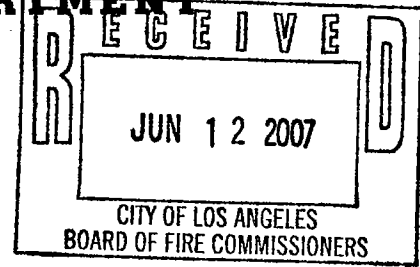




JUN 19 2007

BFC 07-046

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENTDOUGLAS L. BARRY
INTERIM FIRE CHIEFBOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. BFC 07-046

June 12, 2007

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Douglas L. Barry, Interim Fire Chief *DLB*

SUBJECT: **RECOMMENDATION ON AUTOMATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION SERVICES UNIT
AND DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIFIED FIRE INSPECTION SYSTEM**

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Recommendations:

That the Board:

1. Ratify the May 8, 2007, action by the Construction Services Committee in approving funding in the amount of \$226,995 for various capital equipment and expense items for beginning upgrading and improving construction services related systems and processes for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Construction Services Unit, and
2. Approve the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software package that will meet the Department's Unified Fire Safety Inspection System (UFIS) requirements for the Construction Services Unit.

Summary.

On August 11, 2004, the City of Los Angeles (City) adopted an ordinance (No. 176075) that authorized the LAFD to charge fees for construction services rendered to the public as they relate to the City's One-Stop Centers. The effect of the ordinance has proven to be financially beneficial as the Department is currently generating \$3.4 million in annual revenue for the City, and on pace to potentially generate an additional \$2 million per year. With this revenue surplus, the LAFD will be able to:

- Recover the annual costs of system support staff,
- Implement an automated system to streamline and enhance current workflows,
- Improve the efficiency of Construction Services processes, and
- Establish a robust and reliable system.

The proposed system shall be capable of tracking additional inspections and re-inspections, a service for which the Department is authorized to charge, but has not yet implemented.

The City Administrative Officer (CAO) commissioned and funded the LAFD Management Information Systems Division (MISD) to conduct an analysis on the current LAFD plan-check and inspection processes. The following are discussions, findings and recommendations on how to proceed with a solution and implement an automated system for the LAFD Construction Services Unit.

1) LAFD Construction Services Unit

LAFD staff works in conjunction with the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) to provide construction plan reviews, inspections, and approvals for building and occupancy through the City's One-Stop Centers. Currently, LAFD Construction Services staff members use the Fire Log; LADBS Plan Check and Inspection System (PCIS); databases and spreadsheets developed in-house to track inspection activities; and document billings for specific projects such as Playa Vista and Los Angeles Unified School District projects. These stand-alone systems and databases require tedious data entry and cumbersome manual processes to effectively bill customers for select inspection activities. Due to lack of system integration and system functionality, LAFD Construction Services processes in this area are inefficient, resulting in loss of potential revenue needed to optimize cost recovery for the full range of services provided.

As suggested by the CAO, the study also explored an alternate solution, to leverage other City investments, such as using PCIS for the Construction Services Unit. The study concluded that due to a decade-old design and the use of non-City standard development tools, PCIS was not an ideal solution for Construction Services. Costly to maintain, difficult to enhance, and near the end of its useful system life cycle, PCIS may not be able to meet the additional requirements as businesses and legal mandates continue to evolve without significant and costly enhancements.

The release of the Request for Proposal and selection of a successful proposal will lead to a contract to automate the Construction Services Unit. It is estimated that it will take one year to implement the new system. The contract will also allow the Department to implement the proposed Unified Fire Safety Inspection System (UFIS).

2) Unified Fire Safety Inspection System

As a result of the analysis of the LAFD inspection and permitting processes, the report recommended that the Department release a RFP to select a COTS that will consolidate all of the Department's inspection systems and databases into a unified inspection and permitting system or UFIS. Taking a phased-in approach the cost can be distributed over a 3-year period.

The proposed UFIS will:

- Provide cost effective implementation of technological improvements,
- Create an integrated database platform,
- Improve support, and
- Reduce system administration time and cost.

3) Three-year Implementation Plan for UFIS

The report also recommended that the LAFD use a phased-in approach with a three-year plan to include the implementation of the Construction Services Inspection System and then the balance of the Department's inspection systems, as follows:

- Vegetation Management System for Brush Clearance Inspection Program
- Film Inspection
- High-Rise Building Inspection System
- Integrated Inspection System (IISYS)
- Fire Prevention Occupancy System (FPOS)

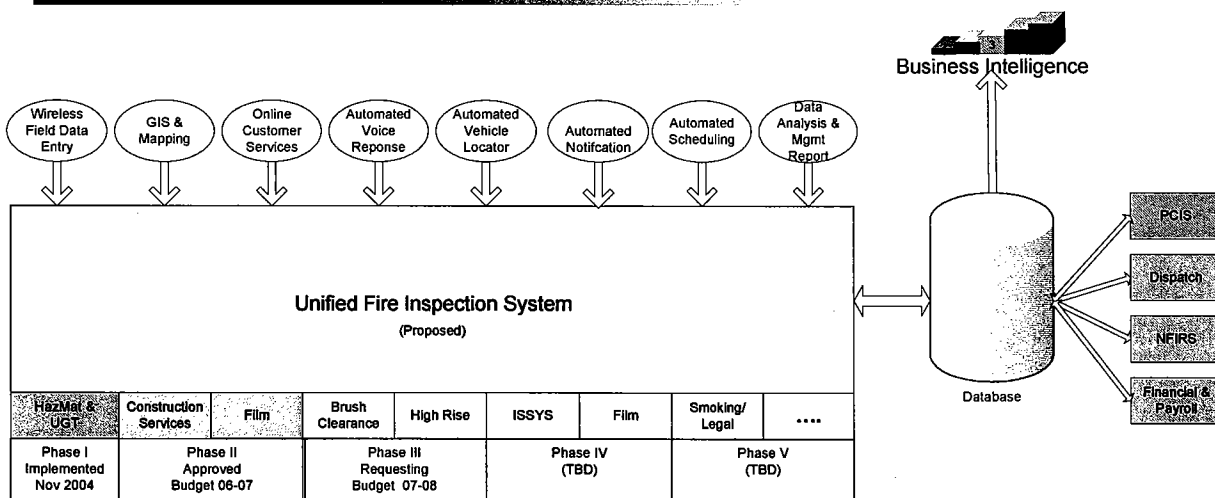
- Fire Prevention Legal Tracking System
- Smoking Ordinance Tracking System
- Legal Tracking System

It was further proposed in the report, that the UFIS shall also provide an interface with the inspection systems of other City departments (i.e. LADBS Plan Check and Inspection System) as well as programs of external agencies that regularly conduct businesses with the City.

The three-year, phased-in approach is both fiscally sound and a practical project management methodology that will optimize resource allocation and usage that will coincide with the LAFD's fiscal year funding. The following diagram illustrates the proposal; identifies the integration of data sources; specifies the implementation timeline; and addresses current problems and benefits. The use of business intelligence, which is the ability to generate detailed reports from various sources, will further enhance decision-making.

**City of Los Angeles
FIRE Department
Proposed Unified Fire Inspection System**

February 2007



<u>Current Problems</u>		<u>3-year Implementation Plan</u>		<u>Department-wide Benefits</u>	
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Scattered Systems/Database/Files	Phase I: CUPA HazMat Inspection System (Cmp Nov 2004)		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Accurate & Timely Information across the board
	Difficult to maintain antiquated system & isolated database platforms	Phase II: Construction Services & Film (Est. Completion June 2008)			Centralized Management of Data & Inventory & System
	Redundant & Inaccurate Data	Phase III: Brush Clearance & High Rise (Est. Completion June 2009)			Economy of Scale & Ease of implementing upgrades/enhancements across the board
	No Centralized Reporting Capabilities	Phase IV: ISSYS (Est. Completion December 2009) FPOS			E-Gov, E-Payment, Online Customer Services
	Limited Accessibility to data	Phase V: Smoking (Est. Completion December 2009) FPB Legal Tracking System			Maps & Geographic Interface Systems
	Limited disaster & recovery options				Voice Integrated Response
					Wireless Field Data Entry

4) Fiscal Impact

Without a reliable and robust tracking system, the Construction Services Unit will face much adversity attempting to bill and collect the hourly fees for additional inspection and re-inspection services (an estimated \$2 million per year). With the implementation of an automated system, the Construction Services Unit will be able to effectively track and manage its inspection activities, workflow, and revenue.

On May 8, 2007, the Construction Services Committee approved funds in the amount of \$226,995. This initial funding was for various capital equipment and expense items for the purpose of beginning upgrading and improving construction services related systems and processes. The Construction Services Committee has expressed support for funding the project. Therefore, additional funding is pending the Board of Fire Commissioners adoption of this Board Report and based on the cost of the successful vendor proposal and final contract negotiations.

Conclusion:

This request reflects the second phase of a multi-year project to unify all LAFD permitting and inspection systems. By automating the Construction Services Task Force processes the potential exists to generate an additional \$2 million per year. Therefore, it is expected that the Department will recover the annual costs of systems support staff, improve processing efficiencies in construction permitting and inspections, and establish a strong foundation for a unified inspection system.

Board report prepared by William D. Bloemhof, Director of Systems, Management Information Systems Division

Attachments



CITY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

DATE: June 6, 2007

TO: Los Angeles Fire Department Board of Commissioners

FROM: Daniel Falcon Jr., Chairperson of the Construction Services Committee

SUBJECT: Los Angeles Fire Department Unified Fire Safety Inspection System

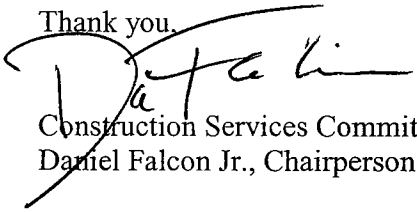
At its meeting of May 8, 2007, the Construction Services Committee considered a Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) request for funding from the Construction Services Trust Fund in the amount of \$226,995 for the purchase of new mobile devices and related hardware and software for the department's proposed new Unified Fire Safety Inspection System.

LAFD staff stated at the meeting that the project would streamline and enhance work-flow, and improve the efficiency of one-stop permit processing with respect to the tracking of inspection and re-inspections. The Committee unanimously approved the LAFD request and agreed that the proposed requested action aims to improve the permitting process at the department's one-stop permit counters, a primary funding criteria of the Construction Services Committee.

However, a major concern raised by several members of the Committee was whether the department had presented its proposed project plans to the LAFD Board of Commissioners for consideration. LAFD stated that they had not and were going to do so at the next available Board of Commissioners meeting.

The Construction Services Committee is in full support of the LAFD proposed project and is committed to funding the proposed requested amount (\$226,995) from the Construction Services Trust Fund, subject to the approval of the LAFD Board of Commissioners. The Construction Services Committee will also support modifications and/or financial adjustments within the approved amount made to the project by the LAFD Board of Commissioners. Please note that if any budget increases are required by the LAFD Board of Commissioners, the increase request will need to return to the Construction Services Committee for review and approval.

Thank you.


Construction Services Committee
Daniel Falcon Jr., Chairperson

OFFICE OF THE
FIRE CHIEF
10 MAY 07 15 20

0220-00110-0285 to 0220-00110-0289

TRANSMITTAL

TO The Council	DATE	COUNCIL FILE NO.
FROM The Construction Services Committee		COUNCIL DISTRICT

**Request from the Los Angeles Fire Department for funding
from the Construction Services Trust Fund
for a Unified Fire Safety Inspection System**

Transmitted for your consideration. See the
City Administrative Officer report attached.

Construction Services Committee

KLS:RMK:04070169dt

Report From
OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
Analysis of Request for Funding from
Construction Services Trust Fund No. 438-50

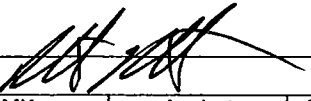
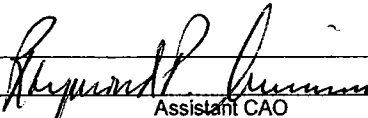
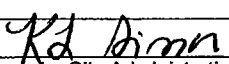
0220-00110-0285 to 0220-00110-0289

To: Construction Services Committee		Date: 05-04-07	
Department Requesting: Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD)		Reference: Five LAFD Requests dated February 9, 2007	
Type of Request	(X) Capital Item	(X) Operating Expenditure	() Other
Project Title: Various Capital Equipment and Expense Items			
Amounts Requested: A total of \$226,995			
Construction Services Committee Criteria			
	Yes	No	
Reduces waiting time for applicants	X		Makes services more accessible
Reduces cost to applicants		X	Makes services more decentralized
Makes application process simpler	X		Consolidates approval process
Improves code compliance	X		

COMMENTS:

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) has submitted five requests for funding from the Construction Services Trust Fund, No. 438-50 (Fund) to purchase various capital equipment and expense items that have been identified below. With the purchase of these technology items for construction services related elements within the Fire Prevention Bureau (Bureau), the LAFD will be able to begin upgrading and improving its antiquated construction services related systems and processes for the future.

- Funding of \$49,998 for a storage area network that will allow a number of storage devices and tape libraries to connect to the main applications server identified below;
- Funding of \$49,997 for an applications server (\$24,999) and a database server license (\$24,998) required for the implementation of a new unified fire safety inspection system (System);
- Funding of \$48,000 for 16 laptop personal computers (Laptops) for construction inspection field staff to allow Fire Inspectors to capture and enter data in the field. The 16 Laptops are critical to the implementation of the new System identified above and will allow staff to become more effective and efficient in their work;
- Funding of \$43,000 for a backup tape library (\$25,000) and three development computers with standard and developmental software for one-stop center staff (\$18,000); and,
- Funding of \$36,000 for 12 Laptops for plan check and other construction-related field staff to allow staff to capture and enter data in the field. The 12 Laptops are critical to the implementation of the new System identified above and will allow staff to become more effective and efficient in their work.

		
RMK	Analyst	04070169d
Assistant CAO		City Administrative Officer

07/09/2003

Technology Items/Expenses	Estimated Cost
Storage Area Network	\$ 49,998
Subtotal Request 1:	\$ 49,998
Applications Server	\$ 24,999
Database Server License	24,998
Subtotal Request 2:	\$ 49,997
Mobile Devices for Field Data Capture (16 Laptops)	\$ 48,000
Subtotal Request 3:	\$ 48,000
Backup Tape Library	\$ 25,000
Developmental Personal Computer (three each)	9,000
Standard Office and Development Software (three each)	9,000
Subtotal Request 4:	\$ 43,000
Mobile Devices for Field Data Capture (12 Laptops)	\$ 36,000
Subtotal Request 5:	\$ 36,000
Total Requests:	\$ 226,995

The LAFD indicates that the combined effect of these technology improvements will produce a more reliable System while streamlining and improving existing processes for the Bureau's construction inspection staff and others. In addition, subsequent to the implementation of the System, tracking costs electronically through the System (rather than manually auditing the Bureau on an annual basis) will allow LAFD to more easily determine adjustments that need to be made to various rates and fees to ensure full-cost recovery for the services being provided.

These actions are in compliance with the City's Financial Policies in that special one-time funds will be used for one-time expenditures. However, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 5.321, the five LAFD requests combined exceed the \$50,000 maximum that can be transferred and must be submitted to the Mayor and City Council for consideration and approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Construction Services Committee:

1. Approve funding for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) totaling \$226,995 for the following capital equipment and expense items:

- A. Funding in the amount of \$49,998 for a new storage area network;
 - B. Funding in the amount of \$49,997 for an applications server (\$24,999) and a database server license (\$24,998);
 - C. Funding in the amount of \$48,000 for 16 laptop personal computers for construction inspection field staff;
 - D. Funding in the amount of \$43,000 for a backup tape library (\$25,000) and three development computers with standard and developmental software (\$18,000) for one-stop center staff; and,
 - E. Funding in the amount of \$36,000 for 12 laptop personal computers for plan check and other construction-related field staff.
2. Upon funding approval for the LAFD, and in accordance with Administrative Code Section 5.321, forward this report and recommendations to the Mayor and City Council for approval.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The source of funds is the Construction Services Trust Fund, which has sufficient funds to finance these eligible requests. The recommended actions are in compliance with the City's Financial Policies in that special one-time funds are being used for one-time expenditures.