



## Reimagining a Resilient Palisades

### Guiding Principles for Rebuilding after the January 2025 Wildfire

A vision set forth by Resilient Palisades, Established in 2019

A community-based nonprofit organization in Pacific Palisades, CA working to coordinate a community-led response to the climate and ecological crisis.

**2025 California Nonprofit of the Year** for *"its incredible work on uniting our communities during the recovery process of the fires, and its continued commitment to local environmental action"* - Senator Ben Allen

Reimagine • Regenerate • Rebuild  
for  
People • Planet • Progress

**Resilient Palisades** was founded in 2019 to bring neighbors together to mount a local response to the climate and ecological crisis. We have worked together to build a vibrant Palisades, and led community campaigns to install rooftop solar and storage, phase out polluting gas landscaping equipment, eat a more plant-based diet, reduce waste, compost, capture rainwater, and landscape with California native, fire safe plants. We have also invested in our youth through a scholarship program to support Palisades High School students pursuing their own environmental dreams.

Then came a climate shock that we had not imagined. Along with the Eaton fire that ravaged Altadena, the January 2025 Palisades wildfire was the most destructive wildfire in Los Angeles history. Our organization's leaders and community members lost not just our homes, but every aspect of our community - parks, schools, our beloved library, places of worship, local businesses, historical landmarks, and more. But, we did not lose each other or our deep commitment to creating lives that respect and preserve the natural world that is our ultimate home. Our community stands strong, determined to **reimagine, regenerate, and rebuild** a resilient and environmentally forward-looking Pacific Palisades.

As we navigate our new reality and grieve our losses, we recognize the urgency of moving forward with a clear vision of what we want our future community to look, feel, and be like. Having now experienced the effects of the climate crisis in the most visceral way, we are more committed than ever to harnessing the dynamic energy of Palisadians to work together with government, NGOs, and private organizations to create a **resilient and regenerative future for our community**.

Our **'Guiding Principles' for Rebuilding** emphasize an integrative framework (*reimagine, regenerate, and rebuild for people, planet, and progress*) to mitigate future fire hazards and center resiliency so that our community will withstand and recover quickly from future risks, including fire, heat, drought, sea level rise, etc. This **resilient + regenerative approach** will foster insurability, and create a cleaner, safer, financially stable, and more vibrant community that is thriving and flourishing without slowing down the rebuilding process.

These principles can help turn this tragedy into an opportunity for collective growth and renewal. We invite you to work together with us to rebound from this disaster and make the Palisades into America's most resilient and regenerative community.

– *The Resilient Palisades Steering Committee*



## Guiding Principles for Rebuilding

The following Guiding Principles for Rebuilding ('Guiding Principles') reflect our commitment to a resilient future, rooted in collaboration, innovation, and community engagement. They have been developed by our [Steering Committee](#), with input and guidance from local experts, organizations, and coordinated wildfire recovery groups. These Guiding Principles address the following **Key Considerations: insurability, long-term safety, health, and environmental benefits, and financial stability**. We have also carefully considered the urgency to rebuild, and want to note that through collaborative and coordinated efforts, we believe that a timely rebuild applying these guidelines is possible, and necessary, to avoid future disasters and destruction.

Over the next several years, we are dedicating our efforts to projects, campaigns, and initiatives that advance these principles and make it easier for Palisadian homeowners, businesses, as well as local and state governments to rebuild the resilient and regenerative community we envision.

**We commit to promoting and facilitating the following:**

### 1. Sustainable & Fire-Resilient Construction

- Use of **fire-resistant materials** such as Class A fire-resistant roofing, ember-resistant and properly enclosed eaves and vents, home hardening and fireproof exteriors, and multi-pane windows (which are also energy efficient).
- Integration of **passive design techniques** and strategic **building placement and orientation** to enhance energy efficiency and resilience against extreme temperatures.
- Adoption of **environmentally-innovative design and materials**, the **adoption of eco-friendly certifications and standards**, and **environmentally forward-looking principles** such as rebuilds that are: net-zero or net-positive, carbon-neutral or carbon-negative, regenerative, biophilic and nature-integrated, circular and adaptive, and water conserving.
- Exploration of **prefabricated and modular construction** for rapid, sustainable, and affordable rebuilding, while maintaining high fire resilience standards.
- Installation of **subsurface thermal sensors** and **easy-to-shut-off exterior water valves** for enhanced fire resistance that contributes to water-saving during disasters.
- Coordination of **bulk purchasing programs** for fire-resistant materials, electric appliances, and solar + storage technologies to lower costs.
- Implementation of **Climate Resilience Districts** to provide financial mechanisms for long-term rebuilding support.
- Expansion of **community-based wildfire preparedness** programs, including annual training and hands-on home-hardening workshops.
- Reduction in barriers for homeowners and businesses to choose fire-resilient + sustainable design and construction strategies through the **rapid development and distribution of educational resources and toolkits**.



- Support of **green workforce training programs** in climate-resilient construction, landscaping, and energy and water infrastructure.
- Rebuilding efforts that are **accessible and affordable**, preventing displacement of vulnerable residents.
- Advocacy for **direct financial assistance** for low-income households to rebuild with sustainable and fire-resistant materials.
- Support for **insurance incentives** for Palisadian families and businesses that adopt fire-resistant and sustainable materials.

Implementing fire-resistant materials and construction techniques will significantly lower the risk of property damage and loss, making insurance more accessible and affordable for homeowners. More sustainable materials, such as metal, are not only fire-resistant, but more robust against termites and moisture, reducing maintenance costs over their lifetime. Sustainable design and construction that results in increased energy efficiency and reduced water use will decrease utility costs. Bulk purchasing programs lower material costs, allowing homeowners to rebuild resiliently without added financial strain, while making insurance coverage more attainable due to reduced long-term risks. Providing financial assistance and workforce training ensures that rebuilding is both affordable and efficient, preventing delays and cost overruns.

## 2. Renewable Energy Systems, Microgrids & Electrification

- Incentives for **solar panel installations** and **battery storage** with fire-rated enclosures for energy independence and resiliency.
- Development of **community microgrids** to enhance energy security during emergencies and extreme heat/ high-energy demand events.
- Rebuilding of **all-electric homes and businesses**, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, enhancing safety by eliminating gas fire risks, and improving indoor air quality and health.
- Facilitation of **fast-track permitting** and **incentives for solar-plus-storage and electrification projects, appliances, and equipment** for healthy and energy efficient buildings that include air filters, air quality monitoring, electric heat pumps for heating and cooling, induction stoves, heat pump or solar water heaters, and LED lighting.
- Opposition of **methane gas infrastructure**, ensuring all rebuilt homes are healthy, safe, and future-proofed with clean energy.
- Designation of **resilient community hubs** (e.g., schools, libraries, parks) constructed with fire-resistant construction materials and equipped with clean backup power and emergency supplies.

Transitioning to all-electric homes with solar power, battery storage, and community microgrids reduces our reliance on volatile fossil fuel markets and enhances energy security and resilience, leading to lower long-term energy costs and safer and more reliable conditions during emergencies and natural disasters. Fast-track permitting for solar-plus-storage systems ensures that energy-efficient homes are rebuilt quickly, keeping pace with conventional rebuilding timelines, while



providing long-term financial and insurability benefits. Incentivizing all-electric homes and businesses eliminates the need for polluting and unhealthy fossil fuels like methane gas and reduces the overall construction time and cost of rebuilding by eliminating the need for gas infrastructure repair and re-installation. Eliminating gas and its infrastructure also reduces the risk of post-earthquake fires, facilitates the installation of underground electric lines, which will eliminate the chance of fire-starting sparks, and reduces negative health impacts from gas leaks and indoor gas appliances that emit deadly chemicals. Furthermore, establishing community resilience hubs that integrate renewable energy and microgrids contribute to strengthening community resilience to other hazards such as extreme heat, drought, poor air quality, and earthquakes.

### 3. Water Security & Landscape Resilience

- Utilization of **bioremediation techniques to clean toxins from the soil, air, and water** while creating community spaces that promote health and wellbeing.
- Implementation and incentives for **rainwater harvesting** in private and public spaces through rain barrels, cisterns, bioswales, and permeable surfaces to minimize runoff and enhance water storage.
- Expansion and incentives for **CA native fire-resistant landscaping** that integrates compost for soil regeneration and is properly hydrated and maintained in all zones to reduce fire spread, limit erosion and invasive plant growth, contribute to cooling and energy efficiency, and promote biodiversity and soil health.
- Careful **evaluation and possible removal of non-native fire-prone plants** like ornamental grasses, eucalyptus, and palm trees, which may contribute to rapid fire spread, especially if not adequately hydrated and maintained
- **Preservation of surviving mature trees** and bird nesting season protections.
- Replanting of open spaces with **fire-resistant tree species such as native CA oaks** and other climate-appropriate plants that hold more moisture.
- Utilization of **nature-based solutions that prioritize native plants for flood and landslide protection**, including reforestation and erosion control measures.
- Encouragement of **greywater reuse systems** on private and public lots to maintain hydrated landscapes, reducing ignition risk.
- Development of **community-scale water retention** for emergency response and long-term sustainability.
- Requirements for **rainwater and stormwater capture systems** in rebuilt homes and public spaces to reduce stormwater runoff volume and pollutant loads, which can lead to improved water quality, reduced flooding, and increased groundwater recharge.

Integrating California native and fire-resilient landscaping on private and public land at the proper density and with proper maintenance requires less effort, tools, chemicals, and water use than traditional landscaping, while mitigating fire spread, ensuring that homes remain insurable and environmentally responsible without adding extra rebuilding costs. An added bonus of native



landscaping that is combined with the application of compost for soil regeneration is that it also contributes to the immediate bioremediation of the fire-polluted soil, while supporting biodiversity and our overall soil and ecosystem health. Utilizing sustainable water management systems such as rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse, and recycled water reduces water demand (and utility costs) and further minimizes the risk of drought-related fire damage. The inclusion of large cisterns to capture water also contributes to ensuring adequate water supplies during times of emergency, improving long-term sustainability and insurance viability.

#### 4. Smart Land Use & Defensible Space

- Revisions to zoning laws to reflect updated **wildland-urban interface (WUI) best practices** that are supported by science and reduce fire risk.
- Requirements for **well-maintained vegetation within defensible space zones** focused on the first 100 ft around structures. Prioritization of pervious solutions like gravel and pavers (instead of concrete) within defensible spaces to permit water filtration and reduce flooding.
- Expansion of **community fire breaks** through targeted land acquisitions and reforestation with California native and fire-resistant species.
- Adoption of **climate-conscious zoning** and exploration of development limits to reduce the impacts of sea-level rise and mitigate threats in very high fire-hazard severity zones, including **managed retreat** options if necessary.
- Development of **resilient and regenerative public and community spaces** that promote and enhance community engagement, public and active transportation, California native landscaping, urban tree canopy for cooling, water resiliency, healthy soils, community gardens, and public amenities that provide drinking water and shade.

Pacific Palisades is a community with a diverse ecosystem that includes beaches, bluffs, canyons, and mountains with a variety of plant and animal species. Strategic climate-conscious zoning and defensible space measures reduce the likelihood of wildfire damage and other climate-related threats like sea-level rise, erosion, and mudslides, making communities safer and more insurable. Implementing these measures should not delay rebuilding but instead ensures that new developments meet modern safety standards, preventing future costly disasters and increasing long-term property values. We have an opportunity to redesign and rebuild neighborhoods and public spaces that enhance community resilience, and the health and wellbeing of our residents, visitors, and the environment on which we all depend, and serve as a model for other disaster recovery efforts in Los Angeles, and beyond.