

ATTACHMENT B

Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council Draft letter on LA Recovery Motions Latest version available at [this link](#)

The Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council watched with sadness and dread as wildfire burned thousands of acres and destroyed tens of thousands of structures. Our area, too, sits entirely within a very high fire hazard severity zone and has experienced destructive fires in the past. Most notable are the Bel Air fire of 1961 and the Laurel Canyon fire of 1959. We were threatened, as well, by the Sunset Fire during the January 7th windstorm as well as several other minor fires.

It is as citizens of communities on the wildland/urban interface and as citizens of the City that we respectfully submit these comments on the many motions made relating to the fires and their aftermath.

As City citizens we would like to note that the volume of motions presented was extremely high, and the topic areas are overlapping. This renders them difficult to track and cumbersome to comment on. We understand the reason why this occurred but the confusing nature of the motions need not continue. The process would benefit from a reorganization of the motions into topic areas, with a central list of all requested reports organized by department made available to the public. The interest in responses received and actions taken by Council is very high; Council should facilitate engagement.

Debris and Debris Removal

Many hazardous materials burned. The City should not let toxic materials remain in the ground and should ensure that enough soil is removed and the remaining soil undergoes testing for this to be the case. Additionally, debris removal should be done with sensitivity to retaining trees whenever possible; those who carry out this job should have the information necessary to be able to do this. Experience gained and lessons learned from clean up of hazardous materials in the locations of recent major fires, such as Woolsey, Paradise, and Maui fires, to be implemented. Finally, this process should be carried out with attention to transparency and equity. Proceedings of the Debris Removal Task Force should be public.

Infrastructure

With reference to Council Motions 25 and Wildfire Motions S2 and S17, we recommend that the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and the Los Angeles Fire Department regularly consult and cooperate with one another. More specifically, we recommend that the LADWP give the LAFD weekly updates about the status of its reservoirs and other elements of water infrastructure, especially when they go offline or are under repair. With reference to Council Motion 27, we recommend that the LADWP report on feasibility and implementation of undergrounding powerlines in Very High Fire Hazard Risk Severity Zones; and we strongly urge

that in those Very High Risk areas where powerlines are above ground that the poles and lines be regularly maintained and that surrounding vegetation be trimmed when it infringes on the lines. The LADWP thoroughly and sensibly addresses some of these matters in Chapter 4 of its June 2023 *Wildfire Mitigation Plan*, and we encourage them to follow through and build on the practices and principles they set forth in that document.

We urge the City to consider replacement of gas-operated heating and cooking equipment with electric alternatives in new and existing residential buildings in the fire affected areas, and to upgrade power lines accordingly.

Public Safety

TO BE COMPOSED

Land Use

The City should seize this opportunity to foster an environment where new construction and rebuilding creates the most sustainable, energy-efficient, and fire-resilient buildings possible rather than perpetuating land-use mistakes of the past. Many experts emphasize that rebuilding “as before” will result in a community still vulnerable to climate change. This is a critical moment to reassess the viability of existing land-use practices and implement the latest building science on fire safety and resilience.

The goals and methods established in the Mayor’s Executive Order and The Governor’s Executive Order N-4-25 should be aligned with the following City Council Motions:

- Motion [25-0006-S38](#), regarding the creation of a Climate Resilience District for the areas directly impacted by and adjacent to the Pacific Palisades Fire.
- Motion [25-0006-S46](#), regarding adopting an incentive program for residential and commercial property owners that voluntarily implement construction best practices for fire resiliency beyond what is currently required in the Building Codes.
- Motion xx-xxxx-xxx (*p. 22 of the Feb. 14 list of motions*) regarding extending permit expiration dates for low rise residential and commercial projects in the fire affected areas.

We furthermore recommend that the following measures are given consideration:

- Expedited enforcement of California Assembly Bill AB3074 for ember resistant zone for both, new and existing construction in the fire damaged zone of Pacific Palisades;
- Adherence to current building codes must be assured. Anything built from this point forward must meet all code requirements. Cities like Austin, Texas, and Louisville,

Colorado, have adopted hardening regulations in response to wildfire risks, providing proven frameworks for action

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Financial Concerns

Much labor will be necessary for the recovery and rebuilding process, particularly in the permitting process. BABCNC believes that an assessment of labor needs along with a schedule of hiring and training should be provided, and that this schedule should be mindful of budgetary concerns.

ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE TO BE ADDED

Environment

AIR QUALITY - To prevent the spread of toxins contained in the ash and debris that has blanketed the burn areas, an ordinance was proposed and already passed which will prohibit the use of all leaf blowers in the Palisades, Sunset, Hurst, and Kenneth Fire burn areas until February of 2026. We highly approve of this measure and would also recommend that the City Council address how this ordinance will be enforced given the widespread use and popularity of leaf blowers in our city. We also recommend that the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the South Coast Air Quality Management District continue to report to City Council with the most up to date data on air quality conditions throughout the debris removal process and provide proper guidance for the public to protect itself from harmful particulate matter that has been released into the environment.

RED FLAG DAYS - We recommend that The Red Flag Days ordinance should be strengthened in several ways to enhance public safety, especially in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Clear enforcement measures should be codified and applied consistently. The City should close City parks located in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones when Red Flag Days are declared. Furthermore, Rec and Parks should work with the City Attorney to find ways to enforce this compliance together with the enforcement against camping in public spaces during Red Flag Days in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

LADWP - We recommend having LADWP, together with LAFD, review its recommendations regarding the response to the recent wildfires. LADWP should assess its preparedness, by reviewing its infrastructure and facilities, grid resiliency, ignition sources, reservoir management, its communication system – both within its own department and with the public, and how to improve fire resiliency citywide.