CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

April 18, 2025

Honorable City Councilmembers
City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attn: Petty F. Santos

RAP Response to CF 25-0006-S23 Status of RAP owned facilities that were impacted by the City Wildfires in January 2025.

Background:

On January 14, the City Council adopted Special Motion 25-0006-S23, requesting the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) to report on the status of City-owned buildings, facilities, service yards, and other resources that may have been impacted by the Palisades Fire and other wildfires in the City.

Emergency Response

Per the Los Angeles Administrative Code, The Public Welfare and Shelter Division shall be under and subject to the control of the Department of Recreation and Parks of the City of Los Angeles. The Chief of this division shall be the General Manager of the Department. The chief shall be responsible for arranging, directing and coordinating sheltering services for persons rendered homeless as a result of a local emergency.

During the Los Angeles Fires, RAP deployed its staff and resources for emergency operations, activating its Department Operations Center (DOC) to Level 2, activating its Continuity of Operations Plan Team (COOP), and beginning damage assessments. Within a very short period, RAP staff had stood up 16 facilities, including 6 shelters for families, 2 large animal evacuation centers, a Family Assistance Center (FAC) at the Cheviot Hills Recreation Center, 2 interim housing shelters, a VA housing shelter, as well as 6 shower sites. In total, 47 Mass Care Operation centers were mobilized for needs such as air quality relief, drop-in child care and camp activities for displaced students, interim housing, water distribution, and mutual aid.

Over 600 RAP staff were involved in emergency operations and reception of people and animals, using a combination of regular staff and augmented staff, including pulling as-needed staff from other areas of the City. Nine park rangers responded to the ongoing fires, helping to extinguish 51 blazes, utilizing 13 vehicles.

To support the families directly affected by the fires, including children whose schools had burned down,RAP created 4 support day camps for serving 150 residents, partnering with Project Camp, LA Zoo, Play Equity/LA84, and the LA Library for robust programming. In addition, RAP offered 27 drop-in childcare centers across the City.

Assessment of Damages

There was extensive damage to Palisades Park and significant damage to the Palisades Recreation Center (newer gymnasium). Other ancillary buildings, park amenities, fencing, trees, and landscaped areas also suffered some damage, including George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon.

On January 30, 2025, at the request of RAP, the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) conducted a visual assessment of the wildfire damage to the recreation center facility from the Palisades Fire. BOE looked at the following aspects: architectural, structural, electrical, mechanical & plumbing and landscape.

Attachment 1 is a copy of the BOE Report with the assessment of damage to the Palisades Recreation Center gymnasium.

Additionally, 42 acres of natural area were damaged at Runyon Canyon park during the Sunset Fire and minor damage to shade structures at Wattles Garden Park. Fire damage was sustained to natural areas and vegetation at other parks including O'Melveny and Stetson Ranch. Included as Attachment 2 is a list of other damages as of March 25, 2025.

RAP also requested an analysis of shallow playground sand at selected parks throughout the City. Group Delta consultants was provided a group of 18 sand pit locations at 17 parks maintained and operated by RAP. The objectives of this limited investigation were to evaluate sand quality at the selected sand pit locations due to the potential for aerial deposition of contaminants to playground sand following significant recent wildfire events in the City and County of Los Angeles. Sand was investigated in February 2025 for potential chemicals of concern (COC), including Title 22 metals (17 elements plus lithium) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which could be present in the sand as combustion byproducts. Based upon the analytical results, and the distribution of the selected parks throughout the City of Los Angeles, this analysis provided no evidence for significant aerial deposition of contaminants in playground sand.

Recommendations:

That the CIty Council Note and File this report

Sincerely,

JIMMY KIM
General Manager

Site Assessment Report

Facility Name: Palisades Recreation Center
Facility Address: 851 Alma Real Drive, Palisades, CA 90272
Inspection Date: January 30, 2025
Inspection Time: 11:30 AM (Pacific Time)
Inspection Description: Fire Damage Visual Assessment
Prepared by: Bureau of Engineering

ENGINEERING
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Attendance

Architectural Division:
Celso Del Poso, Sahar Mehrzad, Abigail Zulueta, Layan Subeih, Quintin Wortham, Richard Fisher

Structural Division:
Shirish Mistry, Melvin Agagas, Erwin Pascua, Catherine Chen

Table of Contents

Background

The Bureau of Engineering (BOE) has received a request from the Department of Recreation and Park to conduct a visual assessment of the wildfire damage to the recreation center facility from the Palisades Fire in early January this year.

Visual Assessment

Based on the site visual inspection, the following were observed,

Architectural:

Figure-1 Image extracted from Google Maps. The gymnasium roofing is damaged by the fire and should be entirely replaced.	
Figure-2 Photo taken from the north of the compound looking southeast. At this view there is evidence of burnt grass area, but the outdoor play area looks unaffected by the fire. The brick recreation building on the left did not seem to be affected but the roof is covered with tarp. The gymnasium building to the right some exterior cladding shows some damage.	
Figure-3 Photo of the north building facade. The upper portion of this facade exterior cladding sustained fire damage, including the metal studs and building insulation. These can be replaced in kind as long as the main structural members are sound. Further investigation is necessary to assess the extent of damage in the wall cavity.	

Figure-4 Photo of the east building facade. The upper portion of this facade exterior cladding and window sustained fire damage, including the metal studs and building insulation. These can be replaced in kind as long as the main structural members are sound. Further investigation is necessary to assess the extent of damage in the wall cavity.	
Figure-5 Photo of the south building facade. This portion of the building is completely burned down, except for the block walls. Further investigation of the structural integrity of the block walls is required for rebuilding this area. The exterior cladding of the gymnasium sustained damage similar to the north and east facades.	
Figure-6 Photo of the west building facade. This side of the building does not have evidence of fire damage.	

Figure-7 Photo from the main northwest entry, looking along the hallway west of the building. This entry lobby to the gymnasium seems unaffected by the fire. Further destructive investigation is necessary to identify the extent of fire and water damage in the ceiling and wall cavities.	
Figure-8 Photo from the southwest entry, looking along the hallway west of the building. This entry shows a portion of the ceiling is damaged by the fire, otherwise the rest of the hallway seems intact. Further destructive investigation is necessary to identify the extent of fire and water damage in the ceiling and wall cavities.	
Figure-9 Photo of gym northeast interior corner. The inside of the gymnasium sustained significant damage from the fire and water. Removal of the gymnasium flooring is required to assess if the slab beneath is affected. All the structural steel covers are to be removed and tested for their structural integrity, including the steel trusses and structural roof metal decking. All damaged gym equipment and wall padding must be replaced.	

Figure-10 Photo of gym southwest interior corner. Similar damage was sustained in this area of the gymnasium.	
Figure-11 Photo of the restroom located southeast of the building. This portion of the building is completely burned down, except for the block walls. Further investigation of the structural integrity of the block walls is required for rebuilding this area. Debris removal is required to further assess the slab beneath.	

Figure-12 Photo of the hallway along the south of the building looking east. This portion of the building is completely burned down. Most of the glass blocks along the corridor are broken and need replacement. Further investigation of the structural integrity of the block walls is required for rebuilding this area. Debris removal is required to further assess the slab beneath.	
Figure-13 Photo of the hallway along the south of the building looking west. This portion of the building is completely burned down. Most of the glass blocks along the corridor are broken and need replacement. Further destructive investigation is necessary to identify the extent of fire and water damage in the framed wall cavities. Debris removal is required to further assess the slab beneath.	
Figure-14 Photo of gym equipment storage at the southwest corner of the building. This room has no evidence of damage from the fire. Further investigation of the ceiling attic is required to confirm is any fire or water damage.	

Structural:

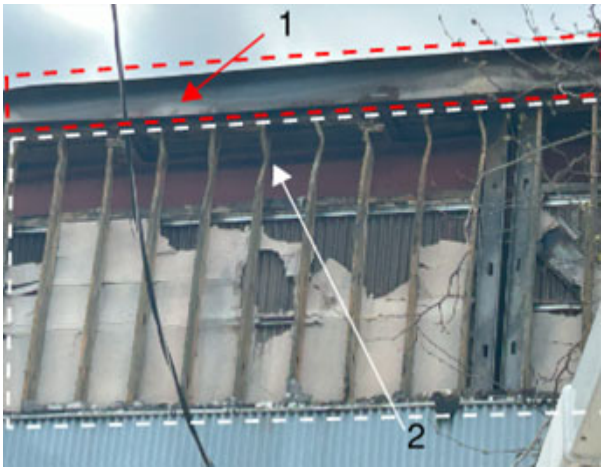
Figure-15 Site plan of the fire-damaged building.	
Figure-16a and Figure-16b Photo of the northern side of the building: The top steel wide-flanged beam (*Label 1*) along the roof perimeter and the cold-formed metal studs (*Label 2*) have been warped due to fire damage and will require in-kind replacement. Additional investigation is needed to evaluate the extent of damage to other structural elements. Any structural steel components that are not distorted or bent do not need to be replaced.	 

Figure-17
Photo of the eastern side of the building:

Similar to the north side, the top wide-flanged beam at the roof perimeter and the cold-formed metal studs have warped due to the fire. The top wide-flanged beam along the entire east perimeter of the roof and the warped exterior metal studs must be replaced in kind. Additional investigation is required to determine the full extent of the damage.

Any structural steel components that are not distorted or bent do not need to be replaced.

Figure-18 Photo of the southern side of the building: Similar to the northern and eastern sides, the top wide-flanged beam at the roof perimeter and the cold-formed metal studs have warped due to the fire. The top wide-flanged beam along the entire east perimeter of the roof and the warped exterior metal studs must be replaced in kind. Additional investigation is required to determine the full extent of the damage. Any structural steel components that are not distorted or bent do not need to be replaced.	
Figure-19 Photo of the western side of the building: There seems to be no visible damage on the western side of the building.	

Figure-20 Photo of the interior hallway along the southern side of the building: The hallway contains combustible roof structural components, including wood ledgers, wood blocking, ceiling joists, and plywood, which have been charred by the fire. Replace all charred or blackened wood roof members in kind. Additionally, replace the connections supporting the charred wood structural members. For any water-damaged wood members, replace them in kind as well. LADBS-approved plans are required to verify the permitted construction type to ensure the use of combustible materials is allowed. Alternatively, for better fire resistance, replace all wood framing with cold-formed framing to be consistent with the construction type of the gym.	

Figure-21a and 21b Photo of the interior hallway along the southern side of the building: A portion of the hallway metal roof deck and steel ledger have collapsed from the fire. To be replaced in kind. The masonry wall requires further investigation to identify large cracks, excessive deformations, or significant spalling. If the wall exhibits signs of compromised structural integrity due to fire damage, replacement may be necessary.	 
Figure-22 Photo of the gym at interior northern side: The fire damage is more pronounced at the eastern side of the northern wall in comparison to the western side.	

Figure-23a and Figure-23b
Photo of gym at interior eastern side (*top photo*) and northeastern corner (*bottom photo*):

The interior eastern elevation of the gym appears to be the most charred/blackened wall compared to the northern, western, and southern interior elevations. The fire-resistance rating protection for the steel columns, beams, and braces has been blackened, with some sections destroyed by the fire.

Remove and replace all damaged fire-resistant drywall. Inspect the steel structural columns, beams, and braces for any signs of deformation. Any deformed steel structural elements must be replaced in kind. Any structural steel components that are not distorted or bent do not need to be replaced.

Consult a licensed civil or structural engineer to prepare structural plans for the repair and replacement of the affected structural elements.

Figure-24a and 24b
Photo of the gym interior at the southeastern corner with east side on the left and south side on the right:

Figure 10a and Figure 10b show the HSS brace for the steel braced-frame lateral system, which shows no signs of deformation from the fire.

Figure 10c shows the steel HSS column, part of the same braced frame as shown in Figures 10a and 10b. While there is some fire damage to the fireproofing of the braced frame, the steel column itself shows no signs of deformation.

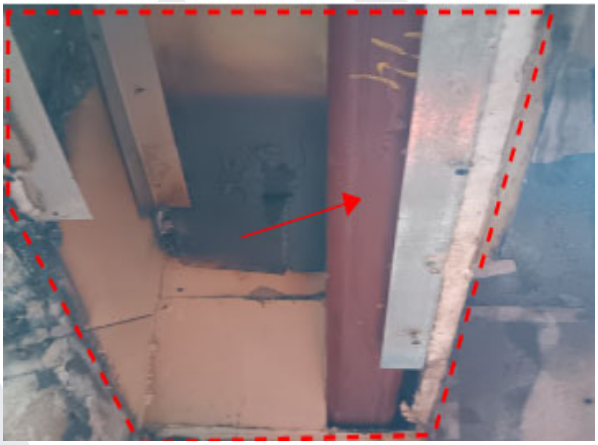


Figure-25
Photo of gym at interior eastern side:

The cold-formed metal studs are exposed due to the damaged fire-resistance rating protection. The studs show yellow discoloration and slight buckling deformation. Replace all deformed cold-formed metal studs in kind.

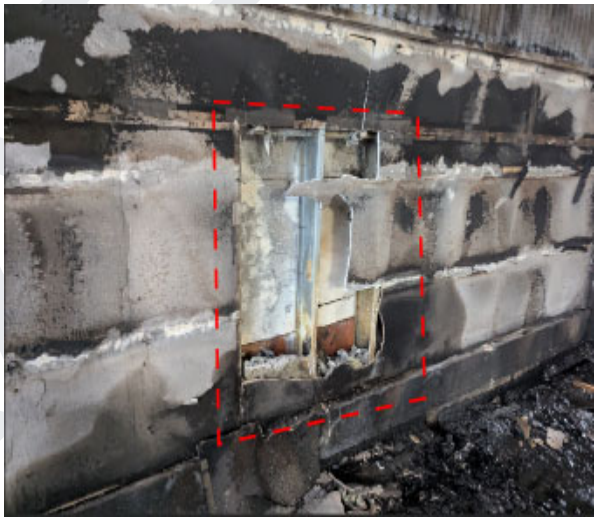


Figure-26
Photo of gym at the southwestern corner, where the south side on the left and west side on the right:

The fire-protection drywall shows sign of fire damage and needs to be removed and replaced.

Inspect the structural steel for signs of deformation after the removal of the damaged drywall.

Any structural steel components that are not distorted or bent do not need to be replaced.

Figure-27 Photo of the gym at interior western side: The gym's interior western elevation shows no visible fire damage to the structural brace-frame system.	
Figure-28 Photo of the gym roof trusses (interior): The metal deck and top chords of the trusses have been blackened by the fire. All fire-damaged metal decking must be replaced in kind. Any deformed steel top chords and braces of the roof trusses must also be replaced in kind. The bottom chords of the roof trusses show no signs of fire damage or deformation.	

Figure-29 Photo of the gym equipment storage at the southwestern corner of the building: The storage space, enclosed with masonry walls, shows no apparent signs of fire damage.	

Mechanical & Plumbing:

Figure-30 Photo of the ductwork on the south side of the gym. The entire duct system in the gym shows heat warping, soot contamination, and insulation deterioration. Diffusers, vents, and air distribution components are damaged and likely inefficient.	
Figure-31 Photo of the ductwork on the northeast side of the gym. A comprehensive inspection and replacement of the HVAC system, ductwork, diffusers, and insulation are recommended.	

Figure-32 Aerial photo of the gym roof, showing rooftop HVAC units located on the burned section of the building. Due to safety concerns, we were unable to access the roof to assess mechanical equipment directly. However, given the severity of fire exposure and damage to interior mechanical systems, it is highly likely that all rooftop HVAC equipment has been compromised and should be fully replaced. The structural framework supporting mechanical systems should undergo a full engineering review and possible reinforcement.	
Figure-33 Photo of the women's restroom. The exhaust fans and ventilation systems have sustained severe fire damage. The ductwork is extensively burned, and the plumbing fixtures including toilets and lavatory are either melted or heavily scorched, requiring full replacement.	

Figure-34 Photo taken inside the women's restroom. The water supply lines are ruptured, and the drainage systems may be clogged or damaged due to fire debris. The sprinkler system has also sustained severe damage. The full replacement of the water line and fire sprinkler is recommended. A comprehensive inspection shall be done to identify blockages or damage in the waste and vent pipes.	
Figure-35 Photo of the men’s restrooms showing urinals and damaged toilet stalls . The exhaust fans and ventilation systems have sustained severe fire damage.The plumbing fixtures, including urinals, toilets and lavatory are heavily scorched or partially melted. Full replacement of the fixture units and ventilation system is recommended.	

Figure-36 Photo of the men's bathroom showing the lavatory and urinal. The water supply lines are damaged, and the drainage systems may be clogged or damaged due to fire debris. The sprinkler system is ruptured. The full replacement of the water line and fire sprinkler is recommended. The full inspection is needed to identify any blockages or damage in the waste and vent pipes. The water heaters can't be found but they are likely damaged due to the fire and need replacment.	
Figure-37 Photo shows one of the two drinking fountains in the south hallway. Both fountains are deformed from heat and covered in soot. There is potential contamination and damage to the water supply lines. It is recommended to replace the damaged drinking fountains and supply water lines.	

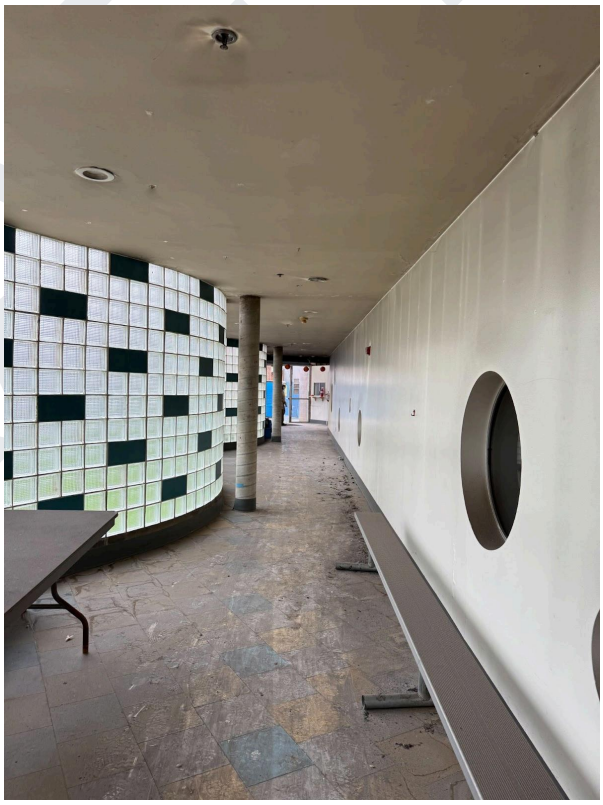
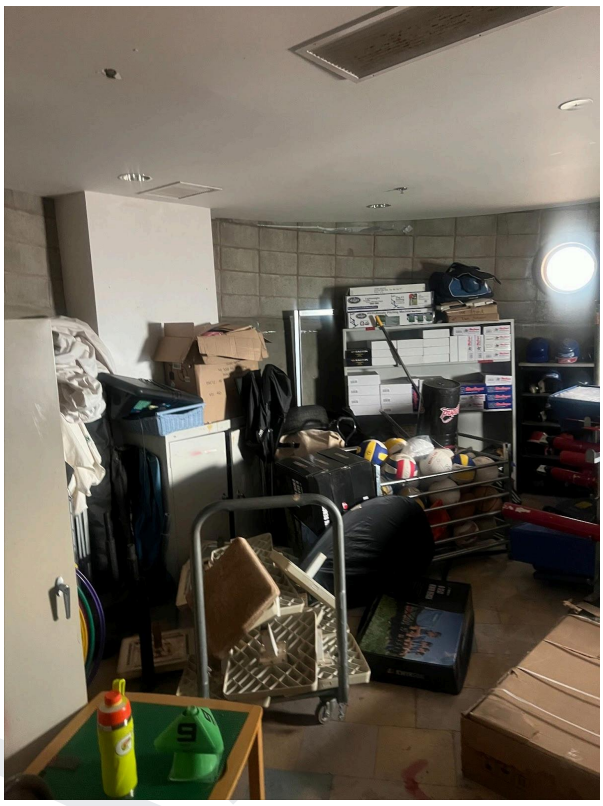
Figure-38 This photo was taken in a hallway on the south side of the building. The area has sustained significant fire damage. The fire sprinkler system in this section is severely damaged. Given the extent of the destruction, the entire sprinkler system in this area will require a full replacement.	
Figure-39 This photo was taken in a hallway on the west side of the building. The sprinkler appears to be in place without any visible physical damage. However, the fire sprinkler head shows some discoloration, which could indicate exposure to heat or smoke. Conduct a full inspection to verify any damage.	

Figure-40 Photo of the storage on the south west of the building. The ceiling diffusers and fire sprinkler heads appear intact. However, further investigation is necessary to confirm the functionality of the fire sprinkler system, ductwork, and associated equipment.	

Electrical:

Figure-41 Photo of LADWP pad mounted electrical equipment near the gymnasium. There are no signs of damage caused by the fire to the electrical equipment. The pad mounted electrical equipment can be reused to service the building if it is acceptable to LADWP based on the new demand load of the gymnasium.	
Figure-42 Photo of the pole near gymnasium. Currently being used to provide temporary power to the construction camp. There are no signs of damage to the pole.	

Figure-43 Photo of the main northwest entry, looking along the hallway west of the building. This entry lobby to the gymnasium seems unaffected by the fire. Further investigation is required to determine if any electrical equipment is damaged.	
Figure-44 Photo of the main northwest entry, looking at the ceiling. This entry lobby to the gymnasium seems unaffected by the fire. Light fixtures show no signs of significant damage. Further investigation is needed to see if there is any damage to the conductors or conduits.	

Figure-45 Photo of gym interior. The inside of the gymnasium sustained significant damage from the fire and water. Recommend to replace receptacles, light fixtures, exit signs, and fire alarm equipment inside the gym. Conduits may be utilized with new wires.	
Figure-46 Photo of light fixture in hallway. Most light fixtures and their respective electrical connections have sustained damage from the fire. It is recommended to replace the fixtures and conductors.	

Figure-47 Photo of the southwest entry. Light fixtures have sustained significant fire damage. The fire alarm pull station, exit sign, and security equipment do not seem damaged. Recommend to replace all electrical systems, including light fixtures.	
Figure-48 Photo of the exit sign near the southwest entry. There are no signs of significant damage caused by the fire. Recommend to replace the exit sign as needed.	

Figure-49 Photo of the southwest entry. There are no signs of significant damage caused by the fire. Recommend to replace the light fixture with an LED fixture.	
Figure-50 Photo of the ceiling along the southwest hallway. Light fixtures and fire alarm devices have sustained significant fire damage. Recommend to replace all light fixtures and fire alarm devices.	

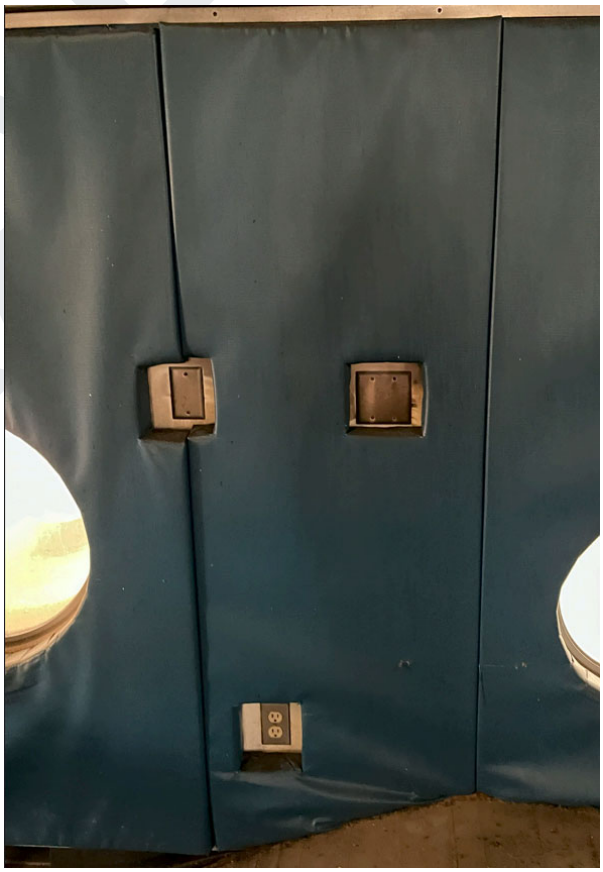
Figure-51 Photo of the light fixture along the southwest hallway. Light fixtures have sustained significant fire damage. Recommend to replace all light fixtures.	
Figure-52 Photo of gym interior facing the west wall. The inside of the gymnasium sustained significant damage from the fire and water. Replacing the receptacles, light fixtures, exit signs, security alarm system, and fire alarm equipment inside the gym is recommended. Further investigation is required by ITA to determine if communication equipment, including telephone and data outlets, are damaged.	

Figure-53 Photo of the light fixture in the women's restroom. Light fixtures have sustained significant fire damage. Recommend to replace all light fixtures.	
Figure-54 Photo taken inside the women's restroom showing the lavatory. The fire alarm strobe was scorched. Recommend to replace all electrical equipment in this area.	

Figure-55 Photo of the hallway along the south of the building. This portion of the building is completely burned down. The light fixtures, receptacles, fire alarm system, and exit signs have sustained severe damage. Recommend to provide this area with new electrical equipment and fire alarm system.	
Figure-56 Photo of gym equipment storage at the southwest corner of the building. This room has no evidence of damage from the fire. Light fixtures and switches show no signs of damage. Further investigation is required to confirm if any fire or water damage occurred to the conduits, conductors, light fixtures, or any other electrical equipment.	

Figure-57 Photo of closet near south entrance. The area has sustained severe damage. It is recommended to replace the receptacles, fire alarm systems, irrigation controls, lights, communications equipment (per ITA), and all other electrical equipment due to direct or indirect damage caused by the fire or water. Further investigation is required to find the status of the electrical panels, switchboards, inverters, fire alarm equipment, communication equipment, and security alarm equipment.	

Landscape:

Figure-58 Photo of turf area at NE corner of building Due to temporary measures for large vehicle access, this area will require soil replacement and amendment, turf and irrigation repair, and specific measures to remediate root compaction around the existing tree.	

Figure-59 Photo of landscape area at west side of building I was unable to initiate the irrigation systems to look for damage here. I expect this area will require soil amendment, turf and irrigation repair, and possibly hardscape repair after re-construction is completed.	
Figure-60 Photo of landscape area at west side of building	
Figure-61 Photo of landscape area at west side of building	

Figure-62 Photo of landscape area at north side of building I was unable to initiate the irrigation systems to look for damage here. This area will require soil amendment, turf and irrigation repair after re-construction of the building is completed. Protection of existing trees and supplemental will be required during re-construction.	
Figure-63 Photo of landscape area at north side of building	
Figure-64 Photo of landscape area at north side of building	

Figure-65 Photo of landscape area at east side of building This area will need soil amendment & de-compaction measures, turf replacement, specimen tree replacement, and irrigation repair. Hardscape repair/replacement will likely be required after re-construction of the building.	
Figure-66 Photo of landscape area at east side of building	
Figure-67 Photo of landscape area at east side of building	

Figure-68 Photo of landscape area at south side of building This area will require soil amendment, turf and irrigation repair after re-construction of the building is completed. Protection of existing trees and supplemental watering will be required during re-construction.	
Figure-69 Photo of landscape area at south side of building	
Figure-70 Photo of landscape area at south side of building	

Figure-71 Photo of landscape area at south side of building	

Recommendation:

In order to move forward with rebuilding the recreation center, BOE recommends the following steps below,

First Step: Salvage remaining gym equipment and display cases, and conduct a debris removal from the fire.

Second Step: Removal and disposal of all the building elements damaged by the fire, including but not limited to the gymnasium wood floor, wall and ceiling finishes in the interior to expose all building framings; remaining mechanical system, including ducts, plumbing fixtures, plumbing pipes, fire sprinkler system; electrical system, including, electrical and data cables, conduits, light fixtures and any loose building elements from the interior and exterior of the building.

Third Step: Secure the building exterior from the elements and building intrusion. Recommend an increased setback for temp fencing

Fourth Step: Conduct further investigation and testing for the building structure's integrity, including the remaining masonry walls, and identify the extent of rebuilding required for the facility.

Fifth Step: Plan preparation and permitting for the rebuilding of the facility.

Sixth Step: Bidding and Awarding the contract for reconstruction.

Facility Name	Description of Damage / Scope of work
George Wolfberg Park (Formerly Potrero Canyon Park)	BOE continues to be onsite for vegetation management
O'Melveny Park	1) Initial fire damage was the burnt slope vegetation. 2) Maintenance installed temporary closures and signage
Palisades Recreation Center	(See BOE Site Assessment Report)
Runyon Canyon	1) Initial fire damage was the burn natural hillside vegetation; 2) Maintenance staff installed erosion control measures and Construction staff installed temporary Chain link
Runyon Canyon - Road Repair	1) After the fire and storm events, staff observed one of the maintenance roadway/trails is substantially eroded and needs to be repaired 2) erosion is currently being evaluated by BOE Geotechnical Division 3) Possible scope of work includes slope and roadway repair
Stetson Ranch	1) Initial fire damage was the burnt natural hillside vegetation 2) Maintenance staff installed erosion control measures
Temescal Canyon Park	1) Initial fire damage was the burnt natural hillside vegetation, fire damaged fences and wooden picnic trellis 2) Scope of work is to repair wooden trellis and repair perimiter
Wattles Gardens - Erosion Repairs	1) Initial fire damage was the burnt natural hillside vegetation and fire damage to decorative wooden arch gateway to rear Japanese Garden 2) Maintenance staff installed erosion control measures including sand bags and straw wattles 3) Maintenance staff continutes to clean mud flow
Wattles Gardens - Structures and Pergola Repairs	Scope of work is to repair/reconstruct the pergola and wooden gates damaged by fire and mudflow
Citywide Playground Sand Sampling	Evaluate and assess sand at 17 playground locations to determine effects of the fires at Palisades and Eaton Canyon