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April 21, 2021

The Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE MAYOR'S FISCAL YEAR 21/22 PROPOSED BUDGET

Dear Honorable Members:

The Bureau of Street Lighting (BSL) is appreciative of the opportunity to provide comments on the Mayor's FY21/22 Proposed Budget. The past year has been a challenge -- one similarly shared with our sister Bureaus and Departments -- and one we have been proud to meet. We recognize that there are still challenges ahead as the CAO's Four-Year Outlook shows the need to remain prudent for the next few years. To the greatest extent possible, we will manage our resources to minimize service impacts, but would like to highlight two items for consideration:

- Support needed to combat the drastic rise in copper wire and power theft
- Support needed to bridge the digital divide

Support Needed To Combat Copper Wire and Power Theft (CWPT)

CWPT incidents have dramatically increased in recent years, rising 338% between FY17/18 and FY19/20. At its worst our CWPT response times grew to over *two months* in FY19/20 and ultimately impacted our ability to respond to our more routine maintenance of "single light out" as we redeployed resources to address the situation. More metrics and details can be found in our 4/7/2021 report on COUNCIL FILE NO. 19-0600-S154. BSL sees this trend continuing and respectfully requests an additional \$2.8M from Gas Tax to combat CWPT, which will fund \$1.1M in hiring hall resources (equivalent to four additional crews), \$0.8M in overtime, and \$0.9M in materials. Along with the currently proposed \$1.8M, this will allow BSL to respond to the growing number of incidents while giving the flexibility to adjust as needed to a fluctuating fiscal environment.

Support Needed to Bridge the Digital Divide

BSL is proud of its work in expanding the co-location of 4G and 5G telecommunication assets on city street lights and has increased our rate of permitting 2600% over the last few years. However, there remains a wide digital divide to bridge, as one in ten Angelenos still live in

households without an internet subscription. Given this reality, the increased work within Los Angeles, and broader actions at the state and federal level, the city must become more proactive in its formulation of digital divide programming. We also see this position as capable of bringing additional resources to bear as philanthropic and government entities seek solutions to the divide and legislation is introduced, such as the proposed American Jobs Act. The Bureau would like to respectfully request a Senior Management Analyst II, funded from the Digital Inclusion Fund, to coordinate such tasks, and will work closely with other Public Works Bureaus and Departments.

The Bureau understands that the current environment requires a delicate balance: prudence to sustain the city long term coupled with strategic action to solve pressing issues now. We reiterate that we will live within our means and hope these additional considerations will help move the city in the right direction.

Should you have any questions on these considerations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Miguel Sangalang" followed by a stylized monogram or initials.

Miguel Sangalang
Executive Director
Bureau of Street Lighting