

REPORT FROM

## OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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Date: December 12, 2011

CAO File No. 0160-01556-0000  
Council File No. 11-1443  
Council District: ALL

To: The Mayor and City Council

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer *MAS*

Reference: Report from the Board of Fire Commissioners dated July 5, 2011

Subject: **FIRE HYDRANT INSPECTION, TESTING AND ACCESS FEES - LAFD**

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### SUMMARY

On August 16, 2011, the Board of Fire Commissioners approved a Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) report to establish fees for special services performed by the Department's Hydrants and Access Unit. It is proposed that the LAFD collect fees for fire environmental impact report research and review, fire hydrant plan review, field inspection and other inspections directly related to the enforcement of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements. The Hydrants and Access Unit enforces Division 9 of the Fire Code to ensure LAFD access, reasonable response distances from Fire and Emergency Medical Service resources and adequate fire protection water availability throughout the City.

The proposed fees include the following:

	Fee	Proposed Fee	Inspector Hours
1.	Fire environmental impact report and review fee	\$156	1
2.	Fire hydrant plan review fee	\$156	1
3.	Fire hydrant field inspection and/or test fee	\$312	2
4.	Fire Department access plan review fee	\$156	1
5.	Fire Department access field inspection fee	\$312	2
6.	Additional plan review, inspection or re-inspection fee (minimum one hour and per hour charge thereafter)	\$156	1

These fees will provide for approximately 40 percent of the full cost recovery potential of the Hydrants and Access Unit. Currently, there are 2,559 hours expended for plan review, consultations and the other services, provided to developers and contractors at no charge by the Department. Using the current hourly rate of \$156 for inspection and related services, the potential annual cost recovery amounts to \$409,440 to the General Fund.

The remaining 60 percent of the workload is derived through interaction with governmental development agencies including the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), the

City Planning Department, the Public Works Bureau of Engineering, the Department of Water and Power and the State of California Division of the State Architect. Cost recovery for this workload will be provided through a proposed "case management" and/or "fire protection infrastructure" type fee as developed by the LAFD in the near future.

The fees for plan reviews, inspections and other inspections mentioned above would be collected by the LADBS on behalf of the LAFD similar to the current practice of all LAFD construction related projects processed through the City's One-Stop Construction Services Centers.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Instruct the City Attorney to draft revisions to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements to include provisions to effectuate the recommended collection of fees contained in the Fire Department report; and
2. Instruct the Department of Building and Safety to collect fees for plan checks and other fire hydrant and access related services through its cashiering system.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The proposed fees in this report are estimated to generate an additional \$409,440 per year in General Fund revenue. The recommendations in this report are in compliance with the City's Financial Policies as the proposed fees are fair and fully recover the total fee-eligible cost of providing fire hydrant related services.

*MAS:MCD:04120056d*

Attachment

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CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA  
MAYOR

ATTACHMENT *MCD(4)*  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

BRIAN L. CUMMINGS  
INTERIM FIRE CHIEF

200 NORTH MAIN STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

(213) 978-3838  
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August 17, 2011

Honorable Members of the City Council  
City of Los Angeles  
City Hall, Room 395  
Attention: City Clerk

Honorable Antonio R. Villaraigosa  
Mayor, City of Los Angeles  
Room 303, City Hall  
Attention: Pamela Finley  
Legislative Coordinator

[BFC 11-105] – PROPOSAL TO CHARGE FEES FOR THE PLAN REVIEW,  
INSPECTION AND TESTING OF FIRE HYDRANTS, FIRE ACCESS, AND FIRE-FLOW  
REQUIREMENTS

At its meeting of August 16, 2011, the Board of Fire Commissioners approved the Fire Department's report dated July 5, 2011. The notice of public hearing publication was conducted in accordance with Government Code Section 6062a. There were no written or verbal public comments received. The report is herewith transmitted concurrently to the City Council and the Mayor for review and approval.

Should you need additional information, please contact the Board of Fire Commission Office at 213-978-3838.

Sincerely,

Leticia Gómez  
Commission Executive Assistant

Attachment

cc: Eileen Decker, Deputy Mayor, Homeland Security and Public Safety  
Board of Fire Commissioners  
Brian L. Cummings, Interim Fire Chief  
Janet Jackson, Deputy City Attorney  
Mark Davis, Office of the City Administrative Officer

*0160-01556-0000*

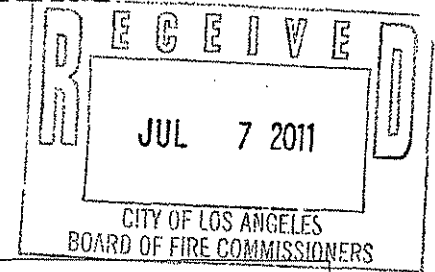
July 19, .

APPROVED: *8/6/11*  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
BY: *John S. ...*  
COMMISSION EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT



LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

MILLAGE PEAKS  
FIRE CHIEF



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 11-105

July 5, 2011

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Millage Peaks, Fire Chief *m.p.*

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO CHARGE FEES FOR THE PLAN REVIEW,  
INSPECTION AND TESTING OF FIRE HYDRANTS, FIRE ACCESS,  
AND FIRE-FLOW REQUIREMENTS

FINAL ACTION:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Recommendations:** That the Board:

1. Approve the proposed fees for special services performed by the Hydrants and Access Unit including:
  - Fire environmental impact report research and review
  - Fire hydrant plan review and field inspection
  - Fire department access plan review and field inspection
  - Field inspection and other inspections directly related to the enforcement of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements.
2. The Board's Executive Assistant be directed to publish the required notice of public hearing on the proposed fees at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
3. Direct the Commission Executive Assistant to forward this report to the City Council and Mayor for consideration and approval. Subject to the approval of the City Council and Mayor, request the City Council to instruct the City Attorney to draft revisions of certain sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements to include provisions for collection of fees, and for a regular review and modification of fees based on verifiable costs to the City.
4. Request the City Attorney to report back to the City Council within 30 days with an amendment revising the LAMC Chapter 5, Article 7, Division 9.

5. Request City Council to direct the Department of Building and Safety to collect fees for plan checks and other Hydrants and Access related services through their cashier system.

**Summary:**

The Fire Department requests to establish fees for Hydrants and Access Unit services. To recover costs for Fire Department services in accordance with the City's financial policies, it is proposed that the Fire Department collect fees for fire environmental impact report research and review, fire hydrant plan review, field inspection and/or test, fire department access plan review, field inspection and other inspections directly related to the enforcement of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements.

The Fire Department's Hydrants and Access Unit enforces Division 9 of the Fire Code to ensure Fire Department access, reasonable response distances from Fire and Emergency Medical Services resources and adequate fire protection water availability throughout the City. This Unit currently provides developers, architects, contractors and consultants with pre-development code reviews, hydrant and access plan reviews, research as it relates to their projects and determines environmental impact.

The proposed fees are to offset the special services that are provided by the Hydrant and Access Unit.

- Fire environmental impact report research and review fee for the research and preparation of environmental impact reports as it relates to short and long term impacts on community emergency services.
- Fire hydrant plan review and field inspection fees to review new developments to determine the need for new and/or additional fire hydrants and corresponding field tests for the newly installed fire hydrants.
- Fire department access plan review and field Inspection fees to review new construction project plans to verify that emergency apparatus and firefighter access requirements are provided with corresponding field inspections as needed.
- Field inspection and other inspections fees directly related to the enforcement of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 57.09, Access, Hydrants and Fire Flow Requirements.

Currently there are approximately 2,559 hours used for plan review, consultations, and the other services itemized above, provided to developers and contractors at no charge. Using the current hourly rate of \$156 per hour, this amounts to a potential annual recovery cost of \$409,440. This will offset approximately 40% of the full cost recovery potential of the Hydrant and Access Unit.

The Fire Department shall collect fees required by the most current recovery schedule for the following:

	Fees	Proposed Fees	Inspector Hours
1.	Fire environmental impact report research and review fee	\$156	1
2.	Fire hydrant plan review fee	\$156	1
3.	Fire hydrant field inspection and/or test fee	\$312	2
4.	Fire Department access plan review fee	\$156	1
5.	Fire Department access field inspection fee	\$312	2
6.	Additional plan review, inspection or re-inspection fee - (minimum 1 hour and per hour thereafter)	\$156	1

About 60 % of the workload of the Hydrants and Access Unit is through interaction with development agencies including, City Planning, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Building and Safety, Department of Water and Power and Department of State Architecture. These agencies consult with the Hydrants and Access Unit with regard to Zoning Actions, City Planning Cases, Tract and Parcel Maps and Public Hearing Oversight. This workload will be proposed to be offset through different "case management" and/or "fire protection infrastructure" type fees in the near future.

The fees for the plan reviews, inspections and others mentioned above would be collected by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety on behalf of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) in the same manner as currently practiced for all LAFD construction related projects processed through the One Stop-Construction Service Centers.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Projected revenue generated from the implementation of the above services is estimated to be \$409,440 for fiscal year 2011-12, if the fees are implemented on July 1, 2011. No additional resources are required to implement this program.

**Conclusion:**

Amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code to authorize the collection of fees for fire environmental impact report research and review, fire hydrant plan review, field inspection and/or test, fire department access plan check review, field inspection and

other inspections will allow the Los Angeles Fire Department to recover costs for special services, ensure continuation of preserving life and property in the City of Los Angeles, and is consistent with the City's financial policy of full cost recovery.

Board report prepared by Timothy Kerbrat, Battalion Chief, Luke Milick, Captain I and Josefina Carreon, Management Analyst II, Bureau of Fire Prevention and Public Safety.