



Rebuilding & Recovery Los Angeles County Status Update

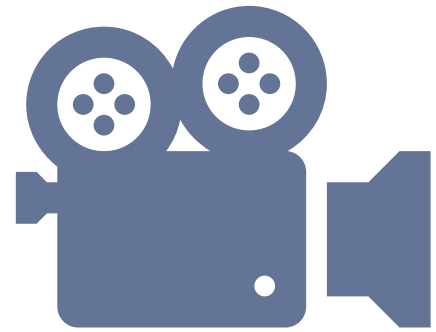


LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- * Attendees will receive an overview of the current response and recovery efforts related to the California fires.
- * Attendees will be exposed to various rebuilding resources and how to apply for various rebuilding permits.
- * Prospective changes to the building code will be addressed and discussed.
- * The webinar will cover additional changes as covered by Executive Order N-20-25, Executive Order N-4-25, and additional orders/ updates related to recovery and rebuild efforts.



HOUSEKEEPING REMINDERS



Resources will be
made available
on our website



Qualifies for
2 AIA HSW/LU



Q&A



Cultivate a
positive learning
environment



SPEAKERS



-  **California**
-  **Los Angeles**
-  **Long Beach/South Bay**
-  **Pasadena & Foothill**
-  **San Fernando Valley**

- * Carina Mills, AIA | 2025 President, AIA California
- * Jodie Mendelson, AIA | Ask an Architect Program, AIA Pasadena & Foothill
- * Chava Danielson, AIA | 2025 President, AIA Los Angeles
- * Jonathan Gilliam, AIA | President of AIA San Fernando Valley
- * Ciara Barnett, P.E. | Co-Chair, LA County Rebuilding Program
- Mitch Glaser, AICP | Assistant Deputy Director, LA County
- * Regional Planning
- Greg Kochanowski, AIA, ASLA | Design Principal, Practice &
- * Founder, The Wild: A Research Lab
- Mohamed Sharif, AIA, RIBA | Partner, Sharif, Lynch,
- * Architecture & Director, Undergraduate Program in Architectural Studies and Graduate Program Design Faculty, UCLA Architecture and Urban Design





-  California
-  Los Angeles
-  Long Beach/South Bay
-  Pasadena & Foothill
-  San Fernando Valley

Rebuilding & Recovery

A Coordinated Effort



IMPACT

Over 16,000 structures were destroyed or damaged

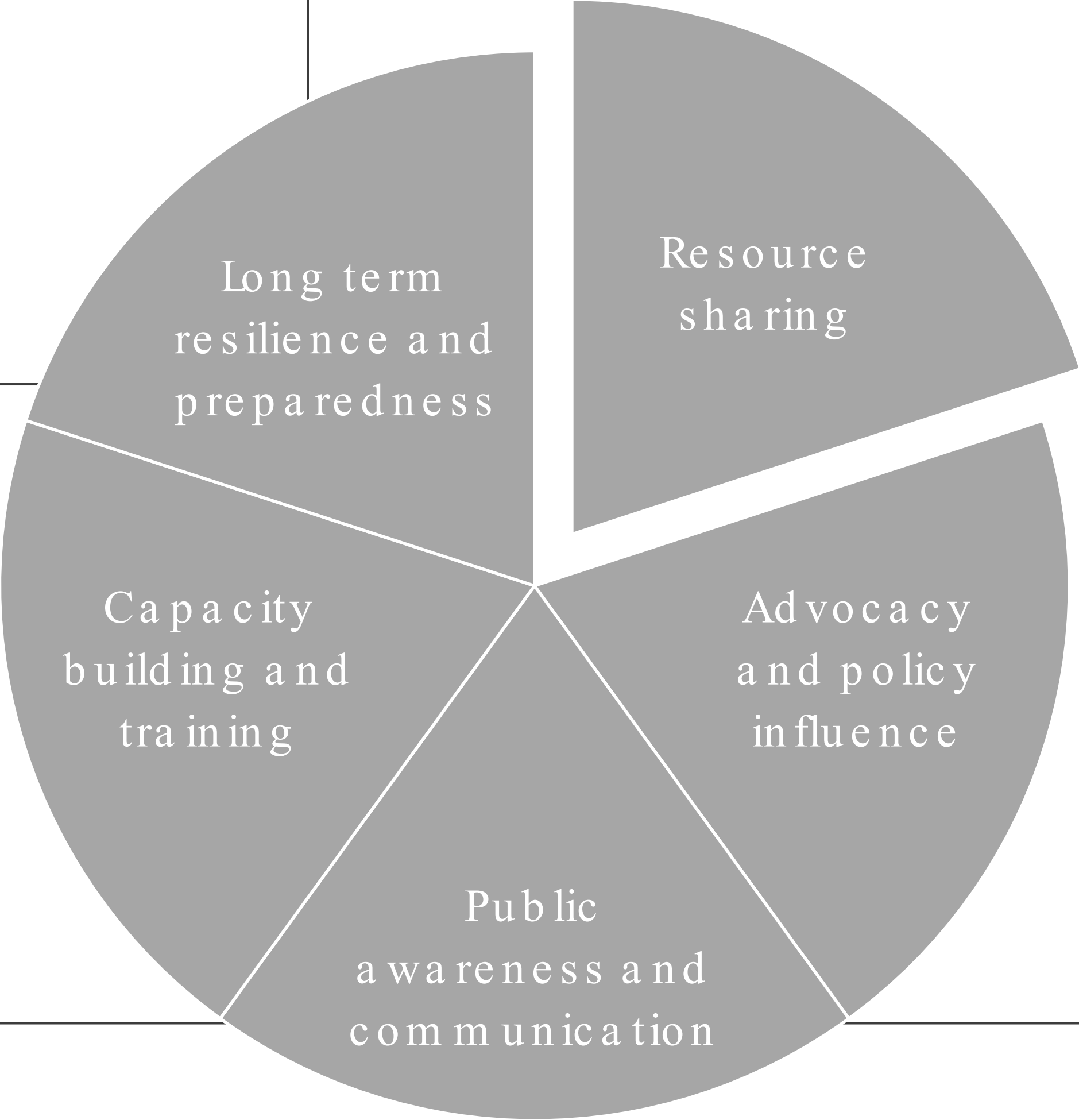
Economic losses est. \$275 billion

Evacuation orders for approximately 200,000 residents across Los Angeles County.

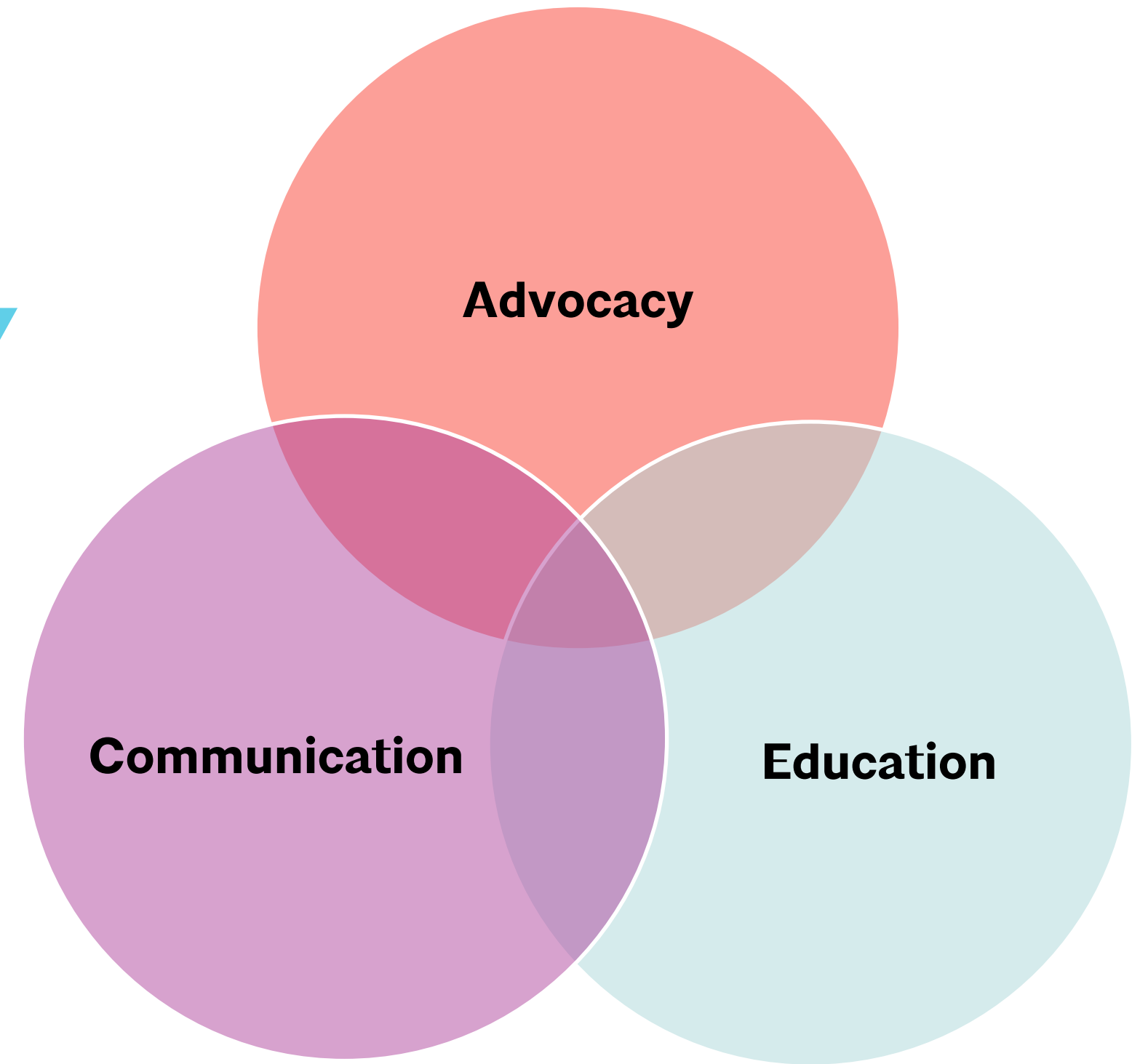
Impact to the region's housing crisis, with rents increasing by 15–20% due to the sudden reduction in housing supply



COORDINATION



DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN



ADVOCACY

AIA

California

AIA

National

March 5, 2025

Cameron Hamilton
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20472

Kelly Loeffler
Administrator
Small Business Administration
409 Third Street, SW
Washington, DC 20416

Re: Request for extension of the FEMA and Small Business Administration Deadlines

Dear Acting Administrator Hamilton and Administrator Loeffler,

On behalf of the American Institute of Architects California (AIA California), an association of over 11,000 design professionals in California, we urge you to extend the FEMA and Small Business Administration (SBA) application deadlines for victims of the recent wildfires in Los Angeles and surrounding counties. The current deadlines are too short, with many individuals and businesses unable to apply by the March 10, 2025 cutoff due to delays in processing, website issues, and necessary fraud investigations. Local governments are stretched thin, struggling to provide recovery services, and an extension would offer the necessary time for impacted communities to access critical aid, including housing, medical, and business recovery grants, as well as loans for rebuilding.


The Palisades and Eaton fires were not fully contained until February 3rd. Consequently, many of those affected were not even able to begin assessing damage until after that date. We understand that California Governor Newsom, as well as the entire California Congressional Delegation, have already made a similar request.

The IRS has also extended tax filing deadlines for wildfire victims, allowing them until October 15, 2025, to file and pay taxes. In line with this, we strongly urge FEMA and SBA to extend their deadlines to December 31, 2025, to give affected individuals and businesses the time needed to navigate the recovery process.


AIA California's members, practicing architects, are assisting in rebuilding efforts, ensuring that properties meet updated resilience standards. An extension of the FEMA deadline would support the timely processing of recovery applications and expedite the rebuilding process.

We respectfully ask for your support in securing this extension for the benefit of all those affected by the unprecedented wildfires.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.
Sincerely,



Scott Terrell
Director of Government Relations
AIA California



Alexander Cochran
Chief Advocacy Officer
AIA National

Letter to FEMA
Requesting extension of the FEMA and Small Business Administration Deadlines

AIA

California

ACEC

American Council of Environmental Engineers
California

CalGeo

the California Geological Engineering Association

February 13, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Waiver Under Health and Safety Code Section 19851 for Property Owners Impacted by Wildfires

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of AIA California, an association of over 11,000 design professionals in California; ACEC California, representing over 500 design firms and 25,000 engineers and land surveyors in California; and the California Geotechnical Engineering Association, which represents over 135 geotechnical consulting firms, more than 45 contractors, drillers, and other geoprofessional firms, as well as over 5,000 geoprofessionals in California, we respectfully request that you take appropriate action under Health and Safety Code Section 19851 to provide a waiver of its requirements for property owners impacted by the recent wildfires in Los Angeles. This waiver would allow affected property owners to receive copies of the plans for their homes, which are essential for the recovery and rebuilding process.

Many property owners who have suffered the loss or significant damage of their homes due to these devastating wildfires urgently need access to their original building plans for several critical reasons:

1. **Insurance Claims** - Insurers often require detailed building plans to accurately assess damages, process claims, and determine appropriate compensation. Without access to these documents, property owners may face delays or difficulties in receiving the financial support necessary to begin the rebuilding process.

2. **Planning for Restoration and Rebuilding** - Architectural and engineering professionals rely on these plans to assess structural integrity, develop restoration strategies, and ensure compliance with local building codes. Access to these documents will expedite the reconstruction process.

3. **Permitting and Code Compliance** - Many jurisdictions require existing building plans to evaluate rebuilding applications and issue permits. Without these records, property owners may experience unnecessary delays and additional expenses.

We urge you to exercise your authority to grant this waiver as a compassionate and practical measure that aligns with the state's commitment to supporting communities impacted by natural disasters. By allowing property owners to obtain their plans without unnecessary restrictions, we can help facilitate a smoother, faster, and more cost-effective rebuilding process for those affected by the wildfires.

We appreciate your leadership and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact Scott Terrell, AIA California Director of Government Relations, at sterrell@aia-california.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Letter to Governor Newsom
Allowing property owners to receive copies of original building plans

AIA

California

January 27, 2025

Los Angeles City Council
200 N Spring St
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Support for Professional Certification

Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

On behalf of AIA California's 11,000 dedicated design professional members, we support our local AIA Components and the many others working to assist in recovery and rebuilding after the recent fires. We recognize the critical importance of facilitating rapid, safe, and cost-effective rebuilding and recovery efforts for the communities impacted.

Among the concepts being considered is the development of a Professional Certification program. We believe this program can simplify and speed up the issuance of the necessary building permits without compromising public health, safety, and welfare. We applaud the quick actions of Mayor Bass, Councilperson Blumenfeld, and others in calling for detailed consideration of Professional Certification. We look forward to supporting our design professional members as they collaborate with LADBS and Planning in the careful development of a program that can streamline permitting while also avoiding unintended negative consequences for the project owners and those working on their behalf.

We stand ready and willing to help. Please let us know how AIA California can best support these initiatives, whether through providing technical expertise, participating in task forces, or assisting with public outreach. We would be happy to coordinate further discussions.

Thank you for your leadership in addressing the challenges posed by this emergency. We look forward to working together to rebuild these communities stronger and safer. If you have any questions, please reach out to Scott Terrell, Director of Government Relations at sterrell@aia-california.org.

Sincerely,



Scott Terrell
Director of Government Relations

The American Institute of Architects

AIA California
1931 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
T (916) 442-9082
F (916) 442-5346

Letter to Los Angeles City Council
Support for Professional Certification program



SOCIAL MEDIA: HERE TO HELP

Campaign:

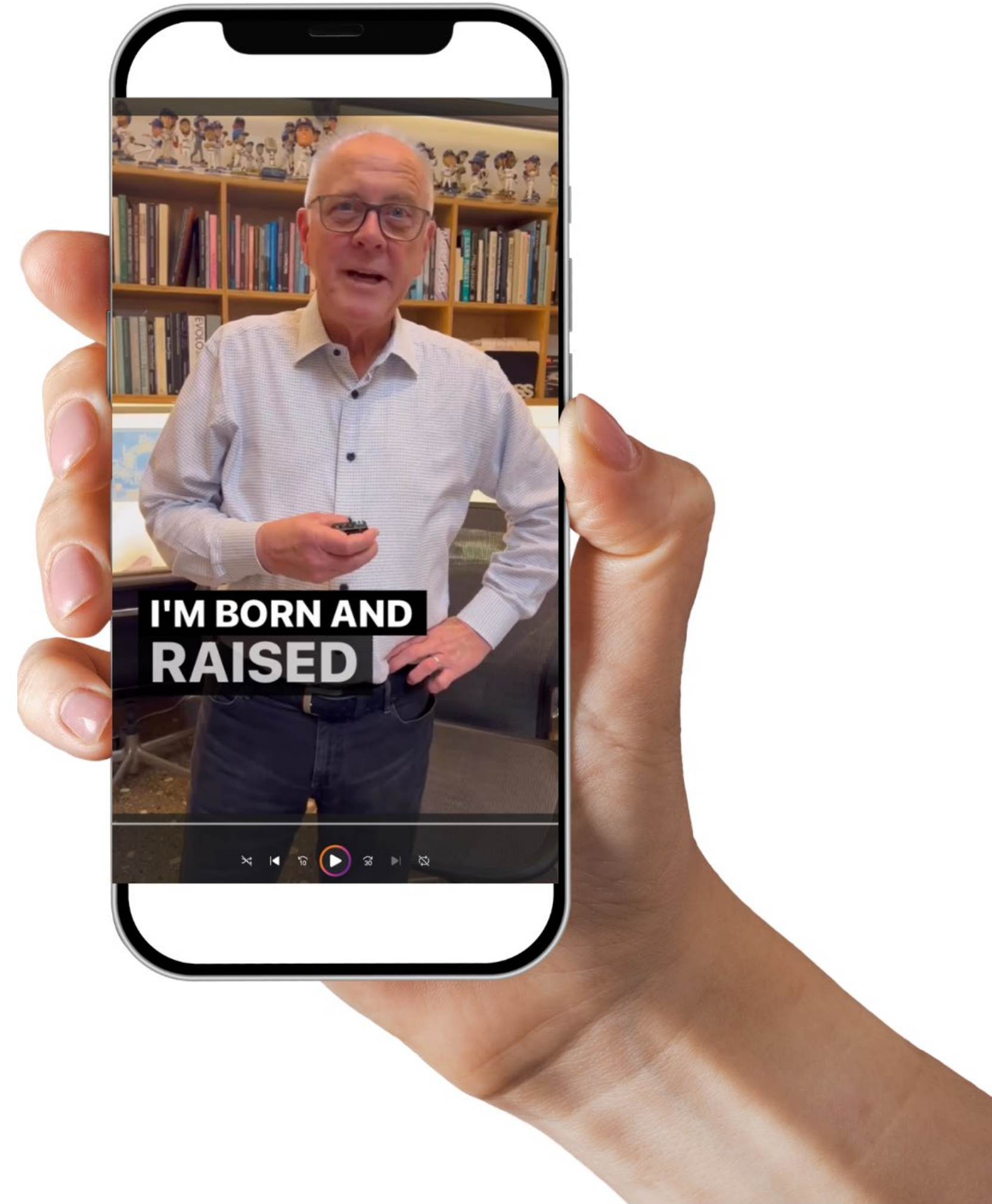
- Demonstrate architects' capacity to help
- Build trust between property owners who have lost their homes and properties

Phase I:

- Features AIA members offering perspectives

Phase I Objective:

- Build awareness – soft campaign
- Engagement – click to form connect with architects that can help



AIA LOS ANGELES

FOCUS

This is a moment for us to gather our best selves and craft ways to move forward with insight, creativity, and the means to construct a better city.

Embracing fire-resilient design, sustainable infrastructure, and forward-thinking urban planning, we will create a stronger, safer Los Angeles. The American Institute of Architects Los Angeles' members have the expertise to ensure LA doesn't just recover but emerges stronger, smarter, and more prepared for the future.



AIA LOS ANGELES

FOCUS

- **Rapid Response & Mobilization:** Established Wild fire Disaster Response Task Force, attracting 550+ volunteers and engaging 800+ participants in initial meetings.
- **Advocacy & Policy Influence:** Actively shaped "Self Certification" policy proposals, testified at city council hearings, and advocated for architects' inclusion in decision-making.
- **Education & Knowledge Sharing:** Organizing 8+ educational seminars on fire-resilient design and collaborated with allied disciplines to provide crucial information.
- **Community Engagement & Support:** Participated in recovery resource fairs, mobilized volunteers for "Ask an Architect" program, and initiated a digital tool to connect community members with architects.
- **Collaboration & Leadership:** Coordinated with AIA California, allied professions, universities, and government agencies to develop holistic rebuilding strategies and solutions.



AIA PASADENA & FOOTHILL

FOCUS

Public facing.

On the ground.

Immediate response.



ASK AN ARCHITECT

Goals:

- Respond to the most immediate questions property owners have about the rebuilding process.
- Be an accurate source of information and trusted partner.
- Be an unbiased party that is not offering or selling any service.

What we are NOT:

- Design Service providers, rather we can share information about how to find architects and other reputable partners.

Ask an Architect: AIA Pasadena-Foothills Volunteer Intake

Thank you AIAPF Volunteers! We thank you for your interest in supporting the community by acting as a resource to answer high-level questions to inform how people decide to move forward with rebuilding (or not). This is an opportunity to serve as a resource, and is not meant to provide advertising or marketing for any particular architect or firm. We will provide resources and training for our volunteers to prepare for engagement, and we will be looking for people who want to engage both in person and virtually with community members. At this time, we will only be working with licensed architects in the state of California, and give preference to those from the local areas which were impacted by the recent fires. Thanks for your support!

Rebuilding After a Fire: Frequently Asked Questions

Date: 2.15.2025
To: Ask an Architect Volunteers
From: AIA PF
Re: [Eaton Fire – Rebuilding Altadena](#)

This document is drafted and managed by the American Institute of Architects Pasadena & Foothill Chapter for the purposes of informing our volunteers, and by extension, the community. We are collecting and updating information as we are able, but we do not certify the correctness of the information provided herein, as the landscape of information is changing daily. This guide is not currently meant for public distribution, but as an internal resource.

If you have further information to contribute or questions about this document, please reach out to us at wildfiresupport@aiapf.org.

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01 INSURANCE & FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

How does my insurance impact my rebuilding options?

- Your policy may dictate coverage limits, rebuild cost reimbursements, and upgrade allowances.
- It is important you get a certified copy of your full policy, read it, and understand

ASK AN ARCHITECT

What we are providing:

- Opportunities for in-person, virtual, or phone consultations.
- Summarized information from governmental agencies and departments.
- Answers to basic questions about the rebuilding process.
- Spanish-language support.

Rebuilding After a Fire:

Frequently Asked Questions

01 What is Phase II debris removal, and what does it cost?

Option 1 (Free of Charge):

Enroll in the government-managed and funded program (Owner must submit Right of Entry "ROE" form providing US Army Corp of Engineering legal authority for entry – beginning 01/28/25. **Deadline 03/31/25**)

Option 2 (Can be Costly):

Manage cleanup independently through a private Licensed Contractor (Requires Permit from LA County)

02 Where do I start when rebuilding my home?

1. Review your insurance and financial options.
2. Determine your available funds and decide what you want to rebuild [like-for-like (faster) or new design (timelier)]
3. Contact an Architect (preferable with local experience) to develop your ideas into drawings that meet current building code and fire resistance standards. An Architect can also assist with preliminary estimates based on your design.
4. Research Contractors, word of mouth and interview, at least three.
5. Your Architect can assist you with obtaining Building permits.
6. Select Contractor and begin construction (upon Phase II Debris Removal clearance).

03 How does my insurance impact my rebuilding options?

Request a certified copy of your **full policy**.

United Policyholders is a free public resource for insurance questions (<https://ushelp.org>).

04 What if my insurance payout isn't enough to cover rebuilding costs?

If you have maxed out your insurance policy, you may qualify for disaster assistance programs, grants, or **low-interest loans** to supplement your rebuilding budget (<https://lending.sba.gov/search-disaster/>).

Work with a **public adjuster** who can work on your behalf to review your claim, negotiate with the insurance company, and potentially help you secure a better settlement.

Consider speaking to an Attorney experienced in Fire Insurance for additional support – they can help review your policy, challenge denied or underpaid claims, explore legal action if insurance is acting in bad faith.

ASK AN ARCHITECT

Summary as of 3/11:

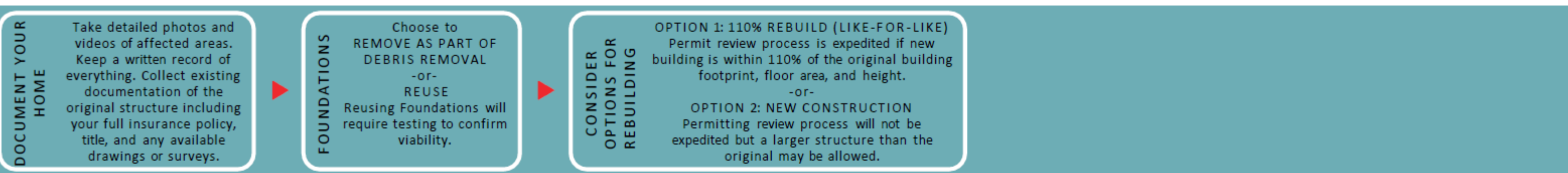
- Launched on 2/21/25.
- We onboarded more than **105 architect volunteers** and provided training materials.
- We have matched more than **104 community members**
- We attended two in-person events spearheaded by SoCal NOMA and Sci-ARC and engaged with dozens of community members.



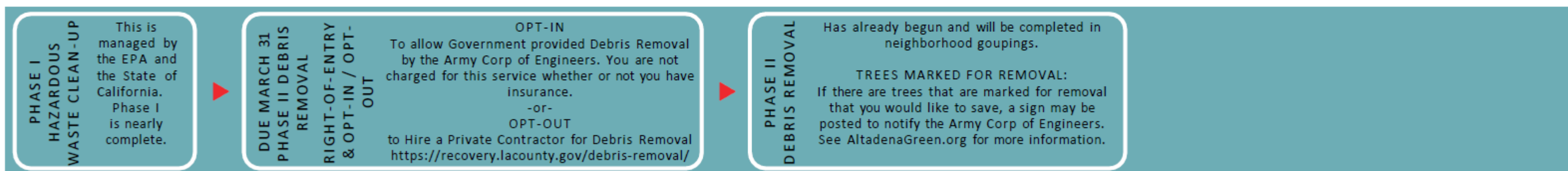
ROADMAP TO REBUILDING

This roadmap is intended to provide you with an outline of the steps to rebuilding. References are available to connect with city and county agencies as well as design and construction professionals who will help you along the way. Please refer to <https://recovery.lacounty.gov/rebuilding/> for relevant links to city and county sites.

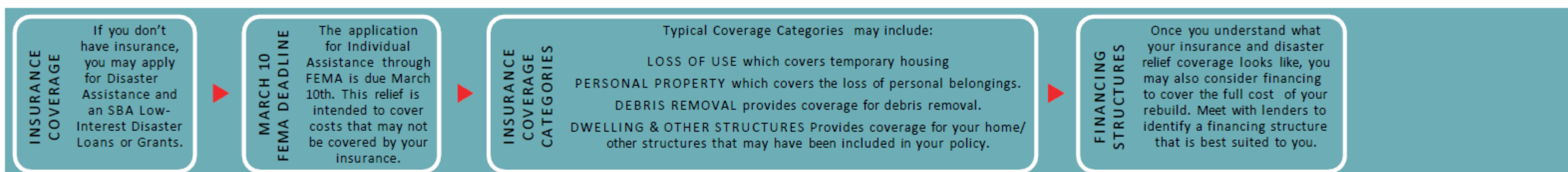
PLANNING



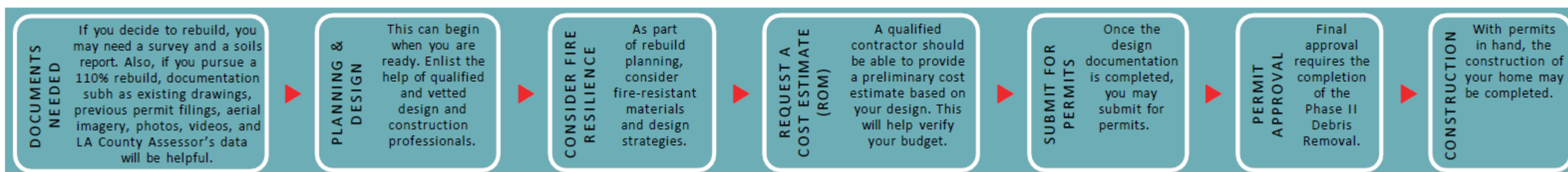
DEBRIS REMOVAL



INSURANCE & FINANCING



DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION



Month 1

WE ARE HERE

Year 1-2

Year 3-4

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Points of confusion:

- Timelines and process
- 110% Rules
- Tax Base changes
- ADUs: timing, permitting, etc.
- Foundation reuse

Help sought:

- Gathering materials needed for ROEs and future rebuilds
- Reduced/pro bono design/advising services
- Filtering out scammers
- Understanding costs

Moving Forward:

- Clarity about who we are and who we serve (**ALL of LA!**)
- Getting the word out to more people
- Continuing to update and improve our materials

WHAT ELSE WE'RE DOING

Future In-Person Engagement:

Saturday, March 15th at Parsons in Pasadena

Saturday, April 12th with USGBC

- Looking for more!

Community Engagement:

- Connecting with other related organizations like SoCal NOMA, Pasadena Heritage, Altadena Historical, etc.
- Working with community organizations like Altadena Town Council, NAACP, Altadena Green, Civic Soul, etc.

Rebuilding Education:

- Rebuilding Roadmap Town Hall (3/15) with an interdisciplinary panel
- Short informational video on process just released
- AIA LA Rebuilding Webinar Series
- Ongoing educational opportunities

Research & Innovation:

- Managing a library of existing resources & selecting materials for community output
- Exploring opportunities for AI integration for lessons learned
- Building new tools for communication: mobile applications

AIA SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

FOCUS

ADVOCACY FOR BOTH THE PROFESSION AND THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE FIRE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES

- Utilization of our technical expertise and partnerships to identify, address, and mitigate potential issues with the rebuild process.
- Support for economic assistance initiatives for those affected with our partners at the Valley Economic Alliance.
- Support for initiatives by our Sister AIA chapters through identification of individuals that can assist initiatives and technical expertise where required.
- Work with the ICC in an upcoming work group to streamline the permitting process and identify areas for code revision.
- Internal advocacy committee discussions and events regarding resiliency & home hardening, development reform, and code reform.



AIA LOS ANGELES



Ciara Barnett, P.E.
Co-Chair of the LA County
Rebuilding Program



Mitch Glaser, AICP
Assistant Deputy Director
of LA County Regional
Planning

