



CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

June 16, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Anita D. Scott, City Manager

Submitted By: Betty Donovanik, Director of Development Services

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 4347
AMENDING THE POMONA CITY CODE BY ADOPTING FIRE
HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE DESIGNATIONS AS RECOMMENDED
BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE
PROTECTION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION
51178**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council introduce, waive further and give first reading to the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 4347 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POMONA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING POMONA CITY CODE CHAPTER 22 (FIRE PREVENTION) ADOPTING THE FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE DESIGNATIONS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51178, AND AMENDING CHAPTER 74, ARTICLE II, DIVISION 1, SECTION 74-32 (CONSTRUCTION IN FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES) ADOPTING PROVISIONS REGULATING OCCUPIED DWELLINGS AND OCCUPIED STRUCTURES PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51182, AND DETERMINING THE ORDINANCE TO BE EXEMPT FROM CEQA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The proposed Ordinance No. 4347 (Attachment No. 1) will amend the Pomona City Code to adopt the fire hazard severity zone designations and regulate construction in the zones as recommended by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, in compliance with Government Code Section 51182.

SB1439/GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLICABILITY:

☐ When this box is checked, it indicates the agenda item is subject to the Levine Act SB1439 requirements. Councilmembers are reminded to check their campaign contributions and determine whether they have received a campaign contribution of \$500 or more that would require disclosure and/or recusal from discussing or acting on this agenda item. Campaign contributions of \$500 or more made 1) by any person or entity who is identified in the agenda report as the applicant or proposer or 2) on behalf of the applicant or participant, including a parent, subsidiary or otherwise related business entity, or 3) by any person who has a financial interest in the agenda item requires a councilmember to comply with SB1439.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact at this time.

PUBLIC NOTICING REQUIREMENTS:

All public noticing was completed in accordance with State law. This includes posting of state mandated information in both the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin as well as the City's website for the period including April 15, 2025 to May 15, 2025 (Attachment No. 2). There were no public comments received regarding this matter.

PREVIOUS RELATED ACTION:

The Fire Hazard Severity Zones were last updated by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) in 2007. On May 27, 2008, per CAL FIRE's recommendations, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 4104 (Attachment No. 3) which amended Pomona City Code Chapter 74 Buildings and Building Regulations and added Section 74-32 Construction in Fire Hazard Severity Zones and adopted CAL FIRE's "Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone Maps".

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

The subject ordinance would be exempt from the requirements to prepare additional environmental documentation per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15061 (b)(3). This section, also known as the "common sense exemption," states that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. If the Lead Agency can determine that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Pursuant to this section, the proposed amendment fits within the general rule that CEQA only applies to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. The amendments made by this ordinance do not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment because they authorize no new development or use.

DISCUSSION:

Summary of Fire Hazard Severity Zone Regulations

CAL FIRE periodically updates fire hazard severity zone maps for Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs) throughout the state. The last CAL FIRE map was adopted in 2007 and approved by the City Council on May 27, 2008. LRAs are areas where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection. These maps identify varying levels of fire hazard (Moderate, High, and Very High) based on factors including vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential, and ember production and movement. State law, Government Code Section 51182 requires local jurisdictions to formally adopt these maps by ordinance to ensure proper implementation of associated building standards and fire safety requirements in identified hazard zones. CAL FIRE has completed its latest assessment of fire hazards for the City of Pomona and has provided updated LRA maps that reflect current conditions and risk factors. The proposed ordinance formally adopts these updated maps and authorizes their use for:

1. Determining applicable building standards for new construction
2. Implementing defensible space requirements
3. Disclosure requirements during real estate transactions
4. Emergency planning and fire prevention efforts

The updated maps incorporate the latest scientific methodologies and data, including vegetation mapping, fire history, weather patterns, and terrain analysis. These improvements enhance the ability to identify at-risk areas and implement appropriate mitigation measures.

For properties in the designated FHSZ there are specific regulations that will apply as summarized below.

FHSZ Category	Applicable Regulations		
Very High	Hazard Disclosure	CBC Ch. 7A	Defensible Space
High	Hazard Disclosure	CBC Ch. 7A	
Moderate			

Hazard Disclosure. Properties will be required to include a Natural Hazard Disclosure report as a part of any real estate transfer. This regulation applies to properties designated as Very High or High.

California Building Code Chapter 7A. Any new structures will be required to comply with applicable building code regulations for the purposes of making the structure more resistant to ignition and damage during wildfires. This regulation applies to properties designated as Very High or High.

Defensible Space. Among other measures, a defensible space of 100 feet from each side of a structure must be maintained, but not beyond the property line. Fuel modification shall also be maintained and spaced in a condition so that a wildfire would be unlikely to ignite the structure. This regulation applies to properties designated as Very High.

Summary of Affected Areas

Of the City's approximately 34,000 parcels, 3,446 parcels (or 10% of all City parcels) have been designated as having a Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). Of the parcels that have a FHSZ designation, 1,921 parcels (or 5.5% of all City parcels) are designated as High; 608 parcels (or 1.8% of all City parcels) are designated as both Moderate and High; and 917 parcels (or 2.7% of all City parcels) are designated as Moderate.

Figure 1 below depicts the areas designated as a FHSZ which have been grouped into five (5) generalized sub-areas (orange depicts a High designation and yellow depicts a Moderate designation; the blue outline depicts the City boundary). Figures 2 through Figures 6 show the five (5) FHSZ areas in the City.

Note that within City boundaries the only area designated as Very High is a small portion of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way along the Interstate 10 Highway, just west of the State Route 57. However, there are no Assessor's Parcels designated as Very High within City boundaries.

Figure 1. FHSZ Area Map of Pomona

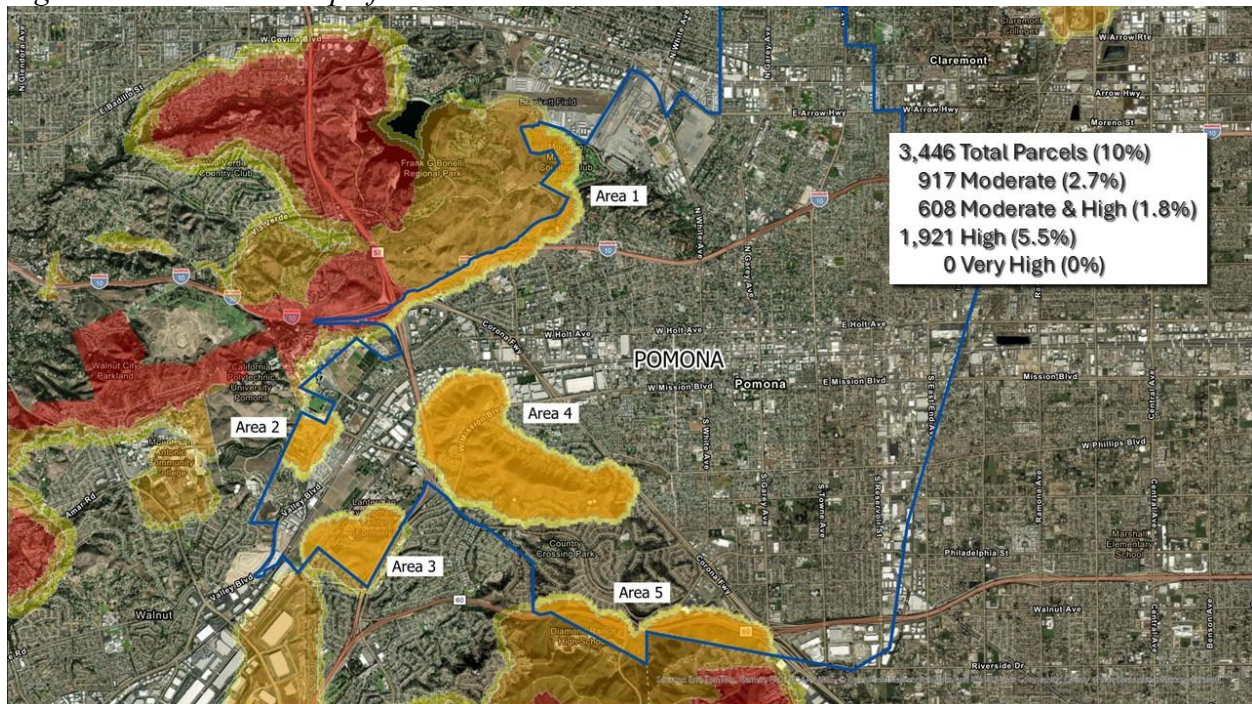


Figure 2. FHSZ Area 1

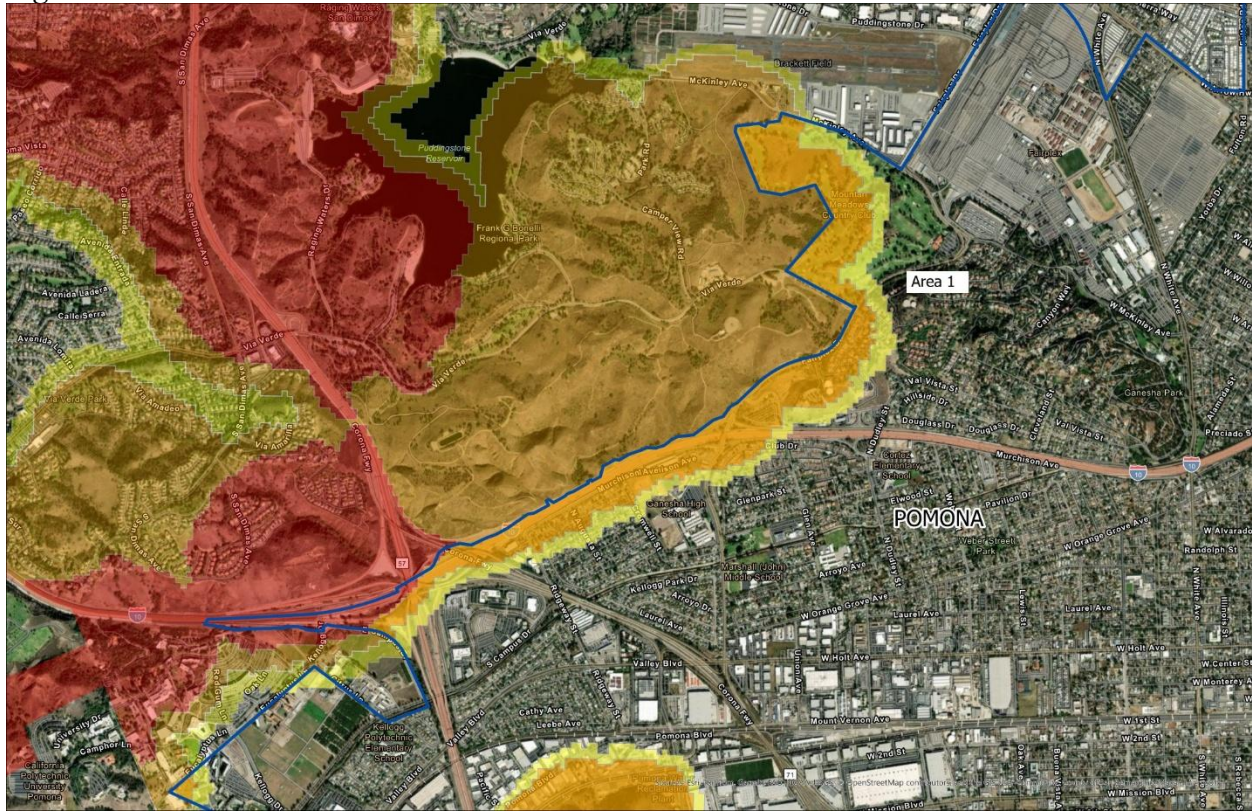


Figure 3. FHSZ Area 2

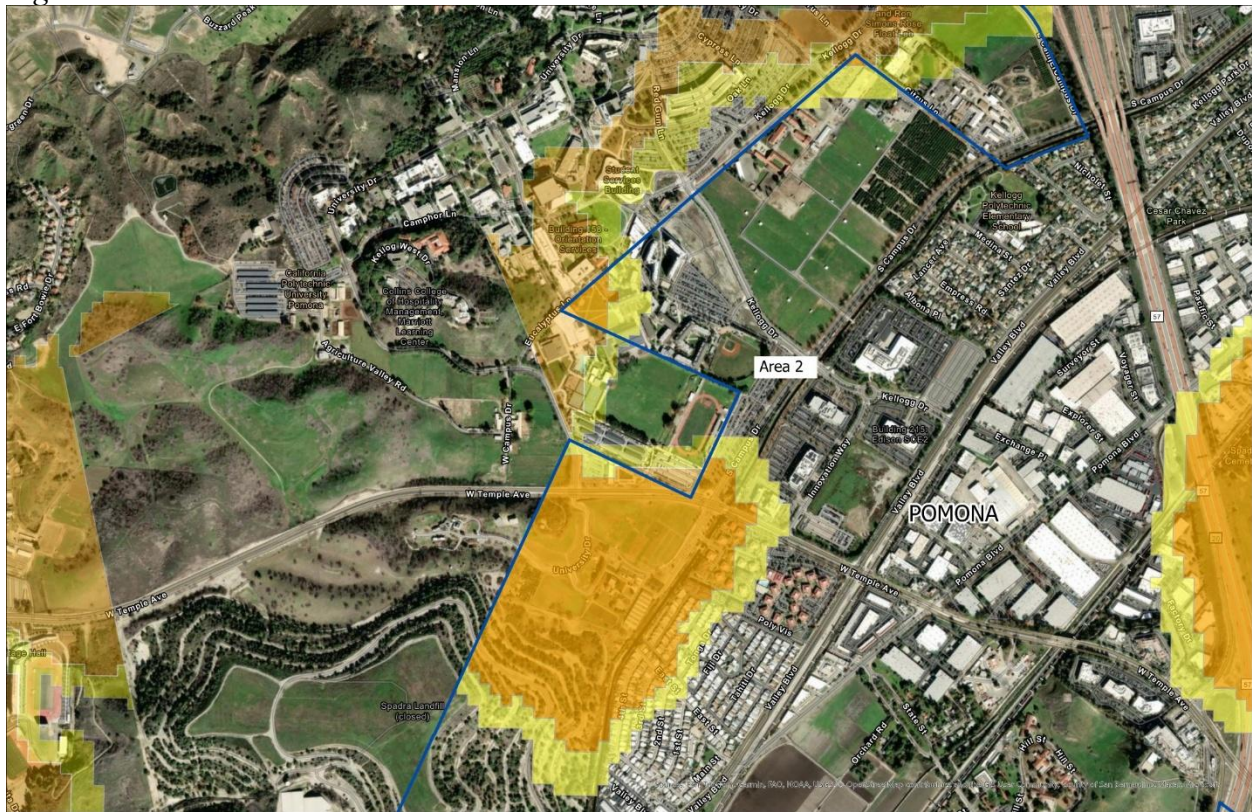


Figure 4. FHSZ Area 3

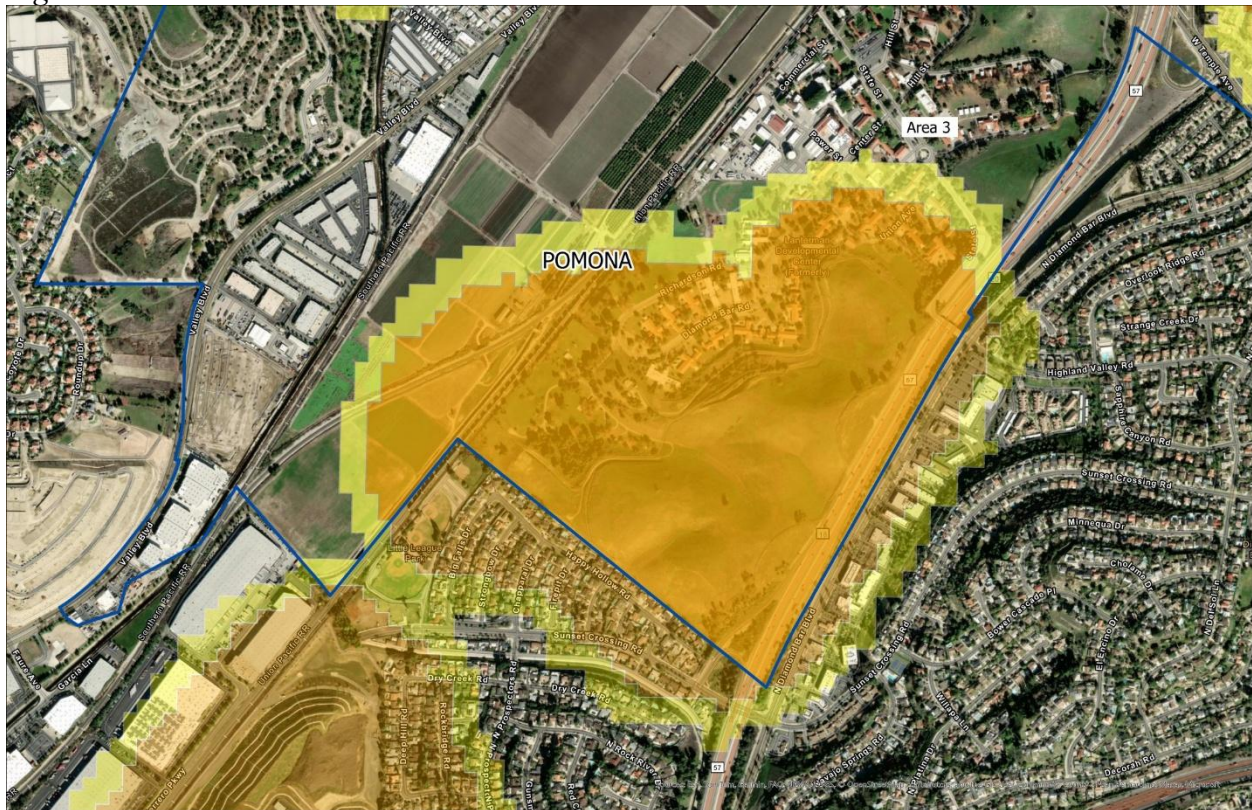


Figure 5. FHSZ Area 4

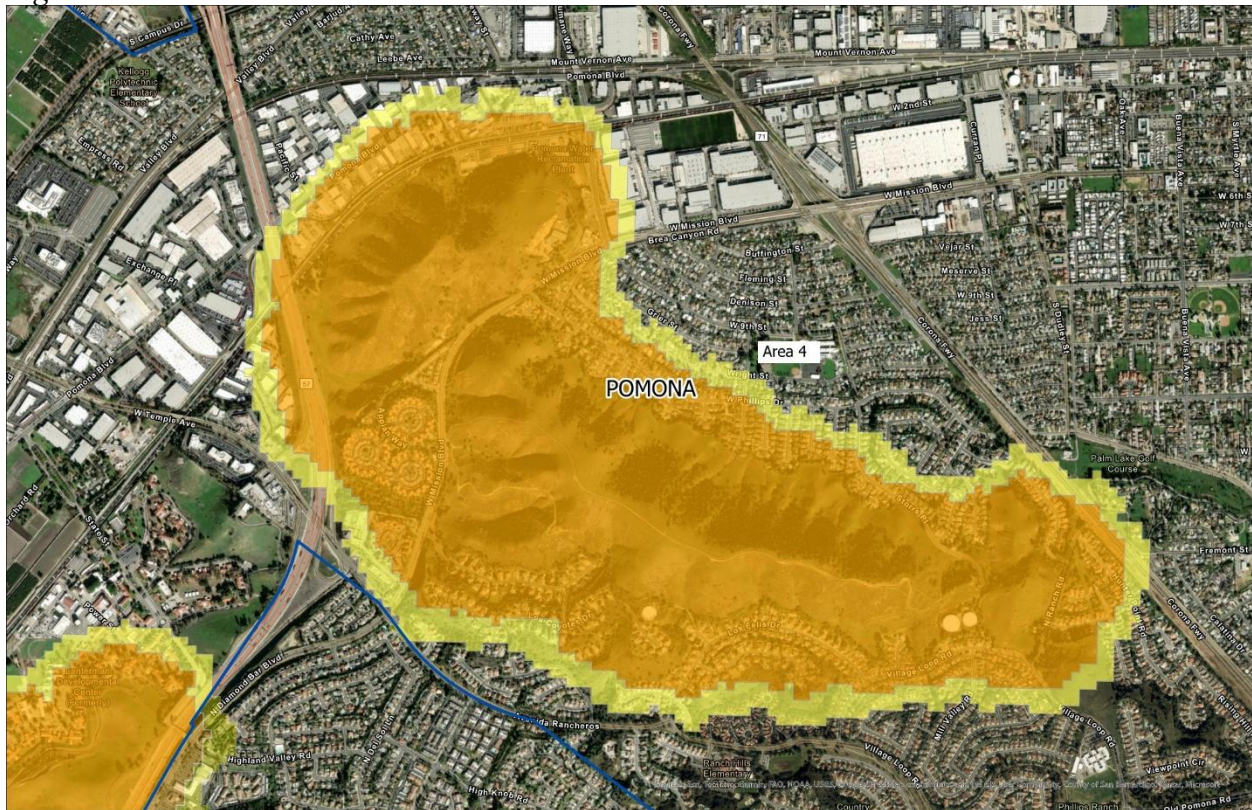


Figure 6. FHSZ Area 5



CAL FIRE released the FHSZ maps on March 24, 2025. Per Government Code Section 51179, all local agencies shall adopt the FHSZ maps within 120 days of receiving the maps, which is July 22, 2025. The City shall transmit a copy of Ordinance No. 4347 to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection within 30 days of adoption.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES & GOALS:

This item supports the 2021 City Council Priority 3, Goal J, Encourage the development and maintenance of quality housing opportunities for all and City Council Priority 4, Goal L to Hold businesses and residents accountable for property maintenance and compliance with other City codes.

Prepared by:

Vinny Tam, AICP
Principal Planner

ATTACHMENT(S):

Attachment No. 1 – Ordinance No. 4347 and Exhibit A Fire Hazard Severity Map
Attachment No. 2 – Public Notice
Attachment No. 3 – 2008 Ordinance No. 4104
Attachment No. 4 – CAL FIRE Factsheet
Attachment No. 5 – Staff Presentation

ORDINANCE NO. 4347

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POMONA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING POMONA CITY CODE CHAPTER 22 (FIRE PREVENTION) ADOPTING THE FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE DESIGNATIONS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51178, AND AMENDING CHAPTER 74, ARTICLE II, DIVISION 1, SECTION 74-32 (CONSTRUCTION IN FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES) ADOPTING PROVISIONS REGULATING OCCUPIED DWELLINGS AND OCCUPIED STRUCTURES PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51182, AND DETERMINING THE ORDINANCE TO BE EXEMPT FROM CEQA

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 51178 requires the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to identify and recommend areas within the state as moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code Section 51179, local agencies are required to adopt the fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) designations within 120 days of receiving the recommendations from CAL FIRE; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2025, the City of Pomona ("the City") received the map depicting the recommended FHSZ designations from CAL FIRE within the City of Pomona (2025 FHSZ Map); and

WHEREAS, the 2025 FHSZ Map is attached and incorporated herein as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the City has made the proposed 2025 FHSZ Map available for public review and provided proper public notice in accordance with Government Code Section 51179(g) to receive public input; and

WHEREAS, the City finds that adoption of the map is in the interest of public safety, supports fire prevention and mitigation efforts, and ensures compliance with applicable state law; and

WHEREAS, the City has not reduced or altered the fire hazard severity designations established by CAL FIRE, and this adoption is consistent with the model ordinance requirements by CAL FIRE.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Pomona as follows:

SECTION 1. Adoption of this ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") under CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3), the general rule that states

that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. The amendments made by this ordinance do not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment because they authorize no new development or use.

SECTION 2. Section 22-3 is hereby added to Chapter 22 (Fire Prevention) of the Pomona City Code and shall read as follows (new language is underlined):

Sec. 22-3. Fire hazard severity zone regulations.

- (a) Pursuant to Government Code Section 51179, this section adopts the map issued by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) titled "City of Pomona – Los Angeles County, Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones," and dated March 24, 2025, for the purposes of identifying properties designated as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones within the City of Pomona. The map shall be kept on file in the Building and Safety Division and in the Office of the City Clerk as Exhibit A of Ordinance No. 4347.
- (b) A person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure within a very high fire hazard severity zone designated by the local agency pursuant to Section 51179, shall at all times comply with all applicable provisions of Government Code Section 51182.

SECTION 3. Section 74-32 (Construction in fire hazard severity zones) of Division 1, Article II, Chapter 74 of the Pomona City Code is hereby amended to read in its entirety as follows (new language is underlined and deleted language is ~~stricken~~):

Sec. 74-32. Construction in fire hazard severity zones.

- (a) ~~Pursuant to Government Code Section 51179(a), this section adopts the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) "Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone Maps," which shall be kept on file in the building and safety division and in the office of the city clerk as Exhibit A to Ordinance No. 4104. New construction and/or renovations within any designated fire hazard severity zone shall comply with all applicable requirements of Chapter 7A of the California Building Code, as may be amended.~~
- (b) ~~Effective July 1, 2008, new construction or building expansion within any Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone shall comply with all requirements of Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.~~

SECTION 4. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this Ordinance, and shall cause same to be posted as required by law, and this Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after its adoption (August 6, 2025).

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 16th day of June, 2025.

CITY OF POMONA:

Tim Sandoval
Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Sonia Carvalho
City Attorney

ATTEST:

Rosalia A. Butler, MMC
City Clerk

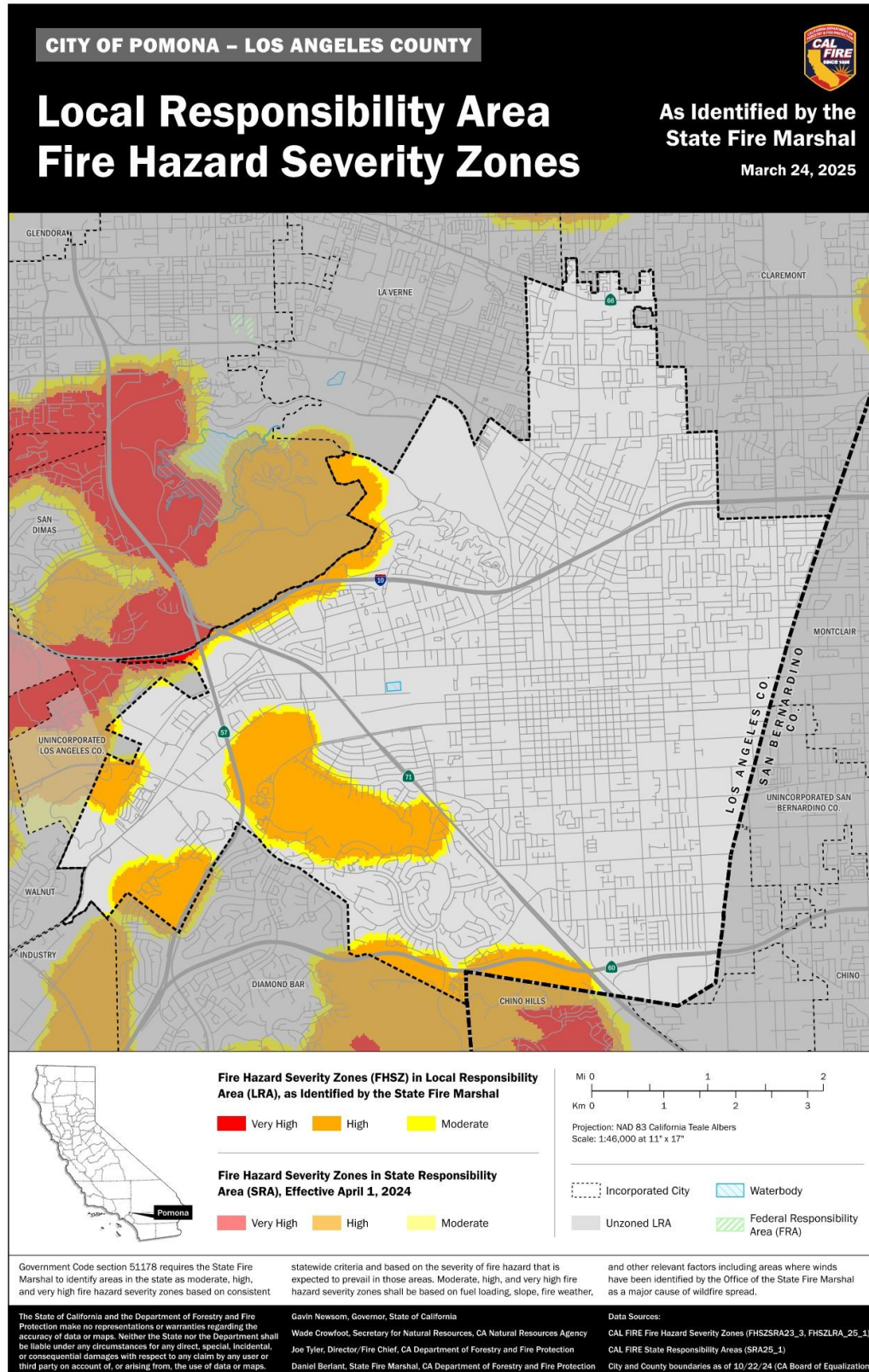
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
CITY OF POMONA

I, ROSALIA A. BUTLER, MMC, CITY CLERK of the City of Pomona do hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced for first reading at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Pomona held on June 16, 2025 and was adopted at second reading at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Pomona held on July 7, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Rosalia A. Butler, MMC
City Clerk

EXHIBIT A



**INLAND VALLEY
DAILY BULLETIN**
Local. News. Matters.
dailybulletin.com

Daily Bulletin-LA
3200 Guasti Rd. Suite 100
Ontario, California 91761
(909) 987-6397

0011729811

POMONA CITY OF LEGAL -
Development Services
505 S. Garey Avenue
Pomona, California 91769

**PROOF OF PUBLICATION
(2015.5 C.C.P.)**

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
County of Los Angeles**

I am a citizen of the United States, I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above-entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the printer of Daily Bulletin-LA, a newspaper of general circulation printed and published daily for the City of Pomona, County of Los Angeles, and which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, on the date of June 15, 1945, Decree No. Pomo C-606. The notice, of which the annexed is a true printed copy, has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to wit:

04/14/2025

I certify (or declare) under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Ontario, California

On this 14th day of April, 2025.

Eva Almeida

Signature

*Daily Bulletin-LA circulation includes the following cities: [UNKNOWN LIST]

**CITY OF POMONA
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY COUNCIL**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Pomona will hold a public hearing at a regular City Council Meeting on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 7:00 PM to consider an ordinance to adopt the new Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) as identified by Cal Fire. These zones will now include High and Moderate along with Very High. A second meeting for the adoption of the ordinance will follow at the same location and time on June 16, 2025. Pursuant to Public Resource Code 4202; The State Fire Marshal shall classify lands within State Responsibility Areas into Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Each zone shall embrace relatively homogeneous lands and shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors present, including areas where winds have been identified by the department as a major cause of wildfire spread.

Government Code 51178. The State Fire Marshal shall identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 382, Sec. 2.5. (SB 63) Effective January 1, 2022.)

Government Code 51178.5. Within 30 days after receiving a transmittal from the State Fire Marshal that identifies fire hazard severity zones pursuant to Section 51178, a local agency shall make the information available for public review and comment. The information shall be presented in a format that is understandable and accessible to the general public, including, but not limited to, maps.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 382, Sec. 3.5. (SB 63) Effective January 1, 2022.)

Government Code 51179.

(a) A local agency shall designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178.

(b) (1) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as very high fire hazard severity zones following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.

(2) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones, respectively. (3) A local agency shall not decrease the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency, and, in exercising its discretion pursuant to paragraph (2), may only increase the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency.

(c) The local agency shall transmit a copy of an ordinance adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection within 30 days of adoption.

(d) Changes made by a local agency to the recommendations made by the State Fire Marshal shall be final and shall not be rebuttable by the State Fire Marshal.

(e) The State Fire Marshal shall prepare and adopt a model ordinance that provides for the establishment of very high fire hazard severity zones.

(f) Any ordinance adopted by a local agency pursuant to this section that substantially conforms to the model ordinance of the State Fire Marshal shall be presumed to be in compliance with the requirements of this section.

(g) A local agency shall post a notice at the office of the county recorder, county assessor, and county planning agency identifying the location of the map provided by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178. If the agency amends the map, pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c) of this section, the notice shall instead identify the location of the amended map.

(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 574, Sec. 10. (AB 211) Effective September 27, 2022.)

You may view the map at <https://www.pomonaca.gov/government/departments/fire-department/local-responsibility-area-fsfield-1#/>. The map will be posted on the website for 30 days. For a hard copy of the map please visit Pomona City Hall - Human Resources Department at 505 S Garey Ave. Pomona, CA 91766. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail to safety@pomonaca.gov, or in person at Pomona City Hall - Human Resources Department at 505 S Garey Ave. Pomona, CA 91766. Please title your email "PC Public Comment". Comments received via email will be made a part of the official record of the meeting. Please direct questions about this matter to safety@pomonaca.gov. Please note that if you challenge this matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those

Issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Pomona, City Clerk Department or prior to, the public hearing. Para información en Español, llame (909) 620-3741.
Inland Valley Daily Bulletin
Published: 4/14/25

ORDINANCE NO. 4104**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POMONA AMENDING ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 74 OF THE POMONA CITY CODE WITH THE ADOPTION OF SECTION 701A.3.2, "NEW BUILDINGS LOCATED IN ANY FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE," OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24, PART 2, 2007 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE**

WHEREAS, the California Building Standards Commission reviews proposed standards and amendments to the California Building Standards Code and adopts new editions and supplements to the Building Standards;

WHEREAS, the State of California has adopted the 2007 California Building Standards Codes, which are required by State law to be utilized by each city throughout the state;

WHEREAS, the City of Pomona adopted the 2007 California Codes in December 2007, which included the new 2007 California Fire Code;

WHEREAS, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has completed their re-mapping of fire hazard severity zones for lands where the State and cities have fiscal responsibility for wildland fire protection;

WHEREAS, under Government Code section 51175 this effort incorporates improved wildland fire behavior science, data sets, and understanding of structure ignition mechanisms during conflagrations;

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2007 the California Building Standards Commission approved the Office of the State Fire Marshal's emergency regulations amending section 701A.3.2, "New Buildings Located in Any Fire Hazard Severity Zone," of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, Part 2, known as the 2007 California Building Code (CBC);

WHEREAS, the City of Pomona has been identified as a "Local Agency Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone;" and

WHEREAS, new buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after July 1, 2008, shall comply with all sections of the new requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the City Council of the City of Pomona as follows:

SECTION 1. That Article II, "Construction Standards," of Chapter 74, "Buildings and Building Regulations," of the Pomona City Code is hereby amended to include the following:

Sec. 74-32. Construction in Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

A. Pursuant to Government Code Section 51179(a), this section adopts the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) "Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone Maps," which shall be kept on file in the Building and Safety Division and in the Office of the City Clerk as Exhibit A to Ordinance No. 4104.

B. Effective July 1, 2008, new construction or building expansion within any Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone shall comply with all requirements of Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.

SECTION 2. That the above-referenced Very High Fire Hazard Safety Zone Maps, attached hereto as Exhibit A, are hereby adopted by this reference.

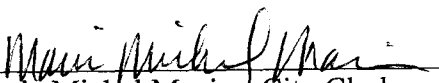
SECTION 3. If any portion of this Ordinance is found to be unconstitutional or invalid, the City Council hereby declares that it would have enacted the remainder of this Ordinance regardless of the absence of any such invalid part or portion. The City Council of the City of Pomona hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance, and each section, subsection, clause or phrase hereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses and phrases be declared unconstitutional.

SECTION 4. The City Clerk shall attest and certify to the adoption of this Ordinance and it shall be in full force and effect thirty (30) days after the date of its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 16TH DAY OF JUNE 2008.

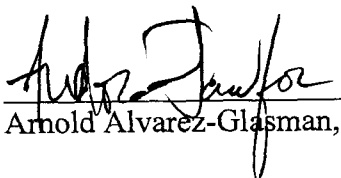
ATTEST:

CITY OF POMONA:


Marie Michel Macias, City Clerk


Norma J. Torres Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Arnold Alvarez-Glasman, City Attorney

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
CITY OF POMONA

I, MARIE MICHEL MACIAS, CITY CLERK of the City of Pomona do hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced for first reading on May 27, 2008 and adopted at second reading at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Pomona held on the 16th of June 2008.

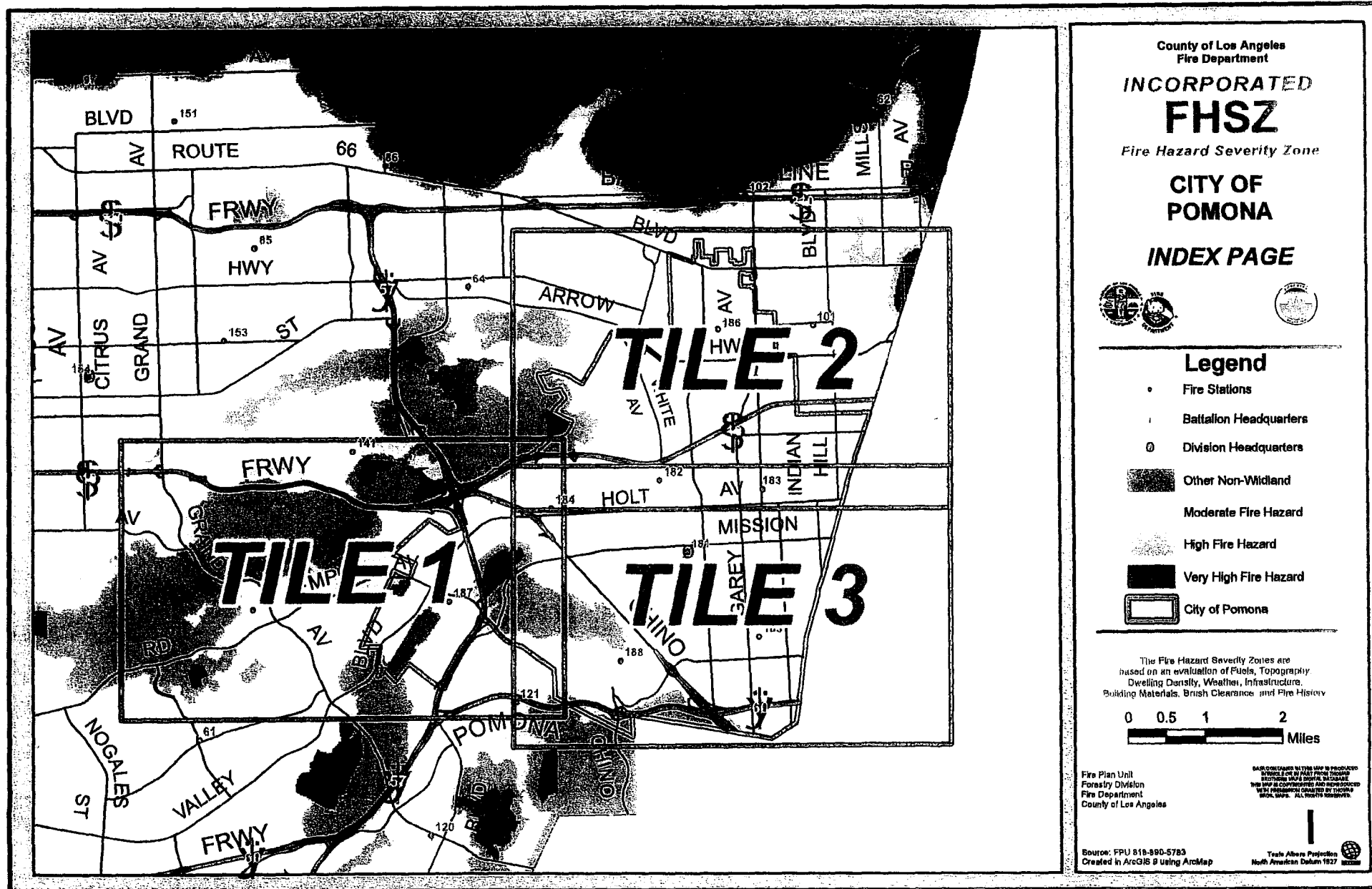
AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS: HUNTER, CARRIZOSA, LANTZ, ROTHMAN, ATCHLEY

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE

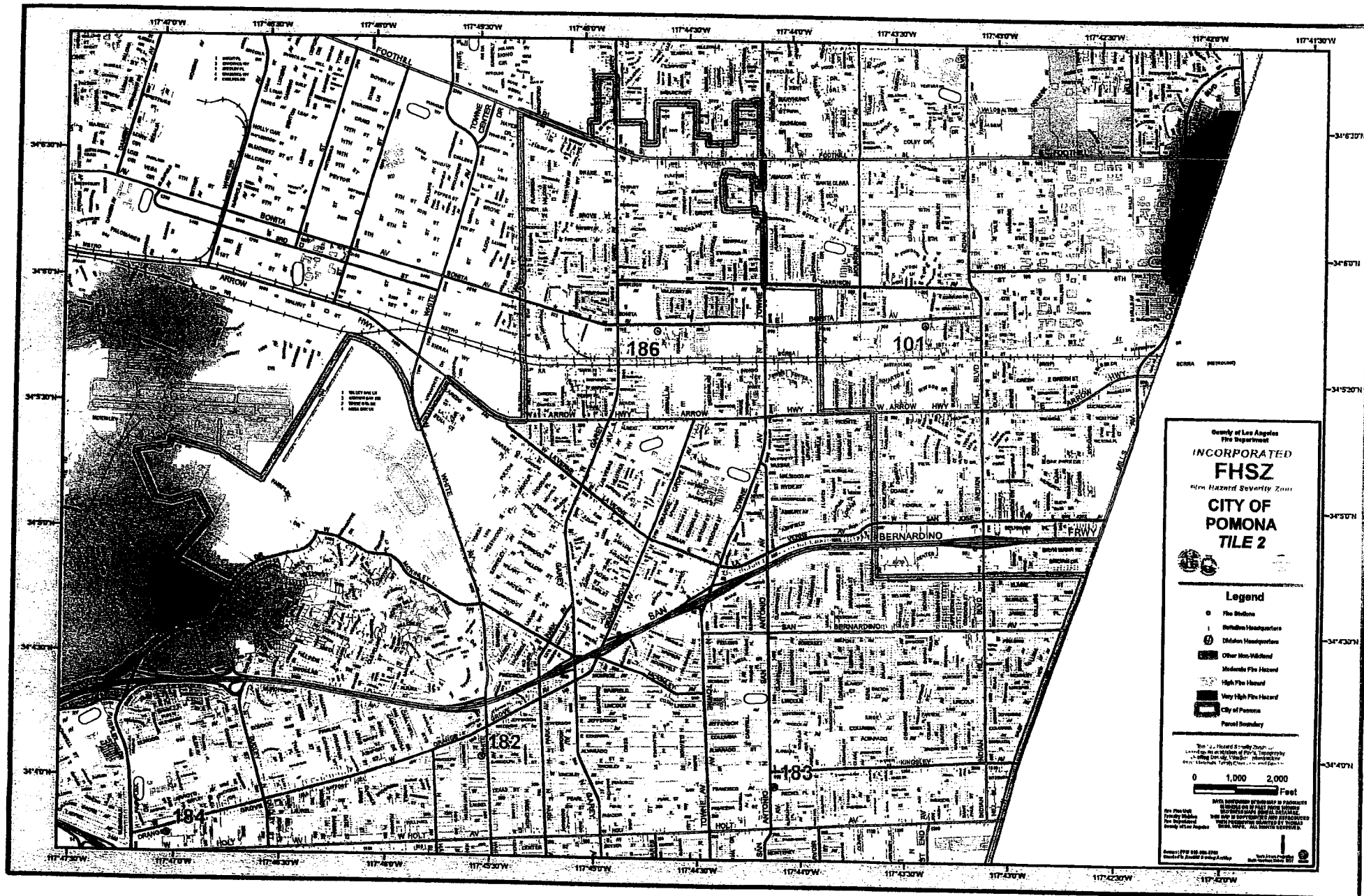
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: RODRIGUEZ, MAYOR TORRES

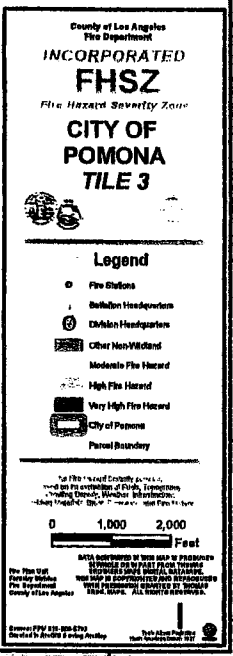
ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE


Marie Michel Macias, City Clerk











Fire Hazard Severity Zones Local Responsibility Area

Fire Hazard Severity Zones

What is a Fire Hazard Severity Zone?

The State Fire Marshal shall identify areas in the State as Moderate, High, and Very High Hazard Severity Zones based on consistent statewide criteria and the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. – [CA GOV 51178](#)

When did Fire Hazard Severity Zones begin in Local Responsibility Area?

Assembly Bill 337 (Bates 1992), prompted by the devastating Oakland Hills fire of 1991, calls for CAL FIRE to evaluate fire hazard severity in local responsibility area and to make a recommendation to the local jurisdiction where Very High FHSZ exist. – [CA GOV 51175](#)

What do Fire Hazard Severity Zones measure?

The maps evaluate "Hazard", not "Risk". Hazard is based on physical conditions that create expected fire behavior over a 50-year period without considering short-term modifications. Risk is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, including fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction. - osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz

Will the new Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps affect my insurance?

Insurance companies use risk models, which differ from hazard models, because they consider the susceptibility of a structure to damage from fire and other short-term factors that are not included in hazard modeling. Insurance risk models incorporate additional factors that change more frequently than those that CAL FIRE includes in its hazard mapping, which is built to remain steady.

– [California Department of Insurance](#)

What are the requirements within Fire Hazard Severity Zones?

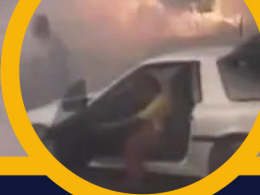
- Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure – [CBC Chapter 7A](#)
- Natural hazard real estate disclosure at the time of sale – [CA CIV 1102.19 \(AB 38 2019\)](#)
- 100-foot defensible space clearance requirements – [CA GOV 51182](#)
- Property development standards such as road widths, water supply, and signage – [CA PRC 4290](#)
- Consideration during future development of Cities and Counties General Plan – [CA GOV 65302](#)

1980



Panorama Fire burns 28,800 acres, destroying 325 structures and resulting in 4 fatalities in San Bernardino.

1991



Tunnel Fire burns 1,600 acres, destroying 2,900 structures and resulting in 25 fatalities in the Oakland Hills.

PRC 4201 mandates that CAL FIRE develop Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

1982

Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps are created.

1985

The "Bates Bill" calls for CAL FIRE to identify Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA.

1992

Frequently Asked Questions



Is there an easy way to determine the Fire Hazard Severity Zone of my property?

You can search by address to find your current designation on the website: osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz

Why are Fire Hazard Severity Zones being updated?

The hazard maps are being updated to more accurately reflect the zones in California that are susceptible to wildfire. The process will incorporate new science in local climate data and improved fire assessment modeling in determining hazard ratings. – [PRC 4125](#) and [GC 51178](#)

What are the key elements of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Model?

The model has two key elements: probability of an area burning and expected fire behavior under extreme fuel and weather conditions. The factors considered in determining fire hazard within wildland areas is fire history, flame length, terrain, local weather, and potential fuel over a 50-year period. Outside of wildlands, the model considers factors that might lead to buildings being threatened, including terrain, weather, urban vegetation cover, blowing embers, proximity to wildland, fire history, and fire hazard in nearby wildlands. This is not a structure loss model, as key information regarding structure ignition is not included. – osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz

Why does the model place an emphasis on the spread of embers?

Embers spread wildfire because they can travel long distances in the wind and ignite vegetation, roofs, attics (by getting into vents), and decks. – osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz

What is the difference between SRA and LRA?

State Responsibility Area (SRA) is a legal term defining the area where the State has financial responsibility for wildland fire protection and prevention. – [CA PRC 4102](#)

Local Responsibility Area (LRA) includes incorporated cities, urban regions, agriculture lands, and portions of the desert where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection. – [CA PRC 4125](#)

How are Fire Hazard Severity Zones determined in Local Responsibility Areas?

CAL FIRE uses an extension of the state responsibility area Fire Hazard Severity Zone model as the basis for evaluating fire hazard in Local Responsibility Area. The Local Responsibility Area hazard rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation in the urban area.

– [PRC 4202](#) and [GC 51178](#)

2017



Tubbs Fire burns 36,810 acres, destroying 5,643 structures and resulting in 22 fatalities in Santa Rosa.

2018



Camp Fire burns 153,336 acres, destroying 18,804 structures and resulting in 85 fatalities in Paradise.

2007
CAL FIRE finalizes the Statewide FHSZ Model to include Very High FHSZ in LRA.

2007

2021
AB 642 and SB 63 require CAL FIRE to identify Moderate and High FHSZ in LRA.

2021

2022
AB 211 requires local agency to designate by ordinance Moderate and High FHSZ in LRA.

2022

FHSZ Frequently Asked Questions



General

What is a Fire Hazard Severity Zone or FHSZ?

[Public Resource Code 4202](#); The State Fire Marshal shall classify lands within State Responsibility Areas into Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Each zone shall embrace relatively homogeneous lands and shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors present, including areas where winds have been identified by the department as a major cause of wildfire spread.

[Government Code 51178](#); The State Fire Marshal shall identify areas in the state as Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.

Will the new Fire Hazard Severity Zones affect my ability to get or maintain insurance?

Insurance companies use risk models, which differ from hazard models, because they consider the susceptibility of a structure to damage from fire and other short-term factors that are not included in hazard modeling. It is unlikely that insurance risk models would utilize CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones as a factor, but much of the same data that is used in the Fire Hazard Severity Zone model are likely included in the insurance companies' risk models. However, insurance risk models incorporate many additional factors and that change more frequently than those that CAL FIRE includes in its hazard mapping, which is built to remain steady for the next 10+ years.

What do Fire Hazard Severity Zones measure?

The Fire Hazard Severity Zone map reflects "hazard," not "risk". The map is like flood zone maps, where lands are described in terms of the probability level of a particular area being inundated by floodwaters, and not specifically prescriptive of impacts.

"Hazard" is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildfire, or fuel reduction efforts.

"Risk" is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, accounting for any modifications such as fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction.

FHSZ Frequently Asked Questions



General

What are the key elements of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone model?

The fire hazard severity model for wildland fire has two key elements: probability of an area burning and expected fire behavior under extreme fuel and weather conditions. The zones reflect areas that have similar burn probabilities and fire behavior characteristics. The factors considered in determining fire hazard within wildland areas are fire history, flame length, terrain, local weather, and potential fuel over a 50-year period. Outside of wildlands, the model considers factors that might lead to buildings being threatened, including terrain, weather, urban vegetation cover, blowing embers, proximity to wildland, fire history, and fire hazard in nearby wildlands. FHSZs are not a structure loss model, as key information regarding structure ignition (such as roof type, etc.) is not included.

Where do Fire Hazard Severity Zones apply?

Fire Hazard Severity Zones are found in areas where the state has financial responsibility for wildfire protection and prevention, called the State Responsibility Area. More than 31 million acres are in this area. Under [Senate Bill 63 \(Stern, 2021\)](#) [Government Code 51178](#) was amended to also identify the Moderate and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones with the Very High in Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

What are the uses of Fire Hazard Severity Zones?

The zones are used for several purposes including to designate areas where California's defensible space standards and wildland urban interface building codes are required. They can be a factor in real estate disclosure, and local governments may consider them in their general plan.

When were the maps last updated?

In 2007, CAL FIRE updated the FHSZs for the entire State Responsibility Area (SRA). Between 2008-2011 the department worked with local governments to make recommendations of the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones within Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

Why are fire hazard severity maps being updated?

The hazard maps are being updated to more accurately reflect the zones in California that are susceptible to wildfire. The hazard mapping process will incorporate new science in local climate data and improved fire assessment modeling in determining hazard ratings.

FHSZ Frequently Asked Questions



General

How do the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps differ from California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) High Fire Threat District Maps?

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) sponsored map, known as "CPUC High Fire Threat District Map" (HFTD), includes similar factors as those in the FHSZ maps, however the CPUC HFTD Map is designed specifically for identifying areas where there is an increased risk for utility associated wildfires. As such, the CPUC map includes fire hazards associated with historical powerline-caused wildfires, current fuel conditions, and scores areas based on where fires start, as opposed to where potential fires may cause impacts.

How are Fire Hazard Severity Zones determined?

CAL FIRE used the best available science and data to develop, and field test a model that served as the basis of zone assignments. The model evaluated the probability of the area burning and potential fire behavior in the area. Many factors were included such as fire history, vegetation, flame length, blowing embers, proximity to wildland, terrain, and weather.

What new data will be included in the new model, and how does this differ from the previous model?

A 2 km grid of climate data covering the years 2003-2018 is being used in the update. The previous model used stock weather inputs across the state to calculate wildland fire intensity scores. The updated model will adjust fire intensity scores based on the most extreme fire weather at a given location, considering temperature, humidity, and wind speed. In addition, ember transport is being modeled based on local distributions of observed wind speed and direction values instead of using a generic buffer distance for urban areas adjacent to wildlands.

Why is my property in a different zone than the adjacent area, which looks similar?

In wildland areas, zone edges are a result of the way zones are delineated. Specifically, zones represent areas of similar slope and fuel potential. Zone boundaries divide zones based on geographic and vegetation features that align with fire hazard potential; although, at a local scale, it may appear that the immediate area is similar on both sides of the edge. The class value within a zone is based on the average hazard score across the whole zone, so areas that are in the same zone but not immediately adjacent to a local area can have an influence on the final zone classification. Classification outside of wildland areas is based on the fire hazard of the adjacent wildland and the probability of flames and embers threatening buildings.

FHSZ Frequently Asked Questions



General

Why does the model place an emphasis on the spread of embers?

Embers spread wildfire because they can travel long distances in the wind and ignite vegetation, roofs, attics (by getting into vents), and decks.

Why do waterbodies have a Fire Hazard Severity Zone Classification?

All areas in State Responsibility Area, including water bodies, require a Fire Hazard Severity Zone designation. The 2007 FHSZ maps zoned all water as Moderate by default. In the 2023 FHSZ model we added a buffer of FHSZ from the surrounding wildland into water bodies to account for potential threat of embers to buildings on docks and house boats, as well as variation in reservoir height that occurs with drought.

How does CAL FIRE assist Local Governments in Fire Hazard Severity Zones?

CAL FIRE's Land Use Planning Program is a specialized unit that provides support to local governments by providing fire safety expertise on the State's wildland urban interface building codes, wildfire safety codes, as well as helping in the development of the safety elements in general plans.

How can I search the Fire Hazard Severity Zone of a property?

You can search by address to find your current designation on the web at: osfm.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ

FHSZ Frequently Asked Questions



State Responsibility Area

What is State Responsibility Area or SRA?

SRA is a legal term defining the area where the state has financial responsibility for wildland fire protection and prevention. Incorporated cities and federal ownership are not included. Within the SRA, CAL FIRE is responsible for fire prevention and suppression. There are more than 31 million acres in SRA, with an estimated 1.7 million people and 800,000 existing homes.

How is State Responsibility Area determined?

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) classifies land as State Responsibility Area. The legal definition of SRA is found in the [Public Resources Code Section 4125](#). The Board has developed detailed procedures to classify lands as State Responsibility Area. Lands are removed from SRA when they become incorporated by a city, change in ownership to the federal government, become more densely populated, or are converted to intensive agriculture that minimizes the risk of wildfire. While some lands are removed from SRA automatically, the Board typically reviews changes every five years.

What Fire Hazard Severity Zones are in State Responsibility Area?

All of the State Responsibility Area is in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Lands are either ranked as Moderate, High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

What are the wildland urban interface (WUI) building codes in State Responsibility Area?

The WUI building codes ([California Building Code \(CBC\) Chapter 7A](#)) reduce the risk of embers fanned by wind-blown wildfires from igniting buildings. The codes for roofing, siding, decking, windows, and vents apply throughout all State Responsibility Area regardless of the fire hazard severity ranking. Ember-resistant building materials can be found at: <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/fire-engineering-and-investigations/building-materials-listing/>



State Responsibility Area

What is the difference between the various Fire Hazard Severity Zones?

Classification of a wildland zone as Moderate, High or Very High Fire Hazard is based on the average hazard across the area included in the zone, which have a minimum size of 200 acres. In wildlands, hazard is a function of modeled flame length under the worst conditions and annual burn probability. Both these factors generally increase with increasing hazard level, but there may be instances where one value is Very High and the other is low, pushing the overall hazard into a more intermediate ranking. On average, both modeled flame length and burn probability increase by roughly 40-60% between hazard classes.

Is the GIS data for Fire Hazard Severity Zones available for download?

The data inputs used to develop the Fire Hazard Severity Zones are identified in the Initial Statement of Reasons (ISOR) Title 19 Development (ca.gov). CAL FIRE has developed an additional data package which consists of sequential modeling steps, including any data inputs that were not already publicly available and referenced in the ISOR. The data package encompasses 34 spatial datasets and 8 tables, provided in raster, polygon, and table format. These datasets are formatted for Esri ArcGIS software, except for four tables provided in Excel. Ten of the datasets are updated versions used to produce an edited SRA FHSZ map following the public comment period that ended April 4, 2023. Upon formal adoption of the FHSZ map, the final SRA FHSZ geospatial data file will become available. The data package is available on the FHSZ website Fire Hazard Severity Zones (ca.gov) under the science and methods banner.



Local Responsibility Area

What is Local Responsibility Area or LRA?

Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) are incorporated cities, urban regions, agriculture lands, and portions of the desert where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection. This is typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL FIRE under contract.

When did Fire Hazard Severity Zones begin in Local Responsibility Area?

Assembly Bill 337 (Bates, 1992) prompted by the devastating Oakland Hills Fire of 1991, calls for CAL FIRE to evaluate fire hazard severity in Local Responsibility Area and to make a recommendation to the local jurisdiction where Very High FHSZ exist. [Government Code 51175](#) then provides direction for the local jurisdiction to take appropriate action.

How are Fire Hazard Severity Zones determined in Local Responsibility Areas?

CAL FIRE uses an extension of the State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone model as the basis for evaluating fire hazard in Local Responsibility Area. The Local Responsibility Area hazard rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation in the urban area.

What are the requirements for landowners in Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas?

California's WUI building codes ([CBC Chapter 7A](#)) apply to the design and construction of new buildings located in High and Very High FHSZs in Local Responsibility Areas. Local ordinances may require ignition resistant construction for remodel projects. Check with your local building department to determine which ignition resistant building codes apply to your project. In addition, Government Code Section 51182 calls for defensible space clearance and other wildland fire safety practices for buildings. Owners are also required to make a natural hazard disclosure as part of a real estate transfer. For information regarding home hardening and defensible space clearance, visit www.readyforwildfire.org.

Does the designation of Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local Responsibility Area trigger the 100-foot clearance requirement?

Yes, per [Government Code 51182](#) unless a local government has passed a more stringent requirement, the 100-foot defensible space clearance applies. For information regarding home hardening and defensible space clearance, visit www.readyforwildfire.org.



Local Responsibility Area

What is the process for developing Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local Responsibility Area?

CAL FIRE uses the same modeling data that is used to map the State Responsibility Area. The map, along with a model ordinance, are then sent to the governing body for adoption.

How are the new Fire Hazard Severity Zones impacting development?

Many of the changes expanding Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas have been supported by the building industry. CAL FIRE works closely with the building industry when setting various building codes and defensible space requirements, so we are working together to not affect development itself but to make sure development matches the hazards of that area.

When will the Local Responsibility Area Map be released?

The Local Responsibility Area map process will happen after the State Responsibility Area process has been completed, which is estimated to occur in winter of 2025.

Why haven't Moderate and High Fire Hazard Severity Zone classes been classified before in the Local Responsibility Area?

New legislation, [Senate Bill 63 \(Stern, 2021\)](#), now requires the adoption of all three Fire Hazard Severity Zone classes in the Local Responsibility Area. Previously only Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones were required for adoption in Local Responsibility Areas.

Why is my property in a different zone than the adjacent area, which looks similar?

In non-wildland areas, zone edges occur based on distance to the wildland edge. Because hazard in these areas is largely determined by incoming embers from adjacent wildland, urban areas that are similar in vegetation type and housing density may have a change in FHSZ class as the distance to the wildland edge increases. Areas immediately adjacent to wildland receive the same FHSZ score as that wildland where fire originates, and the model then produces lower scores as the distance to wildland edge increases.

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Assembly Bill No.337

An act to add Chapter 6.8 (commencing with Section 51175) to Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code, and to amend Section 13108.5 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to fire protection.

[Enrolled, January 28, 1991]

AB 337, Bates. Very high fire hazard severity zones.

- (1) Under existing law, the State Board of Forestry is required to classify all lands within the state, in accordance with prescribed criteria, for the purpose of determining areas in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires is primarily the responsibility of the state.

This bill would declare that the prevention of fires is not a municipal affair but is instead, a matter of statewide concern, and would make a finding and declaration of the Legislature that its provisions apply to all local agencies, including, but not limited to, charter cities, charter counties, and charter cities and counties. The bill would prohibit that finding from limiting the authority of a local agency, as defined, from imposing more restrictive fire and panic safety requirements, as otherwise authorized by law.

The bill would state that it is not the intent of the Legislature to limit or restrict the authority of a local agency to impose more restrictive fire and panic safety requirements, as otherwise authorized by law.

This bill would require the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify areas in the state as very high fire hazard severity zones within all counties pursuant to a prescribed schedule. The bill would require local agencies, as defined, to designate, by ordinance, very high fire hazard severity zones in their jurisdiction after receiving recommendations from the director, except as prescribed. The bill would authorize local agencies to include or exclude areas following certain findings and would require changes made by local agencies to be final and not rebuttable by the director. By requiring local agencies to designate very high fire hazard severity zones within their jurisdictions, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would require the State Fire Marshal to prepare and adopt a model ordinance that provides for the establishment of any high fire hazard security zones.

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Assembly Bill No.337 (Continued)

- (2) Under existing law, any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains any building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area or forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, or grass-covered lands, or any land that is covered with flammable material, is required to undertake specified fire protection measures, including the maintenance of specified firebreaks.

The bill would enact requirements of this nature for any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains, any occupied dwelling or occupied structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land, or land covered with flammable material, which area or land is within a very high fire hazard severity zone, as described in (1).

The bill would authorize local agencies to exempt certain structures and would exempt certain land or water areas.

The bill would make violation of these requirements an infraction or misdemeanor, as specified, thereby imposing a state-mandated local program by creating a new crime, and would specify related matters.

This bill would require local agencies to notify owners of property of violation and would authorize local agencies to correct the conditions and make a lien upon the property, as prescribed. By creating these requirements, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The bill would permit a violation of these requirements to be considered a public nuisance, as specified.

- (3) Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to adopt, amend, and repeal regulations for roof coverings and openings into the attic areas of buildings in those fire hazard severity zones in state responsibility lands as designated by the director. Existing law requires the director to classify lands within state responsibility areas into fire hazard severity zones.

This bill would instead require the State Fire Marshal to propose, and would require the State Building Standards Commission to adopt, amend, and repeal those regulations. The bill would also require the State Fire Marshal to propose, and would require the State Building Standards Commission to adopt, amend, and repeal, those regulations for buildings in very high fire hazard severity zones in state responsibility lands, designated by the director, and in very high fire hazard severity zones as described in (1). The bill would require roofs on all new buildings and certain existing buildings in both of those zones to be at least a class B roof that complies with Standard 32-7 of the Uniform Building Code, as adopted in the California Building Standards Code. The bill would impose requirements on installers and roofing materials and make other related changes. The bill would exempt historic buildings, as defined, from these provisions.

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Senate Bill No.63

CHAPTER 382

An act to amend Sections 51177, **51178, 51178.5**, 51182, and 51189 of the **Government Code**, to amend Section 13108.5 of the Health and Safety Code, and to amend Sections 4124.5 and 4291 of, and to add and repeal Sections 4123.8, 4291.5, and 4291.6 of, the Public Resources Code, relating to fire prevention.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2021. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2021.]

SB 63, Stern. Fire prevention: vegetation management: public education: grants: defensible space: fire hazard severity zones.

- (1) Existing law requires the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify areas of the state as very high fire hazard severity zones based on specified criteria. Existing law requires a local agency, within 30 days after receiving a transmittal from the director that identifies very high fire hazard severity zones, to make the information available for public review, as provided. This bill, among other things, would also require the director to identify areas of the state as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones. The bill would modify the factors the director is required to use to identify areas into fire hazard severity zones, as provided. The bill would require a local agency to make this information available for public review and comment, as provided. By expanding the responsibility of a local agency, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

This bill would also make conforming changes.

- (2) Existing law requires a person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material that is within a very high fire hazard severity zone, as designated by a local agency, or a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining those areas or lands within a state responsibility area, to maintain a defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, as specified. Existing law authorizes a greater distance than specified above on the specified land in a very high fire hazard severity zone. Existing law specifies that clearance beyond the property line may only be required if state law, local ordinance, rule, or regulation includes certain findings and specifies that clearance on adjacent property shall only be conducted following written consent by the adjacent landowner.

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Amended by Senate Bill No.63

Government Code 51178

The State Fire Marshal shall identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 382, Sec. 2.5. (SB 63) Effective January 1, 2022.)

Government Code 51178.5

Within 30 days after receiving a transmittal from the State Fire Marshal that identifies fire hazard severity zones pursuant to Section 51178, a local agency shall make the information available for public review and comment. The information shall be presented in a format that is understandable and accessible to the general public, including, but not limited to, maps.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 382, Sec. 3.5. (SB 63) Effective January 1, 2022.)

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Assembly Bill No. 211

CHAPTER 574

An act to amend Sections 11891, 11893, 12581, 12996, 12998, 12999.4, and 12999.5 of, and to add Sections 12999.6 and 13001 to, the Food and Agricultural Code, **to amend Section 51179 of the Government Code**, to amend Sections 44274.10, 44274.11, 44274.12, 44274.13, and 44274.14 of the Health and Safety Code, to amend Sections 3113, 4799.05, 14503.5.1, 14538, 14549.2, 14581, 42052, and 42060 of, to add Sections 14537.5, 14548, 14555, and 21166.3 to, to add Part 5 (commencing with Section 75250) to Division 44 of, and to repeal Section 75250.1 of, the Public Resources Code, to amend Section 43152.6 of, and to amend and repeal Section 43152.10 of, the Revenue and Taxation Code, to amend Section 13198 of the Water Code, to amend the Budget Act of 2021 (Chapters 21, 69, and 240 of the Statutes of 2021) by amending Item 8570-002-0001 of Section 2.00 of that act, and to amend the Budget Act of 2021 (Chapter 44 of the Statutes of 2022) by amending Items 3540-101-0001 of Section 2.00 of that act, relating to public resources, and making an appropriation therefor, to take effect immediately, bill related to the budget.

[Approved by Governor September 27, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 27, 2022.]

AB 211, Committee on Budget. Public resources trailer bill.

- (2) Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas of the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on specified criteria. Existing law requires a local agency to designate, by ordinance, very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal. Existing law authorizes a local agency, at its discretion, to include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as very high fire hazard severity zones following a finding supported by substantial evidence, as provided.

This bill would additionally require a local agency to designate, by ordinance, moderate and high fire hazard severity zones within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal. By expanding the responsibility of a local agency, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would additionally authorize a local agency, at its discretion, to include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones, respectively. The bill would prohibit the local agency from decreasing the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency, as provided.

LRA Legislation Factsheet



Amended by Assembly Bill No. 211

Government Code 51179

- (a) A local agency shall designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178.
- (b) (1) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as very high fire hazard severity zones following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.

(2) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones, respectively.

(3) A local agency shall not decrease the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency, and, in exercising its discretion pursuant to paragraph (2), may only increase the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency.
- (c) The local agency shall transmit a copy of an ordinance adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection within 30 days of adoption.
- (d) Changes made by a local agency to the recommendations made by the State Fire Marshal shall be final and shall not be rebuttable by the State Fire Marshal.
- (e) The State Fire Marshal shall prepare and adopt a model ordinance that provides for the establishment of very high fire hazard severity zones.
- (f) Any ordinance adopted by a local agency pursuant to this section that substantially conforms to the model ordinance of the State Fire Marshal shall be presumed to be in compliance with the requirements of this section.
- (g) A local agency shall post a notice at the office of the county recorder, county assessor, and county planning agency identifying the location of the map provided by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178. If the agency amends the map, pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c) of this section, the notice shall instead identify the location of the amended map.

(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 574, Sec. 10. (AB 211) Effective September 27, 2022.)



Increasing Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Area and Designation

Government Code section 51179 requires a local agency to designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high FHSZ within 120 days of receiving the identified FHSZ's from the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178.

The law does not allow for a local jurisdiction to request changes or provide comments to the State Fire Marshal on the FHSZ designations. However, a local agency may choose to increase the designation of a FHSZ from the FHSZ identified by the State Fire Marshal, or designate areas as having a FHSZ that were not designated in a FHSZ by the State Fire Marshal. This may occur because FHSZ zone edges in the maps and data from the State Fire Marshal are not aligned with parcel boundaries or roads that some may consider for lines of convenience when adopting ordinances. A local agency is not allowed to reduce the designation of a FHSZ classification from the State Fire Marshal (i.e. a local agency cannot make an area designated as High by the State Fire Marshal, Moderate in its adopted ordinance).

However, a local jurisdiction can increase the designation from the one identified by the State Fire Marshal. If a local agency decides to increase the designation of a FHSZ, it may do so if it does the following:

1. If increasing the designation to Very High, a local agency must make a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Government Code section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection.
2. If increasing the designation to Moderate or High, a local agency may do this at its discretion.

If a local agency decides to include areas in its FHSZ adopted ordinance not identified as being in a FHSZ by the State Fire Marshal, it may include those areas if it does the following:

1. If including areas not identified as being in a FHSZ and designating it as Very High, a local agency must make a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Government Code section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection.
2. If including areas not identified as being in a FHSZ and designating it as Moderate or High, a local agency may do this at its discretion.

LRA Legislation Factsheet





Land Use Planning Program

CAL FIRE's Land Use Planning Program is a specialized unit that provides support to local governments by providing fire safety expertise on the State's wildland urban interface building codes, as well as collaborating in the development of Safety Elements in General Plans.



For More Information
osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz



FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE DESIGNATIONS

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 4347



FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ)

- **What is a FHSZ?**
- CAL FIRE designated areas
- Identifies:
 - Likelihood of fire
 - Expected fire behavior
- 3 Categories
 - Moderate
 - High
 - Very High



FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ)

- **What is a FHSZ?**
- Responsible Jurisdiction:
 - SRAs – State Responsibility Areas
 - LRAs – Local Responsibility Areas
- LRAs are areas where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection



FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ)

- **How will this impact property owners?**
- Applicable regulations dependent on the FHSZ category



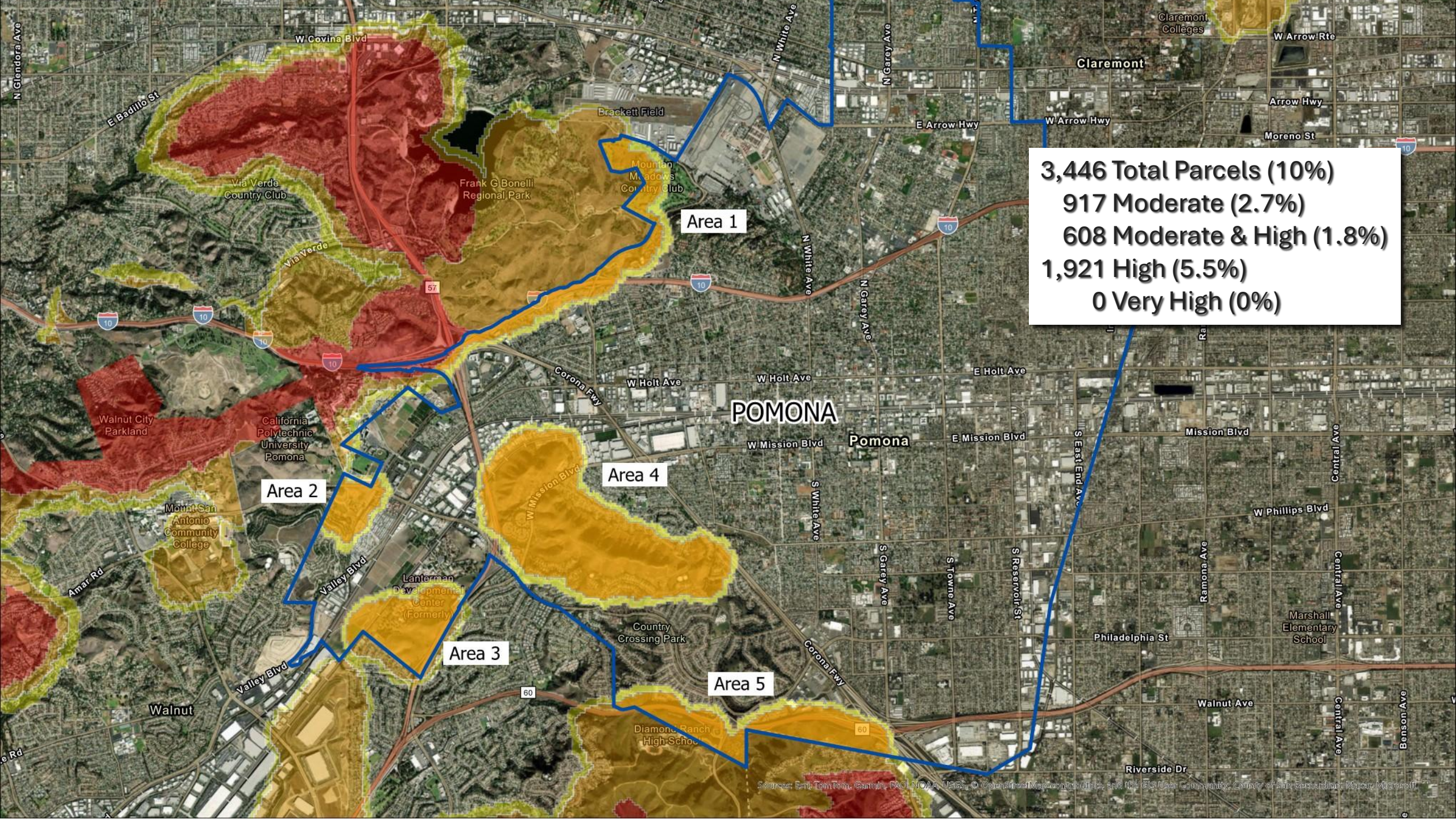
FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ)

FHSZ Category	Applicable Regulations		
Very High	Hazard Disclosure	CBC Chp 7A	Defensible Space
High	Hazard Disclosure	CBC Chp 7A	
Moderate			



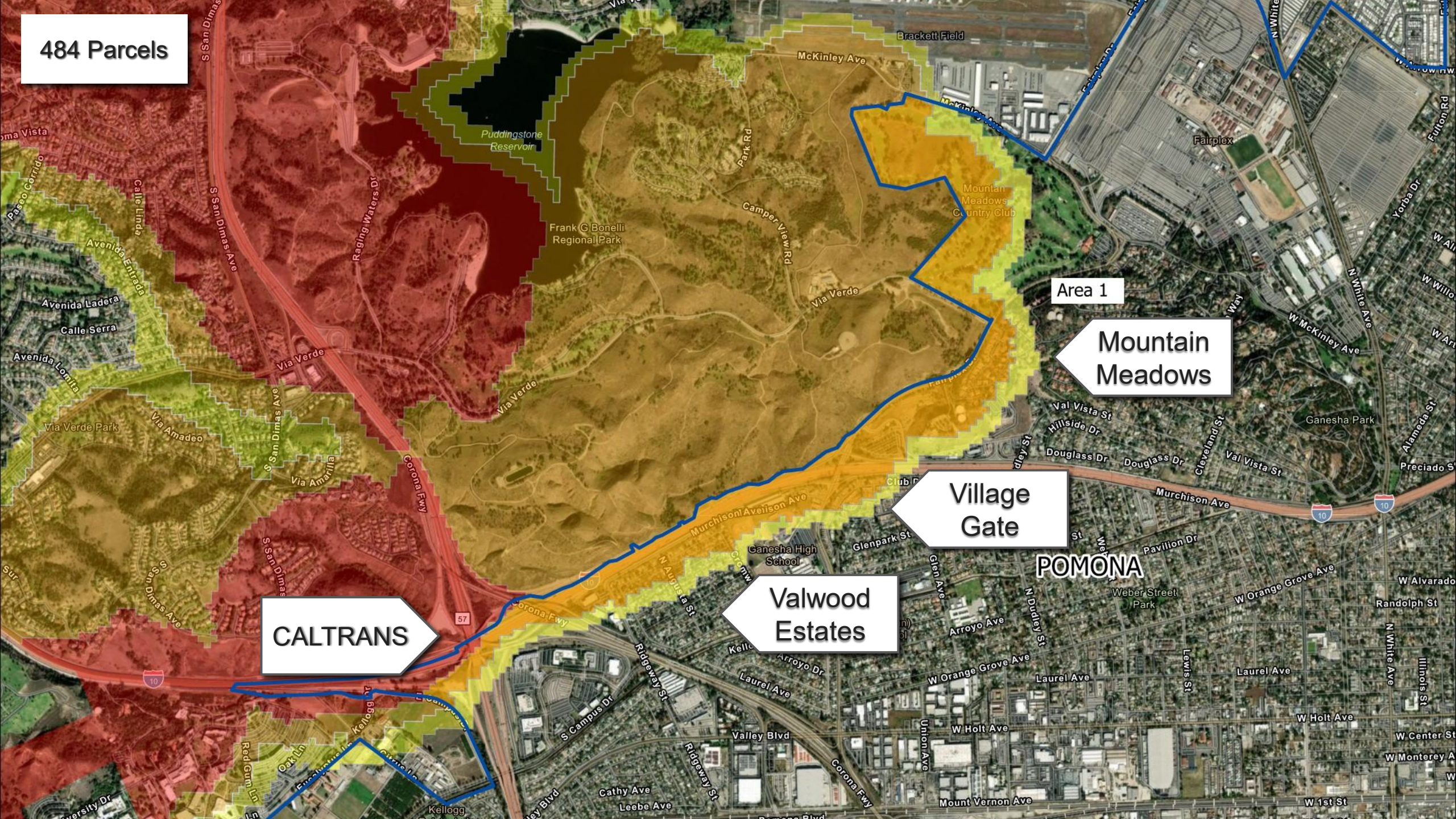
FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ)

- **Review of affected areas**



3,446 Total Parcels (10%)
917 Moderate (2.7%)
608 Moderate & High (1.8%)
1,921 High (5.5%)
0 Very High (0%)

484 Parcels

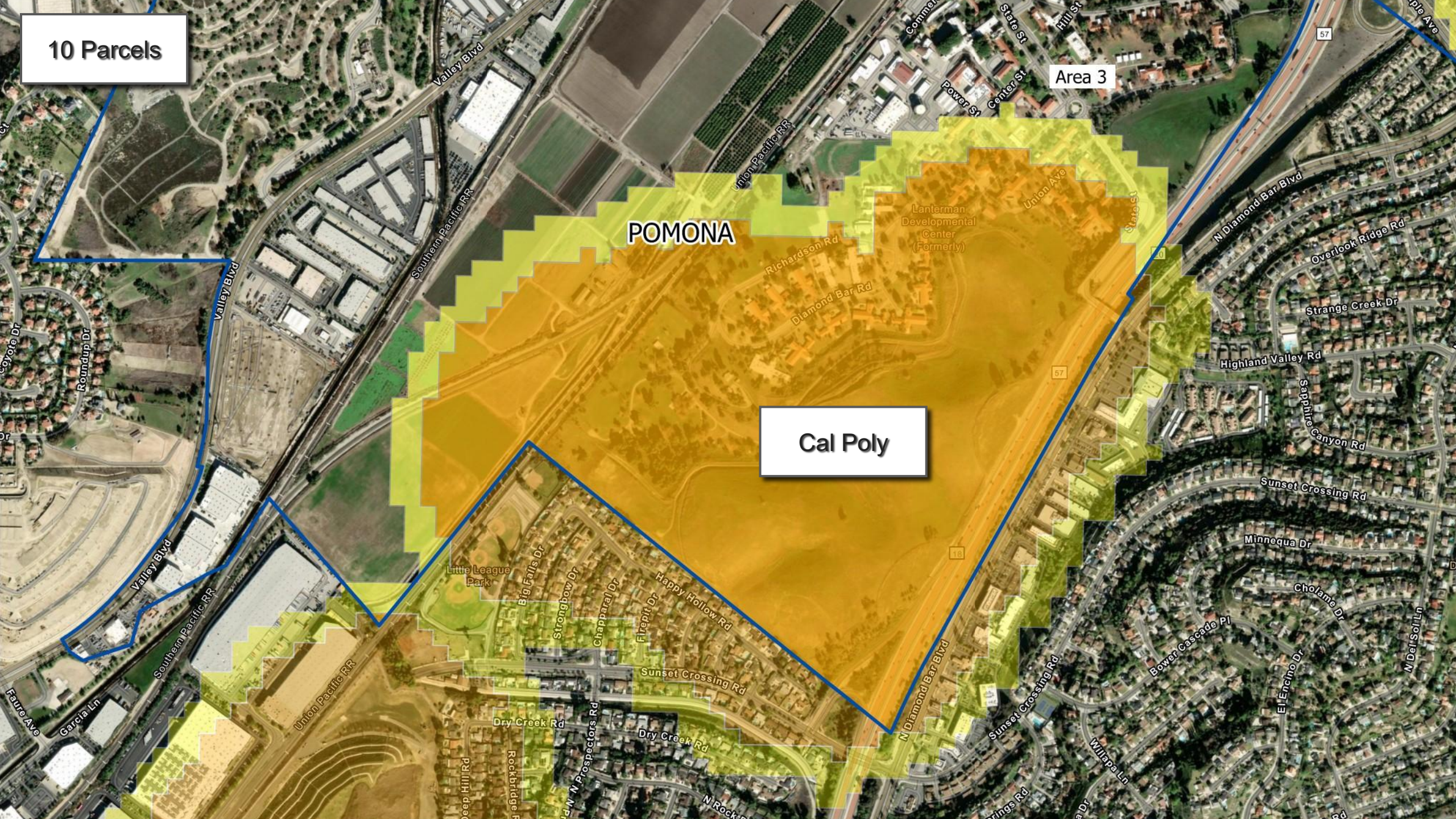


10 Parcels

Area 3

POMONA

Cal Poly



1,935 Parcels

Pomona Blvd
Industrial

Mission/71
Industrial

Westmont

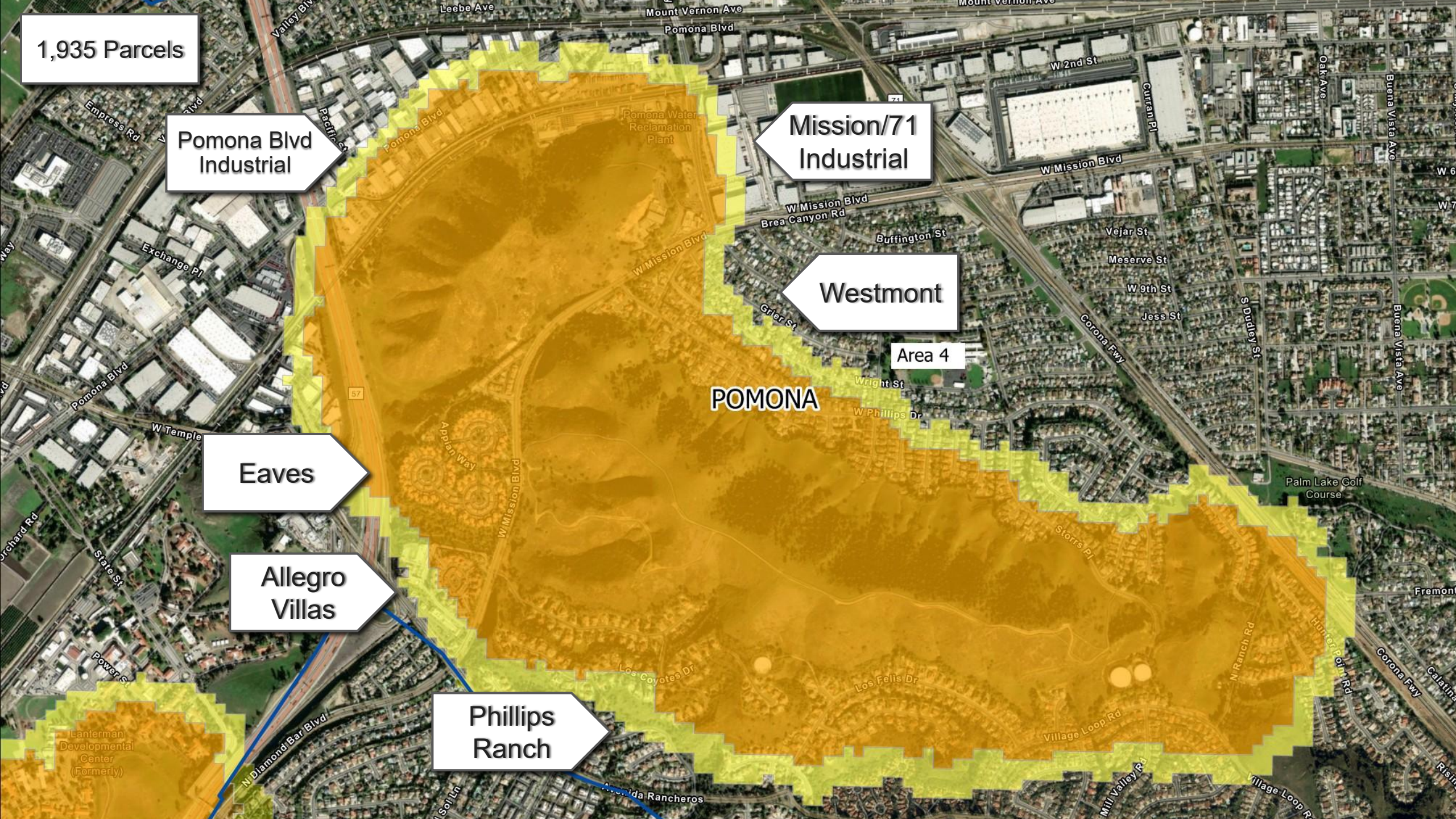
Area 4

POMONA

Eaves

Allegro
Villas

Phillips
Ranch



987 Parcels

Phillips Ranch

PUSD

POMONA

Area 5

Phillips Ranch

Hidden Valley TH

