

West Hollywood General Plan Safety Background Report

Providing a safe living environment is a fundamental goal and one of the most important challenges cities face today. Anticipating, planning for, and guarding against threats to public safety and welfare represent a critical function of government. This background report addresses the major public safety issues relevant to West Hollywood.

The City of West Hollywood is located in a region exposed to environmental hazards that have the potential to cause natural disasters, including earthquakes and associated seismic hazards and wildland fires that could sweep down from the hills to the north. Additionally, the threat of terrorism and other homeland security issues has pushed safety issues and preparedness into the public consciousness. Residents and businesses look to the City to protect the community from threats to public safety.

People recognize that a low crime rate, fire prevention, and reliable emergency response services contribute to the attractiveness of West Hollywood. While the City has no control over natural disasters, it can, and has, set forth policies to minimize exposure to these hazards. By identifying threats to safety, the City can better guard against disasters and develop effective response plans. Toward this end, the following issues are examined as relevant to the General Plan update effort:

- Flood and inundation
- Urban and wildland fires
- Emergency response
- Terrorism/National Security Emergency

Seismic hazards and non-seismic geologic hazards are addressed in the Geologic and Seismic Technical Background Report, prepared by KFM Geosciences.

The following documents were consulted in the preparation of this report:

- City of West Hollywood Safety Element (2001)
- City of West Hollywood SEMS/NIMS Emergency Plan (2006)
- Melrose Triangle Draft Environmental Impact Report (2008)
- The Lot Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (2006)
- West Hollywood Is Prepared – An emergency preparedness manual for the West Hollywood Community (2001)
- County of Los Angeles Draft Safety Element (2007)
- State of California Terrorism Response Plan (2001)
- Municipal Water District 2007 Groundwater Assessment Study (2007)
- West Hollywood Hazardous Materials Plan (2006 update)
- FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps

Flood and Inundation

The Los Angeles Basin, of which West Hollywood is a part, has historically experienced flooding during major winter storms. The City itself is situated on relatively high ground and does not have a major waterway subject to flood hazards. The City is, however, located at the base of mountains with steep narrow canyons that drain into the City.

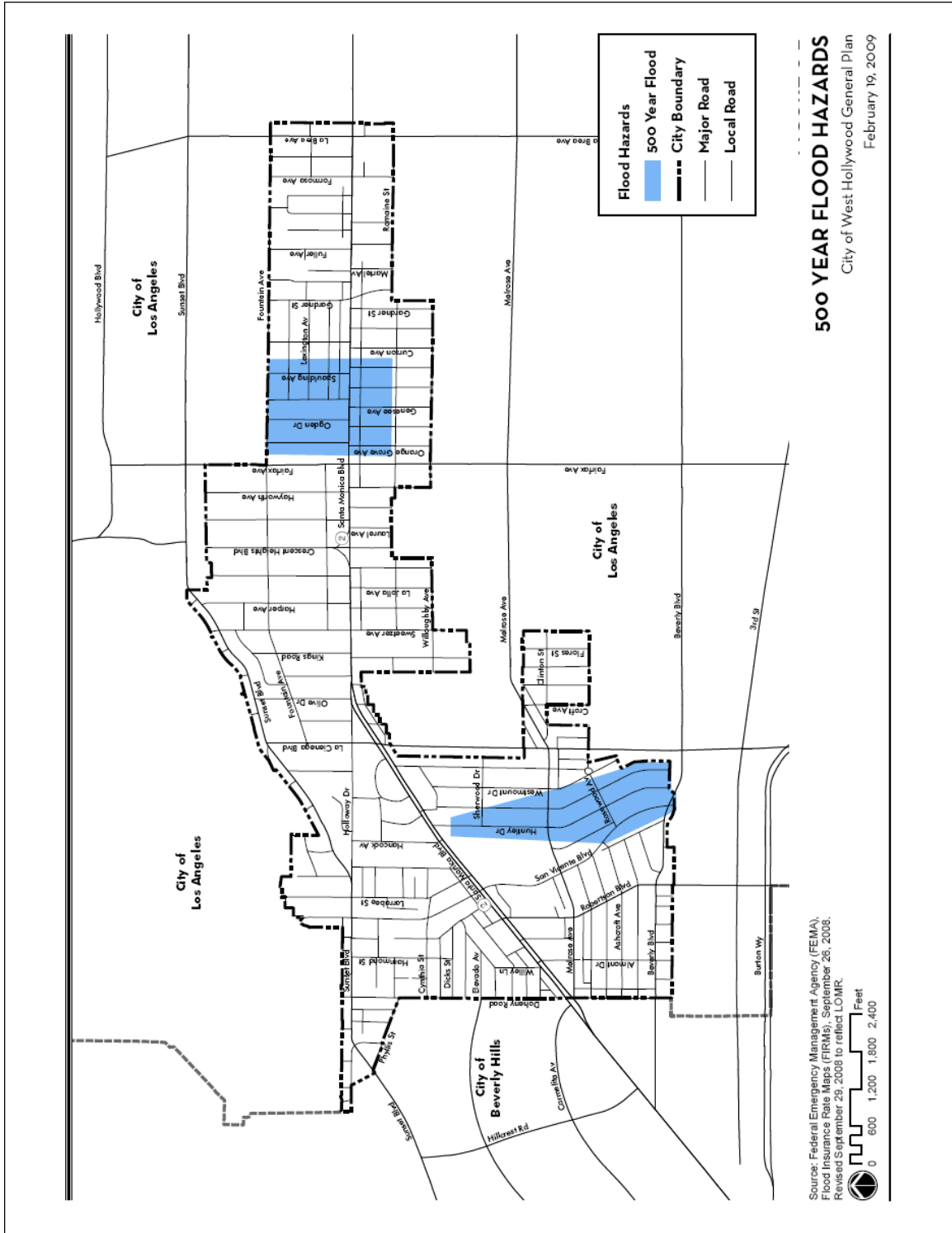
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes flood zone maps for insurance purposes. These maps designate 100- and 500-year flood hazard areas. These designations do not mean that flooding happens in that area every 100 or 500 years. Rather, within a 100-year flood hazard area, there is a one-percent chance every year of a flood occurring. In a 500-year flood hazard area, likewise, there is a 0.2 percent chance. These percentages mean, of course, that over time the frequency of flooding will average out to once every 100 years or once every 500 years, but this does not mean that it is not possible (though unlikely) for two 500-year floods to happen within months of each other.

The most recent FEMA flood maps (from 2008) show that two areas of the City are vulnerable to 500-year floods (see Figure S-2). Recently, the County of Los Angeles has completed the Hollyhills Project, a massive upgrade of the storm drain system affecting large sections of the Los Angeles Basin, including West Hollywood. One of the aims of this project was to eliminate the 100-year flood risk from West Hollywood, reducing the affected area and converting it to a 500-year flood risk.

No major dams or open reservoirs exist in the mountains above the City. However, the Hollywood Reservoir exists to the east of the City, and Franklin Dam and Greystone Reservoir exist to the west. A dam rupture at one of these locations would likely inundate a portion of the City. For the Hollywood Reservoir, the inundation area on the east side of the City might extend as far west as Gardner Street (Figure S-2).

A few steel reservoir tanks exist in the mountains upslope of the City. Failure of one of these tanks could potentially adversely impact property down slope.

Figure S-1



Urban and Wildland Fires

West Hollywood sits at the base of the Hollywood Hills, which includes residential neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles. The developed portions of the Hollywood Hills are densely populated mostly by single-family homes and some apartment buildings. Roads are difficult to navigate, and significant native vegetation and brush cover the undeveloped areas between homes and neighborhoods. A fire in the Hollywood Hills could easily spread to the northern region of the City of West Hollywood, which is also densely populated, potentially making large evacuations difficult. Figure S-4 illustrates wildland fire hazard zones.

Urban fires have the potential to result from careless human activity or in the event of an earthquake and resultant strong ground shaking and liquefaction. In the United States, fires following earthquakes have caused the largest losses associated with earthquakes. Urban fires following earthquakes are driven by two key features: 1) the earthquake is likely to ignite multiple, nearly simultaneous fires; and 2) the earthquake is likely to damage and disrupt fire suppression by severing water pipelines and delaying the arrival of adequate fire-fighting equipment and personnel.

In the event of an urban fire, fire growth (that is, the ability of the fire to spread beyond its point of origin) is related to building density, types of building construction, the presence and amount of flammable materials, wind speed and direction, width of fire breaks, water supply, time of fire department arrival, and available fire fighter resources.

There are no petrochemical or industrial plants in the City; thus, the risk of an oil or industrial fire does not exist. There is one oil field – the Salt Lake oil field which lies underneath much of the Los Angeles Basin – but it is isolated along Beverly Boulevard at the southwest margin of the City, and the nearest well is outside the City boundaries, on the property of the Beverly Center.

Figure S-2

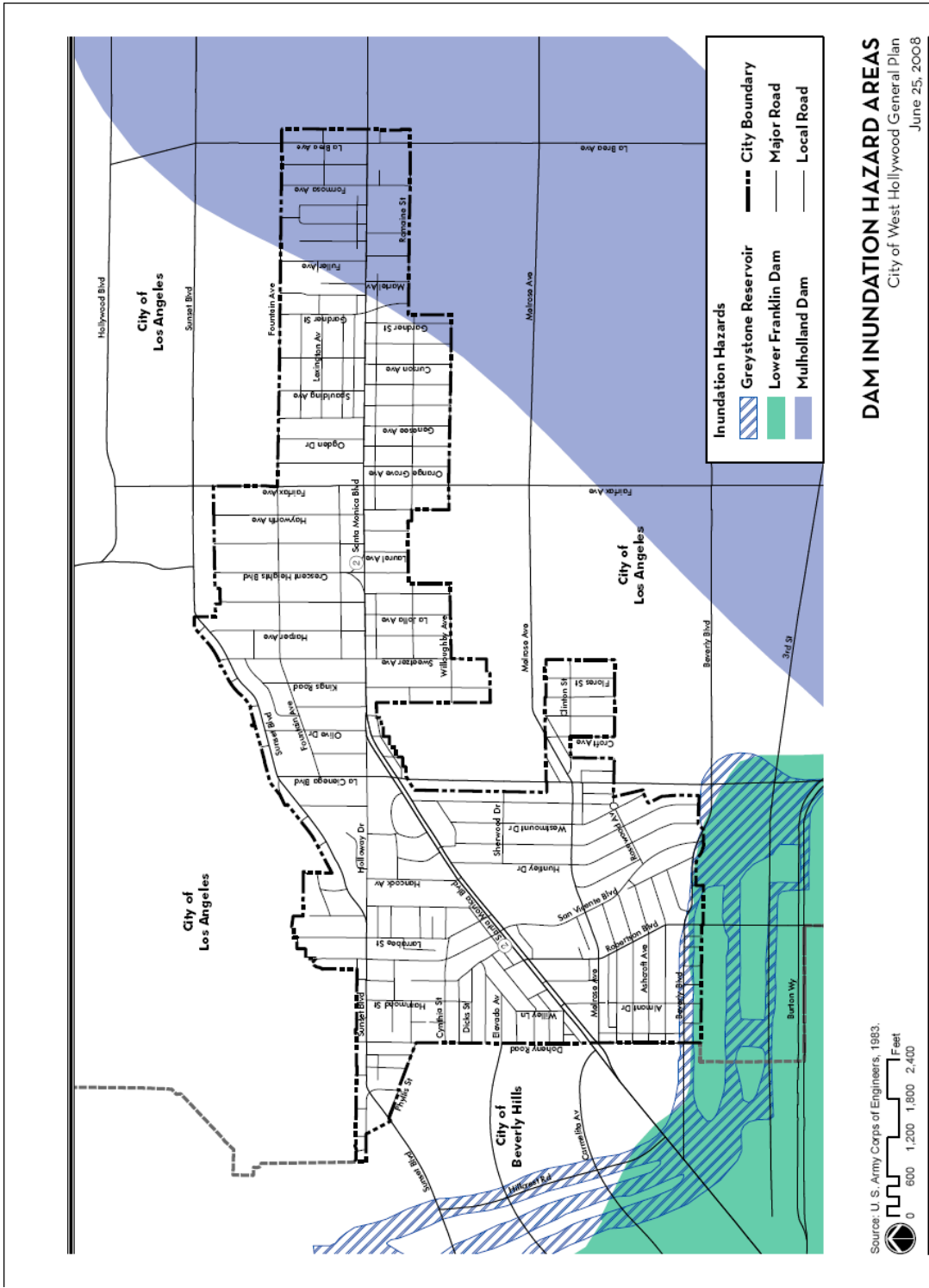
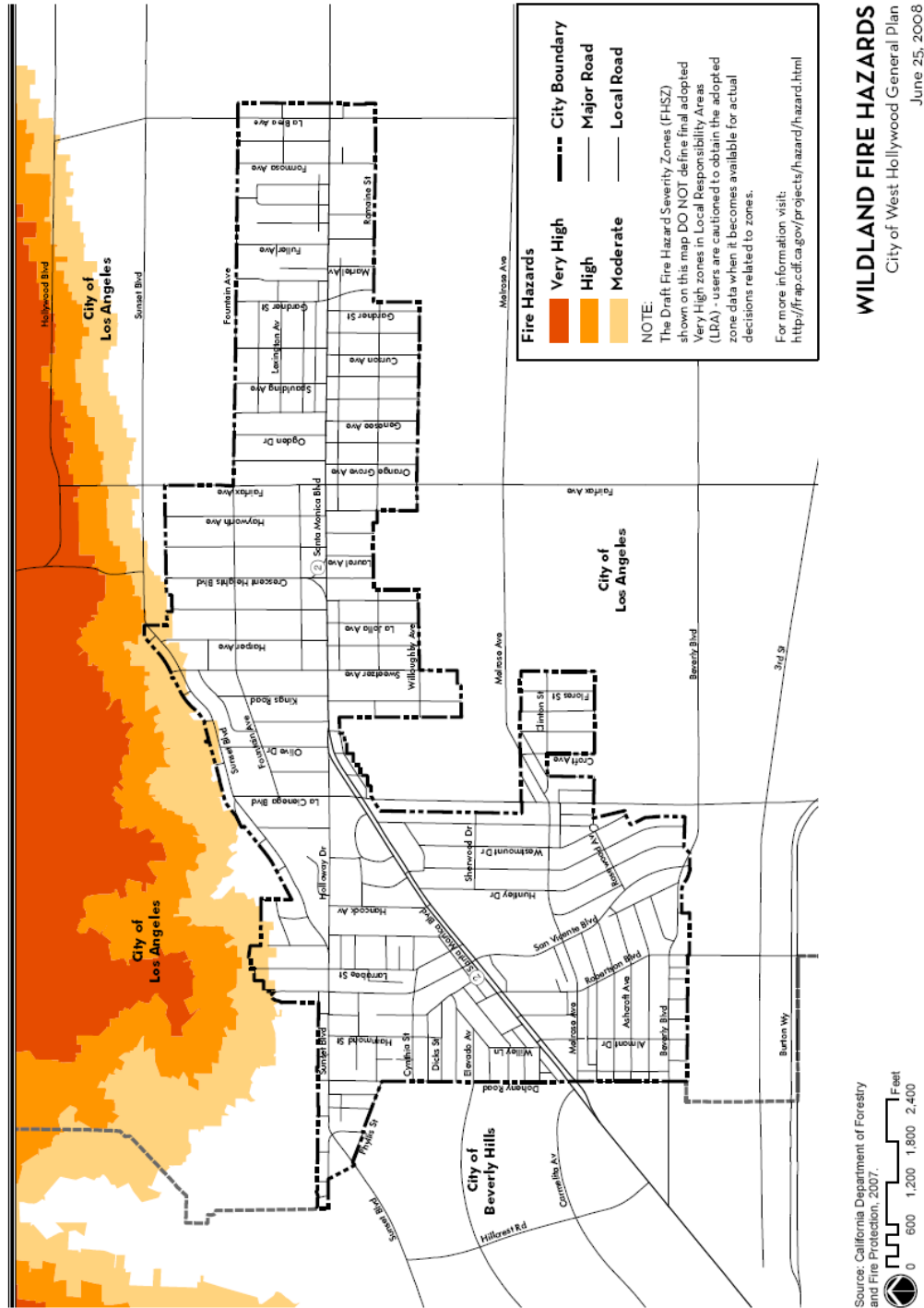


Figure S-3



WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS
City of West Hollywood General Plan
June 25, 2008

First Responders

Fire Safety

Fire protection services are provided to the City of West Hollywood through the Consolidated Fire Protection District by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD). The LACFD is comprised of 170 fire stations, numerous ground and air resources, as well as specialized equipment for Urban Search & Rescue and Hazardous Materials. The LACFD serves almost four million residents, 1.1 million housing units, 58 district cities, 2,296 total square miles, 72 miles of beach area, and 31 miles of public beach. The City of West Hollywood is located in Battalion 1, which comprises six fire stations (two located within city boundaries), located as follows:

**Table S-1
Location of Fire Stations**

Battalion 1 Stations	
Fire Station #7 – Battalion Headquarters	864 N San Vicente Blvd. West Hollywood, 90069
Fire Station #8	7643 W Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood, 90046
Fire Station #38	3907 W 54th St. Los Angeles, 90043
Fire Station #51	3900 Lankershim Blvd. Universal City, 91608
Fire Station #58	5757 South Fairfax Ave. Los Angeles, 90056
Fire Station #110	4433 Admiralty Way Marina Del Rey, 90292

LACFD participates in automatic and mutual aid agreements with several neighboring agencies. Automatic aid provides for the routine exchange of services across jurisdictional boundaries under predefined conditions, while mutual aid is designed to provide additional resources during unusual or catastrophic events. While these types of agreements are beneficial, they do not have a significant impact on the day-to-day provision of fire protection services in the City of West Hollywood.

For typical response calls within the city of West Hollywood, Station #7 and Station #8 provide service. Station #7 houses 6 personnel who staff a paramedic engine and paramedic squad. Station #8 houses 13 personnel who staff an engine, paramedic squad, and a "light force" which is made up of a truck and engine company.

Law Enforcement Services

The City contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services. West Hollywood Station is located at 780 North San Vicente Boulevard in West Hollywood. The West Hollywood Sheriff's Station has 120 sworn personnel, with 48 personnel assigned to patrol duties in the City of West Hollywood. The West Hollywood Sheriff's Station provides law enforcement services for the City of West Hollywood and the unincorporated Universal City Walk area. The West Hollywood Sheriff's station has

created a Community Impact Team (C.I.T.) that provides specialized services to the high impact locations and events in the city.

As of 2008, the station operated beyond its capacity, with nearly 250 employees, reserves, and volunteers occupying the building. The station includes less than 20,000 square feet of usable building space and has access to fewer than 120 parking spaces. The Melrose Triangle Draft EIR (2008) cites a survey performed by a joint collaboration between the Captain and Lieutenant of the West Hollywood Station, which suggests that the station is in need of an additional 33,000 square feet of space and needs access to nearly 200 parking spaces for 2008 staffing levels. The Sheriff's Department has investigated the possibility of expanding at the current location or moving to larger facilities in close proximity to the current station to best serve West Hollywood residents and businesses.

Terrorism/Homeland Security

Since the terrorist incidents of September 11, 2001, public concern regarding terrorist acts in the United States has understandably increased. The State and Federal governments established protocols and programs for dealing with the aftermath of a terrorist act. In 2001, the State of California published the California Terrorism Response Plan. This document identifies and describes how the State and local governments are to plan for and respond to terrorism incidents. The tasks and responsibilities of emergency management are based on two terms: Crisis Management and Consequence Management. Crisis Management refers to the response to people committing an act of terrorism. Consequence Management refers to the response to the potential or actual effects of terrorism. According to the California Terrorism Response Plan (2001), local government has primary responsibility for responding to an incident for the purpose of protecting public health and safety (Consequence Management). The West Hollywood SEMS/NIMS¹ Emergency Plan (2006) is the City's plan to ensure the most effective and economical allocation of resources for the maximum benefit and protection of the civilian population in time of emergency.

The City has also prepared its own emergency preparedness document to help its citizens to be ready for the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster. Titled West Hollywood is Prepared (WHIP), the document provides an extensive checklist of steps to take prior, during, and subsequent to an event such as an earthquake or a terrorist attack.

¹ Standardized Emergency Management System/National Incident Management System