

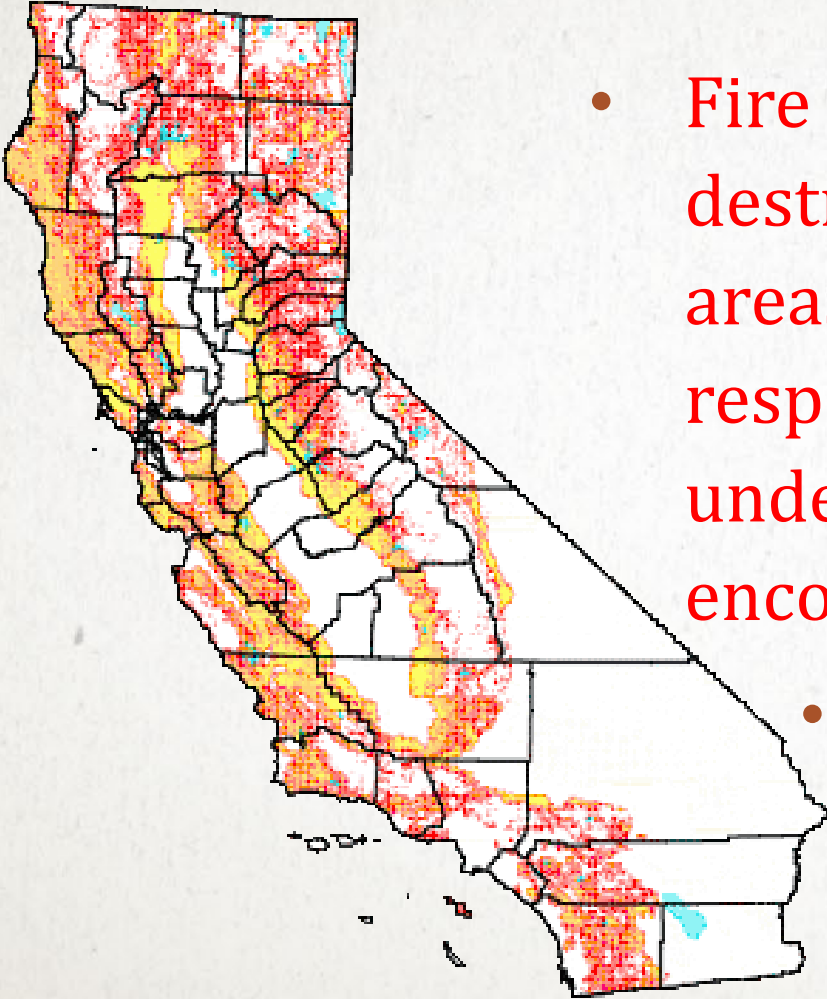


Fire Hazard Severity Zones

JOINT WILDFIRE WORKSHOP

APRIL 23, 2025

The History of FHSZ Maps



- Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps arose from major destructive fires, prompting the recognition of these areas and strategies to reduce wildfire risks. Legislative response led to mandated mapping across California under the California Public Resources Code 4201-4204, encompassing all State Responsibility Areas (SRA).
- For Local Response Areas (LRA) mandated mapping is required by Government Code 51178 & 51179

Why are FHSZ being updated?



Legislature compels on update for SRA and LRA in addition the Governor's Office issued Emergency Proclamation on 3-1-25 to compel update and roll out.

- Updated burn probabilities for wildland areas (inclusive of 2020 fires)
- Updated fire environment footprints (urban/developed)
- Updated Vegetation density for urban areas
- Inclusion of slope in the urban zoning model
- Localized fire weather used in both wildland and urban models
- New firebrand production and transport model using discrete local wind vector distributions

LAH FHSZ Map Adoption Timeline and Outreach



1. **January 30, 2025** **CAL FIRE postponed map roll out to 2/24**
2. **February 24, 2025** **CAL FIRE publishes FHSZ maps**
3. **March 26, 2025** **CAL FIRE FHSZ map posted by LAH online**
4. **April 17, 2025** **FHSZ discussion and consideration**
5. **April 23, 2025** **Joint Wildfire Workshop**
(Postcard Mailed to all Residents)
6. **May 15, 2025** **FHSZ Ordinance 1st Reading**
7. **June 18, 2025** **FHSZ Ordinance 2nd Reading**



How are the zones determined?



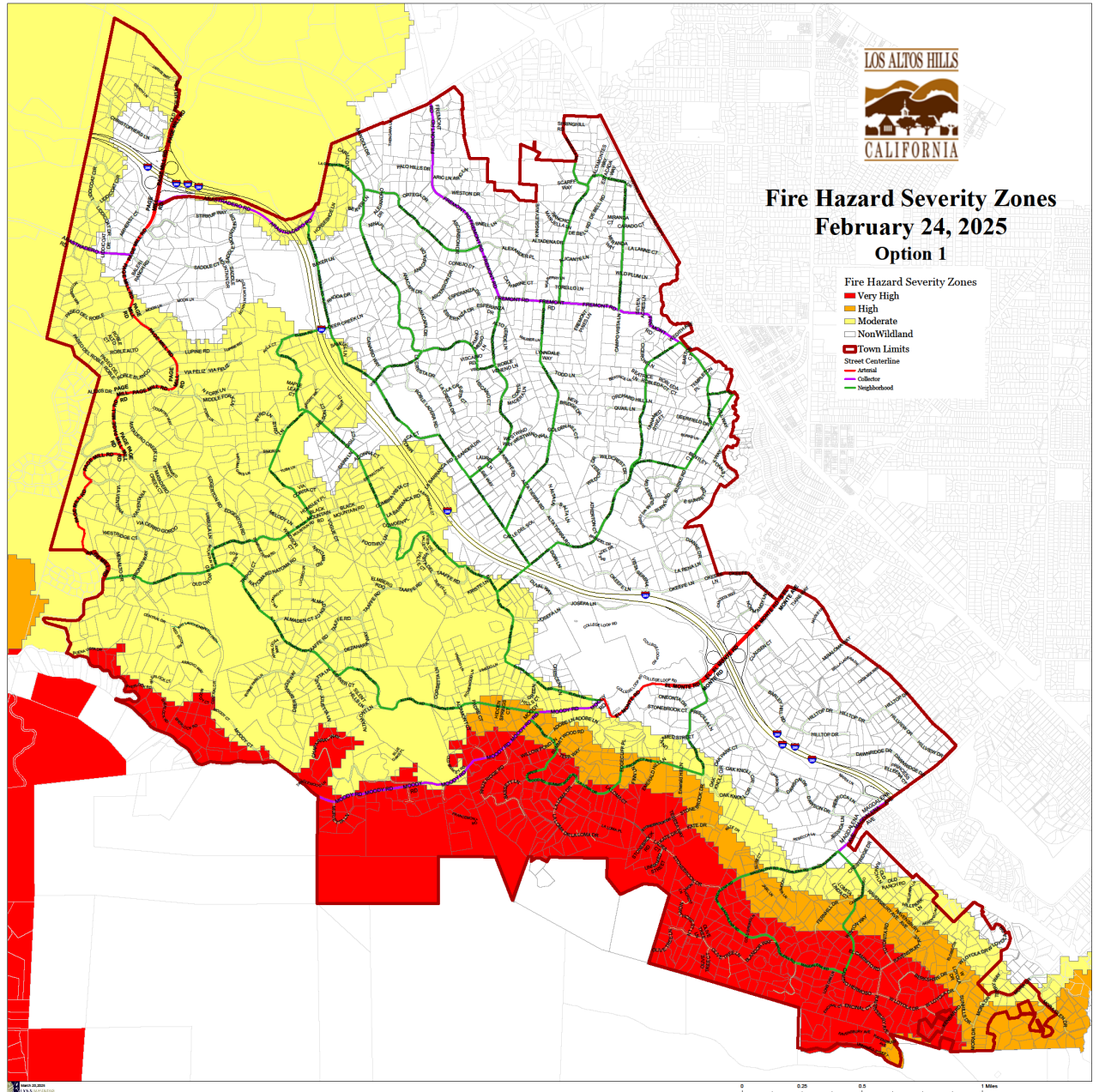
- CAL FIRE used the best available science and data to develop, and field test a model that served as the basis of zone assignments. The model evaluated the probability of the area burning and potential fire behavior in the area.
- Factors: fire history, vegetation, flame length, blowing embers, proximity to wildland, terrain, and weather
- Methods used to create FHSZ MAPS
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXwnUCFVGxI>



Zone Requirements



	SRA	LRA
VERY HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt FHSZ CEQA Subdivision Map Act Safety Element Fire Safe Regulations Chapter 7A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defensible Space Hazard Disclosure Subdivision Review
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt FHSZ CEQA Subdivision Map Act Safety Element Fire Safe Regulations Chapter 7A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defensible Space Hazard Disclosure Subdivision Review
MODERATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt FHSZ CEQA Subdivision Map Act Safety Element Fire Safe Regulations Chapter 7A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defensible Space Subdivision Review



CAL FIRE BASE MAP LOS ALTOS HILLS MANDATORY MINIMUM

MODIFYING CAL FIRE BASE MAP

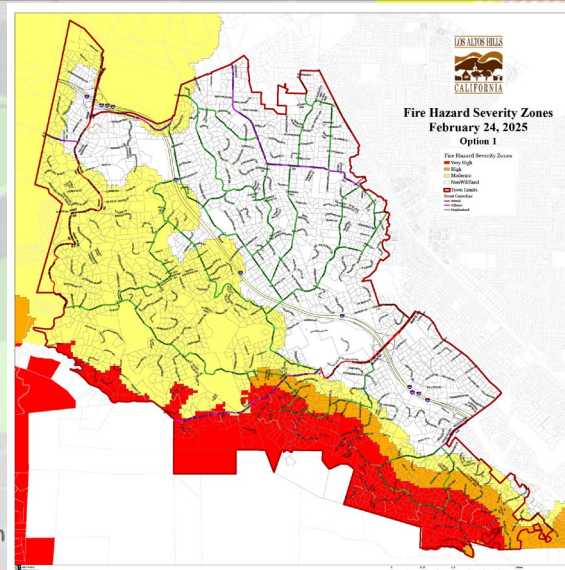
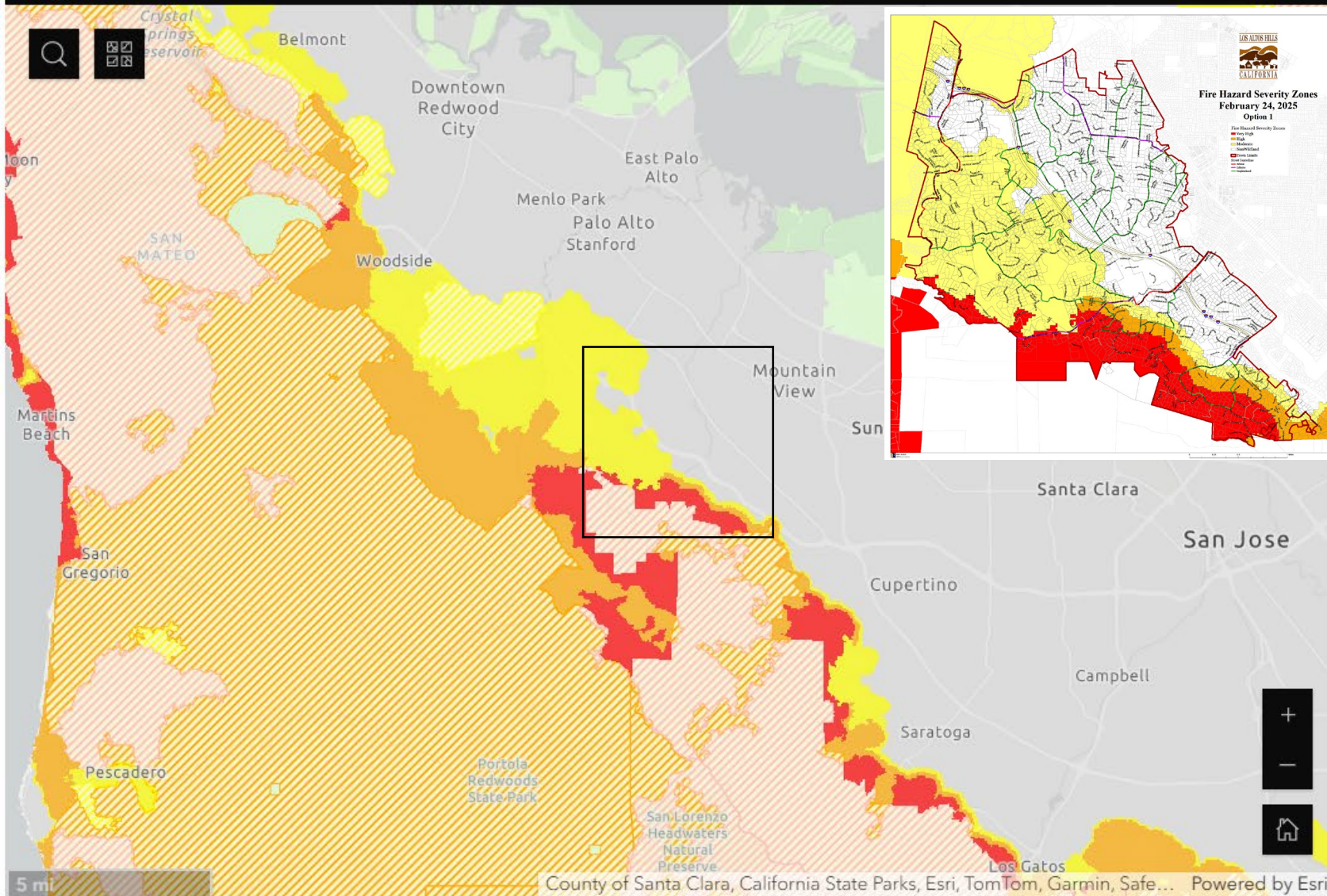
- Town may not decrease the designation in CalFire's Map
 - May increase any area to Moderate or High at Town's discretion
 - May increase any area to Very High (not already designated by CalFire) by making findings supported by substantial evidence that the defensible space requirements under state law are necessary for effective fire protection in the area.
 - 100 feet of defensible space from structures
 - Ember-resistant zone within 5 feet of structure
 - Remove tree limbs within 10 feet of chimneys or stovepipes
 - Maintenance trees, shrubs, fallen leaves, needles and vegetative materials
 - Other requirements listed in statute
-



Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer

FHSZ in State Responsibility Area effective April 1, 2024

FHSZ in Local Responsibility Area - All Phases



Legend Map Layers

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Area

- Very High
- High
- Moderate

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area

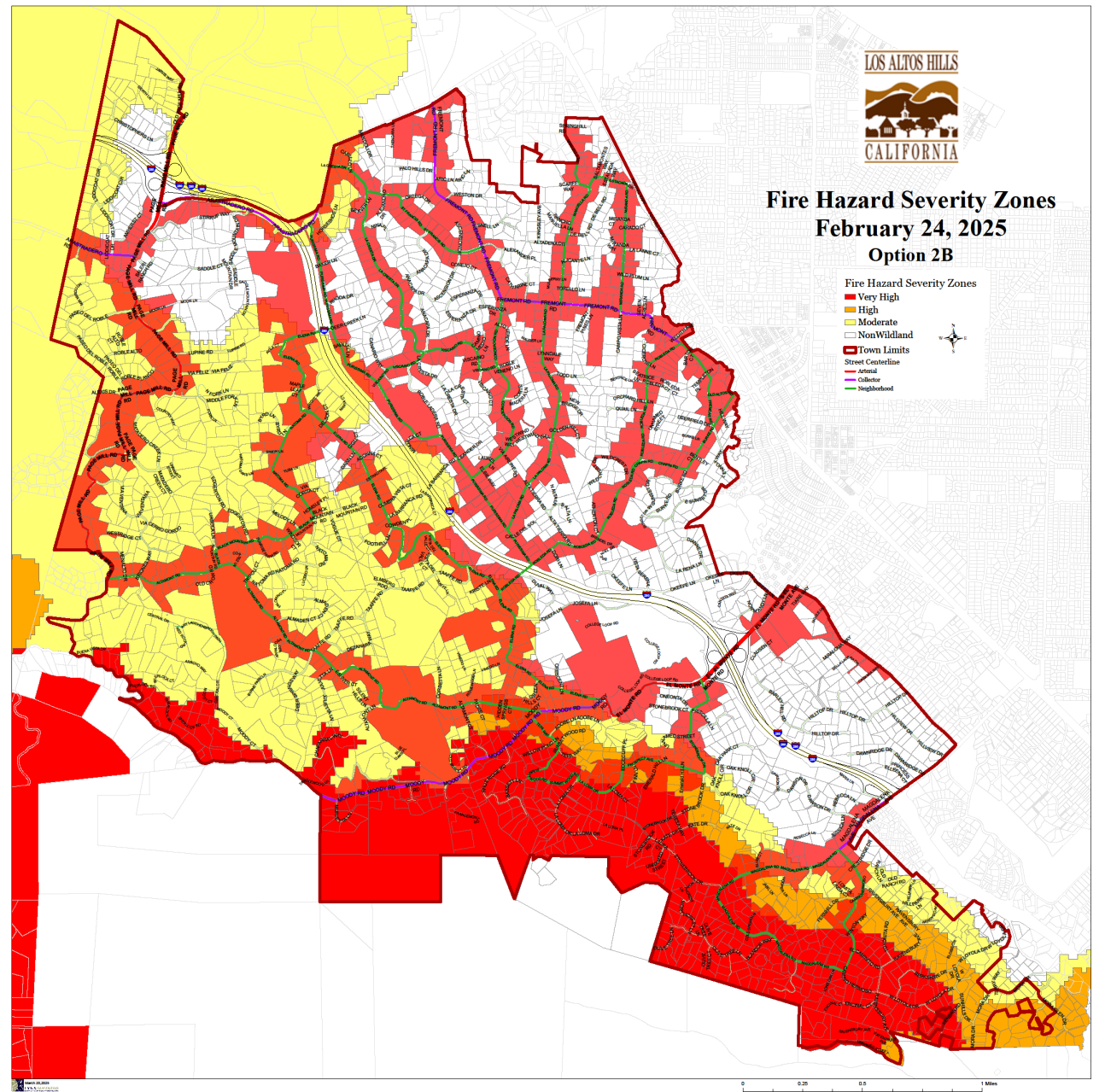
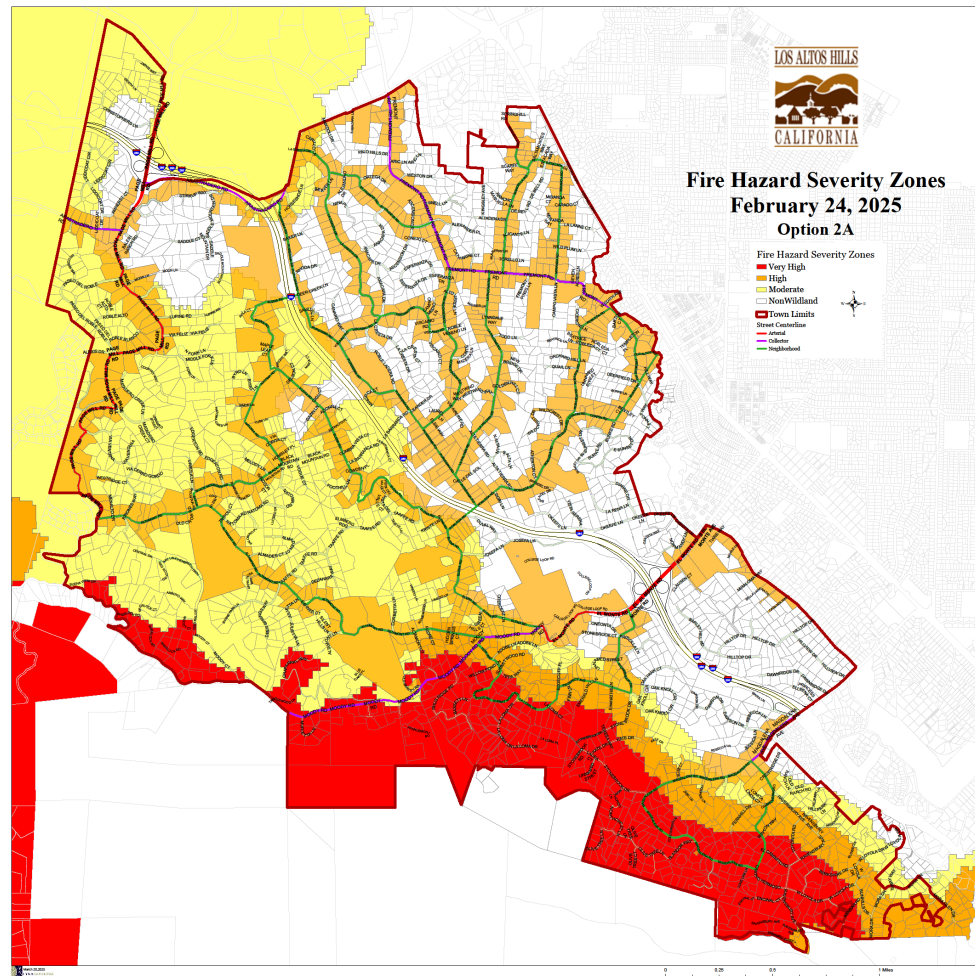
Adopted April 1, 2024

- Very High
- High
- Moderate

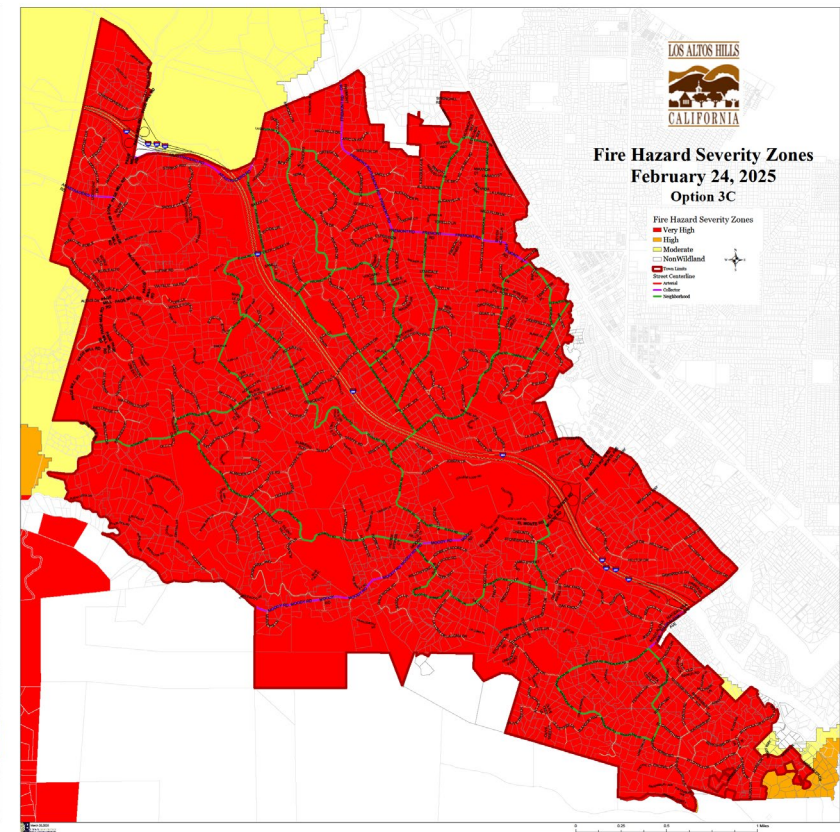
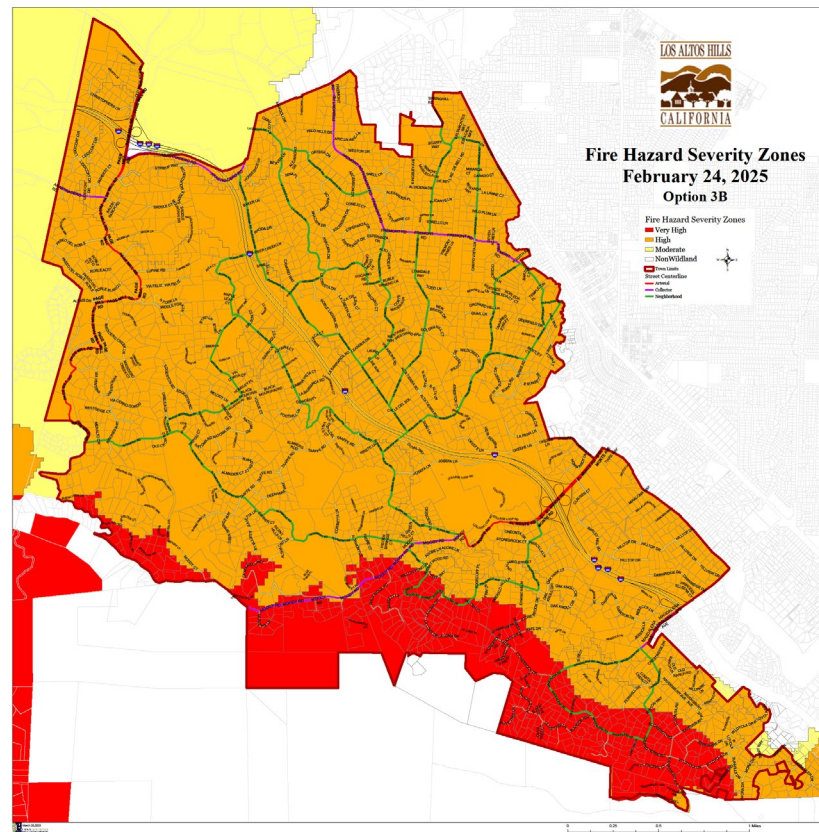
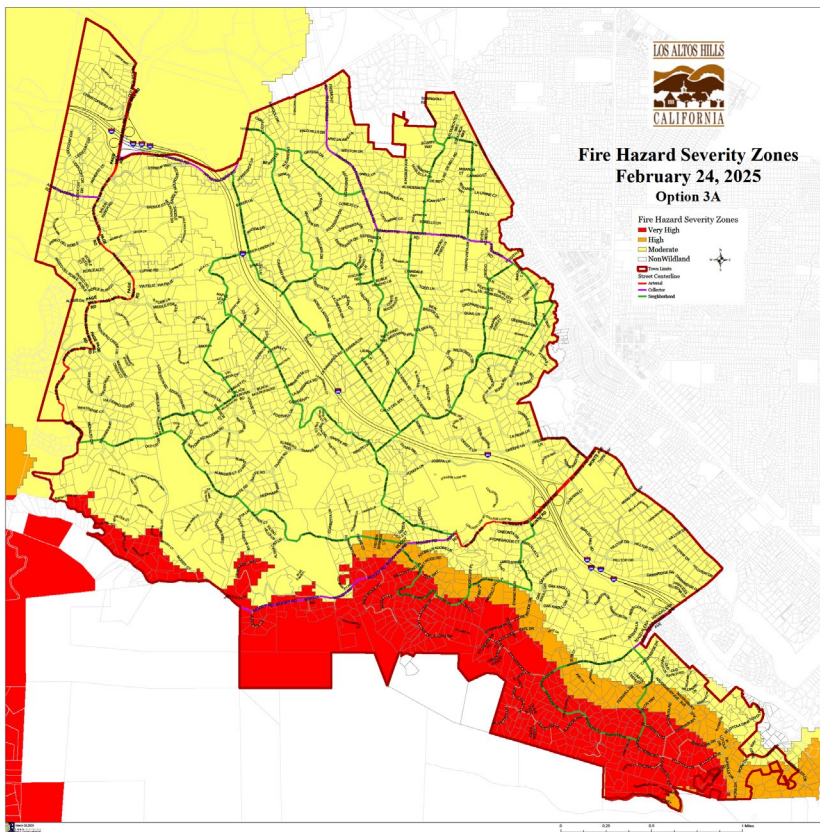
State Responsibility Areas

- Local Responsibility Area (LRA)
- State Responsibility Area (SRA)
- Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)

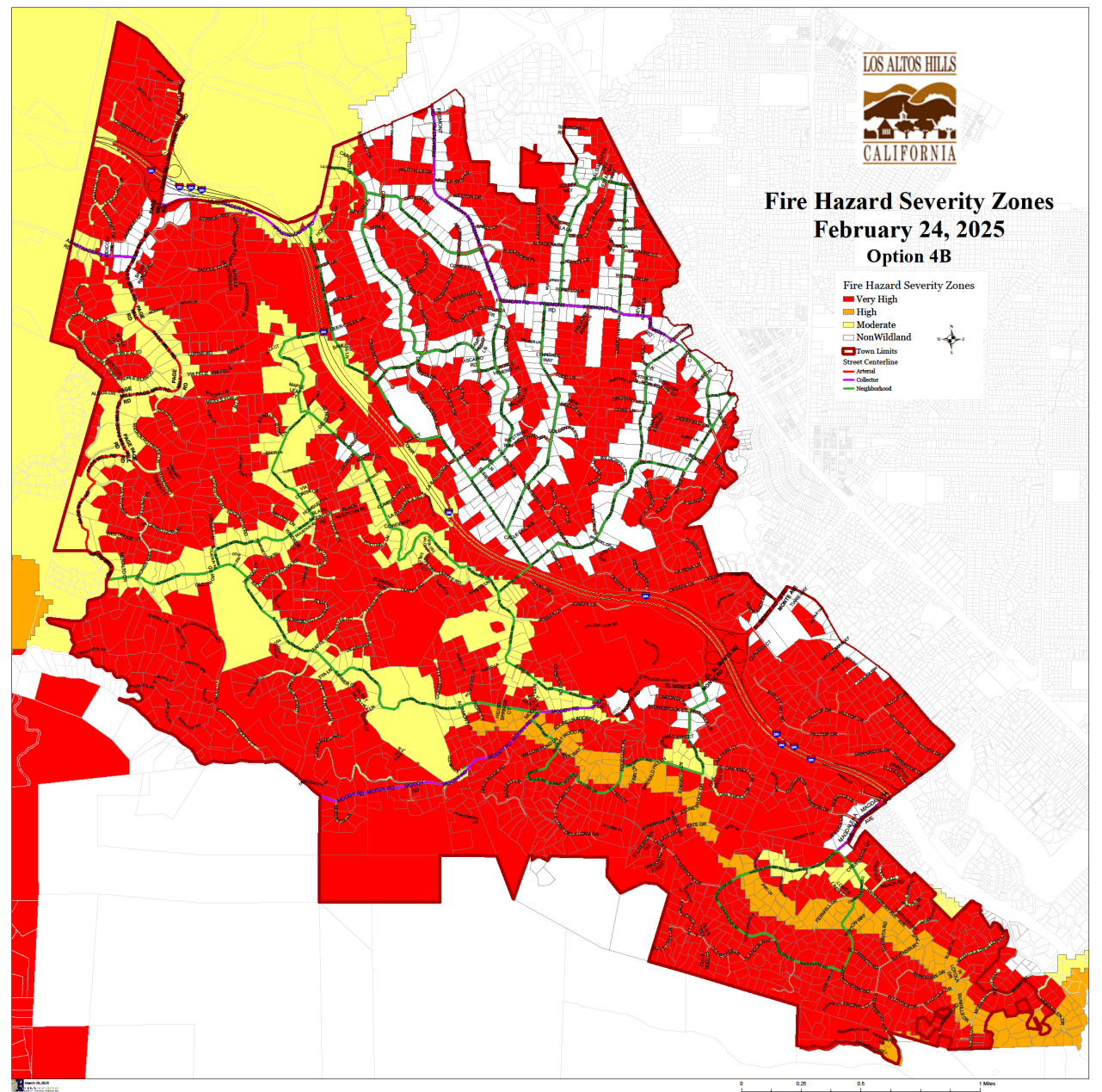
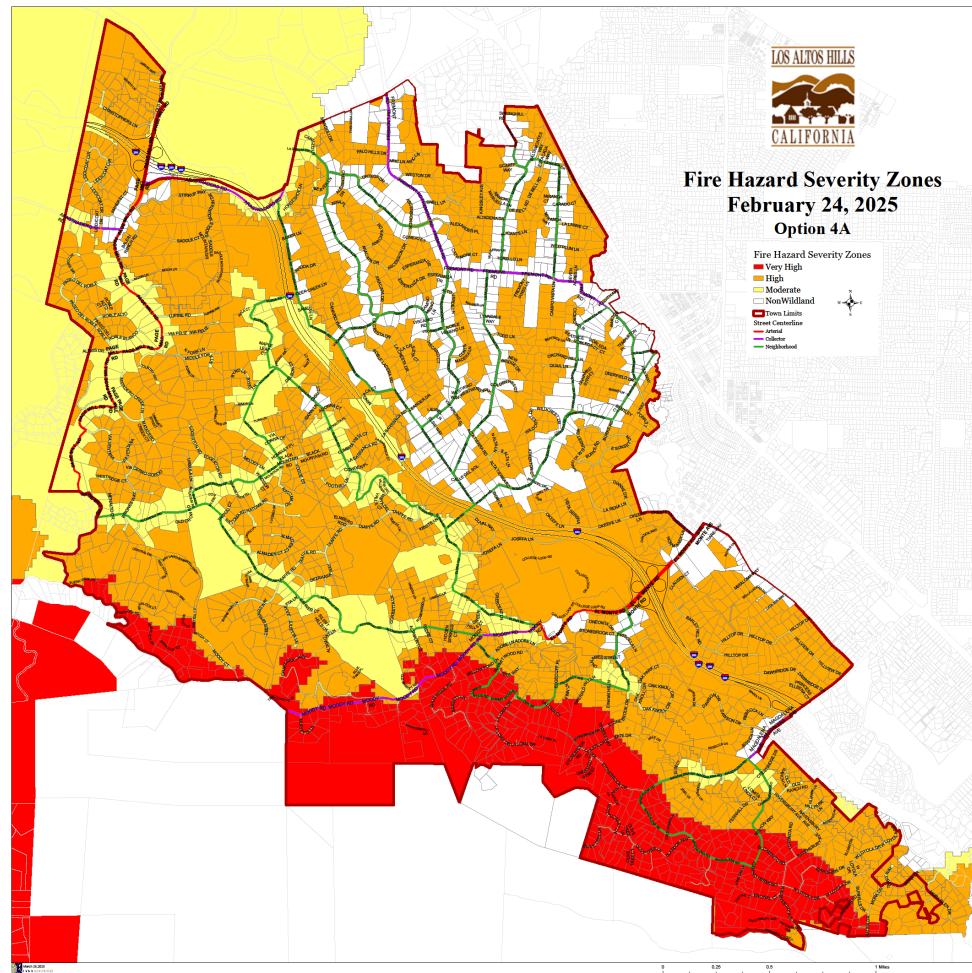
LOCAL AMENDMENTS LOS ALTOS HILLS OPTION 2



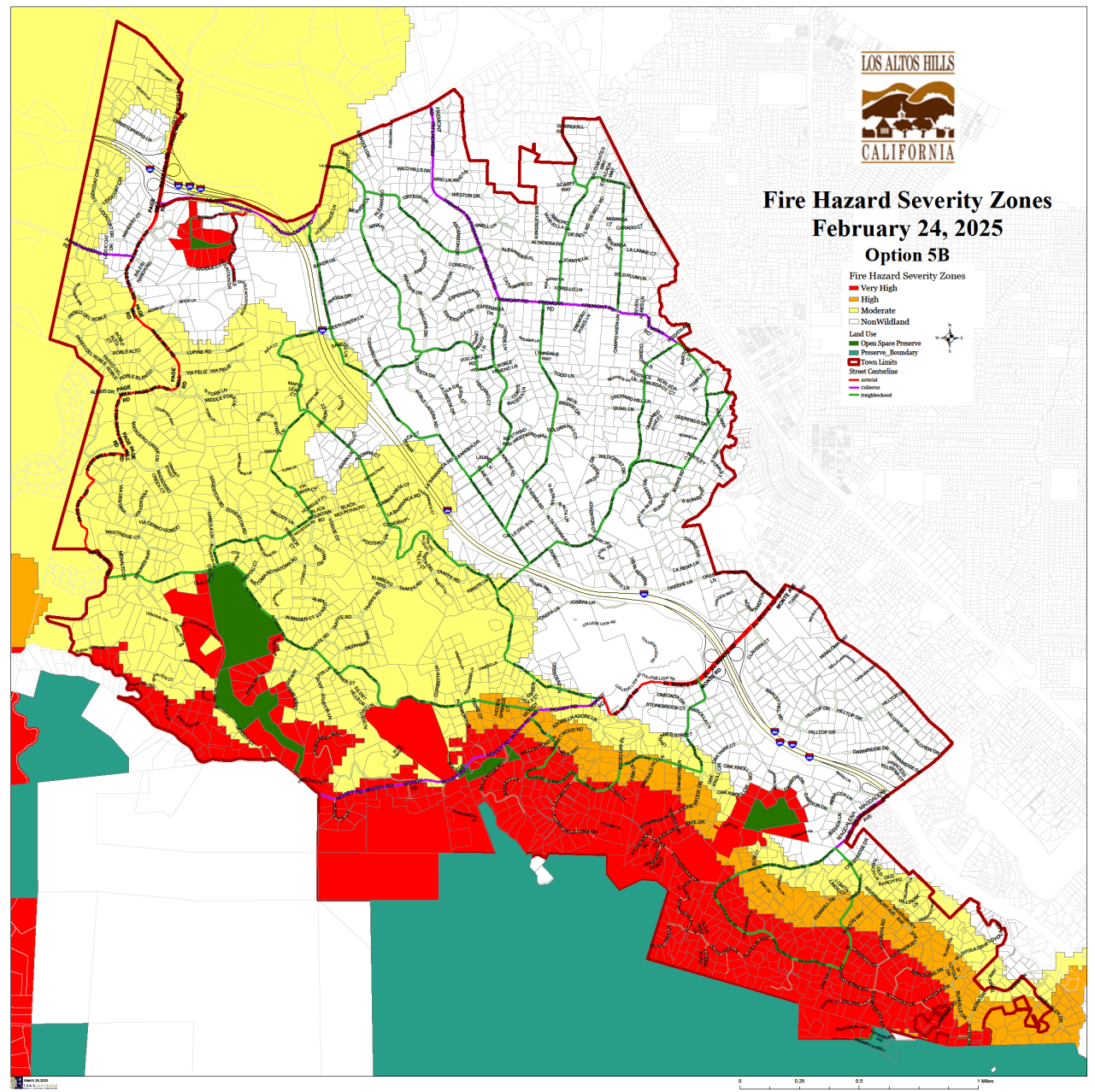
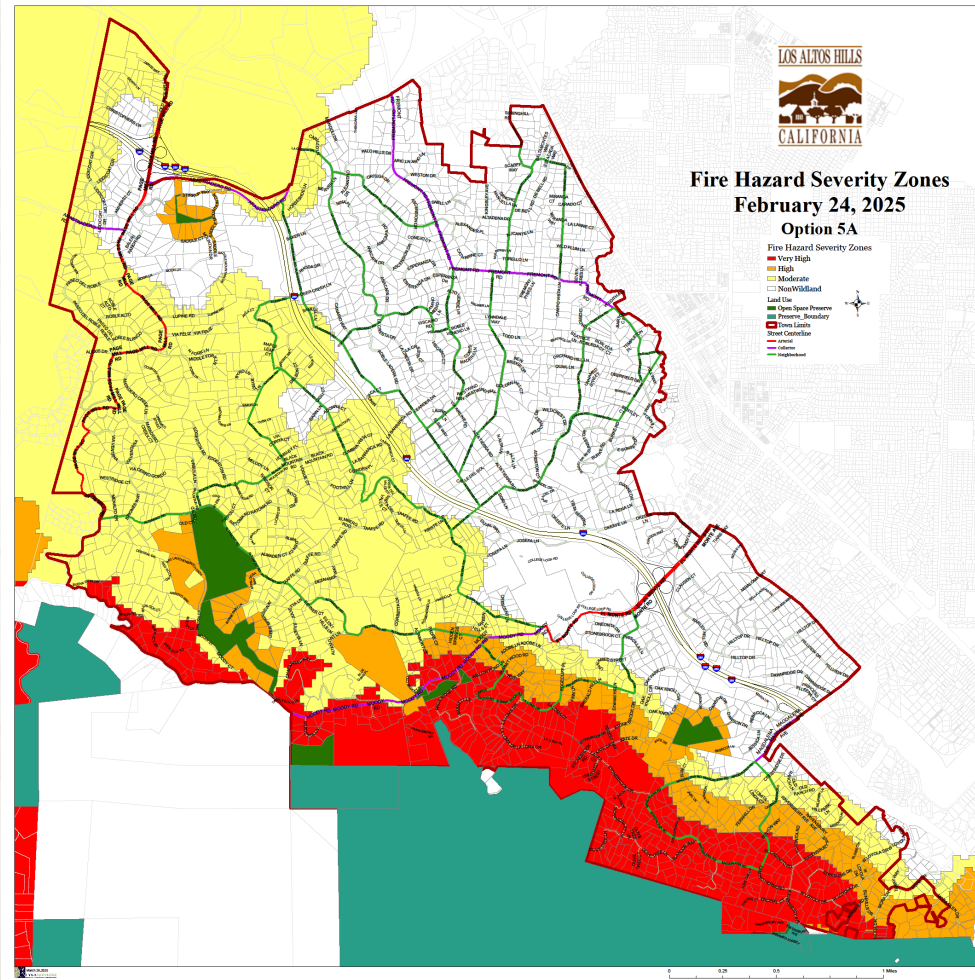
LOCAL AMENDMENTS LOS ALTOS HILLS OPTION 3



LOCAL AMENDMENTS LOS ALTOS HILLS OPTION 4



LOCAL AMENDMENTS LOS ALTOS HILLS OPTION 5





CALIFORNIA CONSUMER ALERT

Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara

CAL FIRE hazard maps do not affect insurance rates or availability

Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara issued a [fact sheet](#) explaining that CAL FIRE hazard maps do not affect insurance rates or availability. A [Spanish-language fact sheet](#) is also available.

For many years, insurance companies have been using wildfire risk models for determining where they will write and renew policies, and how much premium to charge a policyholder – not the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. CAL FIRE's maps are required by law and their purpose is to drive local planning decisions, not insurance decisions.

Commissioner's POV: "Let me be clear: The CAL FIRE hazard maps are not used for insurance rates or underwriting decisions. But they will empower communities with more accurate information about the very real hazards we face. The reality is we all need to do more to protect our homes and communities from wildfires. When communities know and understand their risks, they can plan and prepare."

Background: The Department of Insurance is implementing a Sustainable Insurance Strategy aimed at supporting safer communities. Based on feedback gathered from thousands of town halls and meetings with homeowners, businesses, and individual consumers, Commissioner Lara implemented an aggressive approach to modernize insurance regulations to address insurance accessibility challenges for consumers.

Commissioner Lara's new [Safer from Wildfires regulation](#) clarifies what actions you should take to reduce wildfire risks and receive an insurance discount.

Insurance companies use computerized wildfire catastrophe models to determine which homes to write based on the risk of loss. Building on the Safer from Wildfires initiative — the nation's first wildfire safety discount program — the strategy requires catastrophe models to account for mitigation efforts by homeowners, businesses, and communities, something not possible even a few months ago under outdated regulations.

Learn More: The Department of Insurance fact sheet is posted at [CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zone web page](#) where you can learn more about enhancing your property's fire safety and view current versions of maps.



insurance.ca.gov | 800-927-4357

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

CAL FIRE hazard maps do not
affect insurance rates or
availability

<https://calfire.app.box.com/s/1v2rn7wwl0crsz2jdd65jh3q9uyaxdh>

Fire Hazard Severity Zone



osfm.fire.ca.gov/fhsz

A screenshot of the CAL FIRE website. The page title is "Fire Hazard Severity Zones". Below the title, there is a paragraph: "California's seasonally dry Mediterranean climate lends itself to wildfires, and in an effort to better prepare, CAL FIRE is required to classify the severity of fire hazard in areas of California." Below this is a video player with the title "The History of Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps". The video thumbnail shows a map of California with a red play button and the text "HISTORY OF FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE MAPS". To the right of the video player is a text box with the title "The History of Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps" and a short paragraph: "Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps arose from major destructive fires, prompting the recognition of these areas and strategies to reduce wildfire risks. Legislative response led to mandated mapping across California under the California Public Resources Code 4201-4204, encompassing all State Responsibility Areas (SRA)."



Links

Finding or Retaining Insurance

<https://www.insurance.ca.gov/01-consumers/200-wrr/Safer-from-Wildfires.cfm>

Fire Hazard Severity Zones & FAQs

<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones>

History of Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps CAL FIRE - Ready for Wildfire

<https://readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/>

Fire Hazard Severity Zone Rollout

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zy8X3BCreXY>

Low-cost retrofitting list

<https://readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/hardening-your-home/>



QUESTIONS /COMMENTS?

THANK YOU

**Fire Hazard Severity Zones
Map Adoption Discussion and Consideration**

Presented by: Jay Bradford, Community Development Director
