

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: PAUL LOWENTHAL, ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL – FIRE DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: WILDFIRE ANNEX TO THE EXISTING LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN AND CREATION OF A COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Fire Department that the Council, by resolution, approve the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Wildfire Annex to in compliance with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016 the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was updated to assess and develop a response to the City's vulnerability to natural hazards such as earthquake, flood, wildfire and drought. This item will update the LHMP by developing a Wildfire Annex to the existing plan and creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Following the fires of October 2017, the City prepared an application through a competitive grant process reviewed by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to perform an update to the LHMP. The focus of the application was to develop a CWPP that will become an annex to the Wildfire section of the current LHMP. The grant was approved in the amount of \$200,000, and split 75% Federal share and 25% City share, in which the City costs are slated to be covered through staff time dedicated to the development of the CWPP. The grant was awarded in June of 2018.

On April 2, 2019, City Council approved a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Geo Elements, LLC for the development of a Wildfire Annex to the existing LHMP and the creation and development of a CWPP in compliance with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

This item relates to City Council Goal #6 (Tier 1- Recovery and Resiliency), Commit to Making Santa Rosa a Healthy Community Where People Feel Safe to Live, Work and Play, as the CWPP is intended to help Santa Rosa prepare to respond to future wildfire threats.

AGREEMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WILDFIRE ANNEX TO THE LHMP  
AND CREATION OF COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN  
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BACKGROUND

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that State and local governments develop and adopt a LHMP to be eligible to receive federal grants pertaining to disaster preparedness.

From November 2015 to February 2016, City staff from multiple departments worked with the City's consultant to create an updated plan. The team met four times during the period from November 2015 through January 2016.

On February 23, 2016, the public review draft of the LHMP was released for a 30-day public review period. On April 7, 2016, the Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was submitted to California Department of Emergency Services (Cal OES).

Council adopted the plan on January 10, 2017.

In December 2017 Colin Close – Senior Water Resource Planner, Mike Prinz – Deputy Director Utilities Operations, Neil Bregman – Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Scott Moon – Division Chief Fire Marshal created an application to develop a CWPP intended to be an annex to the LHMP, specific to the Wildfire section of the currently adopted plan (Steve Kral and Catherine Hall with Ernst and Young LLP also assisted in the application process prior to the approval and award). The application was reviewed by State and Federal officials and funding was awarded in June 2018.

In December 2018, the RFP process was opened to solicit applicants to provide proposals for the development of the CWPP. In January four applications were reviewed and one candidate, Geo Elements, LLC was selected based on their prior fire service experience in developing CWPP's, Wildland Fire Behavior Analysis, Community Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessments, Wildland Fire and Fuels Mitigation Strategy Development, Development of Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements at the State and local levels, Fire Management Planning, Fire Behavior Modeling GIS – Geospatial Analysis and Cartography and the cost to provide services. Geo Elements, LLC has provided projects for the communities of Montecito Fire Protection District, CA, Goleta Valley/San Marcos Pass Mountain Communities, Santa Barbara County, CA, California State Office, Bureau of Land Management, Dunsmuir, CA, City of La Verne, CA, City of Goleta, Santa Monica Mountain Communities, plus numerous other Federal, State and local projects.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On March 13, 2012, the Council adopted the City's LHMP. The 2012 plan was an annex to the Association of Bay Area Governments' (ABAG) plan, meaning that it tiered off of the ABAG plan.

On January 10, 2017, the Council adopted the City's current LHMP.

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ANALYSIS

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that State and local governments develop and adopt a LHMP in order to be eligible to receive Federal grants pertaining to disaster preparedness. The updated LHMP assesses and responds to the City's vulnerability to natural hazards such as earthquake, flood, fire, and drought.

FISCAL IMPACT

With the adoption of the LHMP, the City is eligible to apply for additional funding through Federal mitigation grant programs as well as to receive post-disaster recovery funding from the State of California should a disaster occur.

Departments may also seek to fund specific mitigation actions through future budget processes.

The Department was successful in receiving FEMA grant funding in the amount of \$150,000 to assist in accomplishing the creation of an annex to the LHMP – Wildfire section to develop a CWPP based on our community's unique conditions, values and wildfire priorities related to wildfire risk reduction and resilience. Communities with CWPP's in place are given priority for funding or hazardous fuels reduction projects carried out under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA).

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15061(b)3, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore is not subject to CEQA.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution/Exhibit A – Community Wildfire Protection Plan/Wildfire Annex

CONTACT

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