**General Plan Safety Element Assessment**

**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection**



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**Purpose and Background**

Upon the next revision of the housing element on or after January 1, 2014, the safety element is required to be reviewed and updated as necessary to address the risk of fire for land classified as state responsibility areas and land classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3).)

The safety element is required to include:

* Fire hazard severity zone maps available from the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.
* Any historical data on wildfires available from local agencies or a reference to where the data can be found.
* Information about wildfire hazard areas that may be available from the United States Geological Survey.
* The general location and distribution of existing and planned uses of land in very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs) and in state responsibility areas (SRAs), including structures, roads, utilities, and essential public facilities. The location and distribution of planned uses of land shall not require defensible space compliance measures required by state law or local ordinance to occur on publicly owned lands or open space designations of homeowner associations.
* The local, state, and federal agencies with responsibility for fire protection, including special districts and local offices of emergency services. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3)(A).)

Based on that information, the safety element shall include goals, policies, and objectives that protect the community from the unreasonable risk of wildfire. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3)(B).) To carry out those goals, policies, and objectives, feasible implementation measures shall be included in the safety element, which include but are not limited to:

* Avoiding or minimizing the wildfire hazards associated with new uses of land.
* Locating, when feasible, new essential public facilities outside of high fire risk areas, including, but not limited to, hospitals and health care facilities, emergency shelters, emergency command centers, and emergency communications facilities, or identifying construction methods or other methods to minimize damage if these facilities are located in the SRA or VHFHSZ.
* Designing adequate infrastructure if a new development is located in the SRA or VHFHSZ, including safe access for emergency response vehicles, visible street signs, and water supplies for structural fire suppression.
* Working cooperatively with public agencies with responsibility for fire protection. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3)(C).)

The safety element shall also attach or reference any fire safety plans or other documents adopted by the city or county that fulfill the goals and objectives or contains the information required above. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3)(D).) This might include Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, Unit Fire Plans, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, or other plans.

There are several reference documents developed by state agencies to assist local jurisdictions in updating their safety elements to include wildfire safety. The Fire Hazard Planning, General Plan Technical Advice Series from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, referenced in Government Code section 65302, subdivision (g)(3) and available at

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<https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/Final_6.26.15.pdf>

provides policy guidance, information resources, and fire hazard planning examples from around California that shall be considered by local jurisdictions when reviewing the safety element of its general plan.

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) utilizes this Safety Element Assessment in the Board’s review of safety elements under Government Code section 65302.5. At least 90 days prior to the adoption or amendment of their safety element, counties that contain SRAs and cities or counties that contain VHFHSZs shall submit their safety element to the Board. (Gov. Code, § 65302.5, subd. (b).) The Board shall review the safety element and respond to the city or county with its findings regarding the uses of land and policies in SRAs or VHFHSZs that will protect life, property, and natural resources from unreasonable risks associated with wildfires, and the methods and strategies for wildfire risk reduction and prevention within SRAs or VHFHSZs. (Gov. Code, § 65302.5, subd. (b)(3).)

The CAL FIRE Land Use Planning team provides expert fire protection assistance to local jurisdictions statewide. Fire captains are available to work with cities and counties to revise their safety elements and enhance their strategic fire protection planning.

**Methodology for Review and Recommendations**

Utilizing stafffrom the CAL FIRE Land Use Planning team, the Board has established a standardized method to review the safety element of general plans. The methodology includes

1. reviewing the safety element for the requirements in Government Code section 65302, subdivision (g)(3)(A),
2. examining the safety element for goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures that mitigate the wildfire risk in the planning area (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (g)(3)(B) & (C)), and
3. making recommendations for methods and strategies that would reduce the risk of wildfires (Gov. Code, § 65302.5, subd. (b)(3)(B)).

The safety element will be evaluated against the attached Assessment, which contains questions to determine if a safety element meets the fire safety planning requirements outlined in Government Code, section 65302. The reviewer will answer whether or not a submitted safety element addresses the required information, and will recommend changes to the safety element that will reduce the wildfire risk in the planning area. These recommended changes may come from the list of sample goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures that is included in this document after the Assessment, or may be based on the reviewer’s knowledge of the jurisdiction in question and their specific wildfire risk. By answering the questions in the Assessment, the reviewer will determine if the jurisdiction’s safety element has adequately addressed and mitigated their wildfire risk. If it hasn’t, any specific recommendations from the reviewer will assist the jurisdiction in revising the safety element so that it does.

Once completed, the Assessment should provide clear guidance to a city or county regarding any areas of deficiency in the safety element as well as specific goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures the Board recommends adopting in order to mitigate or reduce the wildfire threat in the planning area.

**General Plan Safety Element Assessment**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jurisdiction: Cathedral City | Notes: Final Review | CAL FIRE Unit: Riverside | Date Received: 11/25/2019 |
| County: Riverside | LUPP Reviewer: Marcus Hernandez | UNIT CONTACT: DC Bratcher | Date Reviewed: 11/25/2019 |
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| --- |
| **Background Information Summary**Specific background information about fire hazards in each jurisdiction.*Indicate whether the safety element includes the specified information. If YES, indicate in the comments where that information can be found; if NO, provide recommendations to the jurisdiction regarding how best to include that information in their revised safety element.* |
|  | Yes | No | Comments/Recommendations |
| Are Fire Hazard Severity Zones Identified?*CAL FIRE or Locally Adopted Maps* | YES |  | **Exhibit S-7 Fire Hazard Map** CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone map has been included displaying LRA VHFHSZ. Additionally, designated evacuation routes for the VHFHSZ have been incorporated into this map. (Page S-41) |
| Is historical data on wildfires or a reference to where the data can be found, and information about wildfire hazard areas that may be available from the United States Geological Survey, included? | YES |  | “Climate changes has increased Cathedral City’s exposure to wildland fires, although this threat appears to be limited by the low fuel levels in open space areas and elevated terrain. Between 2000 and 2018, only one wildland fire (12.2± acre Cathedral Fire, 2008) occurred in or near the City. Most wildland fires in the western Coachella Valley are associated with upper elevation slopes of the San Jacinto Mountains to the west.” (Page S-39) |
| Has the general location and distribution of existing and planned uses of land in very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs) and in state responsibility areas (SRAs), including structures, roads, utilities, and essential public facilities, been identified? | YES |  | **Exhibit S-7 Fire Hazard Map** CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone map has been included displaying LRA VHFHSZ. (Page S-41)General location and distribution of existing land use, structures, and roads are displayed in Exhibit S-7.The current VHFHSZ in Cathedral City is small relative to the overall size of the City. There are no current plans for future development of the current VHFHSZ in Cathedral City. |
| Have local, state, and federal agencies with responsibility for fire protection, including special districts and local offices of emergency services, been identified? | YES |  | “The City Fire Department maintains Mutual Aid Agreements for fire and emergency medical services with the Riverside County Fire Department and the Palm Springs Fire Department. (see Riverside County OA MJHMP).” (Page S-35)“Riverside County EMD works alongside the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), and is a part of Cal OES Region VI,20 which consists of the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, Inyo, Mono, and San Diego.” (Page S-38)“The National Guard provides supporting emergency response to battle fires and help communities deal with floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms or other emergencies.” (Page S-44)“The Cathedral City Fire Department is responsible for fire suppression and prevention, paramedic services, disaster preparedness, hazardous materials response, and fire code enforcement.” (Page PSF-16)“The Department maintains mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities for additional fire support. Please refer to the Fire and Police Sub-Element for more information.” (Page PSF-16) |
| Are other fire protection plans, such as Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, CAL FIRE Unit or Contract County Fire Plans, referenced or incorporated into the Safety Element? | YES |  | “The LHMP for the City of Cathedral City planning area was developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and followed FEMA’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan guidance.” (Page S-34)“(see Riverside County OA MJHMP).” Page S-35)“The City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP, 2015) is based on the functions and principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is based on the FIRE SCOPE Incident Command System (ICS).” (Page S-44)**Goal 1:** A detailed, integrated and effective emergency preparedness plan for the City ensuring a high level of readiness and responsiveness to man-made and natural disasters of any scope, and which maximizes response capabilities of the City, County, State and Federal governments. (Page S-45)**Policy 1:** The City shall give priority to maintaining and updating of all hazard summaries and responses of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan. (Page S-45)**Program 1.A:** The City shall periodically review and update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan, including but not limited to fire protection, law enforcement, communications, alternative access, public health services, damage assessment and other emergency response parameters of Emergency Operations Plan. (Page S-45)**Policy 21:** The City Fire Department Strategic Plan shall be periodically reviewed and updated as appropriate to ensure that its goals, standards and training programs and regimes are current with state requirements and the needs of the department and the community. (Page S-49) |
| Any other relevant information regarding fire hazards in SRAs or VHFHSZs?  | N/A |
|  |
| **Goals, Policies, Objectives, and Feasible Implementation Measures**A set of goals, policies, and objectives based on the above information to protect the community from unreasonable risk of wildfire and implementation measures to accomplish those stated goals, policies, and objectives.*Critically examine the submitted safety element and determine if it is adequate to address the jurisdiction’s unique fire hazard. Answer YES or NO appropriately for each question below. If the recommendation is irrelevant or unrelated to the jurisdiction’s fire hazard, answer N/A. For NO, provide information in the Comments/Recommendations section to help the jurisdiction incorporate that change into their safety element revision. This information may utilize example recommendations from Sample Safety Element Recommendations and**Fire Hazard Planning in Other Elements of the General Plan**below, may indicate how high of a priority this recommendation is for a jurisdiction, or may include other jurisdiction-specific information or recommendations.*  |
| **Avoiding or minimizing the wildfire hazards associated with new uses of land.** |
|  | Yes | No | N/A | Comments/Recommendations |
| **Land Use** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Does local ordinance require development standards that meet or exceed title 14, CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 2, articles 1-5 (commencing with section 1270) (**SRA Fire Safe Regulations**) and title 14, CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 3, article 3 (commencing with section 1299.01) (**Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations**) for SRAs and/or VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Cathedral City Municipal Code**, Title 8 BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION, Chapter 8.12 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE, 2016 EDITION, 8.12.010 California Fire Code adopted with amendments.**Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 1.2:** All new development proposals shall be thoroughly reviewed for potential impacts and the ability to effectively provide public safety and fire and police protection. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Policy 1.4:** The City shall support the highest level of code enforcement practicable in order to protect property and lives, property values, and quality of life. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.4.1:** Strictly enforce the California Building and Fire Codes, City Municipal Code and other applicable building standards in the course of reviewing development plans and conducting building inspections. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Are there goals and policies to avoid or minimize new residential development in VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Policy 14:** The City shall make every effort to direct development away from State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), and minimize the extension of services and facilities that induce development in these areas. (Page S-48) |
|  | Has fire safe design been incorporated into future development requirements? | YES |  |  | **Policy 12:** The City shall require all new development in areas within or adjacent to a very high fire hazard severity zone to use retardant landscaping, non-flammable roofing materials and other construction materials and techniques that reduce their fire hazard. (Page S-48)**Program 12.A:** The City shall provide information on and encourage residents to plant and maintain drought-resistant, fire-retardant landscape species to reduce the risk of brush fire and soil erosion in areas adjacent to canyons; and to develop stringent site design and maintenance standards for areas with high fire hazard or soil erosion potential. (Page S-48)**Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page PSF-49)**Policy 19:** Approval of development proposed or to be rebuilt in a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) shall be contingent upon a City-approved roadside fuel reduction plan, and otherwise provide for the long-term maintenance of defensible space clearances around structures, subdivisions and other development, and include fire breaks in the VHFHSZ where appropriate. (Page PSF-49)**Policy 1.2:** All new development proposals shall be thoroughly reviewed for potential impacts and the ability to effectively provide public safety and fire and police protection. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Policy 1.4:** The City shall support the highest level of code enforcement practicable in order to protect property and lives, property values, and quality of life. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.4.1:** Strictly enforce the California Building and Fire Codes, City Municipal Code and other applicable building standards in the course of reviewing development plans and conducting building inspections. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Are new essential public facilities located outside high fire risk areas, such as VHFHSZs, when feasible? | YES |  |  | **Policy 6:** The City shall thoroughly consider and assess vulnerability to natural and manmade disasters or emergencies when reviewing proposals for the siting and development of critical and essential public/quasi-public facilities. (Page S-47)**Program 6.A:** In order to assure the maximum possible protection from environmental and manmade hazards, including earthquakes and flooding, the City shall consider vulnerability to natural and manmade disasters and emergencies when reviewing proposals for critical and essential facilities, as well as sensitive land uses. (Page S-47)**Policy 14:** The City shall make every effort to direct development away from State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), and minimize the extension of services and facilities that induce development in these areas. (Page S-48)**Policy 15:** Every effort shall be made to avoid the location of essential public facilities outside State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) without comprehensive mitigation that precludes or minimizes the threat to these facilities. (Page S-48) |
|  | Are there plans or actions identified to mitigate existing non-conforming development to contemporary fire safe standards, in terms of road standards and vegetative hazard? | YES |  |  | **Policy 16:** As resources are available, the Planning Department shall incrementally develop a database that identifies properties that are not in conformance with the City’s building and fire codes in terms of roads standards and vegetative hazard, and make an ongoing effort to bring such properties or structures into conformance. (Page S-48) |
|  | Does the plan include policies to evaluate re-development after a large fire? | YES |  |  | **Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48) |
| **Fuel Modification** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Is fuel modification around homes and subdivisions required for new development in SRAs or VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Policy 12:** The City shall require all new development in areas within or adjacent to a very high fire hazard severity zone to use retardant landscaping, non-flammable roofing materials and other construction materials and techniques that reduce their fire hazard. (Page S-48)**Program 12.A:** The City shall provide information on and encourage residents to plant and maintain drought-resistant, fire-retardant landscape species to reduce the risk of brush fire and soil erosion in areas adjacent to canyons; and to develop stringent site design and maintenance standards for areas with high fire hazard or soil erosion potential. (Page S-48)**Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290.**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Are fire protection plans required for new development in VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49) |
|  | Does the plan address long term maintenance of fire hazard reduction projects, including community fire breaks and private road and public road clearance? | YES |  |  | **Program 12.A:** The City shall provide information on and encourage residents to plant and maintain drought-resistant, fire-retardant landscape species to reduce the risk of brush fire and soil erosion in areas adjacent to canyons; and to develop stringent site design and maintenance standards for areas with high fire hazard or soil erosion potential. (Page S-48)**Policy 19:** Approval of development proposed or to be rebuilt in a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) shall be contingent upon a City-approved roadside fuel reduction plan, and otherwise provide for the long-term maintenance of defensible space clearances around structures, subdivisions and other development, and include fire breaks in the VHFHSZ where appropriate. (Page S-49) |
| **Access** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Is there adequate access (ingress, egress) to new development in VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49)**Policy 20:** The City Fire Department shall periodically survey, monitor and plan to address conditions within the City’s State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) zones to identify and plan for the evacuation of at-risk occupants or residents and meet their special needs. (Page S-49)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Are minimum standards for evacuation of residential areas in VHFHSZs defined? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48) |
|  | If areas exist with inadequate access/evacuation routes, are they identified? Are mitigation measures or improvement plans identified? | YES |  |  | **Exhibit S-7 Fire Hazard Map** CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone map has been included displaying LRA VHFHSZ. Additionally, designated evacuation routes for the VHFHSZ have been incorporated into this map. (Page S-41)**Policy 3:** The City shall identify and establish emergency evacuation and supply routes and plans to preserve or reestablish the use of East Palm Canyon Drive, Date Palm Drive, Dinah Shore Drive, Ramon Road, Vista Chino, Interstate-10 and other essential transportation routes. (Page S-46)**Program 3.A:** Establish and appoint a staff liaison with adjoining cities, Riverside County, CVAG and Caltrans to facilitate the designation of emergency evacuation and supply routes, and for the development of a multi-agency emergency response plan that provides expeditious and timely repair to major streets and highways damaged by earthquakes, flooding or other disasters. (Page S-46)**Policy 16:** As resources are available, the Planning Department shall incrementally develop a database that identifies properties that are not in conformance with the City’s building and fire codes in terms of roads standards and vegetative hazard, and make an ongoing effort to bring such properties or structures into conformance. (Page S-48)**Policy 20:** The City Fire Department shall periodically survey, monitor and plan to address conditions within the City’s State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) zones to identify and plan for the evacuation of at-risk occupants or residents and meet their special needs. (Page S-49) |
|  | Are there policies or programs promoting public outreach about defensible space or evacuation routes? Are there specific plans to reach at-risk populations? | YES |  |  | “As a part of its emergency mitigation and outreach program, Cathedral City maintains fire safety programs in schools and throughout the year at special community events.” (Page S-35)**Policy 5:** The City shall cooperate and coordinate with Riverside County Emergency Management, local utilities purveyors and other agencies and utilities in the preparation and distribution of public information materials to assist residents, visitors and business owners on how to prepare for and respond to local disasters and emergencies. (Page S-47)**Program 5.A:** Coordinate and cooperate with Riverside County Emergency Management, Desert Water Agency, CVWD, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas, and other agencies and utilities in the development and dissemination of information and instructions on appropriate actions in the event of a local disaster or emergency. (Page S-47)**Policy 9:** Continue to encourage residents, business-owners and others in the community to sign up for the automated emergency Cathedral City Notification System to get critical information quickly in the event of severe weather alerts, unexpected road closures, missing person alerts, and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. (Page S-48)**Program 12.A:** The City shall provide information on and encourage residents to plant and maintain drought-resistant, fire-retardant landscape species to reduce the risk of brush fire and soil erosion in areas adjacent to canyons; and to develop stringent site design and maintenance standards for areas with high fire hazard or soil erosion potential. (Page S-48)**Policy 20:** The City Fire Department shall periodically survey, monitor and plan to address conditions within the City’s State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) zones to identify and plan for the evacuation of at-risk occupants or residents and meet their special needs. (Page S-49) |
| **Fire Protection** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Does the plan identify future water supply for fire suppression needs? | YES |  |  | **Policy 1:** The City shall promote the enhanced resilience of future water, sewer, electric and other utilities, the retrofit and rehabilitation of existing weak structures and lifeline utilities, and the relocation or strengthening of certain critical facilities to increase public safety and minimize disruption of services. (Page S-2)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 1.2:** All new development proposals shall be thoroughly reviewed for potential impacts and the ability to effectively provide public safety and fire and police protection. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.4.1:** Strictly enforce the California Building and Fire Codes, City Municipal Code and other applicable building standards in the course of reviewing development plans and conducting building inspections. (Page PSF-7)**Program 5.1.1:** Confer and coordinate with CVWD and DWA on methods to finance the upgrading and expansion of the sewer and domestic water systems, including the establishment of assessment and/or community facilities districts that also provide financial assistance for economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. (Page PSF-26) |
|  | Does new development have adequate fire protection? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49)**Policy 1.2:** All new development proposals shall be thoroughly reviewed for potential impacts and the ability to effectively provide public safety and fire and police protection. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Policy 1.3:** The City shall provide for the adequate and timely expansion of fire and police protection capabilities, services and facilities to meet future development demands. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.3.1:** Apply objective criteria, including appropriate minimum response time, the matching of services and facilities to local needs, and the availability of alternative routes to serve target neighborhoods, and assure the optimal siting of future fire and police stations. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.3.2:** Evaluate current and potential methods of financing the expansion of fire and police services, including developer impact fees, assessment districts, and fire and police permitting fees for development occurring in high security or fire risk areas. (Page PSF-7) |
| **Develop adequate infrastructure if a new development is located in SRAs or VHFHSZs.** |
|  | Yes | No | N/A | Comments/Recommendations |
| Does the plan identify adequate infrastructure for new development related to: |  |  |  |  |
|  | Water supply and fire flow? | YES |  |  | **Policy 1:** The City shall promote the enhanced resilience of future water, sewer, electric and other utilities, the retrofit and rehabilitation of existing weak structures and lifeline utilities, and the relocation or strengthening of certain critical facilities to increase public safety and minimize disruption of services. (Page S-2)**Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 1.2:** All new development proposals shall be thoroughly reviewed for potential impacts and the ability to effectively provide public safety and fire and police protection. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.4.1:** Strictly enforce the California Building and Fire Codes, City Municipal Code and other applicable building standards in the course of reviewing development plans and conducting building inspections. (Page PSF-7)**Program 5.1.1:** Confer and coordinate with CVWD and DWA on methods to finance the upgrading and expansion of the sewer and domestic water systems, including the establishment of assessment and/or community facilities districts that also provide financial assistance for economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. (Page PSF-26) |
|  | Location of anticipated water supply? | YES |  |  | **Policy 1:** The City shall promote the enhanced resilience of future water, sewer, electric and other utilities, the retrofit and rehabilitation of existing weak structures and lifeline utilities, and the relocation or strengthening of certain critical facilities to increase public safety and minimize disruption of services. (Page S-2)**Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7)**Program 5.1.1:** Confer and coordinate with CVWD and DWA on methods to finance the upgrading and expansion of the sewer and domestic water systems, including the establishment of assessment and/or community facilities districts that also provide financial assistance for economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. (Page PSF-26) |
|  | Maintenance and long-term integrity of water supplies? | YES |  |  | **Policy 1:** The City shall promote the enhanced resilience of future water, sewer, electric and other utilities, the retrofit and rehabilitation of existing weak structures and lifeline utilities, and the relocation or strengthening of certain critical facilities to increase public safety and minimize disruption of services. (Page S-2)**Goal 5:** Economical utility services and facilities that adequately and safely meet the immediate and long-term needs of the community. (PSF-26)**Program 5.1.1:** Confer and coordinate with CVWD and DWA on methods to finance the upgrading and expansion of the sewer and domestic water systems, including the establishment of assessment and/or community facilities districts that also provide financial assistance for economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. (Page PSF-26) |
|  | Evacuation and emergency vehicle access? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Fuel modification and defensible space? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Vegetation clearance maintenance on public and private roads? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Policy 18:** Approval of development proposed within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall require site-specific fire management plans that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress. (Page S-49)**Policy 19:** Approval of development proposed or to be rebuilt in a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) shall be contingent upon a City-approved roadside fuel reduction plan, and otherwise provide for the long-term maintenance of defensible space clearances around structures, subdivisions and other development, and include fire breaks in the VHFHSZ where appropriate. (Page S-49)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
|  | Visible home and street addressing and signage? | YES |  |  | **Policy 13:** Pursuant to Gov. Code 66474.02, prior to approval of subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), the City shall condition the map to meet SRA Fire Safe Regulations and other fire hazard reduction regulations, particularly those regulations that ensure adequate and maintainable roadways for ingress, egress, and fire and other emergency equipment access. (Page S-48)**Policy 17:** New development and major rebuilding within a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) shall be constructed according to current building standards and fire safe design in accordance with the California Building and Fire Codes, including but not limited to Gov. Code Section 51175-51189 and Public Resources Code 4290. (Page S-48)**Program 1.2.1:** The Fire and Police Departments shall evaluate proposals for new development to assure adequate emergency access, the integration of defensible space principles, clear street name signage and numbering, internal circulation, fire flow and other safety design considerations. (Page PSF-7) |
| Are community fire breaks identified in the plan? Is there a discussion of how those fire breaks will be maintained? | YES |  |  | **Policy 19:** Approval of development proposed or to be rebuilt in a State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) shall be contingent upon a City-approved roadside fuel reduction plan, and otherwise provide for the long-term maintenance of defensible space clearances around structures, subdivisions and other development, and include fire breaks in the VHFHSZ where appropriate. (Page S-49) |
| **Working cooperatively with public agencies responsible for fire protection.** |
|  | Yes | No | N/A | Comments/Recommendations |
| Is there a map or description of existing emergency service facilities and areas lacking service, specifically noting any areas in SRAs or VHFHSZs? | YES |  |  | **Table S-3 Critical Facilities in the City** (Page S-42)“EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES” Section (Page S-43)“The City of Cathedral City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located at Fire Station 412 at 32100 Desert Vista Road, just south of Ramon Road.” (Page S-44)“Three fire stations are located within the City, including: 1) Station No. 411 at 36913 Date Palm Drive, 2) Station 412 at 32100 Desert Vista Road, and 3) Station No. 413 at 27610 Landau Boulevard.” (Page S-44)There are no areas presently lacking service in Cathedral City. |
| Does the plan include an assessment and projection of future emergency service needs? | YES |  |  | “Fire Department’s Strategic Plan The Fire Department’s Strategic Plan 2019-2023 guides the development of the fire department for the next four years. Among its objectives are improving the ISO Class 3 rating to a Class 2 by 2020, adding an ambulance and additional personnel at Fire Station 412, and adding a pumper and additional firefighters at Station 412.” (Page PSF-4)**Policy 1.3:** The City shall provide for the adequate and timely expansion of fire and police protection capabilities, services and facilities to meet future development demands. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.3.1:** Apply objective criteria, including appropriate minimum response time, the matching of services and facilities to local needs, and the availability of alternative routes to serve target neighborhoods, and assure the optimal siting of future fire and police stations. (Page PSF-7)**Program 1.3.2:** Evaluate current and potential methods of financing the expansion of fire and police services, including developer impact fees, assessment districts, and fire and police permitting fees for development occurring in high security or fire risk areas. (Page PSF-7) |
| Are goals or standards for emergency services training described? | YES |  |  | **Policy 21:** The City Fire Department Strategic Plan shall be periodically reviewed and updated as appropriate to ensure that its goals, standards and training programs and regimes are current with state requirements and the needs of the department and the community. (Page S-49)“The Plan also identifies goals, policies and opportunities associated with staff training and competency. The department is providing essential training programs, schedules, equipment, facilities, instructional materials and qualified instructors. The Strategic Plan provides company-level training and action plan objectives that include operational consistency, mentorship, event simulations, and proficiency recertification. The primary training and competency goal is to improve and maintain skills and capabilities that provide outstanding emergency services to the community.” (Page PSF-4) |
| Does the plan outline inter-agency preparedness coordination and mutual aid multi-agency agreements? | YES |  |  | “The LHMP for the City of Cathedral City planning area was developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and followed FEMA’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan guidance.” (S-34)“During a State of Emergency, a State of War Emergency, or a Local Emergency, the OA is required to coordinate resources, priorities, and information, as well as serve as a coordination and communication link to the State Mutual Aid System.” (Page S-39)**Goal 1:** A detailed, integrated and effective emergency preparedness plan for the City ensuring a high level of readiness and responsiveness to man-made and natural disasters of any scope, and which maximizes response capabilities of the City, County, State and Federal governments. (Page S-45)**Policy 1:** The City shall give priority to maintaining and updating of all hazard summaries and responses of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan. (Page S-45)**Program 1.A:** The City shall periodically review and update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan, including but not limited to fire protection, law enforcement, communications, alternative access, public health services, damage assessment and other emergency response parameters of Emergency Operations Plan. (Page S-45)“The Department maintains mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities for additional fire support. Please refer to the Fire and Police Sub-Element for more information.” (Page PSF-16) |

**Sample Safety Element Recommendations**

These are examples of specific policies, objectives, or implementation measures that may be used to meet the intent of Government Code sections 65302, subdivision (g)(3) and 65302.5, subdivision (b). Safety element reviewers may make recommendations that are not included here.

|  |
| --- |
| **A. Maps, Plans and Historical Information** |
| 1. Include or reference CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps or locally adopted wildfire hazard zones.
 |
| 1. Include or reference the location of historical information on wildfires in the planning area.
 |
| 1. Include a map or description of the location of existing and planned land uses in SRAs and VHFHSZs, particularly habitable structures, roads, utilities, and essential public facilities.
 |
| 1. Identify or reference a fire plan that is relevant to the geographic scope of the general plan, including the Unit/Contract County Fire Plan, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and any applicable Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
 |
| 1. Align the goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures for fire hazard mitigation in the safety element with those in existing fire plans, or make plans to update fire plans to match the safety element.
 |
| 1. Create a fire plan for the planning area.
 |
| **B. Land Use**  |
| 1. Develop fire safe development codes to use as standards for fire protection for new development in SRAs or VHFHSZs that meet or exceed the statewide minimums in the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.
 |
| 1. Adopt and have certified by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection local ordinances which meet or exceed the minimum statewide standards in the SRA Fire Safe Regulations.
 |
| 1. Identify existing development that do not meet or exceed the SRA Fire Safe Regulations or certified local ordinances.
 |
| 1. Develop mitigation measures for existing development that does not meet or exceed the SRA Fire Safe Regulations or certified local ordinances or identify a policy to do so.
 |
| **C. Fuel Modification** |
| 1. Develop a policy to communicate vegetation clearance requirements to seasonal, absent, or vacation rental owners.
 |
| 1. Identify a policy for the ongoing maintenance of vegetation clearance on public and private roads.
 |
| 1. Include fuel breaks in the layout/siting of subdivisions.
 |
| 1. Identify a policy for the ongoing maintenance of existing or proposed fuel breaks.
 |
| 1. Identify and/or map existing development that does not conform to current state and/or locally adopted fire safety standards for access, water supply and fire flow, signing, and vegetation clearance in SRAs or VHFHSZs.
 |
| 1. Identify plans and actions for existing non-conforming development to be improved or mitigated to meet current state and/or locally adopted fire safety standards for access, water supply and fire flow, signing, and vegetation clearance.
 |
| **D. Access** |
| 1. Develop a policy that approval of parcel maps and tentative maps in SRAs or VHFHSZs is conditional based on meeting the SRA Fire Safe Regulations and the Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations, particularly those regarding road standards for ingress, egress, and fire equipment access. (See Gov. Code, § 66474.02.)
 |
| 1. Develop a policy that development will be prioritized in areas with an adequate road network and associated infrastructure.
 |
| 1. Identify multi-family housing, group homes, or other community housing in SRAs or VHFHSZs and develop a policy to create evacuation or shelter in place plans.
 |
| 1. Include a policy to develop pre-plans for fire risk areas that address civilian evacuation and to effectively communicate those plans.
 |
| 1. Identify road networks in SRAs or VHFHSZs that do not meet title 14, CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 2, articles 2 and 3 (commencing with section 1273.00) or certified local ordinance and develop a policy to examine possible mitigations.
 |
| **E. Fire Protection** |
| 1. Develop a policy that development will be prioritized in areas with adequate water supply infrastructure.
 |
| 1. Plan for the ongoing maintenance and long-term integrity of planned and existing water supply infrastructure.
 |
| 1. Map existing emergency service facilities and note any areas lacking service, especially in SRAs or VHFHSZs.
 |
| 1. Project future emergency service needs for the planned land uses.
 |
| 1. Include information about emergency service trainings or standards and plans to meet or maintain them.
 |
| 1. Include information about inter-agency preparedness coordination or mutual aid agreements.
 |

 **Fire Hazard Planning in Other Elements of the General Plan**

When updating the General Plan, here are some ways to incorporate fire hazard planning into other elements. Wildfire safety is best accomplished by holistic, strategic fire planning that takes advantage of opportunities to align priorities and implementation measures within and across plans.

|  |
| --- |
| **Land Use Element** |
| Goals and policies include mitigation of fire hazard for future development or limit development in very high fire hazard severity zones. |
| Disclose wildland urban-interface hazards, including fire hazard severity zones, and/or other vulnerable areas as determined by CAL FIRE or local fire agency. |
| Design and locate new development to provide adequate infrastructure for the safe ingress of emergency response vehicles and simultaneously allow citizen egress during emergencies. |
| Describe or map any Firewise Communities or other fire safe communities as determined by the National Fire Protection Association, Fire Safe Council, or other organization. |
| **Housing Element** |
| Incorporation of current fire safe building codes. |
| Identify and mitigate substandard fire safe housing and neighborhoods relative to fire hazard severity zones. |
| Consider diverse occupancies and their effects on wildfire protection (group housing, seasonal populations, transit-dependent, etc). |
| **Open Space and Conservation Elements** |
| Identify critical natural resource values relative to fire hazard severity zones. |
| Include resource management activities to enhance protection of open space and natural resource values. |
| Integrate open space into fire safety planning and effectiveness. |
| Mitigation for unique pest, disease and other forest health issues leading to hazardous situations. |
| **Circulation Element** |
| Provide adequate access to very high fire hazard severity zones. |
| Develop standards for evacuation of residential areas in very high fire hazard severity zones. |
| Incorporate a policy that provides for a fuel reduction maintenance program along roadways. |