

MOTION

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, road closures, and a multi-day emergency response. To allow emergency personnel to access the incident area, vehicles blocking emergency operations were removed from the surrounding streets.

Protecting life and ensuring emergency access must always remain the City's highest priority. However, emergencies can also leave residents facing unexpected financial burdens through parking citations, towing fees, storage costs, or other penalties resulting from circumstances entirely beyond their control.

California Vehicle Code Section 40215(a) authorizes issuing agencies to cancel parking citations where extenuating circumstances make dismissal appropriate in the interest of justice, and Section 40215(c)(7) separately authorizes agencies to reduce, waive, or defer the parking penalty based on financial hardship or other extenuating circumstances relevant to payment. The City should establish clear policies for how these authorities are applied during declared emergencies so that residents affected by emergency operations or required to comply with public safety directives are not unfairly penalized.

Establishing a consistent policy for declared emergencies would help ensure that public safety operations can proceed without delay while providing residents with a fair and transparent process for seeking relief from parking-related penalties resulting from extraordinary circumstances.

I THEREFORE MOVE that City Council INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to report on implementing a system for the cancellation of citations given to people who were impacted by "extenuating circumstances" during the Boyle Heights warehouse fire per California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 40215(a). The report should include the status of current programs that are in place that allow for the reduction, waiver, or deferral of citation payments for people who are facing extenuating circumstances in accordance with AB 1299 (Bryan) and California Vehicle Code Section CVC 40215(a) and 40215(c)(7).

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT LADOT, in coordination with the City Attorney, to create a definition of what constitutes "extenuating circumstances," for the purpose of this policy; this should include, but not be limited to:

- Any stay-at-home order issued by any City Department.
- A declaration of Local Emergency at the City, County, or State level.
- Financial Hardship due to the crisis affecting them.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to report on the towing operations practiced during the Boyle Heights warehouse fire. The report should include outreach efforts the Department exercised to contact each owner and how they advised them of their rights under California law.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT LADOT, in collaboration with LAPD, to report on the feasibility of initiating a post-storage impound hearing for each affected vehicle owner or, at a minimum, provide written notice offering such a hearing without requiring the owner to request one first, and allow that hearing to be conducted remotely.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council REQUEST the Chief of Police to issue a Department-wide notice, bulletin, or other written directive to all sworn personnel, advising officers of the proper statutory authority governing the relocation or impoundment of vehicles during emergency incidents. The notice shall clarify the circumstances under which California Vehicle Code section 22654(e) authorizes the temporary relocation or storage of lawfully parked vehicles that obstruct emergency services during a disaster or emergency, and distinguish that authority from other impound statutes.

PRESENTED BY 
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Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY 

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