



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council **DATE:** June 9, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Administration & Fire Department

PREPARED BY: Isaac Whippy, City Manager

PRESENTER: Chief Orsi, Fire Chief & Isaac Whippy, City Manager

AGENDA TITLE: Public Hearing and Introduction of Ordinance to Adopt Updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Map in Compliance with CAL FIRE Mandate

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a public hearing and Introduce By Title Only and Waiving Further Reading of ordinance No. XXXX-2025 An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Fort Bragg to designate Fire Hazard Severity Zones

BACKGROUND

On February 24, 2025, CAL FIRE released updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps for Mendocino County, which for the first time include Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs) such as the City of Fort Bragg. These maps classify wildfire hazard levels as Moderate, High, or Very High based on topography, fuels, climate, and fire history.

Under Government Code Section 51179, LRA jurisdictions are required to adopt the new maps within 120 days of release—no later than June 24, 2025. The City is not permitted to alter the severity designations provided by CAL FIRE, unless it proposes to increase a zone's severity level.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Following the release of the FHSZ maps, the City made the draft maps publicly available beginning March 25, 2025, and opened a public comment period, which remained active through April 30, 2025. A press release was issued on April 10, directing the public to review the maps and submit comments via an online survey.

A public hearing notice was provided, and tonight's meeting satisfies the legal requirements for ordinance introduction.

Key points:

- The City cannot reduce the severity designations included in the map; it can only adopt the map as-is or increase severity.
- The proposed ordinance closely mirrors the model ordinance provided by CAL FIRE.
- While the map may trigger additional building code requirements for properties in the Very High FHSZ, it does not change zoning or land use entitlements.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the FHSZ map. Future development in designated high-risk areas may incur additional mitigation or construction costs in line with state wildfire standards.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Public notice posted online and in compliance with all noticing requirements
- Press release issued April 10, 2025
- Online survey made available for public comments on March 25, 2025.
- Map and survey link hosted on the City's website

ATTACHMENTS

- Draft Ordinance for Adoption of FHSZ Map
- City of Fort Bragg FHSZ Map (2025)
- April 10, 2025 Press Release
- Public Comments