



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1
Return and Rebuild

Issue Date: January 13, 2025

Subject: Expedited Community Rebuilding and Recovery

INTRODUCTION

The firestorm that ignited on January 7, 2025 has destroyed thousands of homes. As of January 13, 2025, fires across our region and the high winds and dry conditions that fuel them continue to threaten property and lives. This emergency executive order clears the way for Los Angeles residents to rapidly rebuild the homes they lost.

This order:

- Ensures impacted City of Los Angeles residents can rebuild their homes
- Confirms local waiver of CEQA review
- Waives local discretionary review processes

On January 13, 2025, I issued an updated declaration of local emergency addressing the hurricane-force windstorm, the extreme fire danger, and the rebuilding process that lies ahead. The extreme winds and extremely dry conditions resulted in multiple devastating wildfires throughout the City of Los Angeles, and fires continue to burn and cause devastating impacts to people and property. Tragically, as of January 13, 2025, nearly 25,000 acres of land in the City of Los Angeles has burned, more than 5,000 structures have been damaged or destroyed, more than 80,000 residents have been evacuated, and people have lost their lives.

To provide a streamlined path for the rebuilding of the City of Los Angeles' fire-devastated communities, pursuant to City Charter Section 231, subsection (i), and

under the provisions of the Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 8.29 that authorize me to promulgate, issue and enforce emergency rules, regulations, orders, and directives, I hereby declare the following order to be necessary for the protection of life and property and I hereby order, effective immediately that:

A. Clean Up Efforts

- 1. Debris Removal:** To clear the way for people to return to their communities and rebuild their homes, the five Bureaus of the Board of Public Works shall immediately establish a Debris Removal Task Force to develop a comprehensive and streamlined program for debris removal, unifying with the California Office of Emergency Services and other City, County, State and Federal agencies pursuant to Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-5-25. The Mayor's Office shall designate a Debris Manager charged with identifying City roles and responsibilities and coordinating debris removal and disposal operations across all levels of government. The debris removal program shall ensure clean-up occurs in compliance with all local, state, and federal hazardous materials and contamination regulations intended to protect human health and protect against groundwater and air contamination, including but not limited to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and complies with adopted standards intended for the protection of worker safety, and facilitates rebuilding as fast as possible while also maximizing the opportunity for federal reimbursement.
- 2. Watershed Hazards Mitigation:** The five Bureaus of the Board of Public Works shall immediately establish a Watershed Hazards Task Force to conduct post-fire debris-flow hazard assessments to mitigate the risks of flash floods, mudslides, and debris flows in response to rain events, uniting with the California Office of Emergency Services and other City, County, and State agencies pursuant to Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-5-25. The Task Force shall evaluate and recommend mitigation measures to protect infrastructure and implement emergency measures as necessary.

B. Rebuilding

- 1. Disaster Recovery Permitting Center:** Establish a special permitting center in the impacted burn area(s) with representatives from all development services departments, in coordination with county, state, and federal authorities including Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) and the federal Small Business Administration (SBA). During the initial stages of recovery, this Center shall be operational and staffed by all related Departments seven days a week. The Departments listed below shall participate:

- Department of City Planning
- Department of Building and Safety
- Department of Recreation and Parks
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Water and Power
- Department of Public Works:
 - Bureau of Contract Administration
 - Bureau of Street Lighting
 - Bureau of Engineering
 - Bureau of Sanitation
 - Bureau of Street Services - Urban Forestry Division
- Los Angeles Fire Department
- Los Angeles Housing Department

2. Department Strike Force: Establish a development services and building permit unified task force to work with the Mayor's Office of Business and Economic Development with participation from all development services departments, as enumerated above in paragraph B.1. above, including representation from City Council Offices that are fully or partially within any of the burn areas. This task force will be charged with further streamlining of administration of this order as well as identifying and addressing any roadblocks to an expeditious reconstruction process.

3. Expedited Permit Review: I further direct all applicable City departments to conduct and conclude all of the City's initial building permitting reviews required for reconstruction projects that are on a site with a structure substantially damaged or destroyed by the Wildfires¹, and to complete all appropriate reviews for such projects within 30 days following the submission of a complete application, subject to and consistent with the California Coastal Act (Division 20 of the Public Resources Code, commencing with section 30000), as applicable. To the extent practicable, all required reviews and approvals shall be conducted simultaneously, not sequentially, by all City Departments so as to meet the time periods specified in this paragraph.

¹ For purposes of this Order, "Wildfires," shall collectively mean the Palisades, Hurst, Kenneth, Archer, and Sunset Fires that occurred in January 2025, in whole or in part within the City of Los Angeles.

- a. Inspections by the Department of Building and Safety shall be conducted within two business days of a submitted request.
- b. I further direct all applicable City Departments to process clearances and utility releases related to building permit applications, certificates of occupancy, or temporary certificates of occupancy within five business days for all rebuild projects.

4. Eligible Projects: For purposes of paragraphs B.5. and B.10. below, an “Eligible Project” shall be a project to repair, restore, demolish, or replace a structure or facility substantially damaged or destroyed by the Wildfires, which meets all of the following criteria:

- a. The structure or facility to be repaired, restored, demolished, or replaced is in substantially the same location as it existed immediately prior to the Wildfires;
- b. The structure or facility to be repaired, restored, demolished, or replaced does not exceed 110% of the floor area, height, and bulk of the structures or facility existing immediately prior to the Wildfires;
- c. The project shall be for the same use as the last use of the structure or facility prior to the Wildfires. Without limitation, the project cannot result in a change of use from residential to commercial, a less intensive use to a more intensive use, or an increase in density or units (including accessory dwelling units), including but not limited to a change from a single-family use to a multi-family use; and
- d. The Project obtains building permits for repair or reconstruction in seven years from issuance of this Order; and the work is completed within three years of obtaining building permits; subject to extension by a subsequent Order or Council resolution.

5. Eligible Project Review Provisions: An Eligible Project shall be subject to all of the substantive and procedural rules in subparagraphs a. through e., below. A project that does not meet the definition of an Eligible Project shall be subject to all applicable requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), or any plan, policy, guideline adopted pursuant to the LAMC, including discretionary review if applicable.

- a. **Non-Conforming Buildings and Uses:** Notwithstanding any rules concerning non-conforming zoning rules for structures, uses and lots to the contrary in the LAMC or plans, policies, or guidelines adopted pursuant to the LAMC, including but not limited LAMC

Section 12.23 and the emergency provisions in LAMC 16.03, a project that meets the definition of an Eligible Project shall be approved provided all of the following requirements are met:

1. The project is being repaired or reconstructed with the same nonconforming use, yards, height, number of stories, lot area, floor area, residential floor area, residential density, loading space, parking or off-site signs as the original building, provided that the rebuilt or restored structures or facilities does not exceed 110% of the square footage, height, and bulk existing immediately prior to the Wildfires. Notwithstanding the above, the project may exceed the 110% allowance if it meets current zoning standards. (Note: if a project exceeding the 100% allowance is in the Coastal Zone, the project may need discretionary review under the California Coastal Act);
 2. The Applicant provides documentation of compliance with the definition of Eligible Project in this Executive Order;
 3. Except as expressly otherwise provided in this Order, the project complies with applicable current City of Los Angeles Building Codes; and
 4. Neither the footing nor any portion of the replacement building or reconstruction encroaches into any area planned for widening or extension of existing or future streets as determined by the Planning Department upon the recommendation of the City Engineer.
- b. **Waiver Of Discretionary Processes:** Applications for an Eligible Project shall be, and hereby are deemed exempt from City discretionary review processes otherwise required by Chapter I or 1A of the LAMC, or any plan, policy, or guidelines, adopted pursuant to the LAMC, including, but not limited to, the Pacific Palisades Village Specific Plan and the Pacific Palisades Village Design Review Board Guidelines, and any other specific plans that are applicable to impacted areas. All City Departments are directed to process all applications and plans for such rebuilding projects using the streamlined ministerial review process currently used for projects eligible under Government Code Section 65913.4.
- c. **Haul Route and Public Works Exemptions:** Notwithstanding any contrary provision of the LAMC, a haul route approval for an Eligible Project shall be approved ministerially and shall be exempt from the LAMC discretionary approval processes, including but not

limited to noticing, hearings, findings, and appeals. The Department of Transportation and the Department of Public Works - Bureau of Street Services shall report back within 15 days with recommendations on safely managing individual and potential concurrent haul routes for Eligible Projects relative to any overconcentrations of haul truck traffic and associated nuisance and safety impacts.

Additionally, Public Works reviews set forth in LAMC Sections 46.00 through 46.06 and 62.161 through 62.162 are exempt from otherwise required discretionary processes, including but not limited to noticing, hearings, findings, and appeals.

- d. **Coastal Zone:** Such Eligible Projects in the Coastal Zone shall be exempt from the requirements of a Coastal Development Permit, as outlined in Coastal Act Section 30610(g). Demolition and construction of dwelling units, for the purpose of rebuilding existing units, shall not be considered a “Demolition” or “New Construction” pursuant to the requirements of the Mello Act and the City of Los Angeles Interim Administrative Procedures for Complying with the Mello Act.
- e. **All-Electric Building Code Provisions:** Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the LAMC, all requirements related to Ordinance No. [187,714](#) shall be waived for Eligible Projects. Although not required, Eligible Projects may choose to opt in to the provisions of Ordinance No. 187,714.

- 6. **Demolition Permit:** Notwithstanding any contrary provision of the LAMC, or policy, plan or guidelines adopted pursuant to the LAMC, for the demolition of any structure, improvement, or facility substantially damaged or destroyed by the Wildfires, a demolition permit is not required provided the applicant has submitted a timely notification prior to demolition to the Department of Building and Safety through an online portal or other electronic means with information and documentation specified by the Department.

A demolition of a structure, improvement or facility substantially damaged or destroyed by the Wildfires shall comply with all local, state and federal regulations for the disposal of waste including any regulations set forth by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control or the City’s Sanitation Department.

The removal of a deep or step foundation or retaining wall shall require review by the Department of Building and Safety to ensure that said removal and subsequent grading or compaction of soils does not exacerbate any life and safety risks.

The Department of Building and Safety shall publish the guidelines to implement this paragraph within 15 days.

- 7. Historic Resources Inventory:** The Department of Building and Safety, in coordination with the Department of City Planning, within 10 days of safe access being available to the impacted areas, shall identify and inspect all properties that have a local, state, or federal historic designation. Furthermore, the Department of City Planning shall publish a list of the status of these properties after said inspections and promulgate guidance on the application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- 8. Allowance For Recreational Vehicles, Tiny Homes, Modular Structures, and Mobile Homes on Affected Properties During Rebuild:** On a site with a structure, improvement, or facility substantially damaged or destroyed by the Wildfires, the use of Recreational Vehicles, Tiny Homes, Modular Structures, and Mobile Homes on the site during rebuilding to house displaced resident(s) shall be permitted for up to three years, or while an active building permit is applicable to said property, whichever is longer. Additionally, a property owner shall be permitted to locate a storage unit or shed on said property for up to three years.
- 9. Expediting Temporary Certificates of Occupancy for Multi-family Residential Projects Near Completion:** Form an interdepartmental task force to help multi-family residential projects nearing completion obtain their Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) expeditiously so as to create more available units in the market. The task force shall include the Department of Building and Safety, City Planning, Bureau of Engineering, Los Angeles Fire Department, Department of Water and Power, Bureau of Sanitation and others as necessary and shall proactively reach out to project applicants to assist. The Department of Building and Safety shall issue guidelines for the implementation of this provision within 10 days.

10. Self Certification: The Department of Building and Safety shall report back within 15 days on what permit review(s) could potentially be undertaken as a self-certification procedure by a licensed project architect, for Eligible Projects that are limited to the reconstruction of a single-family residential structure.

11. Implementation Guidance: In addition to any other implementation guidelines specifically required in this Order, the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, and other applicable City Departments shall issue guidelines as necessary to implement all other provisions of this Executive Order within 30 days of issuance in consultation with the Mayor's Office. Implementation guidelines may be amended and updated from time to time, as may be necessary.

C. State and Federal Assistance

1. Direct all City Departments to report back in seven days with a list of additional relief needed from state and federal regulations and requirements, as well as state and federal funding needed for recovery.

Executed this 13th day of January, 2025



KAREN BASS
Mayor