



ALTADENA TOWN COUNCIL

Serving the community since 1975

730 East Altadena Drive

Altadena, California 91001

www.altadenatowncouncil.org

January 26, 2026

Statement on the McChrystal Group's After-Action Review of Alert Notification Systems and Evacuation Policies for the Eaton and Palisades Fires

The Altadena Town Council acknowledges receipt of the McChrystal Group's After Action Review of the evacuation notification systems and evacuation policies during the Eaton Fire. We appreciate the time, effort, and expertise invested in conducting this review, as well as the stated intent to strengthen future emergency response.

That said, the findings highlight a recurring challenge: reports of this kind too often defer to generalized language and systemic recommendations that place the burden of preparedness back on residents, while leaving unaddressed the longstanding gaps in the resources available to Altadena itself. Our community lives daily with the reality that the two small fire stations serving Altadena do not have the capacity to mount a full structural firefight without waiting for support from ladder trucks dispatched from other jurisdictions—sometimes from as far away as Santa Clarita. This is not an abstract issue; it is an urgent, lived vulnerability.

The Review points to areas of coordination and communication that undeniably need attention, but it does not squarely address the underlying imbalance in fire protection resources within Altadena. Recommendations that result in more funding to LA County Fire, without a clear commitment to augmenting the resources directly serving Altadena, do not resolve that imbalance. Our residents deserve to see concrete improvements, not simply new language in another report.

We also know from decades of experience—both here and in neighboring cities—that jurisdictional boundaries and layered chains of command too often create delays, even as fire spreads unchecked. These operational realities cannot be ignored if we are serious about learning from the Eaton Fire and strengthening community safety.

We fully acknowledge that there are costs associated with requests for additional resources, and we understand that identifying appropriate funding sources for any added assets will be essential. Still, we believe it is necessary to make these needs explicit and to begin the work of pursuing solutions.

As a Council, we will continue to advocate for lessons learned from this Review to translate into actionable, local improvements—better systems of communication, yes, but also the resources and staffing Altadena has needed for far too long. We expect this report to serve as a beginning, not an endpoint, and to catalyze the overdue changes our community requires.