

Public Safety, Logistics Planning and Law Enforcement Meeting – 5/13 – Pacific Palisades

Date: May 13, 2025

Convened by: Palisades Recovery Coalition

Attendees:

40+ community members, joined by Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Robert Clark, LAPD West Captain Rich Gabaldon, SLO Brian Espin, Sgt. Scott Alpert, CHP Lt. Geller, Mayor's Department of Public Safety Elliot Woods, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Col. Jeff Palazzini, Councilwoman Traci Park, CD11 team members, Mayor Karen Bass's Field Representative Marian Ensley.

Army Corps of Engineers Progress

Col. Jeff Palazzini reported that debris clearance efforts are proceeding at unprecedented scale and speed:

- Over 70% of Right of Entry (ROE) lots cleared, covering Palisades, Malibu, and Topanga.
- 3,000 of 4,200 homes cleared to date, at a pace of 50 per day, soon slowing to 40 as complex lots remain.
- 850 tons of debris cleared daily, expected to reach 4.5 million tons total.
- 1,000+ trucks operating daily in the burn zone.
- Priority being placed on clearing Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), targeting end-of-May completion of all lots that have valid Rights of Entry on File. (These statistics do not include private debris clearance lots.)

Maryam raised concerns about infrastructure damage to PCH and the sea wall. Col. Palazzini noted these were beyond the Corps' scope but acknowledged the issue.

Councilwoman Park Update:

Councilwoman Traci Park emphasized the scale of the reconstruction effort ahead, anticipating it to be one of the largest construction zones in the City of LA. She highlighted the need for coordinated logistics, thoughtful planning, and a shared commitment to collaboration. She pledged the full support of her office throughout the process. Maryam Zar expressed appreciation for Councilwoman Park's strong advocacy and pledged to work closely with her to ensure effective, community-driven outcomes.

LAPD Presence & Strategy

Captain Rich Gabaldon outlined a plan for law enforcement in Pacific Palisades after the National Guard is no longer deployed in the Palisades. This is a plan that has been developed

with LAPD Command and other law enforcement agencies. It is subject to change and is built to benefit from, and be reactive to, community input. Key components include:

- Deployment of 5 additional patrol cars, each staffed by 2 officers, strategically covering 5 subzones of Pacific Palisades.
- Continued deployment of the Basic Car, which will remain dedicated to Palisades. (Beach detail has been assisting in surface streets and will remain in place.)
- 50 LPR cameras already in use and operational across the community
- 5 solar-powered trailer-mounted cameras have been pledged as a donation to LAPD resources in Pacific Palisades. These are equipped with loudspeakers and lights and can be monitored by LAPD. Community partnerships may be needed to support this deployment.
- Introduction of a drone pilot program, already active in West LA, to be extended to Pacific Palisades soon.

M. Zar suggested forming a Community Advisory Board to align law enforcement with community needs—an idea Capt. Gabaldon welcomed. D. Schwarz suggested that there be an initial show of force and a zero-tolerance stance against crime gaining a foothold in Pacific Palisades, if/when check points are lifted. Capt. Gabaldon stressed the importance of maintaining strong enforcement presence as the National Guard's departure date looms. He confirmed backing from Chiefs McDonnell, Woodyard, and Choi, and said LAPD Metro Division would be mobilized as needed.

The community raised the potential role of private security to fill gaps. Councilwoman Park has initiated conversations with private firms. Others proposed seeing how the law enforcement plan as currently proposed plays out, and once the shortcomings (if any) can be identified, the community can perhaps begin to assess how they can help fund and fill those gaps. She suggests an RFQ process. Funding strategies will be explored once needs are fully identified, but some conversations have begun.

Deputy Mayor's Commitment

Deputy Mayor Robert Clark shared his direct observations of the Palisades' fire devastation. He underscored the vital importance of a coordinated security strategy as residents repopulate and reconstruction begins. His office will work with all stakeholders—local, state, and federal—to maintain law enforcement support. He encouraged residents to continue reporting crimes, even if response times are delayed, to maintain data for resource justification. He also confirmed that firearms continue to be recovered, highlighting ongoing safety concerns.

CHP Support & Enforcement

Lt. Geller of CHP detailed their role:

- 10 cars per shift (daytime and early morning hours) patrolling the Palisades.
- Officers not only enforcing traffic laws but patrolling neighborhoods and making stops.
- CHP committed to aiding both traffic flow and community safety.

Community Concerns & Discussion

Several residents and stakeholders, including Jessica Rogers, Larry Vein, and Lou Kamer, stressed the importance of retaining the current checkpoints, noting their deterrent effect on crime. Concerns were raised about whether private security or LADOT might be needed to maintain these as LAPD and CHP transition away from full-time monitoring.

Key issues discussed:

- Residents preparing to repopulate expressed concern that checkpoints might obstruct normal daily life.
- Calls for more reliable systems of crime reporting and visibility into repopulation data.
- Consensus that a "zero tolerance" approach to crime is necessary to avoid normalization of offenses during a vulnerable period.

Parking & Mobility

Suggestions included:

- Waiving metered parking for residents.
- Enforcing parking violations in high-traffic and trailhead areas.
- Formation of a parking task force (Arus from CD11 will explore options).

Evacuation Planning

Lou Kamer raised the urgent need to re-evaluate and model updated evacuation routes. USC professor Kostas Synolakis offered to collaborate on new modeling. While LAPD maintains that evacuation plans are sound, the community urged a fresh, science-based review.

Next Steps and Open Items:

- Launch of Community Advisory Board to coordinate with LAPD.
 - Maryam pledged to create a **Palisades Community Advisory Board** made up of representatives from organizations as well as leaders on public safety initiatives
- Assessment of supplemental security needs and potential RFQ to private providers.
- Ensuring nighttime coverage and swift flow of traffic during the day
- Use of technology as a law enforcement or deterrence tool
- Continued advocacy for law enforcement presence
 - A **Stop in station for LAPD** was contemplated (Capt. Gabaldon noted that this had been an ongoing discussion none more urgent than ever), with many benefits including officers not having to exit the Palisades to file a report. Two locations were identified and follow up will be made.
- Development of parking and traffic mitigation strategies.
- Coordination with USC for evacuation modeling support.