

# One Year After the Palisades Fire, a New Survey Shows Community Resilience Coupled with Frustration



Pacific Palisades Community Council

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PACIFIC PALISADES, Calif., Jan. 6, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- One year after the devastating Palisades Fire, the Pacific Palisades Community Council in conjunction with NORC at the University of Chicago, is releasing a new study outlining Palisades residents' challenges, priorities and preferences. "This is the first comprehensive study that identifies community recovery priorities and the trade-offs residents are willing to make to support the process," says PPCC President Sue Kohl.

"This research provides detailed evidence of the complex decisions residents face about returning and rebuilding after the wildfires," says Jennifer Benz, Senior Vice President at NORC. "People are eager to get back to their community, but they face significant barriers including financing, insurance, and permitting challenges, as well as safety concerns regarding environmental conditions and fire resilient infrastructure. These findings can equip stakeholders with credible, resident-centered data to inform the recovery and rebuilding approach." PPCC partnered with NORC because of the organization's national reputation for accuracy, impartiality and rigor in surveying actual residents affected by the fire.

"The community is loudly signaling that it wants an independent rebuilding authority and/or local community groups to have strong involvement in the process," notes David Schwarz, Chair of the PPCC Rebuild Committee which spearheaded the research survey. In addition, PPCC Vice President, Quentin Fleming, highlights that "Safety, such as undergrounding utilities is the number one priority, and there is support for financial co-investment from the community in increased resilience and safety to harden the community against future fires."

Among the key findings of the report:

- Only one in four impacted residents have returned to their homes.
- While 64% of residents plan to rebuild their homes, only 13% of heavily impacted single-family homeowners have begun construction because of numerous obstacles.
- High repair costs and insurance-related issues are the most frequently cited barriers. 71% of residents are extremely or very concerned that insurance will not cover the cost to rebuild.
- Fire safety and infrastructure resilience are top priorities for rebuilding. Roughly 80% of residents place high importance on improved evacuation routes and buried power lines.
- Residents not only value infrastructure improvements but expect its restoration to occur quickly. Most residents consider six months to two years to be a reasonable timeline for utilities, sewage, telecommunications, and public spaces to be fully operational – faster than home rebuilding.
- Residents trust community-based organizations or an independent authority to lead rebuilding. An overwhelming majority of residents have little to no confidence in local/state government, while a majority have greater confidence in either an independent rebuilding authority or heavy involvement by local organizations. There is little to no confidence in the status quo.
- There is support within the community to co-invest in paying for infrastructure improvements through a small tax increase for a limited number of years.

A copy of the full report is available by clicking on the following link:

### **[Survey Report](#)**

SOURCE Pacific Palisades Community Council

**Link to press release on PR Newswire:** [https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/one-year-after-the-palisades-fire-a-new-survey-shows-community-resilience-coupled-with-frustration-302654235.html?tc=eml\\_cleartime](https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/one-year-after-the-palisades-fire-a-new-survey-shows-community-resilience-coupled-with-frustration-302654235.html?tc=eml_cleartime)