File No. 25-1499

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FILM, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY REPORT relative to waiving Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) “spot check” fees, requesting a report on LAFD’s ability to recover associated costs; a report on a strategy for proactive enforcement and a public education initiative regarding Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 41.20 and lawful filming.

Recommendations for Council action, as initiated by Motion (Nazarian – Lee):

1. INSTRUCT the LAFD to waive “spot check” fees for the following types of productions:

    a. Productions assigned a Fire Safety Officer (FSO)

    b. Productions who pay the fee but are never visited by a Fire Inspector

2. INSTRUCT the LAFD, in coordination with the City Administrative Officer (CAO), to report to Council within 60 days on the fiscal impact, including the ability of the LAFD to recover costs, of waiving “spot check” fees for the following types of productions:

    a. Productions assigned an FSO; or,

    b. Productions who pay the fee but are never visited by a Fire Inspector.

3. REQUEST the Board of Public Works (BPW), with assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and City Attorney, and in consultation with FilmLA, to report to Council within 60 days on recommendations for a strategy for proactive enforcement and a public education initiative regarding LAMC Section 41.20, specifically targeting communities impacted by filming and production activities.

4. REQUEST the BPW, with assistance from the LAPD and City Attorney, and in consultation with FilmLA, to develop and implement a community education plan regarding lawful filming, including:

    a. Clear notice that “inconvenience payments” are not required for permitted filming.

    b. Information on how residents can report harassment, price-gouging, or unlawful disruption.

    c. Updated language on all FilmLA notices and the City’s filming website.

5. INSTRUCT the LAPD, in coordination with FilmLA and the BPW Film Liaison, to establish a citywide Motion Picture Officer (MPO) staffing matrix to ensure

consistent deployment standards across all patrol divisions, and to report to Council on eliminating unnecessary staffing minimums unless justified by a documented safety concern.

6. INSTRUCT the LAPD to report to Council within 60 days on current procedures for MPO firearm licensing and recommendations for ensuring that every MPO is up to date on all requisite licensing requirements to do with firearms.

7. INSTRUCT the LAFD to waive and/or significantly reduce "spot check" fees for the following types of productions:

    a. Productions assigned an FSO

    b. Productions who pay the fee but are never visited by a Fire Inspector

8. REQUEST he City Attorney, with the assistance of the LAFD, to prepare and present any Ordinances, if necessary, to effectuate a change in the name of the "spot check" fee to another label that reflects the administrative nature of the fee.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the CAO nor the CLA has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: Yes

For:
Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Los Feliz Neighborhood Council
NoHo Neighborhood Council

(Also referred to the Economic Development and Jobs and Budget and Finance Committees)

Summary:

On September 9, 2026, your Committee considered a Motion (Nazarian – Lee) relative to waiving LAFD “spot check” fees, requesting a report on LAFD’s ability to recover associated costs; a report on a strategy for proactive enforcement and a public education initiative regarding LAMC Section 41.20 and lawful filming. According to the Motion, the City of Los Angeles, a global hub for film and television production, is continually challenged to balance the needs of the entertainment industry with the imperative of maintaining public safety and minimizing civic disruption. Reforming the complex, costly, and duplicative public safety permitting process for on-location filming is essential to keep Los Angeles film-friendly while maintaining safety and efficiency. The LAFD mandates a $285 "spot check" fee for all productions. This fee is non-waivable, even when an FSO is required on-site for high-risk filming, such as those involving pyrotechnics or other potential safety hazards.

Furthermore, a production paying only the "spot check" fee is not guaranteed a visit from a fire inspector, meaning they may not receive the service for which they paid. In 2024, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) processed 7,841 film permits for 13,359 filming locations, conducted 699 spot-checks (filming permit compliance checks), 104 calls for service (mostly illegal filming), issued 44 citations and 126 warnings, and authorized 252 secondary work permits for off-duty Motion Picture Officers (MPOs). MPOs are also mandated to receive proper firearm licensing.

Aside from permit approval, the LAPD is tasked with enforcing lawfully permitted filming activities established in LAMC Section 41.20. This allows the LAPD Film Unit to address scenarios where residents physically interfere with filming, such as using a bullhorn, playing loud music, yelling during takes, running loud equipment, or blocking production personnel. Preserving the film industry's capacity to conduct permitted shoots without disruption benefits the City, local businesses, and the industry itself. The practice of providing "inconvenience payments" to residents, while not explicitly prohibited by the LAMC, establishes a detrimental precedent. This custom is perpetuated because residents increasingly request these payments, and productions—often operating under tight deadlines—agree to them to avoid delays and objections. This prevalent issue warrants attention and can be addressed through a dual approach: amending the LAMC and implementing effective community education.

The current public safety permitting and enforcement for Los Angeles on-location filming is inefficient and vulnerable, notably due to a duplicative, costly permitting process. These systemic issues necessitate reform to link essential services to fees paid and decisively enforce laws against financial misconduct to support the industry while ensuring public safety and civic stability. After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the Motion, as amended. This matter is now forwarded to the Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ad Hoc Committee on Film, Entertainment, and Creative Industry

COUNCILMEMBER	**VOTE**
NAZARIAN:	YES
PARK:	ABSENT
PADILLA:	YES

ARL
9/926

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-