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MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH December 1, 2026

Protecting Communities Vulnerable to Fire Risk and Climate Hazards by Implementing the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Climate Action and Fire Safe Recovery

The January 2025 Wildfires were the most devastating disaster in Los Angeles County history. The Palisades and Eaton fires claimed more than 18,000 structures and thousands of families and businesses are still displaced two years later. The same dangerous conditions that caused those fires also caused nearly a dozen other wildfires over those two weeks, threatening hundreds of thousands of people in multiple communities. Los Angeles County has been designated by FEMA as the county prone to the most natural hazards of any county in the United States, and more than a million Angelenos reside in the Wildland-Urban Interface, with heightened exposure to wildfire. California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment found that the total area that burns in wildfires each year will increase by 50% by mid-century without changes in land management, primarily attributed to native chapparal becoming stressed and replaced by grasses and other fire-prone invasive plants.

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In February 2025, the Third Supervisorial District convened an independent Blue Ribbon Commission on Climate Action and Fire Safe Recovery (BRC) to assess lessons learned from the fires and to develop forward-looking policy recommendations to support a resilient, equitable, and sustainable region. Funded in part by a grant from the California Community Foundation, the Commission was intentionally established as an independent body, operating outside of County departments, to provide expert-driven and community-informed recommendations that could guide policy decisions at every level of government. Commission members included local and national experts across disaster response, economic development, water, energy, land use, finance, insurance, public health, and housing. The Commission was supported by a multidisciplinary, world-class research team at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to ground its work in rigorous analysis, data, and global best practices. In June 2025, the BRC presented their final report including 59 recommendations to local and state officials, including suggestions to keep other similarly vulnerable communities safe from future disasters.

In February 2026, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Sustainability Office (CSO) to evaluate the conclusions of the BRC, document the County's progress in implementing those recommendations, and suggest actions that merit further implementation. The CSO, with the assistance of many departments, presented their findings in a July 2026 report and presentation. They concluded that 18 months after the fires, a majority of the BRC recommendations had been at least partially implemented. This is a noteworthy accomplishment, given the fact that this is the first major disaster in modern US history without public assistance or long-term recovery aid from the federal government. One notable accomplishment was the creation of LA County's Disaster

Recovery Rebuild Authority (RA). The BRC's top recommendation was the creation of a Rebuild Authority that could cross jurisdictional lines and support an accelerated and streamlined recovery. The RA has been launched within LA County Public Works as the unified coordinating body for disaster recovery with the mission of rebuilding fire-impacted unincorporated communities with speed, accountability, and resilience. Many of the BRC recommendations underway are at various levels of implementation through the RA.

The second overarching governance recommendation of the BRC was the creation of a Fire Control District (FCD), to mitigate risks from wildfires and work to protect the many homes and businesses in Los Angeles County facing risk from wildfire. In 2020, voters in Marin County approved the creation of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA), funded by a parcel tax. The MWPA funds community emergency preparedness, home hardening resiliency retrofits, and community infrastructure that reduces fire risk. The BRC recommendation suggested that this FCD could serve all Los Angeles County parcels (akin to other countywide measures), though it could feasibly be narrowed to only include communities served by the LA County Fire Department (LACoFD), unincorporated communities, or properties within defined wildland-urban interfaces. Home hardening retrofits could be led by LA County's Internal Services Department (ISD), which has experience implementing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of private building energy retrofits through its Southern California Renewable Energy Network (SoCalREN). ISD submitted applications to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to fire harden and retrofit several hundred vulnerable homes near the Eaton and Palisades Fire burn scars but is awaiting the release of federal funds to implement these and other fire recovery assistance programs.

A related set of BRC recommendations concern the twin objectives of reducing future fire risk by restoring fire-vulnerable ecosystems with native plants. The CSO prioritized a recommendation that the County develop and seek funding for a program to remove invasive plants on public lands that present fire risk, particularly in areas recovering from wildfires, and other high-priority areas. Recent initiatives in this space include:

- LACoFD received grants from Prop 4 (the Climate Bond) to reduce fire risks through various strategies on land owned by the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA).
- The Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures (AC/WM) regularly inspects *private* property and clears hazardous vegetation and brush as part of the County's Weed Abatement Program.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks) is leading a successful ecological restoration of the County-operated Eaton Canyon Nature Center, including a robust workforce development program.
- The Department of Regional Planning (Planning) is finalizing a Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance, for new developments, to address adequate evacuation egress during wildfire events, to improve public safety, and reduce risks to development located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Planning is also finalizing a Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan to prioritize and better compete for resources to address fire risks to existing communities.
- Following a March 2026 motion, Planning and LA County Fire Department have

been preparing an additional study for a Regional Wildfire Mitigation Joint Powers Authority for the Santa Monica Mountains, to cost-share wildfire risk mitigation strategies, which could provide an early model for how a collaborative fire mitigation program could work.

While the County continues to advocate for overdue federal resources, there is more we can do to leverage funding to assist our communities, building on initiatives underway. The County created Disaster Recovery Financing Districts for the Santa Monica Mountains and Altadena to redirect local property tax revenue back into those communities. The County is preparing a Long-Term Recovery Plan to guide resilient recovery, infrastructure investment, and future programs to assist fire survivors. Philanthropy has provided support for community recovery which has been instrumental in rebuilding and recovery~~, and as we approach two years without federal assistance, there is a pronounced need for philanthropy to help bridge the gap~~. The BRC recommended the creation of a "LA Resilient Rebuilding and Reconstruction Fund," to provide a coherent vision and investment plan for philanthropic support to reduce barriers to community desires to rebuild with resiliency. As we anticipate long-term recovery funding in the year ahead, there is further imperative to explore partnerships with philanthropy that could be catalytic to a robust recovery. In a similar vein, and thanks to Los Angeles County's advocacy, the California Public Utilities Commission released funding for the RISE (Rebuilding Incentives for Sustainable Electric) Homes incentive program, which provides a financial incentive for wildfire survivors to rebuild sustainably. Additional permanent funding sources should be identified so that all communities around California can be prepared to rebuild safer and more resiliently following future disasters.

As we approach the two-year anniversary of the 2025 wildfires, there is a need to advance additional long-term strategies to support resilient recovery and to effectively invest in wildfire-vulnerable communities across Los Angeles County. The BRC report remains a useful guide to direct long-term recovery and preparedness.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Rebuild Authority to report back in each quarterly update to the Board on its plan to implement and track the progress of incorporating relevant Blue Ribbon Commission recommendations identified by the Chief Sustainability Office's report that would help accelerate rebuilding, catalyze investment, and restore ecosystems. The report should describe how those recommendations will be incorporated into the Rebuild Authority's workplan, including which strategies will be prioritized with and without external resources.
2. Direct the LA County Fire Department, in consultation with the Chief Executive Office **(**CEO**)**, Department of Regional Planning, ~~Chief Executive Office,~~ and Chief Sustainability Office, to report back in 120 days on the feasibility of creating a Fire Control District which would serve as a fire risk mitigation and preparedness entity for Los Angeles County. The report should evaluate geographic options (i.e. LA County inclusive of incorporated cities, unincorporated LA County, specific wildland-urban interfaces) including analyses of revenue estimates, varying funding scales, anticipated costs, ~~and~~ initiatives that could be supported by a Fire Control District, akin to Marin County's Wildfire Prevention Authority, and coordination with the ongoing work related to establishing Regional Wildfire Mitigation Joint-Powers Authorities.

3. Direct Internal Services Department to report back in 120 days on a proposal to create a home hardening and defensible space program for properties located in high fire severity zones, including funding strategies, and scenarios for scaling the program.
4. Direct County Fire and Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures to join and participate in the State's wildfire restoration working group and to report back to the Board in 180 days on strategies and funds needed to reduce proliferation of invasive plants on public lands that present a fire risk, in areas recovering from wildfires, and other high priority areas, starting with a pilot initiative in the Santa Monica Mountains.
5. Direct CEO Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch to:
    a. Advocate for an amendment to Executive Order N-29-25 to only allow exemptions to the energy code for those properties where legacy homeowners ~~or next of kin~~ are rebuilding, following the County's own standards for applying fee deferrals to fire survivors;
    b. Support proposals to establish permanent and dedicated resilient rebuild incentives, beyond the existing authorized statewide CPUC RISE program.
6. Direct the CEO to convene philanthropic partners to identify opportunities to support resilient recovery and community risk reduction in partnership with government and report back to the Board in 90 days with recommendations aligned with the County's long-term recovery goals ~~to launch a *LA Resilient Rebuilding and Reconstruction Fund* philanthropic campaign to generate~~

~~opportunities for philanthropy to support resilient rebuilding and community risk reduction~~.

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