

A I A L O S A N G E L E S

Breakfast with LAFD Fire Chief Jaime Moore

Sample Questions for advance distribution // “food for thought” · May 28, 2026

I. LAFD'S TOP PRIORITIES & QUARTERLY MEETINGS

Question 1

AIA|LA convenes quarterly leadership forums with LADBS, LADWP, LACP, and BOE — forums built around identifying shared priorities and providing technical resources, not just surfacing problems. We'd like to establish something similar with LAFD.

What are your top two or three priorities for LAFD over the next two to four years, and where do you see the greatest opportunity for a design and architecture partnership to support them?

II. LAFD'S OWN HOUSING CHALLENGE

Question 2

LAFD stations are distributed across every neighborhood in Los Angeles — some of the most strategically located sites in the city. Many are underutilized. The housing crisis is not abstract for LAFD personnel who can't afford to live in the communities they protect.

Has LAFD explored co-locating workforce housing on department-owned sites — as a revenue source for the department and a direct benefit to personnel? If not, would you be open to AIA|LA convening a design and feasibility conversation around it?

III. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — YOUR DIAGNOSIS

Question 3

Mayor Bass's [Executive Directive No. 19](#) sets a clear expectation for development services modernization across city departments. AIA|LA has been engaged with that effort at LADBS and LACP, and sees LAFD as a critical — and underrecognized — part of the housing production pipeline.

How is LAFD thinking about its role in ED-19's mandate? And when you look honestly at LAFD's development services function, where do you see the most room to innovate — in process, in culture, or in code?

Question 4

Adaptive reuse is among the highest-yield tools for housing production in Los Angeles, but LAFD requirements are frequently cited as a decisive factor in making these projects financially infeasible. An occupied legacy building presents a different risk profile than new construction — and arguably a different moral calculus, given that vacant buildings are themselves safety hazards.

Is there appetite within LAFD to develop an adaptive reuse-specific review pathway — one that acknowledges the distinct risk profile of these projects and positions LAFD's role as helping them succeed rather than screening them out?

IV. CODE EVOLUTION AND TRANSPARENCY

Question 5

Fire code modifications are granted project-by-project across the city with no centralized record. That means hard-won knowledge stays siloed, and the code itself has no feedback mechanism to evolve based on real-world outcomes. A modification database — a transparent inventory of granted modifications — is one of the most efficient levers available to modernize both process and code.

Would LAFD consider piloting a modification database — both as a transparency tool for the development community and as a mechanism for evolving the fire code at scale? What would it take to move that from concept to implementation?

Question 6

Single-stair reform is advancing quickly — Assemblymember Lee's legislation and Culver City's ordinance, accepted by the California Building Standards Commission in fall 2025, represent a significant shift in how the state approaches residential building design for 4–6 story buildings. This is a design efficiency issue with direct implications for housing yield and cost.

What is LAFD's current posture on single-stair configurations, and how is the department engaging the state code process as this moves forward?

V. THE PARTNERSHIP

Question 7

AIA|LA brings technical expertise, a statewide advocacy voice, and relationships across the design and development community. We want this relationship to be genuinely reciprocal.

What would be most useful to your team as we formalize this partnership — and if you were to look back two years from now and call this collaboration a real success, what would have changed?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: (We probably won't have time to discuss all of this)

From Gatekeepers to Trailblazers: AIA|LA members consistently describe LAFD plan-checkers and inspectors as operating under a "find the problem" rather than "find the solution" mandate. *How do you see the cultural and institutional shift that would empower LAFD staff to act as solution-providers — and what resources or policy changes would make that possible?*

The High Cost of Being Too Safe: AIA|LA believes fire safety is non-negotiable — and also believes that certain code requirements impose costs in land, time, embodied carbon, and housing yield that are rarely factored into the safety calculus. Fire lanes are one example: they consume substantial land with significant impacts on biodiversity and urban ecology. *Is there*

an appetite within LAFD to conduct a formal cost-benefit review of select requirements — fire lanes, for instance — to identify where alternative compliance pathways could achieve equivalent safety outcomes?

Zone Zero and the Landscape Approach: ASLA and urban ecology advocates have raised substantive concerns that blanket Zone Zero implementation — removing all vegetation within five feet of structures — may actually increase fire risk in dense urban settings by accelerating laminar flow, while destroying the tree canopy that reduces urban heat. *How is LAFD engaging with the Zone Zero debate, and is there room for a differentiated urban-versus-rural approach to ember-resistant buffers?*

Wildfire Resilience and Rebuilding Best Practices: With LA County's recovery programs actively developing resilient rebuilding standards, LAFD has an opportunity to shape what "building back better" actually means at scale. *What role do you see LAFD playing in the recovery and resilient rebuilding process — and are there specific material or design innovations you're watching closely?*

Statewide Fire Code Consistency: Architects and developers working across California jurisdictions frequently encounter significant inconsistencies in fire code interpretation from city to city and inspector to inspector. *Does LAFD support movement toward a more unified, transparent statewide fire code, and how could a city like Los Angeles lead that conversation?*

Defining Success Together: *If you were to look back two years from now on the AIA|LA–LAFD partnership and call it a genuine success, what would have changed — for the department, for the city's housing outcomes, and for the communities LAFD serves?*

For more information, please contact:

Will Wright, Hon. AIA|LA
Director, Government & Public Affairs
[American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles Chapter \(AIA|LA\)](#)
[Architecture for Communities Los Angeles \(ACLA\)](#)
4450 West Adams Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90016
E: will@aialosangeles.org
O: (213) 639-0764 / M: (310) 309-9580