



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.{{item.number}}

Meeting Date: May 28, 2025

From: Michael Contreras

Title: First Reading of an Ordinance Adopting the Revised Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) Map.

RECOMMENDATION:

To introduce, waive reading beyond the title and provide first reading to an ordinance adopting the March 24, 2025 final updated Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) map.

BACKGROUND:

On June 3, 2008, City Council approved Ordinance No 2008-661 to add sections 8.12.070 and 8.12.080 to the Municipal Code to reduce the threat of uncontrolled fires by designating Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) map as recommended from the California Department of Forestry. After re-analyzing our area, the Department of Forestry (DFFP) submitted an updated version, which was then presented to Council and adopted on February 10, 2010.

On March 24, 2025 Cal Fire released final updated maps for the Local Responsibility Area. This update integrates new climate science, fire modeling, and ember transport data to better reflect long-term wildfire hazards.

Cathedral City has no high or very high zones. According to the maps, Cathedral City has only low and moderate zones.

DISCUSSION:

The Oakland Hills fire in 1991 prompted the 1992 "Bates Bill," Assembly Bill 337 (Government Code 51175-51189). It instructed the Director of DFFP to classify lands in the state in accordance with whether a very high fire hazard is present so that public officials are able to take measures that will reduce the potential intensity of uncontrolled fires that threaten to destroy resources, life, or property.

Exhibit A, the Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone map, dated March 24,

2025 identifies the changes within the city as recommended by the Department of Forestry. The recommendations are a result of a model that took into account factors such as fire history, existing and potential fuel, flame length, blowing embers, terrain, weather and the likelihood of buildings igniting.

While these maps are hazard-based (long-term likelihood and behavior), insurance providers use different short-term risk models, though they may use similar datasets.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

Goal E - Safety

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ordinance
2. 2025 FHSZ Map