



CITY OF ANAHEIM OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

August 12, 2026

The Honorable Sheila F. Hanson
Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "Wildfires Hit Home"

Honorable Judge Hanson:

As the Interim City Manager of the City of Anaheim, I am pleased to respond on behalf of the City to the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "Wildfires Hit Home". The response contained in this letter has been approved by the Anaheim City Council. The City's response addresses the Orange County Grand Jury Report's findings and recommendations in accordance with the California Penal Code Section 933(c).

Findings

F1: More frequent and severe wildfires driven by increasingly hotter, drier, and windier conditions in the Orange County wildland-urban interface are escalating impacts on financial and non-financial resources. Among the financial costs are dramatic increases in homeowners' insurance premiums, nonrenewals, and inability to obtain insurance.

City Response to F1: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding. In response to the growing wildfire threat over the last decade, Anaheim has significantly increased its mutual aid contributions, frequently deploying Strike Teams to assist neighboring jurisdictions and statewide containment efforts. The City remains committed to proactive regional collaboration and robust local wildfire mitigation.

F2: Actions that address conditions in the home ignition zone to significantly reduce ignition potential can prevent a community wildland-urban interface fire disaster or suburban conflagration.

City Response to F2: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding. The City recognizes that managing the home ignition zone through measures such as defensible space and ignition-resistant construction is among the most effective strategies for reducing structure ignition and improving community resilience. However, these measures significantly reduce, but do not eliminate, the potential for wildfire or urban conflagration, particularly under extreme weather, topographic, and fuel conditions.

F3: Expanded engagement with the community to raise awareness and provide support regarding home hardening and defensible space will increase effectiveness of wildfire risk mitigation and insurance risk reduction efforts.

City Response to F3: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding.

F4: Achievement of community-level and property-level wildfire risk mitigation designations (such as Firewise USA Site, Fire Risk Reduction Community or Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety certification) lessens wildfire risk and helps reduce insurance premium costs.

City Response to F4: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding. The City has witnessed firsthand the positive impacts of these programs through the dedication of its residents, notably demonstrated by the designation of the Camino Grande Loop as Anaheim's inaugural Firewise USA Community. This achievement highlights the power of neighborhood-level mobilization in reducing localized risk. Furthermore, the City continues to receive positive feedback regarding these mitigation frameworks during regular district meetings and at our annual Wildfire Prevention Fair hosted at Fire Station 10, underscoring strong community alignment and support for these proactive designations.

F5: All county residents should be made aware that Safer from Wildfire regulation requires insurers to provide discounts to homeowners and communities that implement home hardening and defensible space measures regardless of whether a property is located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

City Response to F5: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding.

F6: AB888, California Safe Homes Grant Program, provides financial assistance to eligible homeowners, cities, counties, and special districts for home hardening and defensible space measures. Applying for and using these grant funds will reduce wildfire losses and improve insurability and resilience of vulnerable communities.

City Response to F6: The City of Anaheim agrees with this finding.

Recommendations

R2: By December 31, 2026, cities and fire service agencies, including Orange County Fire Authority should commit to participation in a county-wide annual wildfire prevention fair planned by the Orange County Board of Supervisors to showcase wildfire prevention outreach programs. [F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6]

City Response to R2: Anaheim Fire & Rescue hosts an annual Wildfire Prevention Fair each fall. The event includes City departments and leaders as well as CalFIRE and other mutual aid representatives, home hardening vendors, and brush abatement contractors. The city would support and participate in a county-wide fair.

R3: By December 31, 2026, cities, unincorporated areas, special districts, and fire service agencies in High and Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zones should initiate planning activities to achieve community-level wildfire risk mitigation designations and/or establish a local Fire Safe Council within one year. [F4, F5, F6]

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August 12, 2026

City Response to R3: The City of Anaheim has been proactive in this effort. The City's first Firewise USA Community (Camino Grande Loop) was created in April 2025 and more are currently proposed with the goal of facilitating a Fire Safe Council by the end of 2027.

R4: By December 31, 2026, to ensure city residents are engaged and aware of wildfire risk reduction resources, OCFA member and non-member cities should provide information, develop their own outreach program, and establish a direct contact person(s) for their residents. This is in addition to whatever referrals or references made to OCFA outreach programs. [F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6]

City Response to R4: Anaheim Fire & Rescue has implemented and exceeded this recommendation with dedicated staffing and robust community outreach. AF&R continually develops and distributes targeted outreach material along with County and State resources. To ensure our residents have a direct, reliable point of contact for wildfire risk reduction resources, the City authorized and added a full-time Wildfire Mitigation Specialist role within the Community Risk Reduction Division in September 2022. This dedicated specialist ensures Anaheim remains highly responsive to community needs regarding defensible space, home hardening, and insurance premium reduction strategies.

I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts of the Orange County Grand Jury. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Patrick Russell, Fire Chief, at (714) 765-4000 or prussell2@anaheim.net.

Respectfully submitted,



Greg Garcia
Interim City Manager

Cc: Orange County Grand Jury
City Clerk, City of Anaheim