

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Patrick W. Ford, RASmith

**Date Submitted:** 09/07/2021 12:08 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0603

**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached SUPPORT Letter submitted by Patrick W. Ford, P.E., Senior Structural Project Manager, RASmith, in SUPPORT of Building A Safer Los Angeles proposed ordinance. We respectfully and strongly urge the PLUM Committee to move the Building A Safer Los Angeles motion forward.

September 3, 2021

Mr. Marquee Harris-Dawson, Chairperson  
Los Angeles City Council  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM)  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: SUPPORT for 19-0603 - Building A Safer Los Angeles**

Dear Chairman Harris-Dawson, and Councilmembers Cedillo, Blumenfield, Ridley-Thomas, and Lee and PLUM committee staff members:

R.A. Smith is an engineering consulting firm that provides a wide range of land development, construction management, and engineering services on construction projects throughout the United States, including the Los Angeles area through our Irvine office. Over the last 40 years I have personally designed dozens of 4 to 7 story mid-rise buildings with structural systems that include concrete, steel, and wood.

Protecting the unhoused and developing affordable housing should be of great concern for both residents and the Los Angeles City Council. Multifamily residents, including those with low-income and people of color, deserve both safe and affordable housing. In response to the housing crisis in Los Angeles, some housing groups have been advocating for the use of "Tall-Wood" or "Mass Timber" construction in the proposed expansion of Fire District 1.

We support advances in technology for construction and development. We have been a supporter of many of the new regulations to allow for greater density and ways to create more housing. However, the current *Building A Safer Los Angeles* ordinance is not the appropriate forum to be advancing one material over the other.

The city has taken nearly 15 years to review issues like increased density, and even issues like earthquake safety. So, let's not confuse the two issues being debated – fire life safety and new construction techniques. These are two separate and distinct issues. We ask that the PLUM committee and the full City Council move forward on the existing motion, and further investigate whether Mass Timber should even be permitted anywhere in Los Angeles, not just in Fire District 1.

This motion will protect those who are most vulnerable to increased fire danger because of where multi-family residential structures are being built in areas that have increased population density and increased fire danger.

Do not allow the use of Mass Timber, a new technology with its own production and implementation challenges prevent this motion from protecting the most vulnerable in our communities.

We want to voice our continued support for *Build a Safer Los Angeles* in an effort to strengthen our communities by using safer, sustainable building materials for multi-family housing. The proposed motion would provide greater fire protection for multifamily structures and the people that call them home.



**Support Building a Safer Los Angeles**

Page 2 / September 3, 2021

We respectfully and strongly urge the PLUM Committee to move the *Building A Safer Los Angeles* motion forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick W. Ford'.

Patrick W. Ford, P.E.  
Senior Structural Project Manager