ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT
BUDGET & FINANCE
PLANNING & LAND USE MANAGEMENT

MOTION

On Friday, September 13, 2024, over 50 residents in Chinatown were displaced from their homes due to a fire that originated at 708-712 S. Depot Street, a construction site that had been left inactive by the owner since November of 2022. The fire spread to three neighboring apartment buildings — 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill. In total, 26 units were deemed unlivable due to the fire.

According to the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), a total of six patients were evaluated with two requiring hospital transport, including an elderly male in critical condition and an elderly female patient in fair condition with a non-life threatening burn injury. Four LAFD firefighters also sustained non-life threatening injuries while bravely responding to the fire.

The fire originated at an unoccupied new construction site that had been permitted since 2019 but which, according to the Department of Building and Safety, has had no construction activity since November 2022. According to LAPD and LAFD, several calls for services were responded to over the past year. Despite numerous calls from the community and the Council Office to address this abandoned construction site, the building was left unsecured, open to the public and vulnerable to nuisance activity.

When disasters render a multi-family residence uninhabitable, residents can face compounding fees and charges for municipal services such as water and sanitation services, ambulance fees for transport during the emergency, and more. The families who have been displaced by this fire are already facing the tragic loss of their homes and belongings. It is imperative that the City not allow them to face additional undue hardship through the accumulation of fees and charges.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Fire Department to waive all ambulance fees for fire victims from the fires that occurred at 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill on September 13, 2024.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council REQUEST the Department of Water and Power to adjust and waive all fees and charges for customers whose units were destroyed or damaged, from the fires that occurred at 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill starting on September 13, 2024 through one full billing cycle.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Bureau of Sanitation including recycLA to adjust and waive all fees and charges for customers whose units were destroyed or damaged, from the fires that occurred at 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill starting on September 13, 2024 through one full billing cycle.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council AUTHORIZE the Bureau of Sanitation and Department of Water and Power to provide a Sewer Service Charge adjustment based on the number of days in the billing cycle that sewer service was provided, for victims of the fire located at 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill.

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ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

I FURTHER MOVE that the LA Department of Building and Safety be instructed to adjust and waive all reasonable fees and charges for the property owners for repairs due to the fires that occurred at 716 S. New Depot Street, 849 Bunker Hill, and 877 Bunker Hill on September 13, 2024.

PRESENTED BY: _____
EUNISSES HERNANDEZ
Councilmember, 1st District

SECONDED BY: _____

ORIGINAL