

MOTION

PUBLIC SAFETY

On June 17, 2026, a fire erupted at a large cold storage warehouse facility located at 1400 South Los Palos Street in Boyle Heights, prompting shelter-in-place orders, public health advisories, ongoing air quality monitoring, and a multi-day emergency response. The incident demonstrated the importance of neighborhood-level preparedness and reinforced the need for strong partnerships between City departments and trusted community leaders before, during, and after an emergency.

Neighborhood Councils serve as the City’s most localized form of civic engagement and are often a trusted source of information for residents during emergencies. As representatives of their communities, Neighborhood Council board members are well-positioned to support emergency preparedness efforts, share critical information, connect residents to available resources, and assist in strengthening coordination between neighborhoods and City departments.

The Los Angeles Fire Department’s Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program provides free, hands-on training that equips participants with the knowledge and skills to safely prepare for and respond to emergencies, including earthquakes, wildfires, hazardous materials incidents, and other disasters. Expanding participation in this existing program would establish a consistent baseline of emergency readiness among Neighborhood Council leadership while strengthening coordination between Neighborhood Councils and the LAFD during emergencies.

Given the existing CERT program and the important role Neighborhood Councils play in supporting their communities during emergencies, the City should evaluate the feasibility of establishing a standardized CERT certification requirement for a majority of Neighborhood Council board members.

I THEREFORE MOVE that City Council INSTRUCT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), to provide a report with recommendations to require the majority of all Neighborhood Council board members to obtain and maintain certification with LAFD’s CERT Program, including implementation options, timelines, costs, exemptions, and renewal requirements. The department should consider more accessible training opportunities, such as providing the CERT Program remotely.

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