



"We're here to Advise, Guide, and Assist so you can Build Safe, Well and Fast".



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General Manager

This Issue:

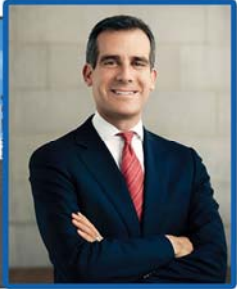
Record Breaking Construction

LADBS Recognized as a B3 Champion

Top 10 Projects

Service Enhancements

LADBS Outreach



# Build LA

## Message from the General Manager

# Record Breaking Highs for Construction Activity in LA!

The size and complexity of the projects in the construction pipeline routinely surpassed our monthly and year-to-date estimates this fiscal year. For example, we projected that the construction valuation for October 2014 would be approximately 10% higher than October FY 2013, but it was actually 97.2% higher (\$825.4 million for October 2014 versus \$418.5 million for October 2013). Based on these robust YTD numbers and projects in the pipeline, we project that FY 14-15 (July 2014 through June 2015) may see another **record breaking \$7.7 billion** in construction valuation!

*The following table provides a comparison between last fiscal year and this current FY for leading construction indicators which include Permits Issued, Construction Valuation (signifies the size and usually the complexity of the projects), and Dwelling Units Permitted:*

| Construction Indicator   | YTD 2013     | YTD 2014     | % Change | FY 14-15 Projection     |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Permits Issued           | 47,700       | 48,500       | 2%       | 145,000 Permits         |
| Construction Valuation   | 1.56 Billion | 2.59 Billion | 66%      | \$7.7 Billion Valuation |
| Dwelling Units Permitted | 2,159        | 4,140        | 92%      | 12,000 Units            |

## LADBS Recognized by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz) as a B3 Champion (agencies recognized for streamlining efforts)

Go-Biz launched a new webpage—"Breaking Barriers to Doing Business, B3" ([www.business.ca.gov](http://www.business.ca.gov)) on October 29, 2014. Go-Biz highlights the best practices of business groups and state and local permitting agencies that are making their programs more user friendly for businesses. LADBS was recognized as a B3 Champion. "B3 Champions" are recognized for their hard work and innovative efforts to help the business community start up, grow and expand in California while at the same time upholding state standards. The article highlighted the following LADBS process improvements and typical customer comments about the improvements:

**1) Development Services Case Management (DSCM)** – A one-stop technical consultation for development projects and a single portal for consultation, problem solving, and facilitation. A customer commented: *"The case management approach has transformed our experience of working with the City. You go to one place, have one point person, and get answers quickly. We're moving forward faster thanks to this change"*

**2) Parallel Design-Permitting Program** – Developers submit plans during various phases of design to LADBS Plan Check to catch problems early in the design process, saving time and money. A customer commented: *"Sense of partnership with the plan checker. Sense of 'first class' service. It saves a great*

*deal of time over the standard, non-expedited, plan check process. On scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the best, my experience with the program has been a 10!"*

**3) Restaurant & Hospitality Express (RHEP) Program** – Helps restaurants and other food service establishments open on time and within budget by providing developers with a single point of contact (case manager) who assists in navigating the regulatory process and eliminate conflicting regulations by other agencies. A customer commented: *"Our entry into the LA market with the support and leadership of the RHEP was without a doubt invaluable."*

## LA's Top 10 Construction Projects

Based on Construction Valuation Permitted Between 7/1/2014–9/30/2014

| Project Address                 | Construction Valuation | Project Description                                                                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 900 W Wilshire Blvd             | \$254,800,000          | New 63-story, mixed-use high-rise building with 892-room hotel and office tower      |
| 1500 N El Centro Ave            | \$148,746,200          | New 6-story office building                                                          |
| 10000 W Santa Monica Blvd 1-283 | \$86,855,817           | 283-unit high rise apartment over 4-level parking garage                             |
| 936 S Olive St                  | \$32,420,000           | New 7-story 263-unit apartment/retail (shell only) & 3-level basement parking garage |
| 1001 S Olive St 1-201           | \$31,779,741           | New 7-story mixed use 201-unit apartment and retail (core & shell only)              |
| 21800 W Victory Blvd            | \$27,000,000           | New 1-story retail/tire shop                                                         |
| 550 S Main St                   | \$27,000,000           | New mixed-use, 6-story 159-unit apartment /retail building                           |
| 6060 W Wilshire Blvd            | \$27,000,000           | Exterior renovation of a Museum (nonprofit)                                          |
| 380 World Way                   | \$26,400,000           | LAX: 4-story addition (t4 connector building) to Tom Bradley International Terminal  |
| 7121 N Woodley Ave              | \$21,310,000           | New 4-story 126-unit apartment building over 2-level basement parking                |

### Service Enhancements

#### • Code Simplification Project Status

Earlier this year, LADBS formed and leads a Code Simplification Workgroup. The goal was to revise or remove duplicative and obsolete Building Code sections without compromising safety to make it easier to understand and apply to the approval process. The milestone achievements and current status are as follows: 8/04/2014, LADBS staff met with the Los Angeles Basin Chapter-LABC of the International Code Council-ICC (group charged with adopting and publishing the Codes); 9/17/2014, LADBS submitted a Draft Code Simplification Proposal to LABC-ICC; and on 11/19/2014, the Proposal was presented to and discussions held with all LABC-ICC jurisdictions and the construction industry. The deadline to submit the final proposal is 1/12/14 and voting will begin 4/26/14 and end 5/3/14.

#### • LADBS Opened VN & WLA Concierge in October

LADBS opened concierge stations in the Van Nuys and WLA Development Services Centers (DSCs). Concierge staff walks around the DSCs to assist walk-in customers in navigating the development process so that they don't waste time waiting in the wrong line. They also provide simple feasibility studies for small residential and business projects. It is estimated that Concierge staff will be able to assist approximately 200,000 customers annually.

#### • LADBS Expanded its Preliminary Plan Check Service

Preliminary Plan Review, which was available only at the Metro office, provides detail code consultation services to projects of all sizes (Major, Mid-size, and Small) during design. This service ensures design accuracy, avoids costly error, and saves time. LADBS expanded this service to its Van Nuys and West L.A. offices during October 2014. Approximately 800 projects will be assisted by this expanded service annually.

#### • LADBS Launched Inspection Case Management

LADBS launched ICM in October 2014. The service includes assigning an IC Manager to a major or midsize project acting as a guardian angel to resolve technical issues and coordinate the inspection process. ICM utilizes a series of "all-hands" meetings before and during construction to collaborate on challenges (construction timelines, overlapping inspection disciplines, etc.) and facilitate issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy. ICM is expected to shorten construction time from 3 to 6 months for more than 600 projects annually.

#### • LADBS Provides Online Solar Permit Services

LADBS established an online plan check/permitting process for the residential solar photo voltaic (PV) systems up to 10KW in August 2014. Unlike other online permitting, this process generates an approved set of plans based on the information provided by the users; thereby, saving them a trip to LADBS offices for plan review. All 2-string Residential PV systems, which equate to 75% of all systems, can be permitted online. By December 2014, the multiple strings systems will be added to the online program which equates to 95% of all systems (2-string + multiple-string). This process saves customers significant time and money, and highly promotes the installation of PV systems. Our customers love this new online permitting process.

#### • Upcoming LADBS IT Enhancements

LADBS will implement the following technology enhancements over the next 7 months—details will appear in future newsletters:

- Online Building Records (targeted for 1/2015)
- LADBS Virtual Emergency Department Operations Center (VDOC) (targeted for 1/2015)
- Revamped LADBS Website (targeted for 3/2015)
- Online Building Information (targeted for 3/2015)

### LADBS Customer Outreach

LADBS implemented a traveling Customer Outreach program in January 2014 to introduce our customer-friendly services and assistance programs to help customers build safe, well, and fast. In the past 10 months, we have given **30 presentations** to more than **800 attendees** from various groups (business and trade associations, communities, and development consultant firms) regarding these new and improved services and solicited their feedback for further improvements. We received overwhelming support.

### LADBS/LAFD Customer Service Code of Conduct

LADBS and LAFD (Fire Department) partnered to create the attached Customer Service Code of Conduct which can also be found at <http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/customer-code-of-conduct.jsf>.

#### COMMITMENT TO OUR CUSTOMERS

Your project is important, so we strive to provide you with superb service and your feedback is important to maintaining this level of service. If you want to recognize a staff member, file a complaint, comment on the service you received, request additional assistance, or a second opinion on any plan check or inspection issues regarding your project, please provide feedback at LADBS' website located at <http://www.ladbs.org> or call (213) 482-6755.



# CUSTOMER SERVICE CODE OF CONDUCT



The number one stimulator of the economy is construction. Building departments and fire departments play an essential role in facilitating construction which results in accelerating and expanding economic growth, creating more jobs and generating more revenue for businesses and more tax revenue for the government.

The City of Los Angeles is one of the world’s largest international metropolises as it attracts investments for development from local residents and throughout the world. To maintain a healthy growth for our City, **LADBS and LAFD must continually strive to improve our services to meet the changing demands of our local and global customers.**

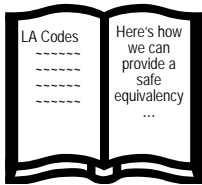
While LADBS and LAFD have been widely recognized for our efficient, innovative and customer-friendly development services, there is always room for improvement in **advising, guiding, and assisting customers to build safe, well, and fast.** One way to achieve this is by **being more helpful, flexible, responsive, and courteous.**

## **Be Helpful – “Go the Extra Mile”**



We are the code experts. To ensure development projects are built safe and well, we naturally use our code knowledge to “write corrections” pointing out the deficiencies of a design or construction work. However, **to ensure projects are built fast, we also need to use our knowledge to proactively advise our customers on how to spot and solve deficiencies, and even help them foresee bumps on the road.**

## **Be Flexible – “Can Do Attitude”**



The number of code regulations has expanded exponentially over the past decade. Often projects, due to their uniqueness, cannot comply with the verbiage of all these regulations. As a result, customers use LADBS’ “Request for Modification of Building Ordinances” process in conjunction with LAFD’s concurrence (when required) to provide an equivalency. **We need to be open-minded and evaluate the merit of the equivalency requested based on the intent of the regulation. If the intent is achieved, then accept the equivalency. If not, we should use our knowledge to guide our customers to modify the equivalency as needed.**

## **Be Responsive – “Sense of Urgency on Behalf of our Customers”**



In construction, time is money. The longer the development process, the greater the costs are for the customer, including interest on loans, construction costs, and delayed occupancy and collection of associated revenue. Ultimately, fewer projects built result in fewer jobs created, less revenue generated, and less tax collected. **We should help the development process move forward and avoid delays by being prompt in returning calls or emails, scheduling meetings, or making decisions on technical matters.**

## **Be Courteous – “Treat Others How You Would Like To Be Treated”**



As we are being *Helpful, Flexible and Responsive*, also **be courteous and treat customers the way we would like to be treated, with respect and integrity. Be a good listener and empathetic, this can go a long way to achieve the best results with any situation**