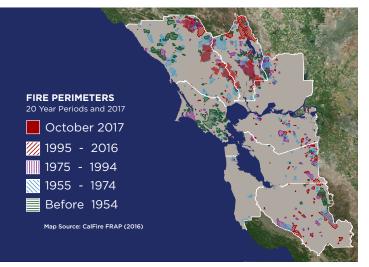# WILDFIRE – BUILDING BACK BETTER

Disasters don't have to decimate a community.
Recovery and rebuilding can catalyze positive change in a community, increasing sustainability, adding housing, creating new opportunity zones for business, and altering land use patterns.

But these decisions are not easy when a community is hurting and wants to go home. Pre-disaster visioning can position rebuilding as a process for expediting long-term goals while meeting the immediate needs of disaster victims, accelerating the community beyond its pre-disaster state.

FIRE PERIMETERS
20 Year Periods and 2017

- October 2017
- 1995 - 2016
- 1975 - 1994
- 1955 - 1974
- Before 1954

Map Source: CalFire FRAP (2016)

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Sustainability and Resilience – As homes and buildings are rebuilt, opportunities exist to add new sustainability and resilience features such as energy efficiency, renewable energy and hazard mitigation. These features go above and beyond current codes. This requires pre-disaster planning, ensuring that new codes are adopted quickly, before rebuilding starts, and guidance is developed to help homeowners navigate a new regulatory landscape.

Housing and Development – Natural disasters may present opportunities to reconsider where housing and development occur, and to accelerate the production of new housing or other community assets. However, this requires special policy tools such as buyout programs, redevelopment districts and having plans already in place.

Community Building – Disasters can tear apart communities or become an opportunity to strengthen them. After a disaster, leaders have the opportunity to create inclusive, locally-led movements that acknowledge residents' traumatic experiences while allowing them to optimistically envision their future.

RESOURCES

COUNTY OF SONOMA
Following the October, 2017 wildfires, the County established the Office of Recovery and Resiliency to develop a plan to help the community recover from the fires while improving capacity to respond to future disasters.

https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Office-of-Recovery-and-Resiliency/

RECOVERY TOOLKIT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (ABAG, 2016)
Local, state, and national best practices for preparing for disaster recovery.

http://resilience.abag.ca.gov/resilience/toolkit/

NATIONAL DISASTER RECOVERY FRAMEWORK (FEMA, 2016)
National model for recovery planning that cities can do before a disaster.
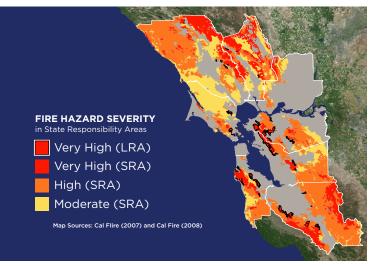
https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1466014998123-4bec8550930f774269e0c5968b120ba2/National_Disaster_Recovery_Framework2nd.pdf

WILDFIRE – INFORMATION SHARING AND PREPAREDNESS

Coordinating how cities and counties alert and evacuate residents in a disaster is critical to saving lives.

Jurisdictions can do a better job getting alert and evacuation protocols in place, and residents can empower themselves through programs like Community Emergency Response Teams.

Building strong and connected communities before a disaster hits can prevent the next disaster from becoming the next tragedy.

FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY
in State Responsibility Areas

■ Very High (LRA)
■ Very High (SRA)
■ High (SRA)
■ Moderate (SRA)

Map Sources: Cal Flire (2007) and Cal Fire (2008)

ALERT AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) – Similar to Amber Alerts, WEA enables government officials to send geographically-targeted, text-like alert messages. Wireless companies must volunteer to participate in WEA.

Reverse 911 – Reverse 911 allows government agencies to notify users within a defined geographic area via voice, email or text. Users must have an address associated with a phone number; for this reason, cell phone users must register and provide an address to receive alerts.

SoCo Alert – Similar to Reverse 911, SoCo Alert sends notifications via phone call, text, or email during an emergency. This system is specific to Sonoma County. Users must register with their address to receive alerts.

Nixle – Nixle is a free alert system that many cities use to send notifications from public safety departments to residents via phone, email and web. Users must sign up to receive alerts.

Nextdoor – Nextdoor is an online community that creates a private social network within a neighborhood or community. Neighborhoods can sign up on their own, or public agencies can use Nextdoor as a community engagement platform. Nextdoor is free for public agencies. Users must sign up to participate in the community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SENATE BILL 833 – EMERGENCY ALERTS (Senators McGuire, Dodd, and Hill, 2018)
Proposed legislation provides state-wide standardization for emergency alerts.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB833

BAY AREA UASI MASS NOTIFICATION RESOURCES
Read about best practices for reaching communities in a disaster.

http://bayareauasi.org/massnotificationseminar

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS
Find or start a Community Emergency Response Team in your community.

http://resilience.abag.ca.gov/preparedness/cert/

FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING GUIDE
Make a plan to help your family respond to disaster.

http://resilience.abag.ca.gov/wp-content/documents/Emergency-planning-handout.pdf