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FIRE DEPARTMENT

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
FIRE CHIEF

200 NORTH MAIN STREET
ROOM 1800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

(213) 978-3800
FAX: (213) 978-3815

[HTTP://WWW.LAFD.ORG](http://www.lafd.org)

April 23, 2019

Honorable Paul Krekorian
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Richard Williams, Legislative Assistant
200 N. Main Street, Room 360
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Proposed Budget. My most sincere appreciation is extended to Mayor Garcetti for a \$687.6 million budget to enhance the LAFD's ability to make our communities the safest in the nation.

The Proposed Budget provides funding for two Recruit Academy classes to add 130 new Firefighters along with funding for the completion of a third class that begins in June 2019. Four engines and a light force are continued under the support of SAFER grants received in 2016 and 2017. The Budget also supports new and continuing initiatives including the addition of a seventh Advanced Provider Response Unit (APRU) team, staffing for the SOBER unit, enhanced coverage from our Fast Response Vehicles (FRV), and expanded support for cannabis inspections and enforcement. The Budget is also responsive to year-round high risk fire conditions through continued funding for sworn overtime for brush fire deployments. These resources will continue to advance the Department's Strategic Plan goals and ensure the delivery of exceptional first response and fire safety services to the people of Los Angeles.

Per your instructions, I have identified thirteen critical areas below, in priority order, that were not funded in the Proposed Budget. Staffing requests reflect six-months funding unless indicated otherwise.

1. **BLS Rescue Ambulances - \$481,901:** Position authority for 12 Firefighter III and three-months funding to staff two Basic Life Support ambulances at Fire Station (FS) 13 in Pico-Union/Koreatown and FS 39 in Van Nuys to improve response times and enhance the delivery of emergency medical services (EMS). The unavailability of BLS resources combined with increased demand for EMS services has led to an increase in EMS response times at these stations. The addition of ambulance resources is expected to improve response times by 21 seconds from the current average of 4:19 for FS 13, and by 58 seconds from the current average of 4:20 for FS 39.
2. **Marine Battalion Chief - \$95,144:** Position authority and funding for one Battalion Chief on special duty to command the Marine Operations Section of the Fire Department, which includes supervision of all marine fire boat operations, safety, training, facilities, equipment, fire boat maintenance and all administrative matters. The position also serves a critical role as the dedicated liaison to the Port of Los Angeles. Battalion 6 is

made up of 11 stations (compared to the citywide average of six stations per battalion), four of which house marine resources that require specialized knowledge and oversight. Approval of the Marine Battalion Chief position will reduce the span of control, allow for closer supervision of personnel, and provide for singular focus to all matters related to marine resources.

3. **Senior Arson Investigator - \$66,315:** Position authority and funding for one Firefighter III on special duty (with Senior Arson Investigator bonus) to support increased workload in the Arson/Counter Terrorism Section (ACTS) and provide continuity and quality assurance in the handling of arson investigations. The section is currently staffed with one Senior Arson Investigator which is insufficient to handle caseload oversight which has grown significantly from 596 cases in 2013 to consistently over 700 cases since 2017 (39.7 cases to 46.9 per investigator over this period). This position requires a high level of experience, training and specific law enforcement and arson investigative knowledge, and turnover in special duty assignments has impacted the continuity of expertise in the section which has been the subject of past audits. In addition to assisting with the adjudication of arson cases, the Senior Arson Investigator will assume a direct role in policy review, training requirements, and quality of investigations to improve the pace and outcome of arson cases.
4. **Computer Aided Dispatch and Related Systems Support - \$74,177:** Position authority and funding for one Fire Captain I on special duty to address increasing workload on programming and algorithm requirements for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) dispatching applications, including the Tiered Dispatch System (TDS), Automated Vehicle Location (AVL), resource status mapping improvements, and various current and upcoming mobile applications to improve response time, situational awareness and data analytics capabilities including, but not limited to, Cycle Team Mobile Data Computers, mCad, FireMap, FireCast and Text-to-911 applications. Currently, one Fire Captain II is assigned these responsibilities, resulting in significantly delayed implementation of these projects due to the significant workload.
5. **Operations Valley Bureau (OVB) Facilities Package - \$1.5 million: Phase II of three phases:** The total cost of this project will be dependent upon a seismic assessment which is currently being initiated. The \$1.5 million will provide funding for design, fees for plan check and permitting, and initial construction costs to Old Fire Station 39 to co-locate and enhance (upgrades include mechanical, electrical, fire life safety/sprinklers, ADA etc.) the OVB office with the existing Chief Officer Command Team 42 currently housed at Fire Station 88 in Sherman Oaks. As part of the implementation of the Four Geographic Bureaus in 2015, the OVB office, which is staffed by the OVB Bureau Chief and command staff, was temporarily placed at Fire Station 83 in Encino. The existing configuration of resources housed at separate locations negatively impacts optimal service delivery and public safety within the San Fernando Valley.
6. **Fire Inspection Management System (FIMS) Project Staffing - \$135,391:** Position authority and funding for one Programmer/Analyst V (\$60,391) and variable sworn staffing overtime (\$75,000) to assist in the development of and for ongoing maintenance of the new FIMS 2.0 system, which consolidates multiple disparate systems into an integrated and robust inspection system. A fully supported FIMS will increase inspection productivity and customer service, and help reduce current inspection backlogs.

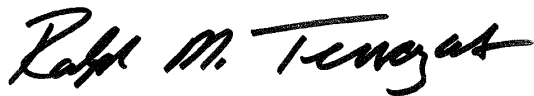
7. **Oil Well Fire Safety Inspections - \$64,425:** Position authority and funding for one Fire Inspector I to comply with the inspection of oil wells in the City of Los Angeles. The ongoing production of oil from oil wells and proper management of idle or abandoned wells is currently managed by one Fire Inspector I. The addition of this position will enable the Department to achieve full compliance with State mandated regulations. The program cost is offset by permit fees.
8. **Cannabis Enforcement Program Expenses - \$444,650:** Funding for related expenses including vehicles, inspection field equipment, computers and mobile devices for 10 Inspectors authorized in the Proposed FY 2019-20 Budget to inspect an estimated 1,200 Illegal Cannabis operations proliferating throughout the City. The program cost is offset by permit fees.
9. **Standards of Cover - \$200,000:** Funding increase to the \$200,000 in the Proposed Budget, for total funding of \$400,000, for development of a Standards of Cover study. This analysis will focus on performance metrics and the optimization of sworn resource deployment in an effort to guide strategic planning and address citywide first response needs. The amount requested is the minimum needed to produce a study that addresses the vast complexities of first responder needs in Los Angeles.
10. **Organizational Study - \$250,000:** Funding for a consultant study to assess current workplace issues of concern to members in the context of maintaining a respectful work environment and zero tolerance policies. The study will seek recommendations for resources to strengthen the Department's ability to more properly and efficiently respond to those issues. This request aligns with the Department's Strategic Plan goal to "create and implement an organizational structure to address human resources, personnel management and workplace environment."
11. **Youth and Preparatory Program Staffing and Expenses - \$215,491:** Position authority and funding for one Firefighter on special duty in the Recruitment Section to staff the High School Magnet, Cadet, and other preparatory programs (\$54,491). Additional funding is requested for variable staffing overtime to support recruitment events (\$75,000); for equipment purchases including tools, CPR training props and fitness equipment (\$74,000); and for risk mitigation (insurance, etc.) (\$12,000). The Department's Youth Development programs provide early education and orientation into a career with the LAFD. This early introduction supports our long term recruitment effort to hire diverse candidates.
12. **Cadet to Firefighter Program - \$62,400:** Funding to implement a pilot "train to hire" youth program. The program would provide on-the-job training to Cadets that possess EMT certification to enhance their preparation in becoming Firefighters. The funding would support eight youth workers assigned to four stations with Cadet Posts.
13. **Administrative Services Bureau (ASB) Workload Reduction:** Position authority without funding for:
 - a. One Personnel Analyst to address human resources workload demands. Staffing in the Personnel Services Section has not kept pace with expansion of the sworn workforce and ongoing work relating to new hires and turnover.

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- b. One Management Analyst to process a 200% workload increase over the past three years for disaster-related claims and reimbursements. The extreme level of wildland fire activity in recent year has become the new normal, but staffing has not kept pace to process billings to and reimbursements from other agencies in a timely manner.

I look forward to discussing the above items with the members of the Budget and Finance Committee and the City Council. I appreciate your consideration of my requests to enhance public and firefighter safety if additional funding is available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph M. Terrazas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
Fire Chief