



# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

869 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  
TEL: 213-974-5555 FAX: 213-974-1010

**KATHRYN BARGER**

SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

June 10, 2025

Ms. Frida Baghdassarian  
President  
Crescenta Valley Town Council  
P.O. Box 8676  
La Crescenta, CA 91224

Dear Ms. Baghsassarian:

Thank you for your letter dated May 20, 2025, and for your thoughtful articulation of the concerns shared by your residents. We recognize the unique challenges facing foothill communities—particularly as we continue to navigate the intersection of housing, public safety, and wildfire resilience.

Your letter raises critical points about evacuation capacity, infrastructure, and the cumulative impacts of increasing residential density in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs). These concerns are taken seriously and are, in fact, already embedded in multiple County-adopted policy documents, including the *West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan*, the *General Plan Safety Element*, and applicable zoning controls for La Crescenta–Montrose.

As you note, State law significantly limits the ability of local jurisdictions to restrict Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), even in high fire-risk areas. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is explicit in this belief and note that they must be permitted ministerially and are exempt from local zoning restrictions.

Nevertheless, the County retains some authority to regulate land use in a manner that supports safety and long-term resilience. This is where existing County plans already play a proactive role:

- **West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (WSGVAP)**
  - Adopted in March 2025, the WSGVAP includes specific land use and zoning changes that direct future growth away from hazard zones.
    - Policy LCM-1.3 explicitly discourages development in VHFHSZs.
    - Implementation Action LCM-1.3 calls for coordinated evacuation capacity studies, recognizing the challenges in hillside areas with limited access.

- **General Plan Safety Element**

- Policy S 2.3 requires ADUs in hazard areas to meet evacuation standards.
- Policy S 4.1 prohibits new subdivisions in VHFHSZs unless certain egress and infrastructure conditions are met.
- Policy S 4.3 mandates evacuation-capable street networks for any new subdivisions.

- **La Crescenta–Montrose CSD Amendments**

- The County recently adopted development standards to limit bulk and scale in R-1 zones, aiming to preserve community character and avoid over-intensification.

These policies form a comprehensive approach that addresses the core issues your letter raises—without requiring immediate additional restrictions that would likely be preempted by State law.

I agree that fire safety, infrastructure capacity, and evacuation planning must be continually reassessed, especially in a changing climate. That is why the County will continue to work with CAL FIRE, SCAG, and other partners to study and refine evacuation strategies. In addition, I am asking that the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Los Angeles County Public Works, and the Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management meet directly with the Town Council and the community to initiate discussions on emergency preparedness needs.

Thank you again for your advocacy and engagement. Your input helps ensure our policies remain grounded in community experience, even as we work within the constraints of State mandates.

Sincerely,



KATHRYN BARGER  
Chair of the Board  
Supervisor, Fifth District

KB:aso

cc: Los Angeles County Fire Department  
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works  
Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management