Purpose and Background

Methodology for Review and Recommendations

Review Process and Timeline

Standard List of Recommendations
Purpose and Background: The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF/Board) is required to review and make recommendations for the fire safety element of general plan updates in accordance with Government Code (GC) §65302.5. The review and recommendations apply to those general plans with State Responsibility Area (SRA) (Public Resources Code 4125) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) (GC 51175).

The statutory requirements for the Board review and recommendations pursuant to GC 65302.5 (a)(1) and (2), and (b) are as follows:

- “The draft elements...to the fire safety element of a county’s or a city’s general plan...shall be submitted to the Board at least 90 days prior to... the adoption or amendment to the safety element of its general plan [for each county or city with SRA or VHFHSZ].”

- “The Board shall... review the draft or an existing safety element and report its written recommendations to the planning agency within 60 days of its receipt of the draft or existing safety element....”

- “Prior to adoption of the draft element..., the Board of Supervisors... shall consider the recommendations made by the Board... If the Board of Supervisors...determines not to accept all or some of the recommendations..., the Board of Supervisors... shall communicate in writing to the Board its reasons for not accepting the recommendations.”

Methodology for Review and Recommendations: The Board established a standardized method to review the safety element of general plans. The methodology includes 1) examining the general plan for inclusion of factors that are important for mitigation of fire hazard and risks, and 2) making recommendations related to these factors. The evaluation factors and recommendations were developed using CAL FIRE technical documents and input from local fire departments.

Enclosed is a series of recommendations directed at communities that include:

- Some Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone acreage and/or State Responsibility Area acreage or abut VHFHSZ/SRA
- Limited financial or physical resources
- Low community support
- Little to no previous wildfire protection planning efforts

The General Plan Safety Element of each jurisdiction that fits those criteria will be assessed based on the recommendations below.
## Review Process and Timeline

The county, local jurisdiction, and local fire unit will receive and review technical guidance documents, the BOF checklist, and other relevant information from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and CAL FIRE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>90 days prior to the adoption or amendment of the General Plan:</th>
<th>The county or local jurisdiction will submit the safety element to the local fire unit for review.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No more than 30 days later:</td>
<td>The unit will submit to the BOF their findings and recommendations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No more than 60 days later:</td>
<td>The Board will consider the fire unit's recommendations and will approve or approve with amendments the recommendations at the next Board meeting.</td>
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</table>
Standard List of General Plan Safety Element Recommendations

Please click on the appropriate box to "check" whether the plan satisfies each point. Standard recommendations are included in the checklist but please highlight or add additional comments as necessary.

1.0 General Wildfire Protection Planning

1.1 General Plan references and incorporates County or Unit Fire Plan: ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Identify, reference or create (if necessary) a fire plan for the geographic scope of the General Plan. General Plan should incorporate the general concepts and standards from any county fire plan, fire protection agency (federal or state) fire plan, and local hazard mitigation plan. Identify or reference the local Unit Fire Plan and, if applicable, the Community Wildfire Prevention Plan.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Ensure fire plans incorporated by reference into the General Plan contain evaluations of fire hazards, assessment of assets at risk, prioritization of hazard mitigation actions, and implementation and monitoring components.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

1.2 Map or describe existing emergency service facilities and areas lacking services, specifically noting any areas in SRA or VHFHSZs. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Include descriptions of emergency services including available equipment, personnel, and maps of facilities.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Initiate studies and analyses to identify appropriate staffing levels and equipment needs commensurate with the current and projected emergency response environment.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies for emergency service training that meets or exceeds state or national standards.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

1.3 Inter-fire service coordination preparedness/mutual aid and multi-jurisdictional fire service agreements. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Adopt the Standardized Emergency Management Systems for responding to large scale disasters requiring a multi-agency response. Ensure and review mutual aid/automatic aid and other cooperative agreements with adjoining emergency service providers.
2.0 **Land Use Planning:**

2.1 Disclosure wildland urban interface hazards including Fire Hazard Severity Zones designations and other vulnerable areas as determined by CAL FIRE or fire prevention organizations. Describe or map any Firewise Communities or other firesafe communities as determined by the National Fire Protection Association, Fire Safe Council, or other organizations. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Discuss and/or include local fire hazard maps.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Adopt CAL FIRE recommended Fire Hazard Severity Zones including model ordinances developed by the Office of the State Fire Marshal for establishing VHFHSZ areas. Include a map of the zones that clearly indicates any area designated VHFHSZ.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

2.2 Goals and policies include mitigation of fire hazard for future development. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Create fire safe development codes used as standards for fire protection for new development in State Responsibility Area (SRA) within the entity's jurisdiction that meets or exceed statewide standards in 14 California Code of Regulations Section 1270 et seq. Have the codes certified by the Board of Forestry.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies for specific ordinances addressing evacuation and emergency vehicle access; water supplies and fire flow; fuel modification for defensible space; and home addressing and signing.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Consider mitigation of previously developed areas that do not meet Title14 California Code of Regulations Section 1270 et seq. or equivalent local ordinance.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

2.3 The design and location of new development provides for adequate infrastructure for the safe ingress of emergency response vehicles and simultaneously allows civilian egress during an emergency: ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Specify the local ordinances, code sections, or regulations addressing the above standards, particularly any ordinances that address right-of-way, easement, and other
reasonable offsite and onsite improvements for a division of land which qualifies for a Parcel Map rather than a Tentative/Final Map under the Subdivision Map Act.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Develop pre-plans for fire prone areas that address civilian evacuations to temporary safety locations.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

2.4 Geographic specific fire risk reduction mitigation measures. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Include policies and recommendations that incorporate fire safe buffers and greenbelts as part of the development planning. Ensure that land uses designated near high or very fire hazard severity zones are compatible with wildland fire protection strategies/capabilities.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

### Additional Land Use Planning Recommendations:

3.0 Housing:

3.1 Incorporation of current fire safe building codes and fire engineering features for structures in VHFHSZ. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Adopt building codes for new development in State Responsibility Areas or incorporated areas with VHFHSZ that are based on those established by the Office of the State Fire Marshal in Title 19 and Title 24 CCR, referred to as the “Wildland Urban Interface Building Codes.”

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Ensure new development proposals contain specific fire protection plans, actions, and codes for fire engineering features for structures in VHFHSZ. Examples include codes requiring automatic sprinklers in VHFHSZ.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Ensure residential areas have appropriate fire resistant landscapes and discontinuous vegetation adjacent to open space or wildland areas.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

3.2 Consideration of diverse occupancies and their effects on wildfire protection.

☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Ensure risks to uniquely occupied structures, such as seasonally
occupied homes, multiple dwelling structures, or other structures with unique occupancy characteristics, are considered for appropriate and unique wildfire protection needs.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

3.3 Fuel modification around homes. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Establish ordinances in SRA or VHFHSZ for vegetation fire hazard reduction around structures that meet or exceed the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection’s Defensible Space Guidelines for SRA and the Very High Fire Hazard severity zones, including vacant lots. See [http://www.bof.fire.ca.gov/pdfs/Copyof4291finalguidelines9_29_06.pdf](http://www.bof.fire.ca.gov/pdfs/Copyof4291finalguidelines9_29_06.pdf)

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

**Recommendation:** Reduce fuel around communities and subdivisions, considering fuels, topography, weather (prevailing winds and wind event specific to the area), fire ignitions and fire history.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

3.4 Identification and actions for substandard fire safe housing and neighborhoods relative to fire hazard area. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Identify plans and actions to improve substandard housing structures and neighborhoods. Plans and actions should include structural rehabilitation, occupancy reduction, demolition, reconstruction, neighborhood -wide fuels hazard reduction projects, community education, and other community based solutions.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

**Recommendation:** Identify plans and actions for existing residential structures and neighborhoods, and particularly substandard residential structures and neighborhoods, to be improved to meet current fire safe ordinances pertaining to access, water flow, signing, and vegetation clearing.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

3.5 Assessment and projection of future emergency service needs. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Ensure new development includes appropriate facilities, equipment, personnel and capacity to assist and support wildfire suppression emergency service needs. Future emergency service needs should be:
- Established consistent with state or national standards.
- Developed based on criteria for determining suppression resource allocation that includes elements such as identified values and assets at risk, ignition density, vegetation type and condition, as well as local weather and topography.
- Local Agency Formation municipal services reviews for evaluating level of service, response times, equipment condition levels and other relevant emergency service information.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A
4.0 **Conservation and Open Space:**

4.1 Integration of open space into fire safety effectiveness. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies for incorporating systematic fire protection improvements for open space. Specifics policies should address facilitation of safe fire suppression tactics, standards for adequate access for firefighting, fire mitigation planning with agencies/private landowners managing open space adjacent to the General Plan area, water sources for fire suppression, and other fire prevention and suppression needs.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

4.2 Identification of critical natural resource values relative to fire hazard areas. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Identify critical natural resources and other “open space” values within the geographic scope of the General Plan.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

**Recommendation:** Evaluate and resolve existing laws and local ordinances which conflict with fire protection requirements. Examples include conflicts with vegetation hazard reduction ordinances and listed species habitat protection requirements.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

4.3 Inclusion of resource management activities to enhance protection of open space and natural resource values. □ Yes □ Partial □ No

**Recommendation:** Develop plans and action items for vegetation management that provides fire damage mitigation and protection of open space values. Plans should address protection of natural resource financial values, establishment of fire resilient natural resources, protection of watershed qualities, and protection of endangered species habitats. Actions should consider prescribed burning, fuel breaks, and vegetation thinning and removal

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies for reducing the wildland fire hazards within the entity’s boundaries and, with the appropriate partners, on adjacent private wildlands, federal lands, vacant residential lots, and greenbelts with fire hazards that threaten the entity’s jurisdiction.

**Priority:** □ High □ Medium □ Low □ N/A

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**Additional Housing Recommendations:**
5.0 Circulation:

5.1 Adequate access to high hazard wildland/open space areas. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies for adequate access in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones that meet or exceed standards in Title 14 CCR 1270 for lands with no structures, and maintain conditions of access in a suitable fashion for suppression access or public evacuation.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

5.3 Incorporate a policy that provides for a fuel maintenance program along roadways in the agency having jurisdiction. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Develop an adaptive vegetation management plan that considers fuels, topography, weather (prevailing winds and wind event specific to the area), fire ignitions and fire history.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

### Additional Circulation Recommendations:

6.0 Post Fire Recovery and Maintenance:
The post fire recommendations address an opportunity for the community and landowners to re-evaluate land uses and practices that affect future wildfire hazards and risk.

6.1 Reevaluate hazard conditions and provide for future fire safe conditions. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Incorporate goals and policies that provide for reassessment of fire hazards following wildfire events. Adjust fire prevention and suppression needs commensurate for both short and long term fire protection needs.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Develop burn area recovery plans that incorporate strategic fire safe measures developed during the fire suppression, such as access roads, fire lines, safety zones, and fuelbreaks, and helispots.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

6.2 Evaluation of redevelopment. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** In High and Very High Hazard areas, ensure redevelopment utilizes state
of the art fire resistant building and development standards to improve past ‘substandard” fire safe conditions.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

8.6 Long term maintenance of fire hazard reduction mitigation projects. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Provide policies and goals for maintenance of the post-fire-recovery projects, activities, or infrastructure.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

8.7 Post fire life and safety assessments. ☐ Yes ☐ Partial ☐ No

**Recommendation:** Identity flood and landslide vulnerability areas related to post wildfire conditions.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Recommendation:** Establish goals and policies that address the intersection of flood/landslide/post fire burn areas into long term public safety protection plans. These should include treatment assessment of fire related flood risk to life, methods to control storm runoff in burn areas, revegetation of burn areas, and drainage crossing maintenance.

**Priority:** ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ N/A

**Additional Post Fire Recovery and Maintenance Recommendations:**

**Additional Recommendations:**