

12 November 2015

City Council File Number: 15-1252-S1

Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council,  
Public Safety Committee  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Members:

The below signatories are Officers of the Legends at Cascades Community Association, which is the Master Association representing 176 (soon to be 190) homeowners of the Legends at Cascades townhome community. We reside in the northernmost area of Sylmar in the San Fernando Valley – a foothill area, under constant threat of fire and which was devastated by the Sayre Fire of 2008. On behalf of our Community, we are writing to you to inform you of our support of Council File #15-1252-S1, for the continued assignment of a Fast Response Vehicle (FRV) as a “temporary asset” towards improving response times, while strongly supporting and recommending additional assets for Sylmar (especially in areas North of the 210 Freeway), e.g. Fire Stations with First Response Equipment, in order to achieve faster response times with the right equipment, and without which we have a very high risk for loss of life and property, as we have. *It's not just about response times: it's about response times with the appropriate and effective assets brought to the scene of any fire or emergency, protecting life and property.*

- Since 1956, Sylmar has only been served by Fire Station 91, ignoring 60 years of expansion.
- Station 91's district is one of the largest across the City of Los Angeles and serves the largest geographical area within Battalion 12 at 12.6 square miles + San Fernando at 2.37 sq miles.
- The geographic area served by Station 91 is even larger with shared support for the City of San Fernando, mutual/automatic aid with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the need to respond to incidents in the Newhall Pass. (The net effect of LA City taking on the Fire/Emergency duties for City of San Fernando is that our area actually LOST fire assets.)
- Cities outside of Los Angeles with a similar population and geographic size have, on average, 4-6 Fire Stations in their communities.
- Apart from our sheer population, LAFD resources are stretched thin in our area due to the unique profile of our community: Segments of Sylmar are classified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity (VHFHS) Zones; Sylmar has a large Brush Area with Eucalyptus, Pepper and Pine trees that burn hot and Urban Interface (IAZ & MTZ); Sylmar is surrounded by multiple freeway systems - 5 / 118 / 210; Sylmar has multiple railroad systems (Freight & Metrolink).
- Sylmar has a history with large-scale disasters and was home, most recently, to the devastating Sayre fire which resulted in the worst loss of homes in the history of the City.
- It is not unusual for some Sylmar neighborhoods to see response times in excess of 10 mins.

We want to preface our following statements by saying that we understand that, with a City as large and complex as Los Angeles, City Budgets are prepared several fiscal years in advance. Accordingly, we urge “long-term solutions” to be planned now to meet these needs and correct

the deficiencies, which create high risks to life and property, that will never grow smaller, but rather, with every year, will only prove to grow more urgent and more necessary. For instance, there is a Planning Department approved Development Project to the immediate east of us, between Balboa Blvd and the foothills, up Silver Oaks Drive, where up to 539 additional single family, for-sale units are going to be built and in direct line with the Sayre Fire of 2008: increased tax income, increased risk for fire loss. Growth and development is constant and fire facilities have not kept pace with our growth. In 2006, there was a groundbreaking ceremony for Fire Station 31, yet no Station was ever built. This point has additional significance to the Legends at Cascades Community, because the "promise" of this 2d Fire Station to serve Sylmar was one of the primary "selling points" that resulted in this development obtaining the support of the Sylmar and Granada Hills communities. Moreover, the heavy Mello Roos taxes levied upon our homeowners in this Community were levied in order to pay for this station, at least in part, that has never materialized. The City obviously recognized the need, and the trigger for the building of this station was written into the Q Conditions and made a requirement of the City's final approvals of this development. Finally, *the land on which this station was to be built is and has been available via donation from the Developer to the City of Los Angeles.*

We have been advised of the range of costs for building various stations and further budget dollars needed for equipment and operations. We are suggesting that when our Community in Sylmar is compared to any and all districts within the whole of the Los Angeles City area, we definitely deserve to have increased services within this Community to effectively "manage" our substantial threats and population as compared to others, and to give us respectable response times with the equipment needed to answer medical and fire emergency demands: it's a matter of "fair share" and taxes paid. Our per capita/per dollar benefits are very low.

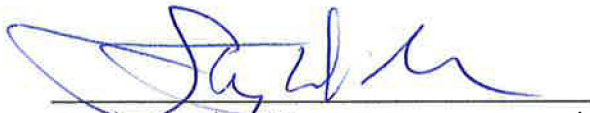
Accordingly, because of the well-documented and demonstrable need for this community to have the protection of additional fire stations, and because at least some initial resources are there to build this station, and because this Community was long ago promised that it would receive its fair share of City resources, *we support the identification of and approval for all additional and meaningful LAFD resources that will reduce response times in our community with the appropriate equipment (assets) required in this high risk area, and which are better aligned with our population and geography.*

Thank you. Representing The Legends at Cascades Community Association, we are

Sincerely,



Christine Whitaker, President, and  
LAC Executive Committee for  
Government Affairs & City Services  
whiskadoodle@yahoo.com



Stephen Beck, CFO, ASEC Documents, and  
LAC Executive Committee for  
Government Affairs & City Services  
zenjinut@aol.com 626.675.8833 (cell)

Legends at Cascades Community Asso., Inc., located at Balboa Blvd & Nicklaus Drive, 91342.  
Association Property Manager: Ilene Scandlyn. Email: [ilene@westcommgmt.com](mailto:ilene@westcommgmt.com)  
Westcom Property Services, 25115 Avenue Stanford A-106, Valencia, CA 91355 661.702.0329