

**BOARD OF FIRE
COMMISSIONERS**

DELIA IBARRA
PRESIDENT

ANDREW GLAZIER
VICE PRESIDENT

JIMMY H. HARA, M.D.
REBECCA NINBURG
JIMMIE WOODS-GRAY

LETICIA GOMEZ
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT II

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

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)

February 1, 2018

Ms. Patricia Berman, President
Downtown LA Neighborhood Council
P.O. Box #13096
Los Angeles, CA 90013-0096

Dear Ms. Berman:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning the City's efforts to reduce the occurrence of fires in the hillside areas of our City. Specifically, you explained that to the extent "additional resources" were being allocated to address fires in the hillsides, "additional resources" should also be allocated to the Downtown LA area to prevent fires there.

I concur. In this regard, the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) has added the following additional resources to the Downtown LA area to address the increased number of encampment fires and escalating Emergency Medical Service incidents:

- Engine 209 (At Fire Station 9) placed into operation 2016
- Fast Response Vehicle (FRV) placed into operation 2016
- SOBER Unit placed into operation 2017
- Advanced Provider Response Unit scheduled for activation in summer 2018

These units have and will continue to provide additional fire suppression and Emergency Medical Services coverage to the Downtown LA area. However, I know that these resources, alone, will not bring an end to encampment fires.

The City's efforts to reduce hillside fires and fires in Downtown LA are being coordinated by the Encampment Task Force, which Mayor Garcetti created subsequent to the "Skirball Fire." This Task Force is comprised of representatives of the Mayor's Office, LAFD, Los Angeles Police Department, Department of Sanitation, Department of Recreation and Parks, the Los Angeles Housing Services Authority, and the City Attorney's Office.

Ms. Patricia Berman, President

February 1, 2018

Page 2

Activities, including encampments, occurring in the hillside areas of the City (also known as the "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" or "VHFHSZ") are governed by strict regulations and prohibitions set forth in the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

The same or similar activities, when conducted outside the VHFHSZ, pose challenges unique to the areas of occurrence due to their magnitude, and limitations concerning disposition of personal property imposed by ordinances and court-imposed injunctions. Therefore, we are using the collective resources of our Task Force members to develop more effective ways to address this problem. Specifically, we are discussing potential mitigation efforts to combat tent and encampment fires which impact adjacent structures in densely zoned urban and industrial areas.

To that end, I would like to meet with you in the coming weeks for a brief tour of the areas of concern within your community. We will be contacting your office to schedule the tour at a mutually convenient date and time.

The Los Angeles Fire Department strives to create positive relationships with the communities that we serve, and I look forward to exploring solutions to this complicated problem with you in person.

Sincerely,



RALPH M. TERRAZAS

Fire Chief

Cc: Councilmember Jose Huizar
Controller Ron Galperin
LA City Council President Herb Wesson
City Administrative Officer Richard Llewellyn