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March 7, 2025

The Honorable City Council
c/o Petty F. Santos
Office of the City Clerk
Room 360, City Hall

COUNCIL FILE NO. 25-0006-S23 – Special Motion 23 / Infrastructure Status/ Affected City-Owned Facilities – 2025 Windstorm and Wildfire Recovery

SUMMARY

This report provides the Bureau of Engineering's (BOE) evaluation and assessment of City-owned infrastructure impacted by the Palisades Fire and other January 2025 wildfires within the City. The report also includes a discussion of BOE's ongoing efforts in the assessment and recovery of fire impacts to infrastructure managed by other Departments in the City.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council RECEIVE AND FILE this report.

BACKGROUND

On January 7, 2025, a Declaration of Local Emergency was issued by the Office of the Mayor due to the development of a windstorm with gusts exceeding 100 miles per hour and extreme fire danger conditions, including active fires in the Pacific Palisades and Hollywood areas. An updated Declaration was issued on January 13, 2025, after the extensive damage caused by the Palisades Fire and other fires in the City. By the date of containment on February 20, 2025, the Palisades Fire had affected more than 27,000 acres. In addition to the loss of more than 5,000 homes and businesses, City infrastructure including parks, a library, a recreation center, retaining structures, and others were damaged or destroyed by the fires or are otherwise impacted.

On January 14, the City Council adopted Special Motion 25-0006-S23 which included instruction to the Department of Public Works and its Bureaus to evaluate and report on the status of infrastructure and facilities serving the communities impacted by the Palisades Fire and other wildfires across the City, and to report on the status of City-



owned buildings, facilities, service yards, and other resources that may have been impacted by the wildfires in the City.

DISCUSSION

As a result of the initial Declaration of Local Emergency and in coordination with the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during and after the Palisades, Sunset, Archer, and Hurst Fires, the Bureau of Engineering has worked to identify, inspect, and evaluate City infrastructure that may be impacted by the fires and emergency response. The BOE has responded to reports of damage and requests for inspection from the EOC coming from other City agencies and Council Offices, as well as State and Federal responders and members of the community.

The BOE's efforts have included inspection of hillsides for erosion control mitigation measures and the inspection of City infrastructure such as bridges, bulkheads, and tunnels.

For buildings, land, and parks managed by other Departments in the City, including locations where the BOE previously provided design and construction support, the BOE has also been supporting and supplementing the work of those agencies when requested to perform inspections and evaluations of fire impacts.

Inspection of the Sunset Fire area did not identify any impacted City infrastructure.

Inspection of the Archer Fire area only identified a minor amount of damage to a hillside concrete drainage ditch that requires repair.

Hillside Assessments and Mudslide and Erosion Mitigation

BOE teams have assessed the hillsides within the fire areas and provided recommendations for the installation of mudslide and erosion control mitigation measures. StreetsLA has implemented the recommended measures. To date, more than 10,000 sandbags have been placed, more than 10,000 linear feet of K-Rail have been installed, and over 1,000 square feet of tarp have been placed. BOE teams continue to monitor hillsides in the Palisades Fire area prior to and after each storm event.

Bridge and Tunnel Assessments

The BOE identified twenty-seven (27) City bridges and four (4) tunnels in the Palisades, Archer, and Hurst fire impact areas. The BOE has completed inspections and evaluations of each of these structures and determined that all of the bridges and tunnels are sound without significant impact from the fires. No further action is recommended.

Bulkhead Assessments

Several bulkheads and similar retaining structures provide support for the public right of way in hillside areas of the City. These bulkheads have been constructed over decades

to support and protect City streets from erosion and landslides. While current designs use steel and concrete, older bulkheads were constructed with wood.

No City bulkheads were identified within the Archer, Sunset, or Hurst fire areas. In the Palisades Fire area, the BOE has completed initial assessments of 19 bulkheads. Eight of the bulkheads did not sustain significant damage and are performing without need for repair. A bulkhead along Paseo Miramar was also undamaged, but the adjacent guardrail may need replacement. A damaged bulkhead on Enchanted Way had already been scheduled for replacement as part of the BOE's ongoing Hillside Slope Stability program before the fire. The design for this replacement has been completed and will be sent out to bid for construction soon.

Two bulkheads at Pintoresca Drive and Via De Las Olas were damaged but are no longer providing essential support to the public right of way. The bulkhead at Via De Las Olas is supporting a guardrail and may need to be repaired.

Final evaluations are complete for damaged bulkheads near 505 Bienvenida Avenue, 17470 Revello Drive, and 17632 Castellammare Drive and repair plans are being developed for each. Repairs are also needed at the bulkheads near 17537 Tramonto Drive and 559 Bienvenida Avenue, but further investigation is also needed at these two locations to determine the condition of the tieback elements of these bulkheads. Depending on the results of the additional testing, more significant repairs or even replacement may be needed.

Of note is the bulkhead supporting Porto Marina Way west of Lecco Lane in the Castellammare mesa area of the Palisades fire. This bulkhead was completely destroyed, compromising support for the street. The roadway doesn't provide direct access to any properties, and a detour is available to get from one side of the closure to the other. This affected portion of Porto Marina Way has been closed as an interim measure while the future of this street segment is being determined.

The BOE has given a very high priority to fire recovery efforts at 17507 Stretto Way, where a pre-existing upslope timber bulkhead has been destroyed and a landslide is completely blocking Stretto Way near the intersection with Castellammare Drive. This is the only road access to the upper part of Stretto Way and Posetano Road above creating a significant impact to recovery. A contract has been awarded to clear the debris and construct a retaining structure to restore access to the roadway. This work is being coordinated around the work by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to clear fire debris. Depending on the conditions uncovered during the work, further efforts may be necessary to fully secure Stretto Way in this area.

In addition, the destroyed house at 17432 Posetano Road was built into the hillside and provided support to a portion of Posetano Road. With the loss of the house, the road has been undermined and some type of retaining structure is needed to support the roadway. The BOE is evaluating alternatives for this repair.

BOE-Supported Projects

BOE is leading repairs on Temescal Canyon Road, a major north-south connection through the Palisades Fire area. Portions of the roadway were closed due to water seepage and severe damage to the pavement after the fire. BOE completed an assessment of the damage and has issued a contract for the installation of a subsurface drainage system and replacement of the damaged pavement.

We are also providing support to LA Sanitation & Environment (LASAN) utilizing emergency contractors to repair damaged storm drain pipes and pump plants, repair damaged sewer pipes and pump plants, and clear mud and debris from several debris basins. As this infrastructure is managed by LASAN, they will likely provide additional details in their respective report requested under this Council File.

Construction of the George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon was recently completed under BOE project management and was still under BOE maintenance agreements at the time of the Palisades Fire. Though the park appeared to act as a fire break for the eastern edge of the Palisades Fire for much of its length, the native vegetation, landscaping, and infrastructure of the park was subject to fire damage. Working with Recreation and Parks, BOE has initiated an assessment of the damage and necessity for repair including replacement of irrigation infrastructure and restoration of landscaping.

The Palisades Recreation Center at 851 Alma Real Drive experienced substantial fire impacts. Working with the Department of Recreation and Parks, BOE has completed a visual assessment of the partially damaged gymnasium building and other elements of the center. Based on the initial assessments, BOE has developed a preliminary scope and cost for rehabilitation and reconstruction. The City is also exploring partnerships to expedite and enhance reconstruction for the Rec Center.

The Palisades Branch Library was completely destroyed by the Palisades Fire. BOE has been working with the Library Department to develop a preliminary cost for a replacement building on the same property. BOE's objective is to generally reconstruct the facility as it was completed in 2003.

BOE's public counters process permits for work in the public right of way including excavation (E) permit, utility (U) permits, and (A) and (B) permits for other adjustments to the public right of way. For this reason, BOE helps coordinate with the companies who construct and maintain utilities below City streets and rights of way. In response to the fires, BOE has worked with the utility companies to cap gas lines and secure other utilities against risk. These emergency repairs have affected street surfaces and appearance in the impacted fire areas. The BOE is working with StreetsLA to evaluate these impacts and ensure that secure and effective utilities are in place to support future rebuilding while our streets and pavements are rehabilitated as needed and maintained to current standards.

FISCAL IMPACT

Receiving and filing this report has no fiscal impact. This report describes activities needed to assess, repair, and reconstruct facilities and infrastructure damaged by the January fires. The BOE is working closely with the City Administrative Office (CAO) to provide cost estimates and support efforts to secure Federal and State reimbursement for eligible costs.

If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Schmidt at Patrick.schmidt@lacity.org or (213) 923-5984.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ted Allen', is positioned over a red digital signature stamp. The stamp contains the word 'ENGINEERING' in blue, 'Electronic' in red, and 'Signed by Ted Allen' in red, along with a date and time stamp '2025 3:31 PM'.

Ted Allen, P.E.
City Engineer

TA/ps/bdm

Box\EXE_Ready for Signature\TSA\Outbox\Archived\2025\BOE Response Report to
CF 25-0006-S23 - 3-7-2025

cc: Randall Winston, Office of the Mayor
Vahid Khorsand, Board of Public Works