

QUICK GLANCE



Technical Assistance
for Local Planning
HOUSING

Top Programs - Wildfire Adaptation & Housing Resiliency

ABAG Wildfires & Housing – Preservation & Protection of Homes

2022 Housing Element Preparation

Policy/Program Title	Applicability	Language
DEFENSIBLE SPACE & HOME HARDENING		
Develop/Update a home hardening and defensible space program to preserve existing housing	<i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i>	The [jurisdiction] will develop/update a program to support residents with home hardening and defensible space. The program may include various resources, incentives, and educational components. Programs may include vegetation disposal assistance, home hardening resources, or support with development of local Firewise Communities.
NEW BUILDING CODES / STANDARDS		
Implement expanded State laws that increase wildfire standards for housing	<i>Applicable to all cities and towns with very high and high FHSZs</i>	The [jurisdiction] shall comply with new State laws that have increased minimum building standards and expanded the requirements to more areas within the [jurisdiction].
Develop a “Wildfire Reach Code” to inform action in areas with reduced structure separation distances	<i>Applicable to jurisdictions with narrow setbacks</i>	The local building department may consider wildfire reach code actions to address areas with reduced structure separation distances. The reach code could be provided as voluntary guidance for the community or be required for new construction and/or substantial building remodel triggers.
Track wildfire building code adoption of new and existing properties in a database	<i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i>	Track which parcels through new construction, significant remodels, or voluntary action meet higher WUI building code requirements. Develop a database and method to track information already collected as part of permitting, inspections, and other already occurring processes.
Consider future action for narrow setbacks informed by forthcoming structure-to-structure ignition prevention research	<i>Applicable to all jurisdictions with narrow setbacks</i>	Upon the completion of research being carried out by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS), and CAL FIRE on structure-to-structure ignition, consider science-backed approaches to addressing minimal setbacks. The [jurisdiction] may wait for State guidance, implement findings into local building standards, or provide voluntary guidance to residents.
PLANNING / MAPPING / LAND USE		
Adopt CAL FIRE’s Fire Hazard Severity Zone Update	<i>Applicable to all jurisdictions, particularly towns and cities</i>	The [jurisdiction] will update the Fire Hazard Severity Zones for Very High, High, and Moderate when the State completes their mapping update. The State update recognizes that fire hazard severity is changing and is currently updating maps to reflect changing conditions.
Use local knowledge to develop a wildfire zone overlay	<i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i>	Building upon CAL FIRE’s Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, use local knowledge of wildfire hazard, landscape, housing, and infrastructure to develop a wildfire overlay for corresponding policies.
EVACUATIONS		
Perform an evacuation assessment	<i>Applicable to jurisdictions with significant evacuation concerns</i>	The [jurisdiction] will conduct an evacuation assessment that meets State law requirements to identify evacuation routes and locations. The analysis will identify points of evacuation congestion and study solutions to improve evacuation clearance times. Following the analysis, the [jurisdiction] will develop responsive actions.
Install street parking boxes to improve ingress and egress in WUI areas	<i>Applicable to jurisdictions that have already identified right-of-way as a key evacuation constraint</i>	The [jurisdiction] will strategically identify where it is safe to park on hilly, winding roads with minimal street widths and indicate these areas using parking boxes. Parking box locations will be determined based on improving routine and emergency access, ensuring ease of passage for emergency vehicles, and improving visibility and turning safety for larger vehicles.

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<p>Develop/Update a pre-evacuation strategy and program for WUI residents</p>	<p><i>Applicable to jurisdictions that have already identified congestion as a key evacuation constraint</i></p>	<p>Develop/Update a strategy and program for residents to understand wildfire hazard warnings, develop a household evacuation plan and be ready to evacuate. Encourage residents to consider pre-evacuation during extreme red-flag events that could result in fast moving wildfires if they occur.</p>
<p>PUBLIC EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT / COMMUNITY BUILDING</p>		
<p>Engage and educate residents on policy changes and upcoming program opportunities</p>	<p><i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i></p>	<p>Develop a public engagement and education strategy to educate residents, contractors, and developers about recent policy changes. Work with community partners, local officials, and non-profit organizations and leverage social media, traditional forms of outreach, and education programs to distribute best practices for meeting required or voluntary fire adaptation measures to reduce risks to structures, landscaping, and property.</p>
<p>Leverage existing community-based partnerships to disseminate wildfire adaptation information</p>	<p><i>Applicable to jurisdictions with existing relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs)</i></p>	<p>Expand existing partnerships with local non-profit organizations, neighborhood groups, and other community organizations to create a broad network of wildfire-informed residents.</p>
<p>Promote neighborhood-based wildfire-centered networks</p>	<p><i>Applicable to jurisdictions that do not have existing community networks to leverage in the WUI</i></p>	<p>Foster neighborhood-wide solutions and establish neighborhood-wide communication networks for citizens to work together. To build relationships between neighbors, offer incentives like chipper programs or access to local wildfire experts to speak at neighborhoods events.</p>
<p>Update residents with best available wildfire adaptation guidance</p>	<p><i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i></p>	<p>Update [jurisdiction] website with current State guidance on home and building owner wildfire adaptation actions. Provide the best available guidance related to defensible space, home hardening, and evacuation.</p>
<p>Provide proactive communication to current and new residents on safe evacuation</p>	<p><i>Applicable to jurisdictions with known evacuation challenges</i></p>	<p>Working with the Fire Department and/or Office of Emergency Services, the [jurisdiction] will publish best practices for wildfire evacuation, hold annual drills, offer proactive evacuation warnings, and increase redundancy of evacuation communication platforms.</p>
<p>With neighboring cities, explore the creation of a collaborative multi-agency organization to advance wildfire prevention efforts</p>	<p><i>Applicable to all jurisdictions</i></p>	<p>[Jurisdiction] will participate in public meetings and workshops with neighboring cities to explore whether a multi-agency organization or joint powers authority similar to the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority may advance wildfire prevention activities faster.</p>

For more information, contact:

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