

# Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: December 4-5, 2025

From: TANISHA TAYLOR, Executive Director

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Subject: Innovations in Transportation: Transportation and Urban Wildfire Evacuation  
Lessons from the 2025 Los Angeles Wildfires

## **Summary:**

Dr. Hao Ding, Postdoctoral Scholar with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Institute of Transportation Studies, will present initial findings from UCLA's survey on evacuation travel during the January 2025 Palisades and Eaton fire areas in Los Angeles County. The presentation will cover evacuees' destinations, travel times, and transportation challenges encountered during evacuation, and preliminary observations on mobility patterns. Dr. Ding will also outline UCLA's ongoing research plans to further analyze the survey data and inform future evacuation planning and wildfire resilience strategies.

UCLA's survey is being conducted as part of an academic study underway entitled, *Transportation and Urban Wildfire Evacuation – Lessons from the 2025 Los Angeles Wildfires*, that aims to fill research gaps on travel behavior during large urban wildfires like the Los Angeles January 2025 events.

## **Background:**

UCLA's study is one in a series of UCLA-led research efforts examining transportation and infrastructure impacts of the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires. These wildfires, including the Palisades and Eaton fires, were among the most disruptive urban wildfire events in the region's recent history. The fires forced large-scale evacuations across multiple neighborhoods, strained transportation networks, and produced severe congestion as residents attempted to leave fire-threatened areas simultaneously. Road closures, visibility issues, and rapidly changing fire conditions further complicated evacuation travel and highlighted significant gaps in emergency mobility planning for dense urban settings.

This work complements related research by the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation, which focuses on post-fire infrastructure recovery, community resilience, and equitable rebuilding strategies. As part of its wildfire recovery work, the Luskin Center for Innovation has conducted rapid assessments of post-fire impacts, particularly on water systems and infrastructure, and provided research support to the [LA County Blue Ribbon Commission on Fire Recovery](#). UCLA's fire research is [available here](#).