

**Protecting and Preparing Communities for Flood Impacts Due to Climate Change**

The County of Los Angeles (County) continues to face serious challenges to lower the risk of climate change on our residents, especially in communities of color that are disproportionately impacted. In response to these challenges, the Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken action to mitigate climate change impacts. In August 2019, the Board unanimously adopted the “Our County Sustainability Plan” that addresses many of the most pressing sustainability issues impacting disadvantaged and vulnerable communities. In August 2021, the Board instructed Public Works to complete an Equity in Infrastructure assessment to ensure infrastructure planning, design, and construction is fair and equitable across the County. The Chief Sustainability Office (CSO) has also released a Climate Vulnerability Assessment containing the expected impacts of climate change from heat storms, wildfires, droughts, inland flooding, and sea level rise. Finally, in April 2022, the Board instructed the Department of Public Health to establish the Office of Environmental Justice and Climate Health to serve as a central hub for health focused environmental justice and climate health goals.

**MOTION**

SOLIS	_____
MITCHELL	_____
HORVATH	_____
BARGER	_____
HAHN	_____

Despite these actions, we are already facing the harsh reality and impact of climate change in our communities. The relentless rise in greenhouse gas emissions over the past century has led to an unprecedented rise in global temperature. The consequence of the warming trend is that natural disasters are increasing in frequency and severity around the world and occurring faster than scientists previously expected.

Locally, Los Angeles County is experiencing more extreme and severe weather that leads to a higher frequency of natural disasters such as drought, fire, mudflows, and flooding. As a result, the County's Flood Control District initiated a study with the University of California Los Angeles to assess the performance of the County's stormwater infrastructure in a climate-altered future. Academic research also revealed impacts of climate change on low-income communities of color. The University of California Irvine recently published a technical paper discussing major flood risk and concludes that low-income communities and communities of color between the Dominguez Channel and the Los Angeles River including the communities of Carson, Paramount, Compton, Bell Gardens, South Gate, North Long Beach and portions of downtown Long Beach, are some of the most vulnerable to localized flooding.

It is the County's responsibility to take a proactive role in combating climate change and ensuring flood protection in our communities. Major investments in stormwater infrastructure such as dams, reservoirs, and channels have increased our ability to boost local water supply, improve water quality, and reduce flood risk during severe storms. The County also participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which enables homeowners, business owners and renters to purchase federally backed flood insurance at discount based on Public Works' outreach and other mitigation efforts. Moving forward, we must increase our focus on protecting and preparing residents to brace for the inevitable

impacts of a changing climate, while increasing efforts to inform and educate communities about how to mitigate their flood risk.

**WE, THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of the Department of Public Works, acting as Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, in coordination with the Chief Sustainability Office, to report back in writing in 90 days on the following:

1. An assessment of the County's stormwater infrastructure and a plan to make infrastructure enhancements to reduce flood risk, increase water supply through stormwater capture and groundwater recharge, and improve water quality in Los Angeles County;
2. The Department's plan to advance equity and climate resiliency in stormwater infrastructure planning, design, and capital improvements;
3. A plan to integrate policy, studies, plans, reports, and data with the input of residents, landowners, and other key community stakeholders into stormwater infrastructure planning, design and capital improvements to address the impact of flood risk consistent with the Our County Sustainability Plan, the County's Climate Vulnerability Assessment, the County Water Plan, and the Equity in Infrastructure initiative;
4. The Department's efforts to prepare communities for the impacts of a changing climate and educational efforts to inform residents on how to mitigate their flood risk with a focus on vulnerable and uninsured communities; and
5. A plan to advocate for local, state, and federal funding opportunities to reduce flood risk in Los Angeles County, particularly in vulnerable and disadvantaged

communities and the necessary strategic partners to assist the County in advancing equity and climate resiliency in stormwater infrastructure planning, design, and capital improvements.

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