Agenda Item #16.1
For Council Meeting of: February 25, 2025

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: PAUL LOWENTHAL, INTERIM DEPUTY CHIEF, FIRE DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN, A WILDFIRE ANNEX TO THE LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

AGENDA ACTION: REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Fire Department that the Council, by motion, accept the fourth annual report for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), a Wildfire Annex to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) in compliance with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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.

In April, 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 2023 Goal and Priorities 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 as the CWPP is intended to help Santa Rosa prepare to respond to future wildfire threats. Wildfires have had significant impacts on housing and the economy. The CWPP will work to mitigate risk and help with short- and long-term fiscal stability and economic resiliency. The CWPP takes into account the needs associated with climate change and is a public safety priority. Ensuring the CWPP targets our diverse community is critical.

On August 25, 2020, City Council accepted and approved the Community Wildfire Protection Plan as presented. The plan serves as a five-year road map to work to mitigate the risk of wildfires through the course of nine objectives and 46 actionable

items.

In 2023 the Fire Department reported that activities on over 40 actionable items and several have been completed. Through the third year, it was discovered that several items require additional work and/or maintenance to keep the activities current and/or relevant.

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.

This is the fourth of five annual CWPP reports being provided to council. An updated CWPP will be developed following the completion of the fifth year.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

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

On August 25, 2020, Council accepted and approved the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

On September 28, 2021, Council accepted and approved the first annual Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

January 10, 2023, Council accepted and approved the second annual Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

January 30, 2024, Council accepted and approved the third annual Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

ANALYSIS

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. 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.

On April 27, 2021, City Council approved $5.25M from Pacific Gas and Electric 2017 Wildfire Settlement Funds for a five-year vegetation management program. $250K of the funds are to be set aside for the development of an updated CWPP. A CWPP must be updated after five years.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the proposed action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – 2024 Annual Report
- Attachment 2 – Community Wildfire Protection Plan

PRESENTER

Paul Lowenthal, Interim Deputy Chief