

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Frances Vincent  
**Date Submitted:** 01/18/2026 06:11 PM  
**Council File No:** 25-0006-S57

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Councilmembers:[ On the morning of January 7, 2025, thousands of Pacific Palisades residents woke up expecting an ordinary day. None of us chose to have our homes destroyed, our neighborhoods erased, or our lives abruptly upended by fire. Yet overnight, hardworking Los Angeles taxpayers lost everything and now face the prospect of being charged by their own city simply to rebuild what was taken from them. I am writing to urge you to rely on realistic assumptions, historical precedent, and long-term fiscal outcomes to support waiving building permit fees for Palisades residents. Mayor Bass issued an executive order on April 25, 2025, furthering a motion to waive plan check and permit fees for Angelenos rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by the fires. The City Accounting Office (CAO) provided an estimate of \$86 million as the amount of potentially waived fees. That estimate included single-family homes and duplexes to be rebuilt within 110% of the original footprint. Over the summer, the CAO released a revised estimate projecting \$278 million in potential waived permit and plan check fees. The revised maximum estimate expanded the scope of eligible projects to include multifamily and commercial properties, and it assumed that all affected property owners would rebuild with projects constructed up to 150% of the original structure size. These assumptions drove the estimate dramatically upward but do not reflect how post-disaster rebuilding typically occurs. Experience from other large-scale fire events in California shows a different pattern. A conservative assumption based on previous fires in California is that approximately 40% of properties are rebuilt, and that rebuilt homes are generally similar in size, not dramatically larger, due to insurance limits, financing constraints, zoning restrictions, and personal circumstances. Assuming universal rebuilding at the maximum allowable size significantly inflates the projected fee total beyond what is realistic. It is also important to note that the CAO's estimate is not a cost estimate, but rather a theoretical maximum revenue estimate. It represents the total fees the City could collect under the most aggressive rebuilding assumptions. Viewed through this lens, the estimate actually demonstrates that the City stands to realize substantial net revenue from post-fire rebuilding, even if certain fees are waived. For example, if 40% of properties are rebuilt by original owners and

the remaining 60% are sold and rebuilt at or near the maximum allowable size, the City would generate approximately \$166.8 million in permit and plan check fee revenue based on the CAO's own \$278 million estimate even after waiving building permit fees for original owners who rebuild. This represents \$166.8 million in incremental revenue attributable solely to post-fire rebuilding and property turnover which is revenue that would not exist if the fire didn't happen. There are other reasons to waive permit fees and encourage rebuilding. Rebuilt homes restore the property tax base; new construction increases assessed values; sales, use, and utility taxes rise with renewed occupancy; long-term economic activity resumes more quickly. There are also clear precedents for fee waivers after disasters. Waiving rebuilding fees after catastrophic events is not new, unusual, or fiscally reckless. It is a well-established practice throughout California and the nation following major disasters. For example:

- Los Angeles County has already waived rebuilding and permitting fees for victims of the Eaton Fire
- After the Woolsey Fire, local jurisdictions reduced or waived rebuilding and permitting fees to help residents return more quickly.
- Following the Camp Fire in Paradise, governments streamlined approvals and waived fees to avoid further financial harm to displaced residents.
- After the Northridge Earthquake, Los Angeles itself reduced and waived fees to accelerate recovery and stabilize affected communities. These actions were taken because policymakers recognized the impact of long-term fiscal planning and this simple truth: disaster victims should not be penalized for events completely beyond their control.

Residents who lost homes, duplexes, townhomes or condominiums in the Palisades fire are taxpayers who have contributed to this City for years and often decades. They did not ask for their properties to burn, and they should not be burdened with additional fees at the moment they are most vulnerable. Traci Park, our Councilwoman, supports waiving these fees because she sees the devastation firsthand. I respectfully ask Councilmembers from other districts to pause and consider what you would want for your own constituents if a fire, earthquake, or flood struck your neighborhood tomorrow. Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our city. Respectfully, Frances Vincent 508 Muskingum Avenue Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Dear Councilmembers:[

On the morning of January 7, 2025, thousands of Pacific Palisades residents woke up expecting an ordinary day. None of us chose to have our homes destroyed, our neighborhoods erased, or our lives abruptly upended by fire. Yet overnight, hardworking Los Angeles taxpayers lost everything and now face the prospect of being charged by their own city simply to rebuild what was taken from them. I am writing to urge you to rely on realistic assumptions, historical precedent, and long-term fiscal outcomes to support waiving building permit fees for Palisades residents.

Mayor Bass issued an executive order on April 25, 2025, furthering a motion to waive plan check and permit fees for Angelenos rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by the fires. The City Accounting Office (CAO) provided an estimate of \$86 million as the amount of potentially waived fees.<sup>1</sup> That estimate included single-family homes and duplexes to be rebuilt within 110% of the original footprint.

Over the summer, the CAO released a revised estimate projecting \$278 million in potential waived permit and plan check fees. The revised maximum estimate expanded the scope of eligible projects to include multifamily and commercial properties, and it assumed that all affected property owners would rebuild with projects constructed up to 150% of the original structure size. These assumptions drove the estimate dramatically upward but do not reflect how post-disaster rebuilding typically occurs.

Experience from other large-scale fire events in California shows a different pattern.<sup>2</sup> A conservative assumption based on previous fires in California is that approximately 40% of properties are rebuilt, and that rebuilt homes are generally similar in size, not dramatically larger, due to insurance limits, financing constraints, zoning restrictions, and personal circumstances.<sup>3</sup> Assuming universal rebuilding at the maximum allowable size significantly inflates the projected fee total beyond what is realistic.

It is also important to note that the CAO's estimate is not a cost estimate, but rather a theoretical maximum revenue estimate. It represents the total fees the City could collect under the most aggressive rebuilding assumptions. Viewed through this lens, the estimate actually demonstrates that the City stands to realize substantial net revenue from post-fire rebuilding, even if certain fees are waived.

For example, if 40% of properties are rebuilt by original owners and the remaining 60% are sold and rebuilt at or near the maximum allowable size, the City would generate approximately \$166.8 million in permit and plan check fee revenue based on the CAO's own \$278 million estimate even after waiving building permit fees for original owners who rebuild. This represents \$166.8 million in incremental revenue attributable solely to post-fire rebuilding and property turnover which is revenue that would not exist if the fire didn't happen.

There are other reasons to waive permit fees and encourage rebuilding. Rebuilt homes restore the property tax base; new construction increases assessed values; sales, use, and utility taxes rise with renewed occupancy; long-term economic activity resumes more quickly.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.la.mes.com/california/story/2025-07-17/six-months-after-palisades-fire-mayor-karen-bass>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.la.mes.com/homeless-housing/story/2025-09-30/rebuilding-california-after-major-wildfires>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/2025/california-home-insurance-underinsured/>

There are also clear precedents for fee waivers after disasters. Waiving rebuilding fees after catastrophic events is not new, unusual, or fiscally reckless. It is a well-established practice throughout California and the nation following major disasters.

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These actions were taken because policymakers recognized the impact of long-term fiscal planning and this simple truth: disaster victims should not be penalized for events completely beyond their control.

Residents who lost homes, duplexes, townhomes or condominiums in the Palisades fire are taxpayers who have contributed to this City for years and often decades. They did not ask for their properties to burn, and they should not be burdened with additional fees at the moment they are most vulnerable.

Traci Park, our Councilwoman, supports waiving these fees because she sees the devastation firsthand. I respectfully ask Councilmembers from other districts to pause and consider what you would want for your own constituents if a fire, earthquake, or flood struck your neighborhood tomorrow.

Los Angeles is one city. We are all Angelenos. In times of tragedy, we should support one another just as other California communities have done. We shouldn't compound loss with additional financial barriers. Waiving rebuilding fees is not about subsidizing one area of Los Angeles; it is about restoring what was lost.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to make your decision considering realistic rebuilding assumptions, lessons learned from prior disasters, and the City's long-term fiscal health and to vote in favor of waiving rebuilding plan check and permit fees for all affected Pacific Palisades residents.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our city.

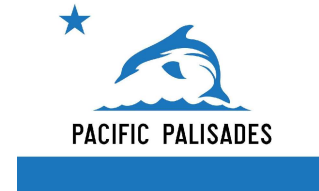
Respectfully,

Frances Vincent  
508 Muskingum Avenue  
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

## Communication from Public

**Name:** James Stuart  
**Date Submitted:** 01/18/2026 10:06 AM  
**Council File No:** 25-0006-S57  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please support the Victims, letter attached.

James Stuart  
(213) 706 4298  
Jds4usc@gmail.com



On the morning of January 7, 2025, thousands of Pacific Palisades residents woke up expecting an ordinary day. None of us chose to have our homes destroyed, our neighborhoods erased, or our lives abruptly upended by fire. Yet overnight, hardworking Los Angeles taxpayers lost everything and now face the prospect of being charged by their own city simply to rebuild what was taken from them.

I am writing to urge you to rely on realistic assumptions, historical precedent, and long-term fiscal outcomes to support waiving building permit fees for Palisades residents.

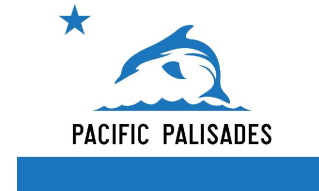
**Mayor Bass issued an executive order** on April 25, 2025, furthering a motion to waive plan check and permit fees for Angelenos rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by the fires.

City Accounting

Office (CAO) provided an estimate of \$86 million as the amount of potentially waived fees.

1 That estimate included single-family homes and duplexes to be rebuilt within 110% of the original footprint. Over the summer, the CAO released a revised estimate projecting \$278 million in potential waived permit and plan check fees. The revised maximum estimate expanded the scope of eligible projects to include multifamily and commercial properties, and it assumed that all affected property owners would rebuild with projects constructed up to 150% of the original structure size. These assumptions drove the estimate dramatically upward but do not reflect how post-disaster rebuilding typically occurs. Experience from other largescale fire events in California shows a different pattern.

2 A conservative assumption based on previous fires in California is that approximately 40% of properties are rebuilt, and that rebuilt homes are generally similar in size, not dramatically larger, due to insurance limits, financing constraints, zoning restrictions, and personal circumstances. 3 Assuming universal rebuilding at the maximum allowable size significantly inflates the projected fee total beyond what is realistic. It is also important to note that the CAO's estimate is not a cost estimate, but rather a theoretical maximum revenue estimate. It represents the total fees the City could collect under the most aggressive rebuilding assumptions. Viewed through this lens, the estimate demonstrates that the City stands to realize substantial net revenue from post-fire rebuilding, even if certain fees are waived.



For example, if 40% of properties are rebuilt by original owners and the remaining 60% are sold and rebuilt at or near the maximum allowable size, the City would generate approximately \$166.8 million in permit and plan check fee revenue based on the CAO's own \$278 million estimate even after waiving building permit fees for original owners who rebuild. This represents \$166.8 million in incremental revenue attributable solely to post-fire rebuilding and property turnover which is revenue that would not exist if the fire didn't happen.

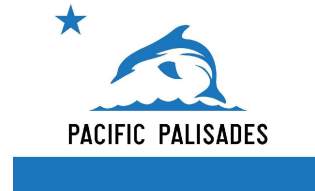
There are other reasons to waive permit fees and encourage rebuilding. Rebuilt homes restore the property tax base; new construction increases assessed values; sales, use, and utility taxes rise with renewed occupancy; long term economic activity resumes more quickly. There are also clear precedents for fee waivers after disasters. Waiving rebuilding fees after catastrophic events is not new, unusual, or fiscally reckless. It is a well-established practice throughout California and the nation following major disasters.

For example:

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- 1 <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-07-17/six-months-after-palisades-fire-mayor-karen-bass>
- 2 <https://www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2025-09-30/rebuilding-california-after-major-wildfires>
- 3 <https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/2025/california-home-insurance-underinsured/>
- After the Woolsey Fire, local jurisdictions reduced or waived rebuilding and permitting fees to help residents return more quickly.
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Residents who lost homes, duplexes, townhomes or condominiums in the Palisades fire are taxpayers who have contributed to this City for years and often decades. They did not ask for their properties to burn, and they should not be burdened with additional fees at the moment they are most vulnerable.

**Traci Park, our Councilwoman, supports waiving these fees** because she sees the devastation firsthand. I respectfully ask Councilmembers from other districts to pause and consider what you would want for your own constituents if a fire, earthquake, or flood struck your neighborhood tomorrow.

Los Angeles is one city. We are all Angelenos. In times of tragedy, we should support one another just as other California communities have done. We shouldn't compound loss with additional financial barriers.

Waiving rebuilding fees is not about subsidizing one area of Los Angeles; it is about restoring what was lost.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to make your decision considering realistic rebuilding assumptions, lessons learned from prior disasters, and the City's long-term fiscal health and to vote in favor of waiving rebuilding plan check and permit fees for all affected Pacific Palisades residents.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our city.

Respectfully,

*James Stuart*

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Gail Zellman

**Date Submitted:** 01/18/2026 03:11 PM

**Council File No:** 25-0006-S57

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am a nearly 50-year resident who raised my children in the Palisades and with neighbors, created a community in our neighborhood. It has taken courage to decide to rebuild at my age, but the Palisades is a special place, and I hope that my husband and I can live out our lives there. None of us chose to have our homes destroyed, our neighborhoods erased, or our lives abruptly upended by fire. Yet overnight, hardworking Los Angeles taxpayers lost everything and now face the prospect of being charged by their own city simply to rebuild what was taken from them. Some neighbors are finding the permit fee a significant barrier to rebuilding, which saddens me a great deal. I am writing to urge you to rely on realistic assumptions, historical precedent, and long-term fiscal outcomes to support waiving building permit fees for Palisades residents. Mayor Bass issued an executive order on April 25, 2025, furthering a motion to waive plan check and permit fees for Angelenos rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by the fires. The City Accounting Office (CAO) provided an estimate of \$86 million as the amount of potentially waived fees.[1] That estimate included single-family homes and duplexes to be rebuilt within 110% of the original footprint. Over the summer, the CAO released a revised estimate projecting \$278 million in potential waived permit and plan check fees. The revised maximum estimate expanded the scope of eligible projects to include multifamily and commercial properties, and it assumed that all affected property owners would rebuild with projects constructed up to 150% of the original structure size. These assumptions drove the estimate dramatically upward but do not reflect how post-disaster rebuilding typically occurs. Experience from other large-scale fire events in California shows a different pattern.[2] A conservative assumption based on previous fires in California is that approximately 40% of properties are rebuilt, and that rebuilt homes are generally similar in size, not dramatically larger, due to insurance limits, financing constraints, zoning restrictions, and personal circumstances.[3] Assuming universal rebuilding at the maximum allowable size significantly inflates the projected fee total beyond what is realistic. It is also important to note that the CAO's estimate is not a cost estimate, but rather a theoretical maximum revenue estimate. It represents the total fees the City could collect under the most aggressive rebuilding

assumptions. Viewed through this lens, the estimate actually demonstrates that the City stands to realize substantial net revenue from post-fire rebuilding, even if certain fees are waived. For example, if 40% of properties are rebuilt by original owners and the remaining 60% are sold and rebuilt at or near the maximum allowable size, the City would generate approximately \$166.8 million in permit and plan check fee revenue based on the CAO's own \$278 million estimate even after waiving building permit fees for original owners who rebuild. This represents \$166.8 million in incremental revenue attributable solely to post-fire rebuilding and property turnover which is revenue that would not exist if the fire didn't happen. There are other reasons to waive permit fees and encourage rebuilding. Rebuilt homes restore the property tax base; new construction increases assessed values; sales, use, and utility taxes rise with renewed occupancy; long-term economic activity resumes more quickly. There are also clear precedents for fee waivers after disasters. Waiving rebuilding fees after catastrophic events is not new, unusual, or fiscally reckless. It is a well-established practice throughout California and the nation following major disasters. For example:

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