

*Excerpt from the February 2003 Draft Wildland Fire Plan
City of Santa Barbara Fire Department
Chapter 4 - Goals, Policies, and Actions*

4.0 GOALS

The goal of the Wildland Fire Plan is to develop a comprehensive, coordinated Wildland Fire Program to protect lives, property, and natural resources threatened by wildland fire. The Fire Department recognizes the catastrophic impact of wildfire in our community and is committed to reducing hazards and risk through fire protection, fuel hazard reduction, public education, preparedness, and community involvement.

Policies and actions outlined in this chapter are a combination of policies and actions the City has already implemented and what is proposed to be implemented. The actions listed below are separated into Existing and Proposed actions.

4.1 POLICIES AND ACTIONS

CODES AND STANDARDS

Policy 1 **Classify the City high fire hazard area based on hazard and risk as identified by the City Wildland Fire Plan.**

Proposed:

- Action 1.1** Update the Fire Department high fire hazard area maps to designate four high fire hazard zones – Extreme Foothill, Foothill, Coastal, and Coastal Interior within the high fire hazard area (See Figure 19).
- Action 1.2** Apply appropriate mitigation and development standards to each of the four high fire hazard zones.
- Action 1.3** Update the Fire Department high fire hazard area maps to designate the Hidden Valley annexation area into the high fire hazard Coastal Zone (See Figure 19).
- Action 1.4** Update the Fire Department high fire hazard area maps to designate the Bel Air Knolls and Las Positas Park area along the east side of Las Positas Road into the high fire hazard Coastal Interior Zone (See Figure 19).
- Action 1.5** Adopt language to the UFC, Appendix IIA outlining the authority of the Fire Chief to maintain the boundaries of the high fire hazard area. See Appendix E for adoption language.

Action 1.6 Adopt the following defensible space standards to all structures within each high fire hazard zone as follows (See Appendix E for adoption language):

Coastal Interior	30 to 50 feet defensible space
Coastal	50 to 70 feet defensible space
Foothill	100 feet defensible space
Extreme Foothill	150 feet defensible space

** Within any high fire hazard zone additional defensible space may be required on slopes greater than 30%. Slopes ranging between 30 and 40 % slope may require 200 feet defensible space. Slopes ranging from 41 to 60% may require 250 to 300 foot defensible space.**

Policy 2 **Increase the survivability of homes in the high fire hazard area through the adoption of fire safe building codes.**

Existing:

Action 2.1 Monitor changes in fire and building codes. Modify and adopt codes as needed.

Policy 3 **Increase the survivability of homes in the high fire hazard area through the adoption of defensible space standards and landscape guidelines on new, remodeled and existing homes.**

Proposed:

Action 3.1 Adopt the following defensible space standards around all structures within each high fire hazard zone (See Appendix E for adoption language):

Coastal Interior	30 to 50 feet defensible space
Coastal	50 to 70 feet defensible space
Foothill	100 feet defensible space
Extreme Foothill	150 feet defensible space

** Within any high fire hazard zone additional defensible space may be required on slopes greater than 30%. Slopes ranging between 30 and 40 % slope may require 200 feet defensible space. Slopes ranging from 41 to 60% may require 250 to 300 foot defensible space.**

Action 3.2 Rename the existing “High Fire Hazard Area Brush Clearance Requirements” to “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements”. Revise the “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” to reflect defensible space standards as outlined in Action 3.1.

Action 3.3 Revise the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Landscape Guidelines and Defensible Space Requirements” handouts to reflect defensible space standards for the four high fire hazard zones. Work with City departments to include specific direction for property owners to reduce fire hazard and provide for protection of creek habitats and soil stability.

- Action 3.4** Revise the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Landscape Guidelines” to include minimum setbacks of plantings along driveways and roadways to meet Fire Department requirements.
- Action 3.5** Revise the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Landscape Guidelines” to incorporate tree planting guidelines under power lines as recommended by Southern California Edison.
- Action 3.6** Require additions or remodels of existing residential properties in the high fire hazard area to comply with the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Landscape Guidelines and Defensible Space Requirements”.
- Action 3.7** Include a copy of the “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” as part of the disclosure report on zoning reports in the high fire hazard area.

Policy 4 **Create a defensible community by increasing the number of homes that comply with the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements”.**

Proposed:

- Action 4.1** Complete a survey of all homes in the high fire hazard area to determine the percentage of homes that comply with the Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements”.
- Action 4.2** Develop an enforcement program to enforce “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” on undeveloped and developed properties within the high fire hazard area.
- Action 4.3** Adopt an enforcement program to enforce “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” on undeveloped and developed properties within the high fire hazard area.

Funding

Policy 5 **Develop funding sources and incentive programs for residents of the high fire hazard area to encourage reduction of wildfire hazards and risks.**

Existing:

- Action 5.1** Research grant funding opportunities for wildland fire projects and apply for appropriate grants.

Action 5.2 Continue work to support and develop funding sources for projects with the Parks and Recreation and Public Works, Water Resources Division that reduce the fire hazard in high fire hazard and non-high fire hazard areas.

Proposed:

Action 5.3 Develop a Fire Department position focused on grant research, writing, and administration.

Action 5.4 Research the feasibility of developing a high fire hazard area assessment district to fund wildland fire programs and projects.

Action 5.5 Develop a permit fee schedule for zoning report inspections, plan review, Pre-application Review Team, and Development Application Review Team submittals reviewed for high fire hazard area requirements.

FIRE REHABILITATION

Policy 6 Post fire rehabilitation guidelines should be established for the City.

Proposed:

Action 6.1 Develop appropriate post fire rehabilitation guidelines for property owners that address post fire effects of flooding and soil erosion.

Action 6.2 Develop a public education pamphlet on post fire rehabilitation guidelines.

EVACUATION

Policy 7 Increase evacuation safety for residents and the general public in the high fire hazard area.

Existing:

Action 7.1 Continue educational campaign to make residents, businesses, schools, and the public aware of evacuation planning and hazards.

Action 7.2 Continue educational campaign with homeowners associations and neighborhoods on the Red Flag Fire Alert Plan.

Action 7.3 Continue fire department vegetation road clearance along primary response routes in the high fire hazard area on a four year maintenance schedule to decrease vegetation obstructions.

Proposed:

Action 7.4 Investigate signing of evacuation routes along high fire hazard roadways.

- Action 7.5** Work with the Mountain Drive Volunteer Fire Department on notification and preparedness for wildfire and Red Flag Fire Alerts.
- Action 7.6** Develop training bulletins for Police Department employees identifying recommended evacuation routes and proposed traffic control points. The Police staff in cooperation with the Fire staff would accomplish this action.
- Action 7.7** Develop a simple, straight forward directive for the use of Police Watch Commanders and Field Supervisors identifying the duties and responsibilities of officers in the event of a major fire. This would be accomplished by Police staff in cooperation with Fire staff.
- Action 7.8** Identify specific roads that do not meet Fire Department Access Standards and develop feasible mitigations and/or appropriate tools (exp. a tool box of measures) that can be used to reduce fire risk in these areas.

FIRE PROTECTION

Policy 8 Reduce fire engine response times in all high fire hazard areas to 4 minutes.

Existing:

Action 8.1 Continue fire department vegetation road clearance along primary response routes in the high fire hazard area on a four year maintenance schedule to decrease vegetation obstructions.

Proposed:

Action 8.2 Evaluate fire department response times for the high fire hazard area.

Action 8.3 Develop appropriate actions (development standards, vegetation management, signing, etc.) from evaluation of fire department response times.

Policy 9 Provide the highest level of fire protection services to the firefighters and residents within the high fire hazard area.

Existing:

Action 9.1 Conduct department training classes focused on Urban Wildland Operations for all operations staff levels.

Action 9.2 Investigate all available alternatives to extend the City water supply lines along West Mountain Drive to all areas within the Extreme Foothill Zone.

Proposed:

- Action 9.3** Develop, fund and implement a high fire hazard enforcement program to ensure annual “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” are met to increase firefighter safety.
- Action 9.4** Increase the amount of interagency wildland fire training to gain expertise in wildland fire equipment.
- Action 9.5** Fund and complete a wildland fire pre-attack mapping project to identify staging areas and safety zones and preplan high fire hazard areas using Geographic Information Systems.
- Action 9.6** Incorporate identified staging areas and safety zones from Action 9.5 into the permit review process for all large developments in the high fire hazard area.
- Action 9.7** Purchase one additional Type 3, wildland fire engine for wildland fire response.
- Action 9.8** Purchase a Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS) in cooperation with local fire agencies to monitor fire weather and get more accurate fire weather forecasts for the community.
- Action 9.9** Purchase three 1,000 gallon water fold-a-tanks to support water operations in designated Staging Areas during a wildfire incident.
- Action 9.10** Purchase 3 portable pumps to increase potential use of water supply from pools and ponds in the high fire hazard area. Standard complement for the Type 3 engines should include 1 portable pump.
- Action 9.11** Work with the Mountain Drive Volunteer Fire Department within the Extreme High Fire Hazard Zone.
- Action 9.12** Purchase two compressed air slip on units to utilize on department patrol vehicles.
- Action 9.13** Identify potential fire fighting safety zones and escape routes within all high fire hazard zones. The importance of identified safety zone is critical to fire fighter safety.
- Action 9.14** Develop appropriate improvements needed to make identified safety zones useable for fire suppression operations.

VEGETATION (FUELS) MANAGEMENT

Policy 10 Provide community protection from wildland fire through fuels management projects on City owned lands both within and outside the high fire hazard area.

Proposed:

- Action 10.1** Incorporate the City 1993 Vegetative Fuels Management Plan into the Wildland Fire Plan (*See Appendix C and E*).
- Action 10.2** Update the 1993 Vegetative Fuels Management Plan to include vegetation management on city lands adjacent to private structures to ensure defensible space requirements (*See Appendix E*).
- Action 10.3** Develop a creek vegetation restoration/maintenance plan that balances riparian values and fire hazard and risk on public lands.
- Action 10.4** Identify any additional City properties not identified in the 1993 Vegetative Fuels Management Plan in non-high fire hazard areas, develop vegetation management projects for these areas to reduce the fire hazard and include in the Wildland Fire Plan (*See Appendix E*).
- Action 10.5** Develop language for Conditions of Approval on new developments adjacent to City owned lands. These conditions will ensure that structures have either adequate setback to meet defensible space requirements on their property or that they will be held responsible for completing defensible space requirements on City lands as approved by the Fire Department and Park and Recreation or Water Resource Department as appropriate

Policy 11 Support collaborative fuels management projects between the City and residents of the high fire hazard area to encourage fire hazard reduction and protection of natural resources. This includes compliance with Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements”, as well as additional defensible space projects requested by homeowners.

Proposed:

- Action 11.1** Develop affordable incentive programs to allow homeowners to maintain defensible space around homes.
- Action 11.2** Develop a creek vegetation restoration/maintenance plan that balances riparian values and fire hazard and risk on private lands.
- Action 11.3** Work with the Mountain Drive Volunteer Fire Department on cooperative fuel management projects.

Action 11.4 Work with City departments in the development of Fire Department “High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements” to ensure that fuels management projects on private lands decrease fire hazard and balance natural resource values.

Action 11.5 Develop an Exotic Pest Plant Management Plan that addresses how property owners can eradicate and eliminate the potential expansion of exotic pest plants from defensible space projects on their property.

Policy 12 **Create a community fuels treatment network within the Extreme Foothill Zone to provide a fire buffer between continuous stands of chaparral fuel adjacent to the City boundary and more densely populated areas within the City. To be effective this project should be a collaborative project between County, City, and Montecito Fire Protection District.**

Proposed:

Action 12.1 Create a community fuels treatment network within the Extreme Foothill Zone. A community fuels treatment network is an area where multiple property owners interlink their individual defensible space zones and treat continuous strips of hazardous vegetation to form a vegetation management network to reduce fire hazard. See Appendix E – Vegetation Management for specific details on proposed implementation. And Appendix E – Glossary for definitions of terms used in this action item.

Action 12.2 Develop an Exotic Pest Plant Management Plan to eradicate and eliminate the potential expansion of exotic pest plants within the Community Fuels Treatment Network.

Policy 13 **Identify and prioritize vegetation management projects on private lands in the Wildland Fire Plan to reduce fire hazard.**

Proposed:

Action 13.1 Recognize the following vegetation management areas, called Vegetation Management Units, as identified by the Fire Department. Each unit is listed in the order of priority based on fire hazard and risk.

Extreme Foothill Zone

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Las Canoas Road | 2. Upper Coyote Road |
|--------------------|----------------------|

Foothill Zone

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Circle Drive/Las Barrancas | 10. Owens Road |
| 2. Coyote Road | 11. Cleveland School area |
| 3. Coyote Circle | 12. Jimeno/Garcia Road |
| 4. Conejo Road | 13. Stevens Park area |

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 5. Fire Station 7 | 14. Mountain/Las Tunas |
| 6. San Roque Creek | 15. Camino Viejo |
| 7. Hillcrest Road | 16. Cima Linda |
| 8. Eucalyptus Hill Road | 17. Alturas Del Sol |
| 9. Alston Place | 18. Garcia/Ferrello Canyon |

Coastal Zone – no Vegetation Management Units

Coastal Interior Zone

1. Hondo Valley
2. Las Positas Road
3. Flora Vista

Action 13.2 Complete public education outreach within each of the Vegetation Management Units. This initial outreach effort should address defensible space, fire access, building construction, public safety, resident addressing, evacuation, and Red Flag Fire Alert.

Action 13.3 Conduct a follow up meeting within each Vegetation Management Unit to help the neighborhood or community develop a vegetation (addresses fuels management and defensible space) and fire (addresses fire access, water supply, addressing, evacuation, etc) management plan.

Action 13.4 Develop funding sources to implement vegetation and fire management plans within the identified Vegetation Management Units. Funding sources could include grants, private landowner funding, City general fund, cooperative funds, etc.

Action 13.5 Develop project standards for each Vegetation Management Unit based on vegetation type, slope, aspect, biological concerns, and erosion potential. See Appendix E – Vegetation Management for specific details on vegetation management standards to be implemented for Vegetation Management Units. Reference Appendix F – Glossary for definitions of terms used in this action item.

Action 13.6 Develop an Exotic Pest Plant Management Plan to eradicate and eliminate the potential expansion of exotic pest plants within any proposed project areas.

Action 13.7 Work with the Parks and Recreation, Creeks Division to develop vegetation management techniques that reduce fire hazard in creek areas and maintain creek values.

Policy 14 **Look at creating economic alternatives and incentives for local businesses for the use of biomass generated from vegetation management projects.**

Proposed

- Action 14.1** Complete a feasibility study to look at creating economic alternatives and incentives for local businesses for the use of biomass generated from vegetation management projects in the CEQA environmental review document.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Policy 15** **Increase the community's knowledge and awareness of wildland fire and develop training and education programs to prepare, motivate, and educate the community.**

Existing:

- Action 15.1** Research grant funding opportunities for wildland fire public education and apply for appropriate grants.
- Action 15.2** Continue to work with businesses, schools, and assembly occupancies in the high fire hazard area to develop evacuation preplans and preparedness for wildland fire.
- Action 15.3** Continue to work with the Santa Barbara Fire Safe Council on public education projects to increase the public's awareness and preparedness of wildland fire.
- Action 15.4** Work with communities, neighborhoods, and individuals to get the message across that reducing the wildland fire threat requires them to take personal responsibility for preparedness, evacuation, brush clearance around homes, driveways, and roadways, and community cooperation.

Proposed:

- Action 15.5** Develop a fire landscaping brochure with all City departments to educate the public on fire safe landscaping, power line hazards, and wildfire safety. The brochure should include fire safe landscaping, native landscaping, water conservation, soil stabilization, creek restoration, and non-invasive plant species concerns.
- Action 15.6** Complete a standard public education package to disseminate evacuation preparedness, preplanning, and evacuation procedures to the public.
- Action 15.7** Hire a professional media firm to develop a video specific to the Santa Barbara area on wildland fire. The video should include defensible space, fire landscaping, road access, Red Flag Fire Alert, resource concerns, and evacuation.

Action 15.8 Develop a program similar to Citizens Emergency Response (CERT) focused on wildland fire for residents in the high fire hazard area.

Action 15.9 Post fire danger signs in strategic areas within the high fire hazard area to notify the public of low, moderate, high, and extreme fire weather conditions. Signs would be designed to select the appropriate fire danger conditions based on National Fire Danger Rating System forecasts. The Fire Department will work with community organizations to monitor and change weather conditions daily.

Action 15.10 Develop in cooperation with all City departments a detailed pamphlet encouraging property owners to maintain and/or create native landscapes within the high fire hazard area that meets High Fire Hazard Defensible Space Requirements.

Action 15.11 Develop educational material for the public to eradicate and reduce the potential for the expansion of exotic pests plants that has the potential to occur from defensible space projects.

Policy 16 **Work with all City departments and staff to increase their knowledge, awareness, prevention, and preparedness for wildland fire.**

Proposed:

Action 16.1 Develop annual City staff training on wildland fire safety to train City staff working in the high fire hazard area. Training should include Red Flag Fire Alert, process for fire complaints, fire reporting procedures, and fire prevention, and defensible space requirements.