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AD HOC LA Recovery

MOTION

In the wake of the January 2025 windstorms, the Palisades and Eaton Fires, and other emerging fire emergencies, the Los Angeles region finds itself reeling from the constant threat and remnants of disaster. Too many Angelenos have seen homes destroyed, trees and vegetation scorched, storm drains filled to their brim, and existing infrastructure decimated. Our City must act swiftly in an extensive debris removal process that allows families and businesses to safely return and anticipates future rain and other hazards. Failing to clear the rubble could lead to further issues such as mudslides and water contamination. Through Emergency Executive Order 1, and subsequent legislation passed by this Council, the City of Los Angeles is stepping up through determined efforts to return and rebuild.

Given the scope of the disastrous fires, the federal government announced that it would reimburse the City for all eligible costs under the Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance Program, including 100 percent reimbursement for debris removal in the public right of way within the first 180 days. At the State level, Governor Newsom has signed a \$2.5 billion bipartisan relief package to expedite Los Angeles' recovery and rebuilding, prioritizing fire-affected communities, debris removal, and investing in mitigation measures to prevent future disasters. The LA County Board of Supervisors has established a comprehensive recovery framework to coordinate local efforts, address community needs, and ensure transparency in the recovery process. These coordinated actions reiterate the critical importance of multijurisdictional coordination to address this crisis and ensure an equitable recovery for all impacted communities.

The devastating impact of recent fires has underscored the critical need for equitable recovery efforts that safeguard public health and prioritize environmental justice. While the ongoing cleanup is essential for fire-ravaged communities to recover and heal, much of the fire debris contains hazardous materials, such as lead, asbestos, mercury, and other toxins, posing significant risks to both health and the environment. It is imperative that debris removal processes not only advance recovery but also protect the health and safety of all Angelenos, particularly those in communities with deep legacies of environmental injustice.

The East San Fernando Valley, long home to numerous landfills and waste facilities, has historically borne the brunt of environmental challenges, including odor, noise, and harmful emissions from disposal operations and the frequent movement of garbage trucks. These cumulative impacts disproportionately harm vulnerable communities and highlight the importance of ensuring that debris hauling and disposal efforts do not exacerbate existing inequities.

As we work together to recover from these fires, the City must reaffirm its commitment to equity by ensuring that no single area, especially historically overburdened areas like the East San Fernando Valley, bears a disproportionate burden of debris removal and storage operations. At the same time, the City must collaborate as one with our Federal, State, and County partners to ensure that recovery efforts move with urgency and reflect our shared values of fairness, health, and environmental stewardship.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Los Angeles Department of Sanitation and Environment (LASAN), with the assistance of the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) of the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), to report back within 15 days on the following:

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- **Debris Transport and Destinations**

- Identify all landfills and trash facilities where fire-related debris is being transported in the City;
- Provide detailed maps of these facilities and their proximity to vulnerable communities, particularly in the East San Fernando Valley.

- **Distribution Methodology**

- Describe the methodology being used to determine how debris is dispersed among landfills and facilities to ensure equitable distribution across the region.

- **Contractor Oversight**

- List the vendors and contractors being considered for debris hauling and storage that are based in the city, use existing public or private facilities in the City, or operate haul routes in the City
- Evaluate the geographic locations of these vendors to ensure no over-concentration of operations in the East Valley or other historically burdened areas.

- **Haul Routes**

- Provide a detailed analysis of the haul routes being used to transport debris out of fire-affected areas.
- Include measures to mitigate noise, air pollution, and safety risks in communities along these routes.

- **Hazardous Waste Management**

- Outline how hazardous waste is being identified, packaged, transported, and disposed of safely, ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations.
- Note which permits and other regulations will be removed or expedited as part of the recovery.
- Specify what safeguards are in place to protect communities from potential exposure to hazardous materials.

- **Debris Composition and Management**

- Provide a breakdown of the types of debris being removed, including hazardous waste, non-hazardous waste, green waste, and recyclable materials.
- Clarify whether any categories of debris are being managed or transported by entities outside of the City and under what conditions.

- **City-Owned Facilities in Fire Recovery**

- Identify any City-owned facilities that are being used as part of fire recovery efforts, including for debris processing, storage, or any other recovery-related operations.
- Provide a status update on the capacity, operations, and environmental monitoring at these facilities to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal standards.

- **Intergovernmental Collaboration**

- Detail LASAN and LADBS LEA efforts to coordinate with County, State, and Federal officials in the region's fire recovery efforts, including any collaborative agreements or partnerships.
- Include information on any funding or resources being secured through these partnerships to aid in debris management and environmental restoration.

- **Timeline for Debris Removal**

- I FURTHER MOVE** that LASAN and LADBS LEA advocate for an equitable distribution of debris management impacts in their coordination with our multijurisdictional partners working on the fire recovery, ensuring that historically overburdened areas like those in the East Valley, do not disproportionately shoulder the burden of debris hauling, storage, or processing. This includes identifying additional processing sites in less impacted areas, and strategies that balance our urgent work to recover and rebuild with our ongoing commitment to equity and environmental justice.

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SECONDED BY:

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