

## Federal Support Request from Pacific Palisades Community Leaders

March 6, 2026

Dear Administrator Lee Zeldin, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

We, members of the Pacific Palisades community, respectfully request support from EPA and the Trump Administration as we continue to recover from the devastating Palisades Fire of January 7, 2025. More than a year later, many residents remain traumatized and deeply concerned about the pace and clarity of the rebuilding process.

Shortly after the fire, the EPA completed the largest wildfire hazardous material cleanup in its history—in a record 28 days. The rapid deployment of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for debris removal demonstrated how decisive federal action can accelerate recovery, giving our community hope. However, several critical challenges remain unresolved and require coordination across federal, state, and local levels. We have identified our top recovery priorities (please see next page). While recovery will also depend on funding from LA City, LA County, the State of California, and philanthropic sources, our community currently lacks a clear, actionable plan and sufficient resources to rebuild effectively.

We urgently need federal financial assistance and leadership to cut through bureaucratic delays, align agencies, and accelerate rebuilding so residents can return home, businesses can reopen, and our community can fully recover. With the 2028 Summer Olympics bringing the world's attention to Los Angeles, there is a narrow window to restore Pacific Palisades and demonstrate what effective disaster recovery can look like.

Sincerely,

Reza Akef, *Pacific Palisades Home Builder, Pali High Graduate, and Community Leader*

Alexander Bush, *Resident and Community Leader*

Darragh Danton, *Resident and Community Leader*

Michael Edlen, *Resident, Local Business Owner, and Community Leader*

Ben Einbinder, *Resident and Community Organizer*

Chris Feil, *Resident and Business Owner*

Ross Greenberg, *Resident and Community Leader*

Daphne Gronich, *Resident and Community Leader*

Tony Hocking, *Resident and Team Palisades, Volunteer*

Allison Holdorff-Polhill, *Resident and Community Leader*

Rachel Jonas, *Resident, PALIPOWER - Founder, and Community Leader*

Kambiz Kamdar, *Resident, Pali Builds - Founder, and Community Leader*

Sue Kohl, *Resident and Community Leader*

Roseanne Landay, *Resident, Pali Condo Captains - Founder, and Community Leader*

Caroline Nick, *Friends of the Palisades Library - Board Member, and Palisades Presbyterian Church - Elder*

Annine D. Madok, *Resident and Community Leader*

Chris Spitz, *Resident and Community Leader*

May Sung, *Resident, Local Business Owner, and Community Leader*

Maryam Zar, *PRC President and Pacific Palisades Malibu Chamber of Commerce ('PaliBu') CEO*

# Federal Support Request from Pacific Palisades Community Leaders

## Infrastructure Systems Recovery

*We welcome the assistance of the USACE in restoring our critical infrastructure systems.*

### **1. Rebuild and Strengthen Infrastructure**

*Overhead power lines and above-ground transformers threaten homes and, during fires, can hinder firefighting and block evacuation routes.*

- Underground all overhead utilities—including telecommunications—using joint trenching and submersible transformers along 53.1 miles, and accelerate the undergrounding timeline to three years or less.
- Require LADWP to implement joint-parallel trenching for telecom lines at cost, and require the State to mandate underground telecom lines and integrate replacement cellular antenna towers into streetlights.

### **2. Repair and Modernize Existing Water Infrastructure**

- Overhaul and repair the Santa Ynez drinking water reservoir and the Chautauqua firefighting reservoir, install emergency backup water systems including water tanks, and expand fire protection by adding hydrants and upgrading existing hydrants with pressure gauges and remote monitoring.
- Repair and upgrade the water distribution system—including water lines, storage tanks, and septic-to-sewer connections—while rehabilitating and modernizing sewer and storm-drain systems.

### **3. Rebuild and Stabilize Natural Infrastructure**

- Deploy USACE engineering expertise to stabilize hillsides and coastal bluffs.
- Conduct comprehensive soil and building remediation and implement ongoing soil and air quality testing.
- Mandate brush clearance on public lands and actively manage overgrown and invasive vegetation.

### **4. Build Evacuation Infrastructure**

- Build security, emergency communication, and evacuation infrastructure, including improved street networks, traffic signaling, and public alert systems to support safe and efficient emergency response and evacuation.
- Establish a shared multi-jurisdictional substation for First Responders (State, County, and City) to coordinate security, emergency operations, and disaster response.
- Assess and establish safe density limits.

### **5. Reconstruct and Restore Public Infrastructure and Commercial Corridor**

- Repair public right of way, resurface streets and reconstruct sidewalks, parkways, curbs, and private driveway approaches.
- Reconstruct public spaces, including local library and community recreation center.
- Rebuild commercial corridors.

## Community Recovery

**6. Provide Gap Funding** for residential and commercial rebuilding through grants, subsidies, and low-cost flexible construction loans and increase SBA loan limits to \$2M for homeowners and \$7M for commercial properties.

**7. Expand Eligibility and Duration** for rent subsidies for displaced residents.

**8. Provide Federal Tax Relief**, including exclusion of lawsuit settlement taxes per HR5863.

**9. Assist With Mortgage Forbearance and Insurance Issues**, including protecting credit scores, expediting payouts, and ensuring future insurability.

**10. Support Establishment of a Locally-Led Community Authority**, similar to the 9/11 Lower Manhattan Corporation, subject to community input and approval.

**11. Expedite Building Materials Supply, and Stabilize Prices.**

**12. Establish Workforce Provisions** to meet rebuilding labor demands.