To: Hon. Karen Bass, Mayor; Hon. Marqueece Harris-Dawson, City Council President; Hon. Eunisses Hernandez, Adrin Nazarian, Bob Blumenfeld, Nithya Raman, Katy Yaroslavsky, Imelda Padilla, Monica Rodriguez, Curren D. Price, Jr., Heather Hutt, Traci Park, John S. Lee, Hugo Soto-Martinez, Ysabel Jurado and Tim McOsker, City Councilmembers

We are deeply grateful for your service which is a huge and, at times, a thankless task. While the Palisades Fire may not have happened in your own district, we know that disasters don't respect boundaries — the next fire, flood, or earthquake could impact any one of our communities. What we do now sets the tone for how Los Angeles stands by its residents when the unimaginable happens.

We are writing from our hearts to ask you to **vote to waive building plan check and permit fees for fire survivors**, following the Budget and Finance Committee's recommendation, **and to amend it to include condominiums, townhomes, mobile homes, and small, owner-occupied apartment buildings** . We are writing on behalf of thousands of Palisades Fire survivors. For many of us, this is not just about rebuilding homes — it's about rebuilding lives, neighborhoods, and the very fabric of our community.

1. We lost everything.
The fire didn't just take structures — it took homes, memories, and our sense of security. Every survivor we've spoken with is still trying to put the pieces back together.

2. Most fire survivors are underinsured.
Insurance rarely covers the full cost of rebuilding, and many families are facing staggering shortfalls. Every dollar counts. Waiving permit fees would make a real, immediate difference for families trying to come home.

3. The City is already benefitting financially.
We project that 30% of fire survivors will have no choice but to sell their lots at a loss. These sales, along with the new construction that follows, generate higher property taxes and development fees. The City is not losing money — it's gaining revenue because so many survivors cannot afford to rebuild. In addition, fire survivors are still paying for mortgages and property taxes on their empty land. Fire survivors are still contributing to the City Fund along with paying for rent to live somewhere else plus sales tax for all the replacement items and building supplies they are purchasing.

4. The City's budget assumptions are simply wrong; in fact, the City will profit.
The idea that every homeowner would rebuild at 150% of their previous square footage, losing the City $250 million in income, is completely unrealistic. These numbers misrepresent the real, human scale of what's happening. At a minimum, 30% of fire survivors are selling their lots. The builds on these lots represent an unexpected profit to the City.

Revenues from non-eligible builds will actually be far higher than those from eligible builds - so revenue will be cash positive The assumption is that only 25% of plan and permit revenues goes to actual administrative cost (this is taken from the LADBS refund statement that 20% is required to cover clerical and administrative, so we add a further 5% for physical inspections).

5. Condos, Townhomes, Mobile Homes, and Small, Owner-occupied Apartment Buildings must be included in the ordinance.

Many of these properties represent the few sources of **affordable housing** in our community. We estimate that 9 of the 16 condo/townhome buildings and 8 small, owner-occupied apartment buildings will rebuild as eligible projects. Our projections indicate that this would be less than $1.2M of plan and permit revenue, and just an estimated $300,000 of costs. If these properties cannot be rebuilt, we lose not just homes but affordability and diversity. Further, the burden will be to all homeowners in the impacted HOAs since loss assessments are levied to all homeowners, not just the owners of destroyed units. Rebuilding these structures is critical to keeping families, seniors, and working people in Los Angeles. **At a time when our City faces an affordable housing crisis, supporting every resident who wants to rebuild should be a moral and civic priority.**

6. Our vulnerable elderly population is harmed. 27% of our community are over 62 falling into the category of house rich cash poor. We lost our biggest asset: our home.

7. The City has acknowledged room for improvement.

The rebuilding process has been painfully slow and filled with red tape. This waiver is one of the simplest, most meaningful actions the City can take to show it stands with survivors.

8. Developers shouldn't be the ones to benefit.

When the City refuses to waive fees, the only people hurt are the residents who already lost everything. The developers, buying lots from underinsured homeowners, will gain.

9. Do not exclude fire victims regardless. For single-family residence rebuilds by original owners of homes destroyed in the fire, please waive fees on at least a pro rata basis, bringing them to parity with eligible rebuilds (comparable size, type, use). Many rebuilds are deemed "ineligible" due to technicalities – for example, numerous circa-1920s single-story homes with three-foot setbacks are being reconstructed as two-story homes with same total square footage to allow for larger, more fire-resilient setbacks.

We want to ensure we can count on you to vote to waive building permit fees for fire survivors — and ensure that **condominiums, townhomes, mobile homes, and small, owner-occupied apartment buildings are included** in that relief along with single family homes. It's the right thing, the ethical thing to do, and it's the least our City can do for those who have already lost so much. We would like to schedule a meeting to discuss the possibility of waiving permit fees. Please inform us of your availability at your earliest convenience.

With gratitude,

Reza Akef	Beverley Auerbach	Martin Curland	Darragh Danton
Claude Erb	Susie Fitzgerald	Ross Greenberg	Daphne Gronich
Allison Holdorff Polhill	Sara Houghton	Tony Hocking	Kambiz Kamdar
Sue Kohl	Roseanne Landay	Karina Maher	Robin Meyers
Vienna Nowell	Mark Smith	Chris Spitz	Jill Smith
May Sung	Hank Wright	Matt Yoder	Maryam Zar

[NOTE: sent via email 10/26/25]