



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

April 13, 2026

Hon. Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California

via his Regional Director, Victor Reyes-Morales

Hon. Karen Bass, Mayor, City of Los Angeles

Hon. Traci Park, Councilwoman, CD 11

Vince P. Bertoni, Director, Los Angeles Dept. of City Planning (DCP)

Carol P. Parks, Los Angeles Emergency Management Dept. (EMD)

Jaime Moore, Chief, Los Angeles Fire Dept. (LAFD)

Jim McDonnell, Chief, Los Angeles Police Dept. (LAPD)

Via email to all addressees

Re: Density Mandates & Evacuation / Public Safety Impacts – Request (1) expedited response by City agencies to the Council’s directive in CF 25-0848); (2) initiation of catastrophe modeling studies of the impacts and risk to public safety in Pacific Palisades of increased density; (3) development and implementation of evacuation plans, as required by AB 747; (4) a pause by DCP on issuance of rebuild permits for density bonus projects in Pacific Palisades, and (5) as necessary, a Governor’s emergency order, and request by Mayor Bass and Councilwoman Park for an order, authorizing such a pause until compliance with AB 747 has occurred and evacuation plans have been implemented in Pacific Palisades

Dear State and City officials:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) is the most broad-based organization in Pacific Palisades and has served as the voice of our community since its formation in 1973, 53 years ago.

Background Considerations: As you know, the Palisades community suffered unprecedented devastation in the Palisades Fire last year. PPCC has (1) consistently opposed increased density in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ – the entire Pacific Palisades) on public safety grounds, and (2) repeatedly requested that our government officials – *whose duty it is to protect public safety* – develop evacuation plans without delay in the Palisades community, which has narrow hillside roads and extremely limited routes of ingress and egress.¹

Despite our repeatedly expressed concerns – and the mandate imposed on the City by AB 747 – evacuation plans have never been developed, resulting in a harrowing, life-threatening emergency evacuation in Pacific Palisades from the 2025 Fire, at then-current density levels. Moreover, to date, relevant City agencies have failed to report back to City Council within 30 days on evacuation plans, despite being directed to do so within 30 days on October 5, 2025, in CF 25-0848 (Park).

¹ See PPCC position letters and statements on these subjects, linked on p. 4 (Resources) of a PPCC LUC preliminary report on a recent proposed density bonus project: <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/LUC-Report-re-15113-Sunset.pdf>.

More than five months later, the relevant City agencies do not appear to have responded to the above directive and no evacuation plans have been implemented, let alone developed. **This is a completely unacceptable and outrageous failure by the City to protect the safety of its residents.**

On another front, in July-August 2025, we wrote to Governor Newsom, requesting and then thanking him for his emergency order authorizing temporary suspension of dense SB 9 housing projects in the Palisades. Now, as the community is embarking on recovery, we have learned that the owners of vacant land along the Sunset Blvd. commercial corridor in our Specific Plan area are seeking approval for a proposed large mixed-use project *under State density bonus mandates*. On the recommendation of the PPCC Land Use Committee (LUC), our Board recently voted unanimously to oppose this project. The LUC and PPCC Board are also concerned more broadly with the cumulative impact on public safety of increased density from future projects in the Palisades that are expected to utilize State density mandates.

Motion regarding Density Mandates and Evacuation / Public Safety: In light of the above facts, and on the recommendation of the PPCC LUC, at the well-attended, regularly scheduled public Board meeting on April 9, 2026, after an opportunity for discussion, the PPCC Board unanimously passed the motion attached below and described above.

We therefore urgently request that the relevant City agencies (including DCP, EMD, LAFD and LAPD) report back without further delay in CF 25-0848; that the City expeditiously initiate catastrophe modeling studies of impacts of density on emergency evacuation, as requested; that evacuation plans then be immediately developed and implemented in Pacific Palisades; that the DCP temporarily pause issuance of rebuild permits for density bonus projects in the Specific Plan and Sunset Blvd. corridor neighborhoods of the Palisades until such catastrophe modeling studies and implementation of evacuation plans are completed; and that if necessary, Governor Newsom issue an emergency order, and Mayor Bass and CW Park request such an order, authorizing the requested pause.

Thank you for your anticipated courtesy and cooperation with this important request.

Sincerely,

Sue Kohl and Christina Spitz

Sue Kohl, President

Christina Spitz, LUC Chair

Pacific Palisades Community Council

(LUC members: Christina Spitz, Chair; Reza Akef, James Alexakis,
Michael Edlen, Howard Robinson, Joanna Spak, Maryam Zar)

cc (via email):

Lisa Webber, AICP, Deputy Director, Project Planning, DCP

Attachment: PPCC Motion regarding Density Mandates and Evacuation / Public Safety Impacts (pp. 3-4, following)

**Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) Motion
regarding Density Mandates and Evacuation / Public Safety Impacts**

This motion is made with reference to the following facts and considerations:

- 1) Large portions of commercial and multi-family zoned areas of Pacific Palisades were destroyed in the catastrophic Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, leaving many vacant lots along the Sunset Boulevard corridor stretching west from the Commercial Village to Pacific Coast Highway, and on sites located within the areas of the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan (Specific Plan).
- 2) Pacific Palisades is entirely located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ), with extremely limited routes of ingress and egress. PPCC has consistently opposed increased housing density in the Palisades due to the dangerous impacts on public safety in emergency evacuations. During the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, at existing levels of housing density, the danger to lives and property presented by crowded conditions on our roads was made shockingly evident, when residents under mandatory evacuation were forced to abandon cars and flee for their lives on foot while emergency vehicles were impeded from entering burning areas.
- 3) At least one commercial property owner in Pacific Palisades is seeking a permit, in part under State density bonus law, to rebuild a former building on a now-vacant lot on Sunset Blvd. in the Commercial Village. The PPCC Land Use Committee (LUC) and PPCC Board are concerned about the cumulative impacts as other commercial property owners within the Specific Plan area, and owners of multi-family zoned sites along the Sunset Blvd. corridor, seek to rebuild their sites and may utilize State density bonus laws or other State housing mandates to increase the density of rebuild projects.
- 4) On October 3, 2025, the City Council passed a motion by Councilwoman Park in CF 25-0848 (<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=25-0848>), directing, among other things, expedited completion of reports on the City's compliance with AB 747, a list of evacuation routes within CD 11, and plans to improve evacuation route infrastructure. To date, the directed reports have not been returned. PPCC strongly supported this motion (<https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/PPCC-Letter-CF-25-0848-Evacuations-Reports.pdf>).

Based on the above facts and considerations, PPCC therefore requests that:

- 1) the relevant City agencies directed to report back in CF 25-0848 do so without further delay;
- 2) relevant City agencies (e.g., LAFD, the Planning and/or Emergency Management Depts.) undertake catastrophe modeling studies in the Specific Plan and Sunset Blvd. corridor neighborhoods of the Palisades, to ascertain the actual impacts on emergency evacuation and the risk to public safety from varying levels of increased housing density, expected to be proposed for rebuild projects on now-vacant commercial and multi-family zoned lots in Pacific Palisades;
- 3) upon ascertaining the impacts and risk to public safety from increased levels of density, the City immediately develop and implement evacuation plans for Pacific Palisades (as required under AB 747 and contemplated in CF 25-0848), to address the likelihood of increased housing density during the rebuild;
- 4) the City pause its issuance of rebuild permits for density bonus projects in the Specific Plan and Sunset Blvd. corridor neighborhoods of the Palisades until such catastrophe modeling studies and development and implementation of evacuation plans for Pacific Palisades have been completed; and

- 5) to the extent necessary, in the overriding interest of public safety, Governor Gavin Newsom issue an emergency order, and Mayor Karen Bass and Councilwoman Traci Park request the Governor to issue such an order, authorizing suspension of permit issuance for density bonus projects in the Palisades until the City's compliance with AB 747 has occurred, and development and implementation of evacuation plans for Pacific Palisades have been completed.

*Motion adopted unanimously by the PPCC Board
April 9, 2026*