongly encourage you and your fellow councilmembers to move forward with these efforts and support the efforts of Build with Strength - Los Angeles to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Jonathan Hanish



20400 Ventura Boulevard, Woodland Hills, California 91364
818 348 0670 Fax 818 348 1584 www.koltikvah.org
A Reform Congregation Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 05:58 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_LA County Economic Impact Study Exposes Dangers of Wood 7.24.18

LA County Economic Impact Study Exposes Dangers of Wood-Framed Construction



7.24.2018

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

klawlor@buildwithstrength.com

202-253-6402

LA County Economic Impact Study Exposes Dangers of Wood-Framed Construction

Disadvantaged Communities will be Hardest Hit by Rising Costs to Fight Fires

Los Angeles, California—An economic impact [study](#) submitted by Urvashi Kaul, Consultant and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia University, seeks to address the issue of wood-framed residential fires, particularly multi-family wood-framed structures. By examining two California fires, Kaul utilized an economic impact analysis of losses incurred by citizens and local governments to determine the potential repercussions of similar fires over the next fifteen years. Focusing exclusively on the County of Los Angeles as a model, the study suggests that under current building codes, the area could be facing billions of dollars in losses over the coming years due to wood-framed construction fires.

“Los Angeles could lose \$22.6 billion in wood-framed residential fire losses over the next 15 years,” Kaul estimates. The study takes into account the rapidly-expanding need for affordable housing in Los Angeles, which includes more mid-rise residential buildings in close proximity.

Some organizations argue that framing these structures with combustible materials such as wood sets the stage for major fire losses.

“Low and moderate-income communities will be the first to suffer, as they include residents that cannot afford insurance, that if they lose everything, are the least likely to bounce back, and will put a further strain on the public health and welfare systems in their communities,” says Gloria Colazo, Regional Director of the Southern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (SCHCC). SCHCC is a member of Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing.

One of the cases cited in the study examines a 2011 fire at a wood-framed apartment complex in Carson, a suburb city in Los Angeles County. The fire, which destroyed five buildings and damaged six more, wound up displacing 139 people and forced the evacuation of senior citizens from two nearby buildings. A nearby mobile home park was also evacuated, and thirty units

were either damaged or destroyed.

The study also points to the 2014 Los Angeles fire at the Da Vinci apartments, where four surrounding buildings were damaged, including the Los Angeles County Department of Health and the Los Angeles Department of Aging. Kaul sees these examples as indicative of the risks associated with combustible residential framing.

National and local building codes have been relaxed considerably over recent years, which has led to an increase in wood-framed residential construction. Given the findings of this recent cost study, Colazo suggests restricting the use of combustible materials in residential framing.

“The continued use of combustible wood framing places not only our buildings and their residents at risk, but entire neighborhoods, and even the city of Los Angeles itself,” says Colazo. “Our families, friends, and neighbors deserve safer buildings than this. These fires burn so quickly and at such great temperatures that they spread within minutes. And unfortunately, they often end up displacing our most vulnerable citizens, sometimes permanently.”

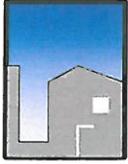
Build with Strength works with communities, lawmakers, and industry employees to advocate for safer, sustainable building materials. Strengthening local and national building codes is among the organization’s top priorities.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com

###

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:00 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_LA Housing Project_Support
Letter 12.4.17



Los
Angeles
Housing
Partnership

December 4, 2017
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Council member, Third District
City Hall
200 N. Spring St. #415
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

Los Angeles Housing Partnership is proud to stand with the coalition of community groups, labor unions, and small businesses encouraging the Los Angeles City Council and other elected officials to enact safer, more sustainable standards for low-rise building developments throughout our city.

Safer building standards impact all communities, yet low and moderate-income residents and small and medium-sized businesses most often occupy mixed-use low-rise developments, and are thus most affected by these policies. What's more, the safety measures of the Build with Strength effort do not only apply to residents, but also impact workers involved in the development, management and emergency response programs. Requiring the safest and most reliable processes in the construction of multi-family housing is essential for the security, health, and economic future of our city.

Los Angeles is facing a housing crisis amidst a projected population boom. This is a challenge for local policymakers, but it is also an opportunity to model socially and environmentally-conscious development. We hope that new developments will meet or exceed existing building codes, and especially that the City of Los Angeles will encourage the use of non-combustible materials. Fires and earthquakes are a major risk, and only compounded by the city's density, emphasizing the need to focus on safety for the future.

We urge Councilmember Blumenfield and his fellow council members to support the Build with Strength campaign to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles. Sustainable development is as much about people as it is about infrastructure, and the City Council has a chance to invest in true sustainable development by ensuring safe, affordable places to live and work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Grunwald'.

David Grunwald
President and CEO
Los Angeles Housing Partnership

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:01 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_LA-10.18.17_ New Study
Concrete Cheaper Than Wood In Building Insurance Costs LA



10.18.2017

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

klawlor@buildwithstrength.com

202-253-6402

New Study: Concrete Cheaper Than Wood in Building Insurance Costs in Los Angeles, California

Findings Suggest Differential to Grow Over the Next Few Years, As Concerns with Fire in Wood-Framed Buildings Increase

Silver Spring, MD – A new study by Dr. Pieter VanderWerf and Nicholas Haidari of Boston College entitled “[Survey of Insurance Costs for Multifamily Buildings Constructed with Wood-frame and Concrete](#)” found building insurance rates will be lower for midrise apartment buildings constructed with concrete instead of wood-frame. This result appears to hold for both builder’s risk and commercial property insurance and across a wide range of regions of the United States.

The objective of the study, underwritten by the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA), was to collect insurance premium quotes for builder’s risk insurance (during construction) and commercial property insurance (during occupancy) for a reference building built using combustible construction (wood-frame) and non-combustible construction (concrete). The five reference cities include Edgewater, NJ; Towson, MD; Orlando, FL; Dallas, TX; and Los Angeles, CA.

In Los Angeles, California, the results found, on average, builder’s risk insurance savings of 38.8 percent and commercial property insurance savings of 35.3 percent.

“This study validates what has long been the assumption when it comes to the hidden costs of certain types of buildings,” said Kevin Lawlor, a spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the NRMCA consisting of fire service professionals, engineers, architects, and industry experts committed to stronger building codes. “At a time when multifamily residential building fires are a seemingly common occurrence, concrete’s durability in the face of such threats has resulted in a marked difference in terms of insurance costs.”

Over the last several months, there have been a number of fires in multifamily, residential complexes constructed from wood – most notably in [Lakewood, NJ](#); [Weymouth, MA](#); [Haverhill, MA](#); [Waltham, MA](#); [Charlotte, NC](#); [Warner Robins, GA](#); [Midvale, UT](#); [Oakland, CA](#); [Dorchester, MA](#); [Lawrence, MA](#); [East Hollywood, CA](#); [Lowell, MA](#); [Waterbury, CT](#); [Emeryville, CA](#); [St. Petersburg, FL](#); [Arlington, VA](#); [College Park, MD](#); [Overland Park, KS](#); [Raleigh, NC](#); and [Maplewood, NJ](#). There have been dozens over the last few years.

“Concrete buildings cost less to insure because they’re not going to combust, and they’re less prone to degradation over the lifespan of the structure,” continued Lawlor. “It’s only logical that insurance rates would reflect that durability.”

While the extent of the insurance savings for a concrete building varied widely for builder’s risk insurance quotes, it was within the range of 22-72% for all regions. For commercial property insurance, the quoted savings were within the range of 14-65%.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com.

###

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles

Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:03 PM

Council File No: 19-0603

Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_LA-cost-comparison-9.17.2019

FIRE SAFETY DOESN'T HAVE TO COME AT A PRICE FOR L.A. COMMUNITIES.

Two analyses show costs of using non-combustible building materials either on par or less than wood.

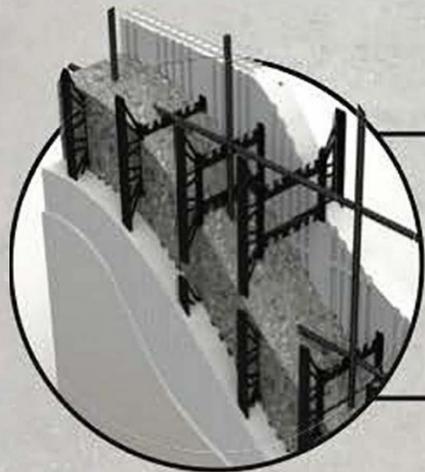
Using non-combustible materials has been proven to save lives. But too many communities have been relying on wood construction because they believe it saves money for multi-family buildings. Analyses using *Dodge Data & Analytics (DDA)* and *RS Means* demonstrate the affordability of non-combustible construction in L.A. is virtually the same as building with wood. The results mean local construction and developers thrive, while residents and businesses stay protected.

Analysis #1: HISTORICAL COSTS

A comprehensive analysis using *DDA* data for 1-7 story buildings built in Los Angeles from 2014-2019 2nd Quarter (representing 826 projects). The takeaway? Non-combustible buildings (concrete and masonry) cost 4.7% less to build than combustible (wood) buildings.*

Buildings built with non-combustible construction

Buildings built with wood construction



COST DIFFERENCE
OF
↓ 4.7%



Comprehensive concrete costs:
\$147.74/sf

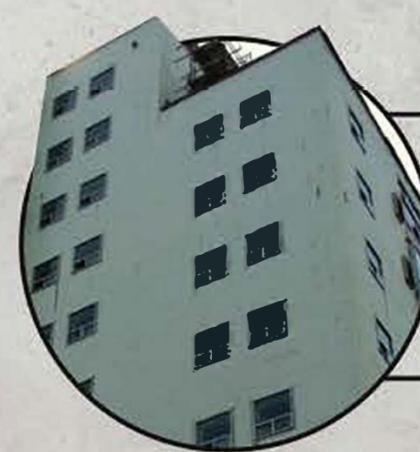
Comprehensive wood costs:
\$155.11/sf

Analysis #2: ESTIMATED COSTS

A comprehensive cost estimate using *RS Means* for a typical four-story, 100,000 square-foot apartment building located in Los Angeles. The building consists of 92 apartments, 60 one-bedroom apartments, and 32 two-bedroom apartments. The analysis indicated that the costs for non-combustible construction (concrete) are less than combustible (wood) construction.**

Apartment built with non-combustible construction

Apartment built with wood construction



COST DIFFERENCE
OF
↓ 0.2%



Comprehensive concrete costs:
\$17,791,687

Comprehensive wood costs:
\$17,831,934

*With over half a million real projects tracked annually, *DDA* is the most comprehensive and economic model ensuring insight and forecasting confidence.

***RS Means* is the world's leading provider of construction cost data software and services to help owners, architects, engineers, and contractors precisely estimate the cost of new building construction.

We can afford to put the safety of L.A. residents first. Pass a citywide ordinance to build non-combustible construction. Learn more by visiting BuildwithStrength.com.

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:04 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_LADBS Response Final_12.15.17

BUILD WITH STRENGTH

A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

www.BuildWithStrength.com

December 15, 2017

John Popoch, Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Los Angeles City Council, Third District
200 N. Spring St., Room 415, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Popoch,

Cc; LADBS (Attendees – Joint Meeting)

Thank you for giving us the time and opportunity to respond to a review by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) of a draft ordinance that would address changes made to the building codes that have resulted in significantly larger and taller buildings constructed with combustible framing materials. As part of this response we have included a white paper titled 'Wood Roofs Are Dangerous', a city of Anaheim ordinance with building standard changes as well as a letter that discusses those changes due to the local conditions.

We appreciate the review by the LADBS and have found some points of agreement on a few specific issues. However, we strongly disagree with assertions throughout their comments that "There is no justification under local geologic, climatic, or topographical condition" to support a change in the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAUMC) to address the proliferation of exposed wood framing members that is currently permitted.

To the contrary, it is clear that there are certain characteristics present in Los Angeles that meet the tests of this requirement, and there is precedent for accepting these justifications for imposing limits on combustible construction materials in the recent past.

The changes or modifications to the 2016 California Building Standards Code (Title 24), as set forth in the proposed ordinance, are reasonable and necessary due to the following local conditions:

I. Climatic Conditions:

- A. The City of Los Angeles is located in a semi-arid Mediterranean-type climate which predisposes all fuels, including and perhaps most especially wood framing, to rapid ignition and spread of fire. Therefore, there exists a need for additional fire protection measures.
- B. The entire City of Los Angeles is located in an area which is subject to periodic wind conditions of extremely high velocity; the City is also subject to seasonal high temperatures and dry atmospheric conditions which often occur during times of those high-velocity winds. This combination of events creates an environment, which is conducive to rapidly spreading fires and thus justifies the additional protections identified in the proposed ordinance.

- C. Exposed combustible framing materials cause or contribute to serious fire hazards and to the rapid spread of fires when accompanied by high winds. Pieces of burning wooden framing materials become flying brands and are carried by the wind to other locations and thereby spread fire quickly.
- D. Further, control of such fires requires rapid response. Obstacles generated by a strong wind, such as fallen trees, street lights and utility poles, and the requirement to climb 75+ feet vertically up flights of stairs will greatly impact the response time to reach an incident scene. Additionally, Section 6, Figure 6-2 of ASCE 7 identifies a significant increase in the amount of wind force at 60 feet above the ground. Use of an aerial-type firefighting apparatus above this height would place rescue personnel at increased risk of injury. Fire Department equipment does not allow easy access to areas of buildings greater than 55 feet above the level of Fire Department vehicle access, not to mention buildings that use combustible framing materials that are 70 feet above the grade plane. These conditions create the need for built-in, on-site fire protection systems, as described in the proposed ordinance, to protect occupants and property until fire-fighting apparatus and personnel arrive on the scene.

These dry climatic conditions and winds contribute to the rapid spread of fires originating in high-density housing and create a need for increased levels of fire protection as described in the proposed ordinance.

II. Geologic Conditions

- A. The City of Los Angeles is located in a highly- active seismic area. There are earthquake faults that run along both the northeastern and southwestern boundaries of Los Angeles County. The San Andreas Fault/Mohave Section, which runs along the eastern boundary of the county, is described by the US Geological Survey and the Southern California Earthquake Center as overdue for a major eruption, which could trigger a magnitude 8.1 earthquake. This could be significantly more devastating than the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, which was a magnitude 6.7, and caused \$44 billion in damage and the death of 57 residents. In fact, a 2008 report by the US Geological Survey found that a hypothetical 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Southern California would kill 1,800, injure 50,000, and cause \$200 billion in damage.

Los Angeles also sits upon numerous other fault lines. The Whittier Fault runs through the center of Los Angeles before it intersects with the Raymond Fault which runs east to west through Eagle Rock and Hollywood. Santa Monica, Inglewood, Marina Del Ray and other Los Angeles communities sit on the Santa Monica area fault lines.

- B. Major earthquakes are accompanied by congested traffic flow and fires. During a major earthquake, fire department resources would be extremely taxed and the ability to respond to fires would be complicated and in some cases impossible.
- C. The viability of the public water system would be questionable at best after a major seismic event. This would leave tall buildings vulnerable to uncontrolled fires due to a lack of available water and an inability to pump sufficient quantities of any available water to floors above the 55-foot level.

As a consequence of these geological conditions, the additional protections identified in the proposed ordinance are necessary to provide additional protections when combustible framing materials are used in mid-rise apartments.

III. Topographical Conditions

- A. The climatic conditions described above are further accentuated by the topographical features of the hill and canyon areas in the eastern and northern areas of the city, portions of which have been designated as a "Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area". The "Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area" is especially susceptible to fires which may spread quickly from one structure to another due to lack of shrub/brush clearance requirements, and other fire protection requirements needed to provide reasonable levels of fire safety. In the "Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area", these conditions are further accentuated by steep canyons and draws, very steep road grades, and dense vegetation which impede responding personnel and equipment. In order to provide reasonable levels of fire safety in the "Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area", more restrictive fire suppression and control safeguards are necessary.

- B. Traffic and circulation congestion is already common throughout the City of Los Angeles, and is exacerbated by certain topographical features including the Hollywood Hills, Chalk Hills, Baldwin Hills, Rosecrans Hills, Verdugo Mountains, Simi Hills, and Foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, and another 13 other significant elevations in the County. This congestion often places at risk the fire department response time to fire occurrences, and makes it necessary to provide additional-fire protection systems to limit the exposure to death injury and property loss caused by fire, prior to the arrival of the fire department.

These topographical conditions, resulting in the increased potential for major fire events and the difficulty they created for the fire department, justified the need for increased levels of fire protection as described in the proposed ordinance.

We also offer the following response to the observations made in the spreadsheet prepared by LADBS (note that extraneous language in some of the comments have not be repeated in this letter but the original document is attached for further reference):

1. Date of Enactment

LADBS Comment (Spreadsheet, Row 4): Planned construction is not defined with (sic) the Los Angeles Building Code. What construction is effected under the proposed ordinance.

Response: The description "new proposed building" is not intended to be a technical description but is intended to clarify that the proposed ordinance affects new construction rather than existing buildings. If LADBS has a technical term they prefer that would have the same intent, then that would be a welcome revision.

2. Heights and Areas / Exposed Framing

LADBS Comments (Rows 5, 6, 7, 8):

- There is no indication that the DaVinci fire was caused by too tall a building.

- There is no explanation as to how this type of restriction would prevent a fire in a building under construction.

Response: There are no provisions in the proposed ordinance that suggest that wood framing on its own will cause a fire but rather they address the recently introduced building code changes that now allow significant increases in the amount of combustibile framing in certain types of buildings.

The relaxation of building regulations were allowed when sprinklers are installed, commonly known as "sprinkler trade-offs", and can be used to rationalize dubious practices. In fact, the National Association of State Fire Marshals (Dembsey, 2016) published findings that the concept of trade-offs generally lacks scientific justification.

The issue is, in fact, the enormous new risk created by the fire load from acres of exposed wood in an urban environment. If that structure catches fire, whether the cause is lightning, arson, and/or hot work (welding or similar construction activity), the presence of that much wood will threaten the safety of firefighters and residents. It will have a financial impact on the city and its taxpayers. This proposed ordinance seeks to remedy these deficiencies for both buildings during construction and under occupancy.

3. Automatic Sprinkler Systems

LADBS Comment (Row 9): CBC Chapter 7 and 9, address automatic sprinkler systems. These chapters have been adopted by the LAMC

Response: NFPA 13R sprinkler systems were adopted in 2003 IBC and allowed in apartment buildings, up to four stories in height and limited to buildings that are 60 ft. or less in height above grade plane. Post 2003, the "trade-offs" and compromises have increased the fire risk of these buildings, in height and area, as evidenced by structural fires in California. The more robust requirement of sprinklers that meet NFPA 13 requirements is most appropriate for these occupancies.

4. Podium Exception and Grade Plane

LADBS Comment (Row 10): CBC Section 510.4 allows parking below an R Occupancy when the floor separation complies with that required of a parking garage and there is a fire resistance rating in compliance with mixed use occupancies.

Response: The issue is not whether a noncombustible podium or mixed-use occupancy has the appropriate fire rating, but that placing combustibile framing higher above the grade plane significantly increases the difficulty for firefighters, and significantly increases the risk for occupants (workers or residents) who must evacuate a structure that is engulfed in fire. This is a recent code change that should be reversed in favor of overall occupant safety.

5. Fire Walls / Compartmentation

LADBS Comments (Rows 11, 12, 13): CBC Chapter 7 was adopted by LAMC Section 91.700. Fire walls are required and required to be constructed of noncombustibile materials with a 2 or 3-

hour rating per CBC Table 706.4. (See CBC Sections 706.4, 706.6 and 707.5) There is no need to "revise" CBC Section 708.3.1 as indicated in the proposed ordinance as CBC Table 1020.1 states a 1 hour fire resistance rating is required for corridors with automatic sprinklers in an R Occupancy. (CBC Section 903.2.8 should be consulted for some guidelines re: automatic sprinklers in certain R Occupancies.)

Response: Passive fire protection based on compartmentation of fire and preventing collapse through structural fire resistance, including firewalls, can save lives and assets, of residents, fire service and construction workers. "Trade-offs" and compromises such as "*Exception: Buildings of Type V construction.*" have increased the fire risk of these buildings. The language in the proposed ordinance seeks to remedy a deficiency created by this *Exception* for both buildings during construction and under occupancy.

We agree with the comments in LADBS document, Rows 12, 13.

6. Fire Partitions/Egress

LADBS Comments (Row 14): CBC Chapter 7 and 9, address automatic sprinkler systems. These chapters have been adopted by the LAMC. (See, LAMC Sections 91.700 and 91.900).

Response: This proposed ordinance directs greater safety than allowed by Chapter 7 and 9, given sprinkler trade-offs. "Trade-offs" and compromises have increased the fire risk of these buildings, in height and area, as evidenced by structural fires in California. Currently, under Section 708.3 Fire –resistance Rating "*Dwelling unit and sleeping unit separations in buildings of Type IIB, IIIB and VB construction shall have fire-resistance ratings of not less than 1/2 hour in buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system*" The proposed ordinance seeks to remedy increased risk by requiring not less than a 2-hour fire resistance rating. The minimum required sprinkler type meets NFPA 13R. The more robust requirement of sprinklers that meet NFPA 13 requirements is most appropriate for these occupancies.

LADBS Comment (Row 15): CBC Chapter 7 and 9, address automatic sprinkler systems. These chapters have been adopted by the LAMC. (See, LAMC Sections 91.700 and 91.900)

Response: This proposed ordinance directs greater safety than the minimum requirements allowed in Chapter 7 and 9 as a result of sprinkler trade-offs. "Trade-offs" and compromises have increased the fire risk of these buildings. Currently, 708.3. Exception 1 states "Corridor walls permitted to have ½-hour fire-resistance rating by Table 1020.1". The proposed ordinance seeks to remedy increased risk by requiring not less than 1-hour.

7. Non-combustible Horizontal Assemblies

LADBS Comment (Row 16): CBC Chapter 7 was adopted by LAMC Section 91.700. CBC Section 707.3.10 and Table 707.3.10 state a 2-hour fire resistance for horizontal assemblies is required. This portion of the proposed ordinance is not needed.

Response: We agree with this comment.

8. Fire Watch

LADBS Comment (Row 17): A fire watch or fire guard is provided for at California Fire Code (CFC) Section 3302.3. CFC Chapter 2 defines “Fire Watch.” Under the existing CFC, a fire watch guard is not allowed to have any other duty beyond the fire watch. The added details such as the fire watch maintaining a record of activities, submitting those records to LAFD, a certificate of fitness and fees for LAFD participation in these activities are not supported by code authority and are vague.

There is no authority to require submission of records or LAFD charging for looking at them. The certificate of fitness has no authority, no requirements, no testing guidelines.

Response: Agreed. The Fire Watch is addressed in California Fire Code Section 3302.3; however, this provision is guidance not a requirement. The proposed ordinance affirmatively requires Fire Watch Guard on Group R construction sites under this code. A “certificate of fitness” is necessary to ensure that the individuals retained to monitor a construction site have the rudimentary ability to perform the required task. The guidelines can be developed by the Fire Marshal’s office or further detailed in an amended ordinance.

9. Identifying Emblems

LADBS Comment (Row 18): There are emblems required now for buildings and occupancies to indicate certain fire hazards in order to help a fire department be more responsive. Those usually deal with the contents of the building not the construction. Let the LAFD take the lead on this. However, even those emblems are not required during construction.

Response: The proposed ordinance directs LADBS to promulgate Identifying Emblems Regulations for construction type. In the absence of a robust and immediately accessible method of identifying the type of construction, a method of providing the LAFD with a way to determine the appropriate tactics for fire suppression or control. The use of combustible framing materials in buildings over 70 feet in height create particular risks for fire fighters, and this measure would provide them with additional guidance.

10. Directed changes to CBC

LADBS Comment (Row 19): The City of Los Angeles has no authority to require the California Building Standards Commission to adopt any revision to the California Building Code. The LAMC cannot require the state to do anything.

Response: We agree and suggest revising this to read: "(2) The **City of Los Angeles** shall pursuant to Section (1) above adopt revisions to the 2016 California Building Code, Part 2, Volume 1 for the purpose of regulating the structural design, construction, maintenance and use of new lightweight, combustible buildings or structures to be erected in the City of Los Angeles"

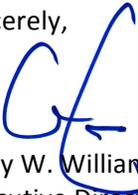
11. Proposed Definitions:

LADBS Comment (Row 20): Terms already defined under Chapter 2 of the Los Angeles Building Code.

Response: Agreed, however, ordinances are typically structured to include definitions for ease of understanding.

On behalf of the many Los Angeles residents that the members of our collective industry's and the Build with Strength coalition represent, we are grateful that Councilmember Blumenfield and staff are working to ensure that the interests of the community, including the safety of citizens and the protection of our municipal resources, are being protected.

Sincerely,



Larry W. Williams
Executive Director
Steel Framing Industry Association



John Loyer
Vice President of State and Local Government Affairs
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association

Attachments

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:07 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_PLUM Committee_Build with Strength Letter of Support_June 13 2018



June 13, 2018

Dear Chairman Huizar and Councilmembers Englander, Price, Blumenfield, and Harris-Dawson,

On May 22, we came together before the PLUM Committee as a group of community, faith and industry leaders to address the pressing matter of fire safety. We represent diverse communities, and this issue reflects on all of our communities, from the safety of our neighbors and workers to the integrity and sustainability of business. We all support the *Build with Strength* campaign and believe it is right for our city.

Requiring the utilization of the safest and most durable materials in the construction of building foundations in new multistory developments is an essential standard for ensuring the safety of our residents and the longevity of our investments. Examples such as fire-treated wood, concrete and steel provide a lasting, durable base that is nearly impossible to ignite. In a city prone to fires and with the looming promise of a major earthquake in the near future, Los Angeles cannot afford to remain behind on this issue. Most major cities across the United States already require the foundations of multi-story buildings to be made of the strongest materials.

It is an issue of practicality and a matter of life or death. For residents, for first responders who risk their lives in the face of disasters, and for workers across the labor spectrum. Our city must make the best choice for protecting the lives of a great number of people. This proposed ordinance would also require a two-hour fire safety wall installment in the construction of these new developments – another practical, safety-minded measure that will assure the safest outcomes for all involved, including the actual building.

With affordable housing, the number of people involved in any building crisis is significant, alongside increased risks of accidental fire and higher likelihood of chaos and casualty in the event of an earthquake. As we step into the future and especially as we look to provide more affordable housing options for the more vulnerable communities in our city, we have an absolutely fundamental, moral responsibility to prepare these new buildings, and most critically, their residents, for the best possible chances. We commend Councilmember Blumenfield on his leadership with this critical step forward, and encourage and applaud the entire committee and city council to join together in securing our city.

Sincerely,


Teresa Barahona, President
Southern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



Rabbi Jonathan Klein, Executive Director
Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE)



Bishop Juan Carlos Mendez, Founder
Churches in Action

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:08 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Ron Miller Building a Safer Los Angeles Op-Ed

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Updating L.A.'s Building Standards

By Ron Miller

Monday, August 5, 2019

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The city of Los Angeles, including the Valley area communities, is growing at an alarming rate. With more than 16,000 new units of housing last year, Los Angeles led the Golden State in new residential construction. As more and more buildings go up and as our city continues to grow at a record pace, safety must remain at the forefront.

Why? Just look at the recent Woolsey fire, which destroyed sections of the Valley area, and the continuous toll of the overall wildfire problem across the region. A major earthquake is a question of when, not if, as was seen in the recent Ridgecrest earthquakes. Preventive measures in construction and stricter building codes are a long-term investment in the city and more important, the safety and well-being of its residents.

A recent measure introduced by San Fernando Valley Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez, titled "Building a Safer Los Angeles," is a critical first step in the right direction to protecting the homes of residents across the Valley area.

"Building a Safer Los Angeles" directly addresses a major construction flaw that exacerbates the growing fire problem in the county: combustible materials. This measure is relevant to communities across Los Angeles and is particularly important in the respective districts of the sponsoring councilmembers, including Pacoima, Sylmar, Tuna Canyon, Woodland Hills, Tarzana and Canoga Park, among other neighborhoods, where temperatures soar and the Santa Ana winds blow strong.

It was only last November that the Woolsey fires engulfed over 70,000 acres and destroyed at least 400 homes, many across Valley-area districts, and into Malibu and areas such as Thousand Oaks, West Hills, Bell Canyon and Oak Park. But California's growing wildfire problem isn't the only safety consideration. When buildings, particularly the low-rise residential complexes that are so common in Los Angeles, rely on combustible materials, residents are put directly in harm's way.

Just a few years ago, arson at the DaVinci apartment complex in downtown Los Angeles set the building ablaze and caused more than \$3 million in property damage. And after a major earthquake, it's fire that can cause most of the damage.

Alternatives to combustible materials bolster the safety and longevity of their structures. Concrete and steel structures, for example, are a safer, stronger, affordable and more environmentally friendly approach, and the buildings are designed to last for centuries. Outdated and unsafe combustible structures are no match to the durability and resistance to the elements that concrete brings.

Additionally, the economic benefits of using non-combustible material are underscored by a Dodge Data & Analytics study. This leading company tracks over half a million projects annually and provides extensive economic insight and accurate foresight on models. Tracking more than 600 projects in Los Angeles from 2013-16, the data proved non-combustible buildings have cost 9.2 percent less to build than combustible buildings. The popular belief is that wood construction is significantly cheaper. But this study shows the contrary and in fact, further demonstrates the positive impact that using non-combustible construction will have across the Valley.

"Building a Safer Los Angeles" also seeks to expand Fire District 1, which sets higher fire-prevention and fire-fighting standards for areas such as Valley neighborhoods that are at high risk for fire and wind, as well as pockets of the city that exceed 5,000 people per square mile.

Los Angeles is seeing an ongoing influx of new residents, and buildings made with combustible materials are particularly dangerous in areas with such a great population density. As we build more housing, we run into the frequent objection from current residents in risky areas that their escape routes will be blocked or compromised by more homes. Preventing those homes from being fire risks in the first place will help keep neighborhoods safe.

The measure prioritizes safety for L.A. residents, and that's also a good thing for skilled construction workers. Our ongoing struggle in the building trades is against the "underground economy" of off-the-books construction where workers are exploited, with low wages paid in cash, no benefits or workers' compensation and lax safety protections on the job. More workers are injured on these jobs and yet they're the least likely to have insurance. Projects that utilize noncombustible construction will have to up the skill level, pay and benefits of their workforce. And that is a win not only for our community, but for all construction workers, residents and homeowners alike.

Future natural disasters will ultimately bring a high cost. The best action in this scenario is to make sure that our buildings do not fall prey to these inevitable catastrophes, and that we build with the smartest possible methods. I applaud and support "Building a Safer Los Angeles" and join councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez, along with many others who want to make our city safer.

Ron Miller is executive secretary for the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council.



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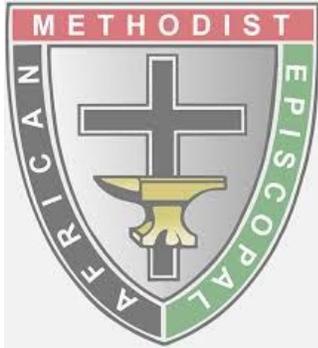
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Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:10 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Row, Grant and BethEl BWS
Letters 2018



February 6, 2018

Dear Councilmembers,

I write to you today to express my utmost support for the ordinance you are considering, concerning the safety and security standards for new multi-level residential and commercial developments in this great city of Los Angeles. My parish, the Grant AME Church, is mostly comprised of African American families, many of whom are lower income, and I cannot express with enough passion, the imperative of safety for our community.

By requiring new developments to use the safest and most durable materials in the construction process, you are improving the potential for a longer and safer life for the thousands upon thousands that live in such buildings, and also for the many righteous folks who work in the building process and those who come in to help in the case of an emergency. We live in a city with great threats of natural disaster, such as fires and earthquakes, and making sure that our people have the best possible chances of survival is a righteous and grave responsibility. I am proud of my city, one that takes such matters seriously.

You have my support and the support of Grant AME Church in moving forward with this most crucial matter. I have read the details of the Build With Strength campaign and I know it is not only a very good and appropriate measure, but one that concerns the sanctity of life. Nothing is more precious than life, and assuring that the buildings so many will call home are as safe as possible is fundamental to good leadership and protecting the people that trust in their elected officials.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. H. Eagle". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Pastor Michael Eagle, Grant AME Church



February 6, 2018

Dear Councilmembers,

I have recently learned that you are considering a new ordinance concerning the standards of safety and security for new multi-level residential and commercial developments. My understanding is that this ordinance specifically addresses the matter of using the safest and most durable materials in the construction process.

As Reverend of the Bethel AME Church, I take this matter very seriously. I am concerned about the safety and welfare of my parishioners and of all people within the broader community. I want you to know that you have my most heartfelt support on this ordinance and I urge city leaders to move forward and pass it as soon as possible. In a city with such great risk of fire and earthquake we have every responsibility to assure that residents, young and old, have the best chances of surviving a disaster. We also must assure that the safety of first responders and the many laborers involved in the construction process have the best and safest trajectories in their work.

I am most especially concerned for the many people of color, those that live in multifamily housing, and I pray that the great leaders of Los Angeles will do all they can to assure the safety of people- women, children, the elderly and everyone else. I am very impressed by the merits of the Build With Strength campaign and by our city leaders for recognizing a need in Los Angeles and moving forward to address it.

Many Blessings

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobbie Lee Anderson", is written in a cursive style.

Reverend Bobbie Lee Anderson
Bethel AME Church

THE ROW LA

THE CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS

P.O. Box 862005
Los Angeles, CA 90086
www.therowchurch.com

February 13, 2018

Dear Councilmembers,,

The Row Church has joined a coalition representing community based organizations, businesses, labor and many other organizations throughout Los Angeles, reaching out to support our City Council and other elected leaders in moving toward a safer and more sustainable standard for low-rise building developments in Los Angeles. As the founder and Pastor, and as a man of faith, I consider the safety of families and residents to be a moral imperative.

I support the efforts of Los Angeles City Council to ensure the safety and reliability of multi-family residences in Los Angeles. Requiring development that utilizes the safest and most reliable processes in the construction of multi-family housing is an essential step forward for the future and health of our city. It's important that these new developments meet or exceed the existing building codes, and that the City of Los Angeles encourages the use of non-combustible materials which heavily reduces the risks associated with fires and earthquakes; both major factors of concern in our city.

These factors are compounded by the dense populations in such buildings, increasing the concerns for safety and the need for standards to address them. The benefits of safer standards are important to so many communities, especially communities at risk, such as low and moderate income neighborhoods, and small and medium size businesses that often occupy many mixed use low-rise developments.

With continuous, positive growth taking place across Los Angeles, new regulations that protect and embrace the diverse communities living and working throughout the city will provide broad and long-term benefits to the many collaborative interests involved in these developments. The critical safety measures of the Build with Strength effort do not only apply to residents, but also impact workers involved in the associated development, management and emergency response programs.

I encourage the City Council to move forward aggressively to support these efforts and support the efforts of Build with Strength - Los Angeles to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles. Feel free to contact us at info@therowchurch.com or 310-466-8366.

In Gratitude,

Pastor Cue Jn Marie

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:12 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_SCHCC Support Letter_Build with Strength LA



Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Council member, Third District
City Hall
200 N. Spring St. #415
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

We are excited to join a coalition representing, community based organizations, businesses, labor and many other organizations throughout Los Angeles, reaching out to support our City Council and other elected leaders in moving toward a safer and more sustainable standard for low-rise building developments in Los Angeles.

We support the efforts of Councilmember Bob Blumenfield to ensure the safety and reliability of multi-family residences in Los Angeles. Requiring development that utilizes the safest and most reliable processes in the development of multi-family housing is an essential step forward for the future and health of our city. It's important that these new developments meet or exceed the existing building codes, and that the City of Los Angeles encourage the use of non-combustible materials which heavily reduces the risks associated with fires and earthquakes; both major factors of concern in our city.

These factors are compounded by the dense populations in such buildings, increasing the concerns for safety and the need for standards to address them. The benefits of safer standards are important to so many communities, especially communities those at risk, low and moderate income communities and small and medium size businesses that often reside in many mixed use low-rise developments.

It is important that this program not be limited to the residents; workers involved in the development, management and emergency response programs, but to take into account all the many diverse communities that make Los Angeles so great. And whatever regulations that are put in place, should embrace the need to continue the positive growth that Los Angeles is experiencing, as well as working collaboratively with all the many interests that will benefit from continued robust economic growth.

We encourage Councilmember Blumenfield and his fellow council members to move forward aggressively to support these efforts and support the efforts of Build with Strength - Los Angeles to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

Teresa Barahona
Southern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
President

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:13 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_Shmira Support Letter_Build with Strength LA 7.20.17



July 20, 2017

The Honorable Councilmember Blumenfeld
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfeld,

When it comes to safety, Los Angeles Shmira Patrol is a leading organization serving Jewish communities across Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. We focus on crime prevention and emergency preparedness. Our team is trained in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and provides volunteer emergency management. We work with the Los Angeles Police Department and other agencies to provide support, whether securing a large non profit event or responding to a particular crisis.

There are a few critical areas we are most concerned about here in Los Angeles which are earthquakes, fires, and the elderly. Additionally, there are many large families and young children in our community, and this makes the work of LA Shmira especially critical in times of emergency. As real estate developments expand throughout the city, we are concerned about the integrity of these new structures, and how they will impact the safety of the community.

As the City of Los Angeles considers changes to ordinances regarding materials in multifamily and commercial structures, Los Angeles Shmira is hopeful that the best decisions will be made, with safety as a top priority. For many decades, buildings under five (5) stories have been foundationally constructed with wood. Taking into consideration both the rate of combustion in the event of a fire and the structural integrity in the case of a major earthquake, this preference to wood is not only outdated but also it reflects poorly on the safety of our community. When I consider the elderly and young children, this is especially concerning for us as an organization.

Structural foundations built with concrete have a far lasting quality and are significantly safer when it comes to the serious threats of fires and earthquakes in our region. In addition to

increased safety, there are many other reasons for a provision evaluating the use of concrete and steel in the foundation of new construction, not least of which are the long-term cost benefits over the lifespan of the building (insurance savings, increased property value, reduced maintenance etc). Allowing builders to cut corners in upfront costs and rely entirely on wood, which is demonstrably less safe in case of an emergency, is simply irresponsible. We are counting on your leadership to lead our city into a safer and more sustainable future. As you know the City of Los Angeles should be a national leader in setting building safety codes.

Thank you in advance for allowing me to enter this letter into the record regarding any ordinance changes here in the City.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Lowenstein

Kenneth Lowenstein
Director, Los Angeles Shmira Patrol

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:15 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_TPOA Build with Strength Letter
5.20.18



Tarzana Property Owners Association, Inc.

May 20, 2018

Councilman Bob Blumenfield
Los Angeles City Hall, Room 415
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

The Tarzana Property Owners Association (TPOA) supports the efforts of *Build with Strength Los Angeles*, a coalition representing community-based organizations, small businesses, and labor unions throughout Los Angeles to encourage the Los Angeles City Council to strengthen fire safety standards by enacting a stronger code for the use of non-combustible building materials in the construction of low to mid-rise buildings. In TPOA's 45-year history, we have worked with developers and government agencies to improve Building and Safety regulations that preserve our unique community in the face of development, fires, and major earthquakes.

We support these efforts and recognize that by requiring developers to utilize less combustible materials, like concrete, steel, and treated wood in the construction of buildings, fires can be prevented or compartmentalized. Furthermore, these materials have the strength and durability to better protect the communities of Los Angeles in the event of a major earthquake.

An ordinance enacting stronger safety codes ensures greater safety for the diverse families in housing complexes, and businesses in multi-unit buildings. Note that the ordinance does not include single family structures, which are the majority of residential structures in Tarzana, reducing the cost of construction of these buildings which do not pose the same serious threat to neighbors as multi-family structures. We also encourage surveillance of buildings under construction, either by on-site presence for larger structures or by camera surveillance for single family structures and small multi-family structures.

We encourage the *Build with Strength Los Angeles* campaign and urge the Los Angeles City Council to enact safer, more sustainable building and fire standards for low to mid-rise multi-family developments and commercial structures throughout our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David R. Garfinkle".

David R. Garfinkle
President, Tarzana Property Owners Association

Communication from Public

Name: Building A Safer Los Angeles
Date Submitted: 02/25/2020 06:28 PM
Council File No: 19-0603
Comments for Public Posting: Building A Safer Los Angeles_BWS_City of LA Proposed Ordinance to Expand Protections Fire D-1_2.18.2020_compressed

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Proposed Ordinance to Expand the Protections of Fire District No. 1

Fire risk in the City of Los Angeles continues to rise in parallel with three factors:



As the **population of neighborhoods** directly alongside the wildland-urban interface grow



As **first responder access** to buildings in high populations urban areas is hindered by topography and narrow street networks

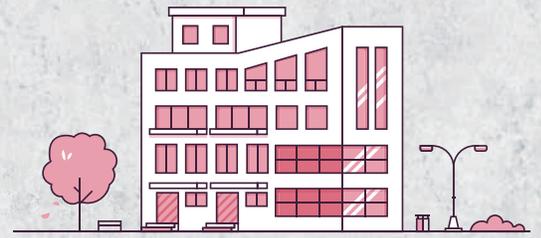


As **wildfires driven by high wind events** increase

Los Angeles' drought-like conditions and vegetation are ripe for future devastating fire seasons, as demonstrated throughout the state of California in recent months and years. It is critical that the City of Los Angeles strengthen their resilience to mitigate these risks.

The foundation of the proposed ordinance is Fire District No. 1, an already existing law with 11 provisions that protect certain types of construction within the boundaries of the fire district. Those provisions include:

- 01.** Type (IV) (V) building is not permitted (7204.1)
- 02.** Type IIB construction must include fire resistive construction for exterior walls (7204.2)
- 03.** Openings must be protected by a fire assembly with a $\frac{3}{4}$ hour fire resistive rating (7204.3)
- 04.** Provide Class A or B roofing (7204.4, 1505.1)
- 05.** Exterior plastic veneer not permitted (7204.11)



Fires in mid-rise residential buildings with combustible frames could have a negative impact of \$22.6 billion over 15 years, including \$17.14 billion in direct losses from property damage.

Build with Strength members across the City of Los Angeles agree: The passage of this proposed ordinance is paramount in protecting the citizens and first responders of Los Angeles.

The proposal calls for three pre-defined areas to be folded into the provisions of Fire District No. 1, thereby expanding the protections of that district:



Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones



High Wind Velocity Areas

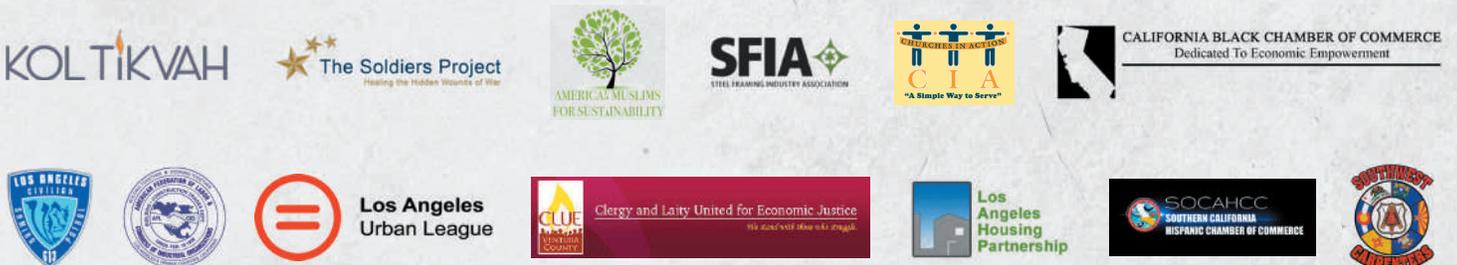


Areas with a population density of more than 5,000 persons per square mile

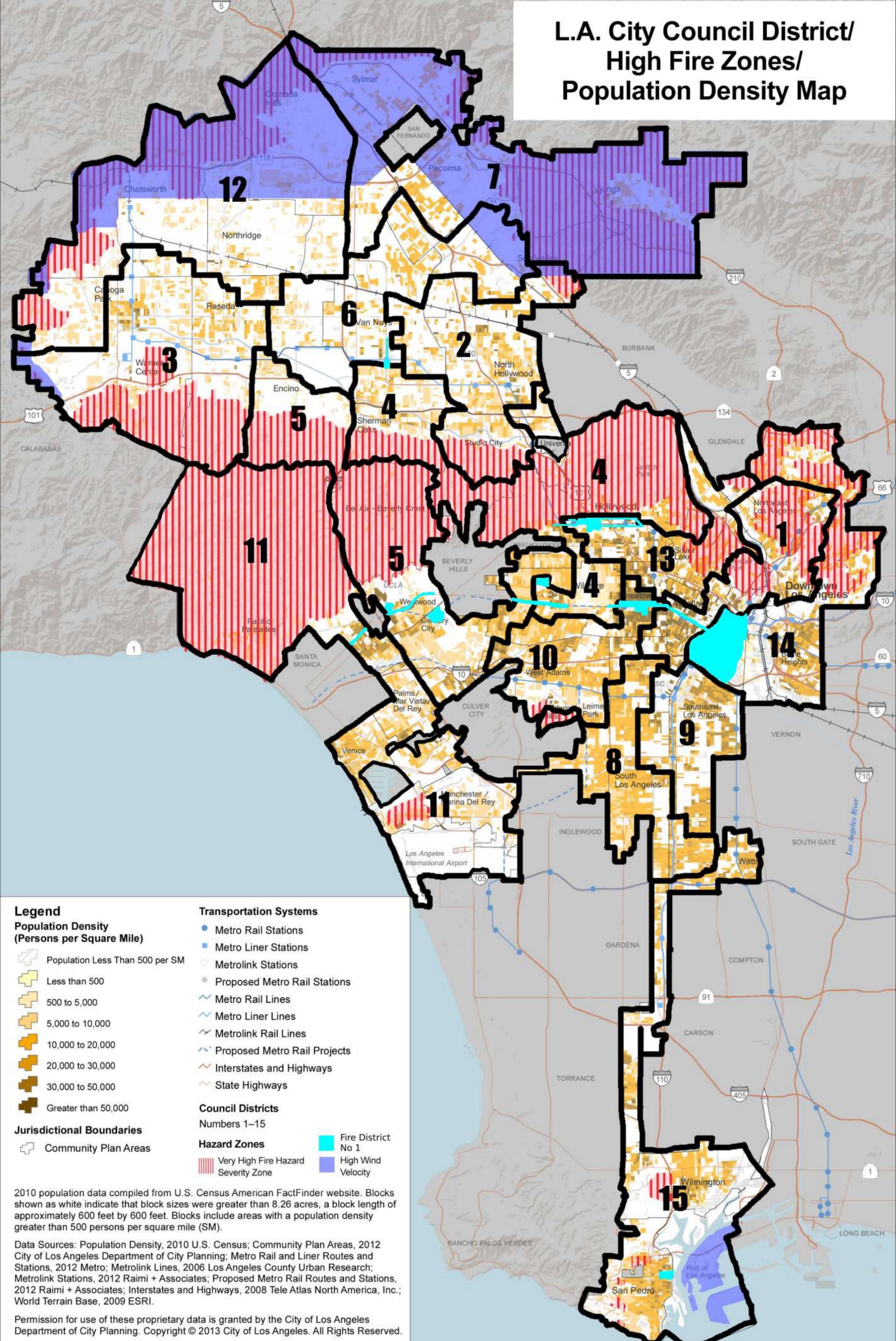
Additionally, the proposal expands the already existing requirement for new buildings under construction to comply with Chapter 33 of the 2017 Los Angeles Fire Code and 2016 edition of the NFPA 241. This ordinance would combine high fire risk areas with pre-existing laws that have historically

been fragmented, making its implementation smartly simple and effective. Build with Strength members across the City of Los Angeles agree: the passage of this ordinance is paramount in protecting the citizens and first responders of Los Angeles.

Build with Strength LA Members



L.A. City Council District/ High Fire Zones/ Population Density Map



Legend

Population Density (Persons per Square Mile)

- Population Less Than 500 per SM
- Less than 500
- 500 to 5,000
- 5,000 to 10,000
- 10,000 to 20,000
- 20,000 to 30,000
- 30,000 to 50,000
- Greater than 50,000

Jurisdictional Boundaries

- Community Plan Areas

Transportation Systems

- Metro Rail Stations
- Metro Liner Stations
- Metrolink Stations
- Proposed Metro Rail Stations
- Metro Rail Lines
- Metro Liner Lines
- Metrolink Rail Lines
- Proposed Metro Rail Projects
- Interstates and Highways
- State Highways

Council Districts
Numbers 1-15

Hazard Zones

- Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
- High Wind Velocity

2010 population data compiled from U.S. Census American FactFinder website. Blocks shown as white indicate that block sizes were greater than 8.26 acres, a block length of approximately 600 feet by 600 feet. Blocks include areas with a population density greater than 500 persons per square mile (SM).

Data Sources: Population Density, 2010 U.S. Census; Community Plan Areas, 2012 City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning; Metro Rail and Liner Routes and Stations, 2012 Metro; Metrolink Lines, 2006 Los Angeles County Urban Research; Metrolink Stations, 2012 Raimi + Associates; Proposed Metro Rail Routes and Stations, 2012 Raimi + Associates; Interstates and Highways, 2008 Tele Atlas North America, Inc.; World Terrain Base, 2009 ESRI.

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