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April 14, 2026

Re: CF 26-0386: Abandoned Structures Demolition / Fire Risk / Due Process Protocols / Owner Notification / Final Opportunity to Abate

To Whom It May Concern:

At a public meeting on April 14, 2026, the Board of Directors of the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council ("DLANC") voted to provide the following comments below:

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council submits this Community Impact Statement **in support** of CF 26-0386: Abandoned Structures Demolition / Fire Risk / Due Process Protocols / Owner Notification / Final Opportunity to Abate.

Downtown Los Angeles is experiencing a growing crisis of "Demolition by Neglect." Vacant structures that remain unsecured become highly susceptible to squatting, illegal activity, and subsequent fires. These risks are further intensified in non-compliant structures where excessive storage of hazardous materials, textiles, and other highly combustible items creates extremely dangerous conditions.

These conditions frequently result in major structure fires that damage adjacent properties, disrupt operations for nearby businesses, and significantly impact the livability of surrounding residents. Most critically, these preventable incidents place firefighters' lives at serious and unnecessary risk.

A [Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety \(LADBS\) report](#) dated December 20, 2024 (CF [24-1128](#)), and a [City Attorney's Office report](#) dated November 7, 2025 (CF [24-0196](#)), highlight longstanding staffing shortages and procedural challenges between LADBS and the City Attorney's Office related to the Vacant Building Abatement (VBA) program. These reports underscore systemic delays in enforcement and abatement efforts. Without additional funding and the restoration of adequate staffing levels, including LADBS inspectors and attorneys within the City Attorney's Office, the abatement of vacant and fire-damaged structures will remain significantly hindered, allowing these dangerous conditions to persist as an ongoing public safety threat.

DLANC recommends that the City explore the use of the Los Angeles Fire Department's Heavy Equipment Operators, where appropriate, to assist in the demolition of fire-damaged vacant structures that are prone to "repeat burns," as a proactive measure to prevent recurring incidents, in coordination with LADBS, the City Attorney's Office, and the Los Angeles Police Department.

Additionally, DLANC recommends that the City Council **consider adding an Amending Motion** to include the following instructions, and **to incorporate these priorities into the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget**:

1. Request the City Attorney, in consultation with LADBS, to report back within 60 days, with an updated report, on current processes and procedures for handling nuisance abatement referrals related to vacant, abandoned, and derelict structures and parcels, including identification of procedural inefficiencies and recommendations for streamlining enforcement. The report should also explore necessary reforms to [Division 89, Article 1, Chapter IX of the LAMC](#), and other applicable sections of the Municipal Code, to expedite the abatement of vacant and fire-damaged structures.
2. Request the City Attorney to report back within 60 days, with an updated report, on the current status of LADBS referrals for criminal filings, including any backlog, average processing times, and recommendations for expediting review and enforcement actions, including referrals to the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners where appropriate.
3. Instruct LADBS, in coordination with the City Administrative Officer (CAO), to report within 60 days on current staffing levels within the Vacant Building Abatement unit, recommended staffing ratios, and funding needs required to effectively address the existing caseload, and to identify positions and resources for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.
4. Instruct Los Angeles Fire Department, in coordination with LADBS and the City Attorney, to report within 60 days on the feasibility of utilizing Heavy Equipment Operators to support the expedited demolition of fire-damaged vacant structures that pose a high risk of repeat fires, including operational, legal, and resource considerations, and any associated budget needs for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget

The safety and well-being of Downtown Los Angeles residents, workers, and visitors depend on the City's ability to proactively address these chronic hazards. DLANC urges immediate and coordinated action, including necessary budgetary commitments, to resolve these longstanding gaps in enforcement and protect public safety.

Sincerely,

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY DLANC BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON APRIL 14, 2026

Jens Midthun
President,
DLANC

Heera Kapoor
Chair,
DLANC Livability Committee

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Cc: Mayor's Office of Public Safety (via email)
Office of the City Attorney (via email)
Operations Central Bureau, Los Angeles Fire Department (via email)

Fire Prevention & Public Safety Bureau, Los Angeles Fire Department (via email)

Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (via email)

Council District 3 (via email)

Council District 6 (via email)

Council District 14 (via email)