

March 3, 2009

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE POLICY FOR
UNINCORPORATED AREA COMMUNITIES
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Adopt an Emergency Management Implementation Policy that provides for an Emergency Management Implementation Task Force to sustain emergency management planning strategies for unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County, as needed.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the following actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated in this Board letter.
2. Approve the unincorporated community Emergency Management Implementation Policy which provides for the establishment of Emergency Management Implementation Task Forces in the unincorporated areas to oversee the ongoing sustainability of community-specific unincorporated area emergency management planning strategies.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The recommended actions will establish a Board policy to provide for the structural framework to sustain emergency management planning strategies that have been completed for specific unincorporated communities. The Policy creates a mechanism for the Chief Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management (CEO/OEM) to establish and co-chair Emergency Management Implementation Task Forces with a community representative, selected by the respective Board Office, for specific unincorporated area communities. The Task Force will implement, review, update and monitor community emergency management planning strategies to assist

unincorporated area communities to be prepared to respond to large-scale disasters (Attachment). Guidelines have been developed for the formation of Emergency Management Implementation Task Forces for unincorporated area communities and are attached to the Policy.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The Policy supports County Strategic Plan, Goal 6: Community and Municipal Services, by improving the quality of life for the residents of Los Angeles County's unincorporated communities; and Goal 8, Public Safety, by increasing the safety and security of all County residents.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Topanga Canyon was the first unincorporated community for which a pilot emergency management planning strategy was initiated. As part of this planning process, the Topanga Disaster Survival Guide; and a Supplement to the Topanga Disaster Survival Guide, were prepared. In addition, the Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan is being developed. The Topanga community is prepared to move forward with formation of an Emergency Management Implementation Task Force for the purpose of sustaining its strategies. Additional funding is not being requested at this time for this initial Task Force; however, since CEO/OEM is the co-chair on the Task Force, should other unincorporated area communities develop emergency management planning strategies and thereby create a need for establishment of additional Task Forces, funding may be required to meet staffing requirements.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

On July 3, 2001, your Board approved the Strategic Plan for Municipal Services to Unincorporated Areas (UA Strategic Plan) with the objective of improving the delivery of, and accountability for, municipal services provided to the unincorporated area communities of Los Angeles County. The UA Strategic Plan included action plan models, one of which was *Action Plan F – Emergency Management Planning for Unincorporated Areas/County Communities*.

In December 2002, the Chief Administrative Office, Office of Unincorporated Area Services (CAO/OUAS) in conjunction with the Board Offices designated Topanga Canyon as the pilot area to develop an emergency management planning strategy that could ultimately be replicated in other unincorporated communities. A Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Chief Administrative Office/Office of Emergency Management (CAO/OEM) and a community leader selected by the Third Supervisorial District, worked with County, State and federal agencies as well as community organizations and businesses to develop the Topanga Disaster Survival Guide. The Topanga Steering Committee subsequently completed the Supplement to the Topanga Disaster Survival Guide, addressing disaster prevention, pet preparedness and recovery, and the draft Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan.

It became apparent that in order to ensure the sustainability of the Topanga Steering Committee's initiatives, an ongoing task force needed to be established that would continue to oversee

implementation of the emergency management planning strategies in the community. The proposed Policy is the recommended action that will allow for the continued emergency management planning as envisioned in the UA Strategic Plan by setting forth the following:

- *Joint Leadership between the County and the Community:* The Emergency Management Implementation Task Force would be co-chaired by the Chief Executive Office (CEO), OEM and a community leader, selected by the respective Board office.
- *County, State, Federal and Community Participation:* County departments would be included on the Task Force including the Sheriff, Animal Care and Control, Fire, and other departments such as Health Services, Mental Health, Public Health, Public Social Services and Public Works, as necessary. The Department of Parks and Recreation and the Office of Public Safety would participate in those unincorporated areas that have park facilities. State and federal agencies would be included as well as community leaders, businesses and appropriate utility representatives.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:* The Task Force would: (1) implement, review, update and monitor community specific emergency management planning strategies that include preparedness, response and recovery and advise the CEO and the Board of pertinent concerns and issues; (2) carry out emergency planning exercises that would be evaluated and modified as required; (3) ensure community involvement and provide educational outreach on matters related to emergency management planning; and (4) convene after any significant disaster affecting the community which it represents to evaluate and update that community's emergency management planning strategies based on lessons learned during a disaster.

The Los Angeles County Audit Committee approved the Policy on December 18, 2008. In addition, County Counsel has approved the Policy and guidelines as to form.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The proposed actions are not subject to, and/or are exempt from, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on several grounds, including that: (1) the activities do not constitute a "project" in that they involve organizational or administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5); (2) the activities are covered by the general rule that CEQA does not apply where, as here, it can be seen with certainty that the activities will not have a significant effect on the environment, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3); and (3) the activities consist of resource evaluation, experimental management, research, and basic data collection and, as such, are categorically exempt, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15306.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
March 3, 2009
Page 4

The Policy will ensure ongoing focus is placed on emergency management planning strategies for unincorporated communities through the establishment of community specific Emergency Management Implementation Task Forces. Additionally, this collaborative effort between governmental agencies and the community will foster and enhance development of emergency management planning coordination and efficiencies that will ultimately benefit the constituents of the unincorporated area communities.

CONCLUSION

Adoption of this Policy by your Board will enable County departments to form and participate in implementation of ongoing emergency management planning strategies for unincorporated area communities.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:LS
DSP:MJS:

Attachments (2)

c: County Counsel
Sheriff
Director, Animal Care and Control
Fire Chief
Director and Chief Medical Officer, Health Services
Director, Mental Health
Acting Chief, Office of Public Safety
Director, Parks and Recreation
Director and Health Officer, Public Health
Director, Public Social Services
Director, Public Works

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
March 3, 2009
Page 5

K:\CMS - Budget\Board Letters Agenda 09 (WORD)\021709 CEO_Emergency Management Task Force Policy_Bd Ltr_final.doc