

OPR Wildfire Guidance

Fire Hazard Planning TA and WUI Planning Guide



Introductions

We welcome you all to today's webinar event!

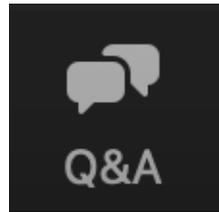


Webinar Agenda

1. Context Setting
2. Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory (TA)
3. Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Planning Guide
4. Additional Resources
5. Question and Answer

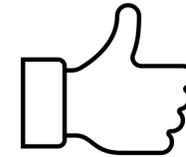


Opportunities for Engagement



Ask us questions during the webinar.

Staff will actively respond to questions submitted through Zoom's Q&A feature.



Upvote questions you would like answered.

This can reduce duplicate questions and help our team prioritize responses.

Context Setting

Brief overview of wildfire in California



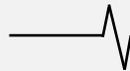
Wildfire in California

Life in California has relied on wildfire since time immemorial.

Vegetation started to build up, creating fuel for future wildfires.

Planners must address wildfire & climate change in their general plans.

Time
Immemorial



1800's

1900's

2000's

The State of California passed a series of laws to suppress wildfire.

Climate change begins to exacerbate wildfire hazards in California.



The Wildland-Urban Interface

Nearly 1/3 of the homes in California are built within or adjacent to wildland areas.

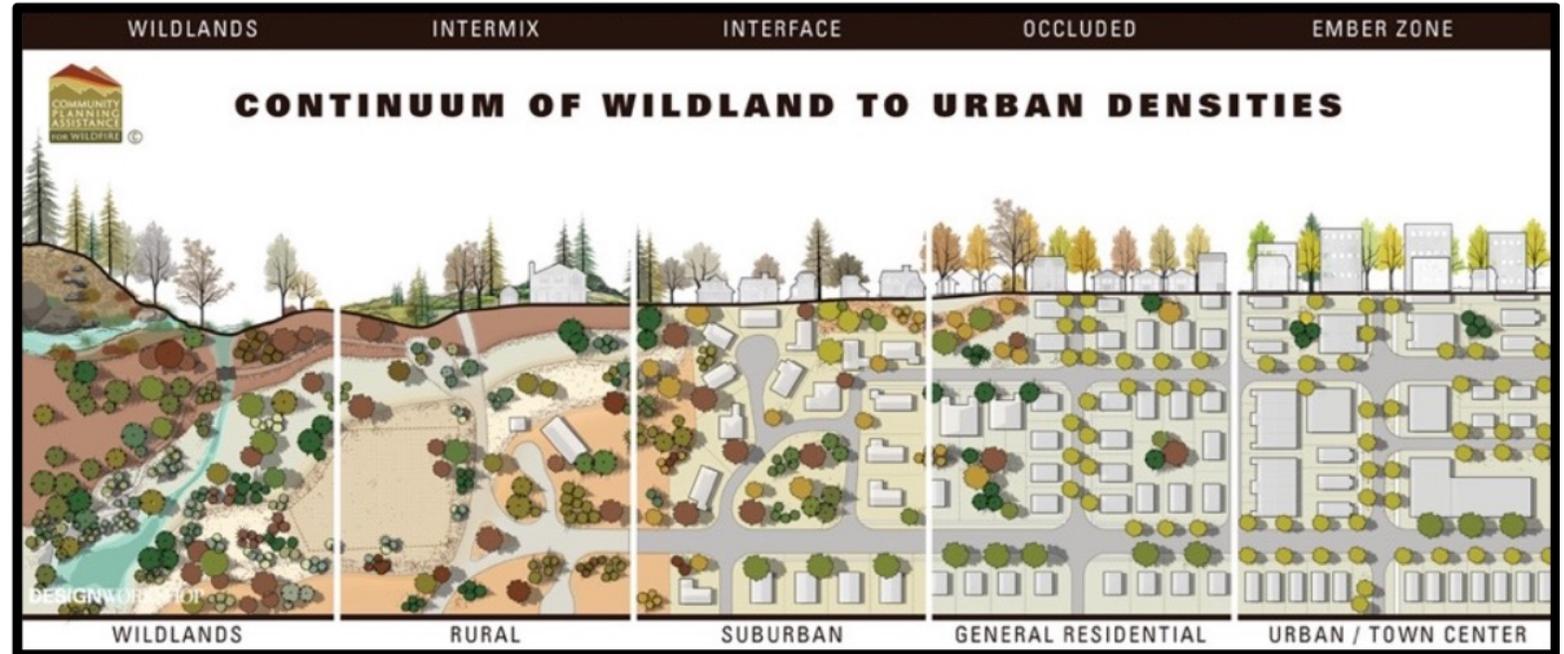


Image Credit: Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire with permission by Wildfire Planning International

The Opportunity



Wildfire risk can be reduced through land use planning and implementation.

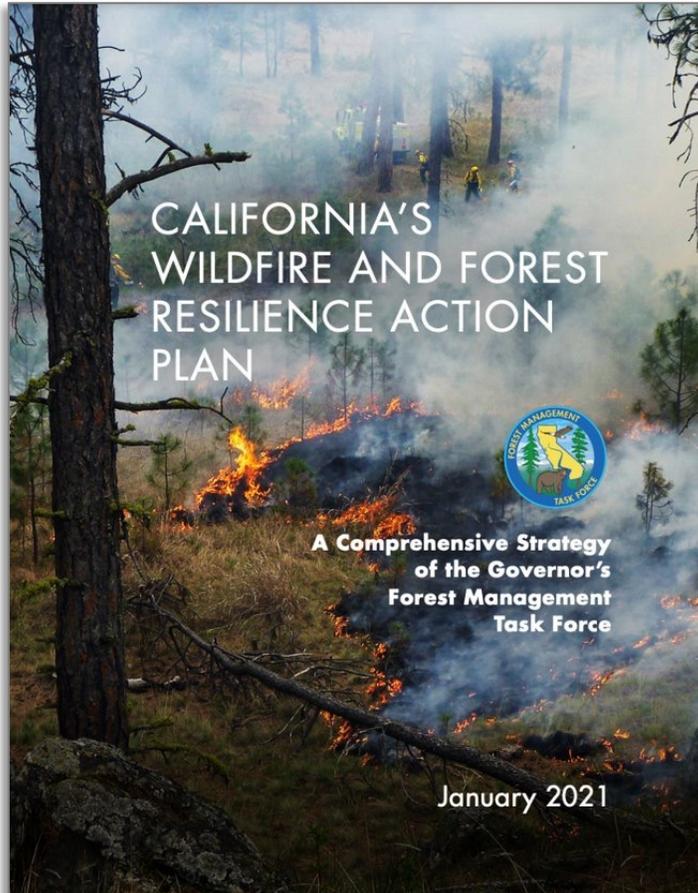


Community-scale action can protect climate vulnerable communities.



It's possible to learn from the past to build resilience moving forward.

Taking Action



Goal 2: Strengthen Protection of Communities

Action 2.4 – Update OPR’s Fire Hazard Planning TA

“...assist local governments in developing effective fire hazard policies and programs in the general plan...”

Action 2.5 – Develop a WUI Best Practices Inventory

“The inventory will serve as a complement to OPR’s Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory and will inform local governments on how best to develop and implement plans, codes, standards, and enforcement activities within the WUI...”

How To Use The Documents

Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory (TA)	Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Planning Guide
 Helps users develop long-range policies and programs	 Helps users leverage planning tools to support implementation
 Designed as process guidance and is best read from A to Z	 Designed to be a "choose your own adventure" document
 Requires more time to digest	 Requires less time to digest



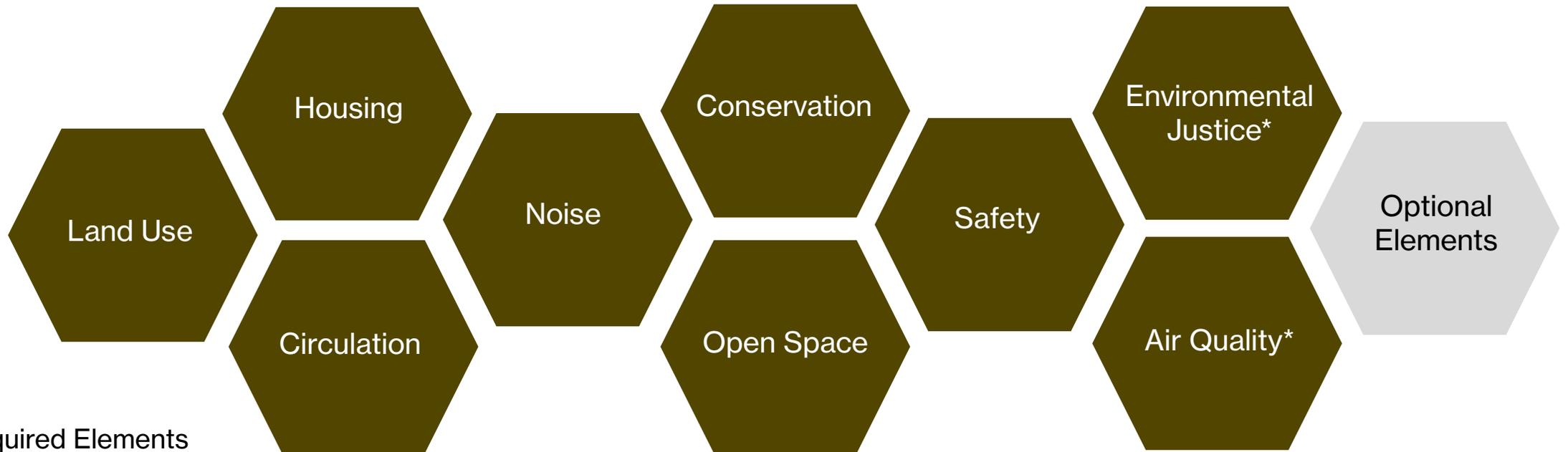
Fire Hazard Planning TA

A supplement to OPR's General Plan Guidelines



General Plan Guidelines

General plans are blueprints for meeting communities' long-term visions for the future.

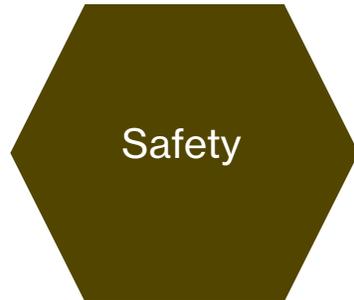


- ◆ Required Elements
- ◇ Optional Elements

*Only required in a subset of jurisdictions

Wildfire Requirements

SB 1241 (2012) amended GC § 65302 (g)(3):



Wildfire must be addressed in the general plan safety element for jurisdictions in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) upon the next housing element update on or after 1/1/2014.

In 2015, OPR developed a Fire Hazard Planning TA to address these requirements.

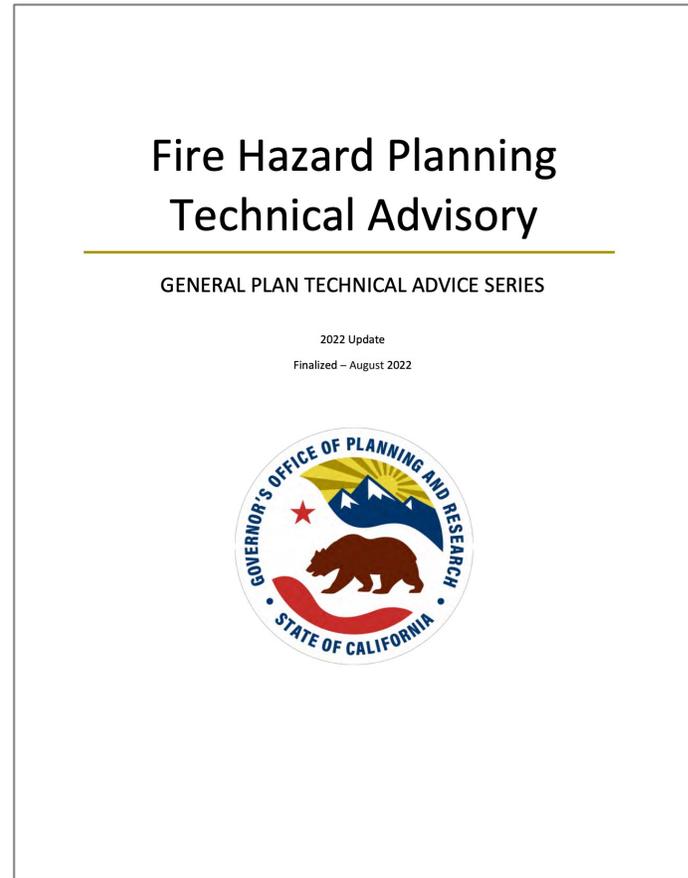
Purpose

Update the 2015 TA to include:

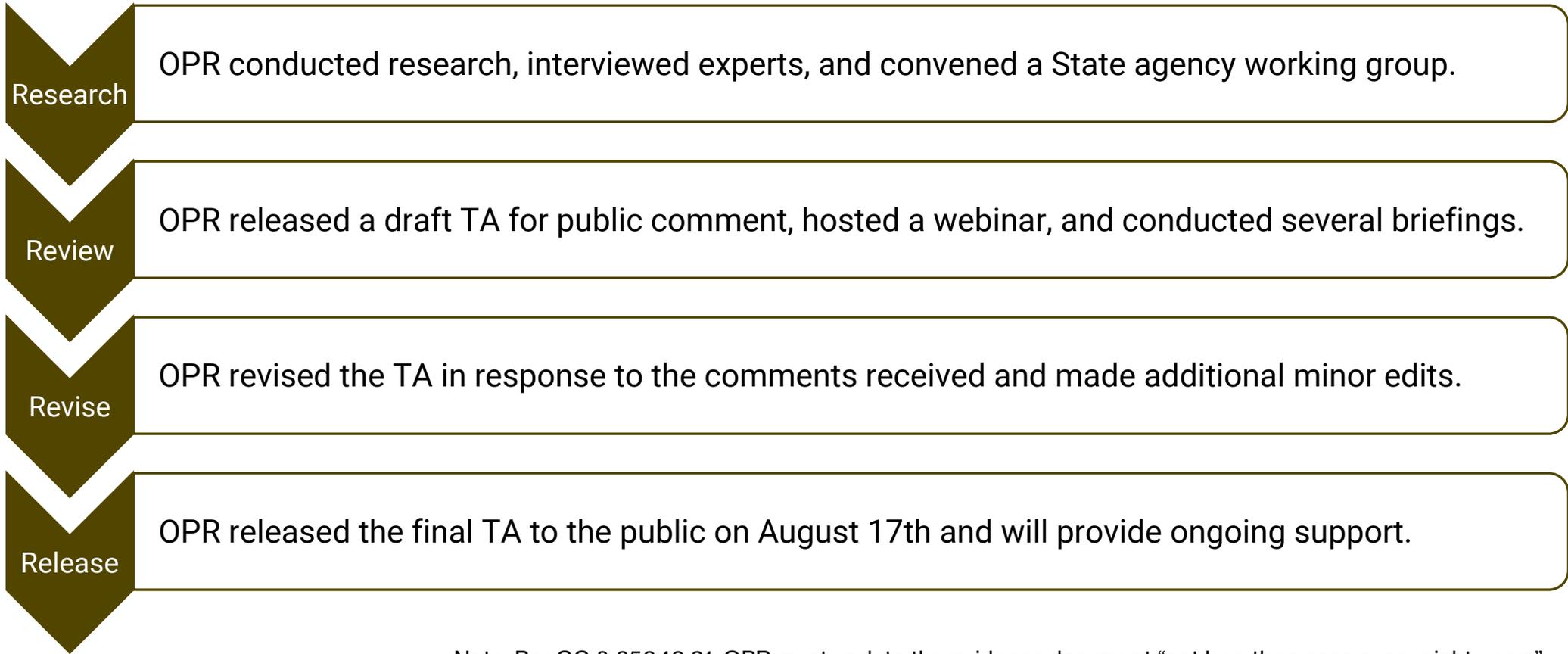
“specific land use strategies to reduce fire risk to buildings, infrastructure, and communities” per GC § 65040.21

Provide guidance to help agencies:

- Conduct outreach
- Assess wildfire hazards & risks
- Align general plan activities
- Develop policies & programs



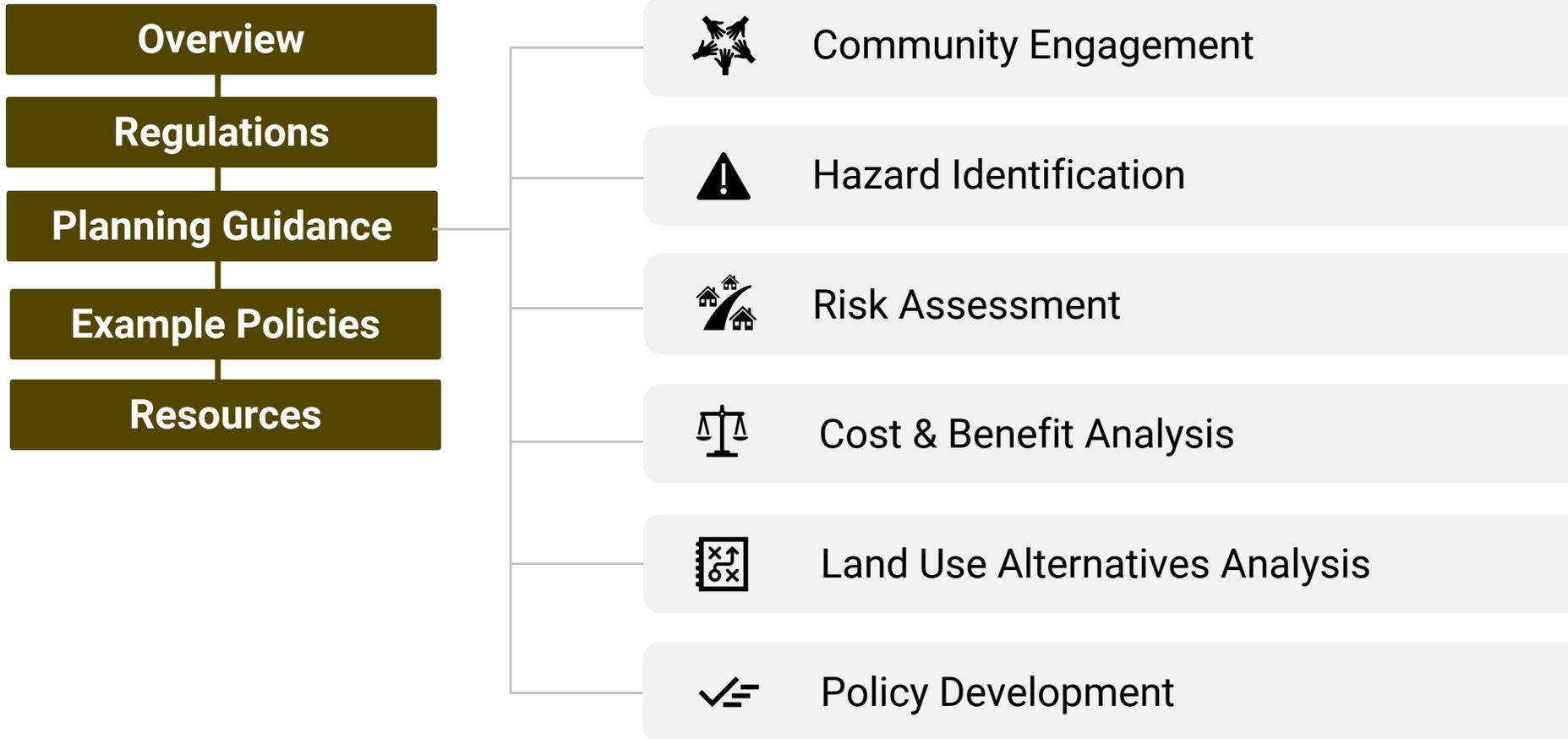
Technical Advisory Process



Note: Per GC § 65040.21, OPR must update the guidance document “not less than once every eight years”.



Components



Key Concepts



Community Engagement

- Engage early and often
- Reduce the duplication of efforts



Cost and Benefit Analysis

- Use a holistic planning approach
- Consider secondary impacts



Hazard Identification

- Review the latest wildfire data
- Consider post-fire hazards



Land Use Alternatives Analysis

- Start upstream in the process
- Protect from unreasonable risks



Risk Assessment

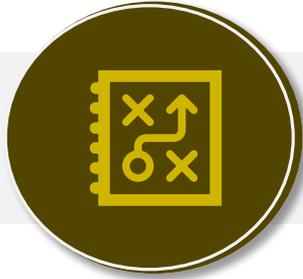
- Consider alignment with environmental justice and climate vulnerability efforts



Policy Development

- Create alignment across elements
- Plan alignment is also encouraged

Public Comment Themes



Land Use Alternatives

Commenters felt that the draft TA set a preference for avoidance over risk-minimization activities and expressed that this could create barriers for housing development.



Policy Development

Commenters felt that the TA should address regulatory challenges such as increased housing pressures from RHNA, permitting ADUs, streamlining entitlement approvals, and scaling up vegetation management activities.

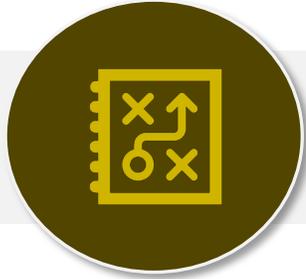


Hazard Identification

Commenters wanted the TA to address additional hazards such as wildfire smoke and post-fire landslides & flooding.

OPR received a total of 33 public comments.

Notable Changes



Land Use Alternatives

OPR clarified that avoidance and risk minimization can both be effective strategies and ensured that the TA did not give preference to either alternative.



Policy Development

OPR encourages local agencies to consider “no net loss” policies as complimentary to avoidance. In addition, the TA includes local planning approaches to support vegetation management.



Hazard Identification

OPR added additional language and examples to the TA, highlighting the impacts of wildfire smoke as well as other wildfire-related hazards.

WUI Planning Guide

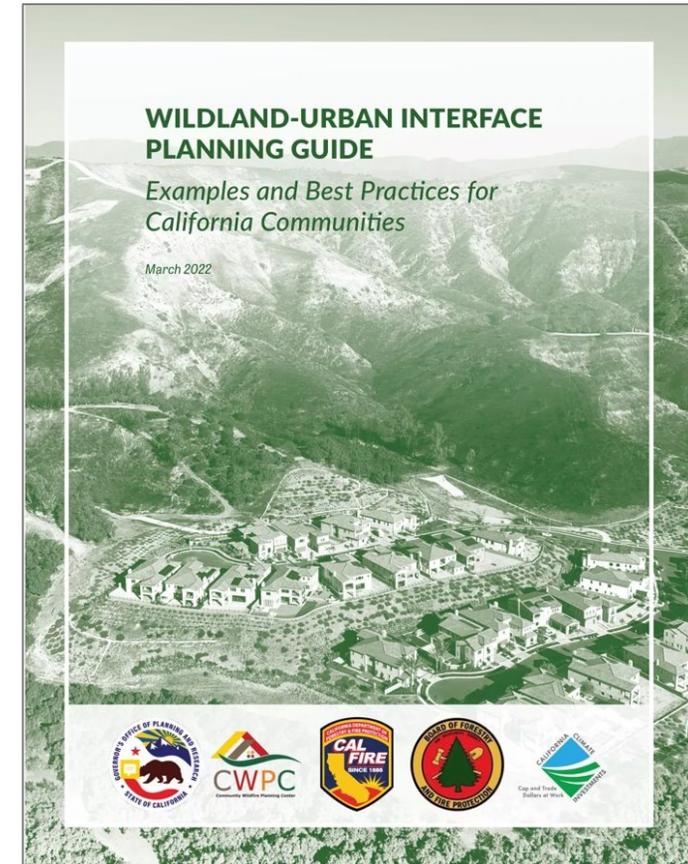
A compliment to OPR's Fire Hazard Planning TA



Purpose

California’s Budget Act of 2019 provided funding for OPR to inventory and publish: “best practices reflected in local planning ordinances and enforcement practices undertaken at the local level in the wildland urban interface”.

This project is part of California Climate Investments: a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work.



Project Partners



Community Wildfire
Planning Center



Office of Planning
and Research



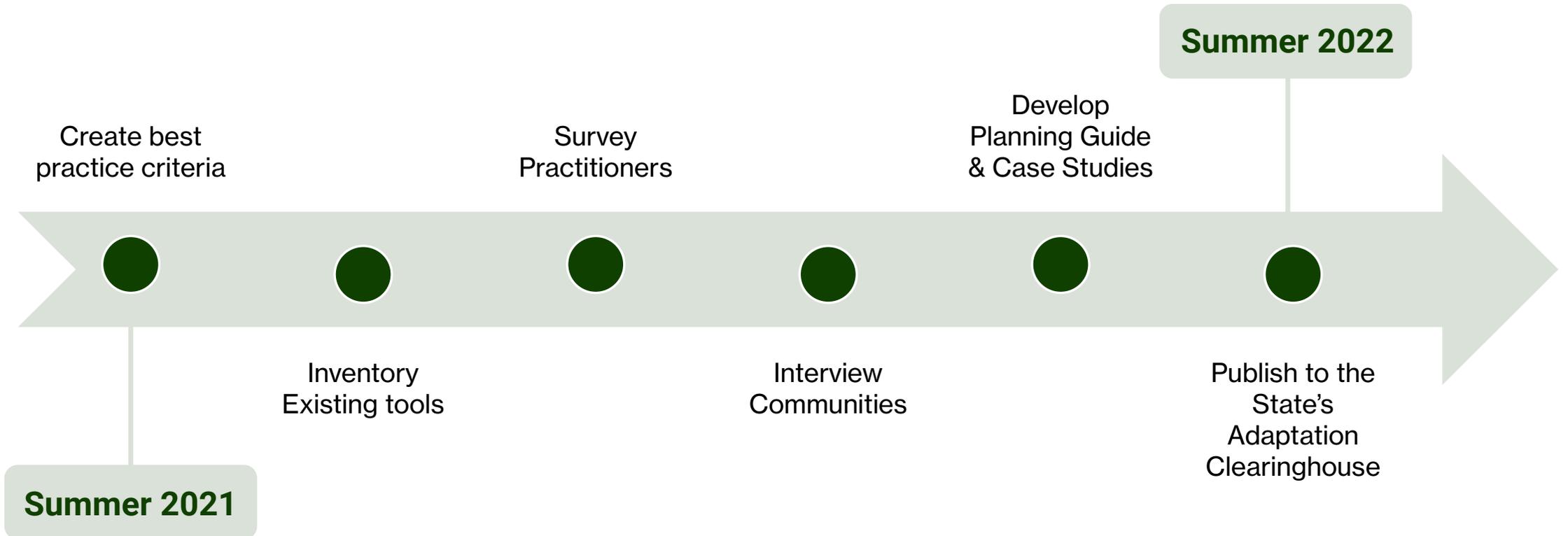
CAL FIRE



Board of Forestry
and Fire Protection



Timeline



Best Practice Criteria



Relevancy



Efficiency



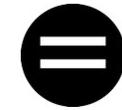
Innovation



Effectiveness



Replicability



Equity



Collaboration



Sustainability



Inventory Process

CWPC reviewed planning tools across...

- 39 Tribal Nations
- 58 Counties
- 189 Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Jurisdictions

CWPC also developed a survey

- 600+ planning and wildfire practitioners were contacted
- 117 responses were received from across the state



Case Study Selection

53 → 21 → 14 → 9

Communities
of Interest*

*based on the
inventory and
survey results

Communities
selected for
an interview

Communities
that were
interviewed

Communities
selected for
case studies



Case Study Tools & Locations

- Fire Protection Plans
- Community Plans
- Recreation and Resiliency Master Plans
- Landscaping Ordinances
- Fire Hazard Abatement Ordinances
- Disaster Recovery Ordinances
- Wildfire Hazard Overlay Zones
- Assessment Districts



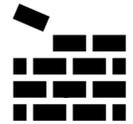
Case Study Components



Planning Tool Design



Innovations



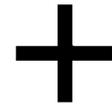
Implementation



Funding Sources



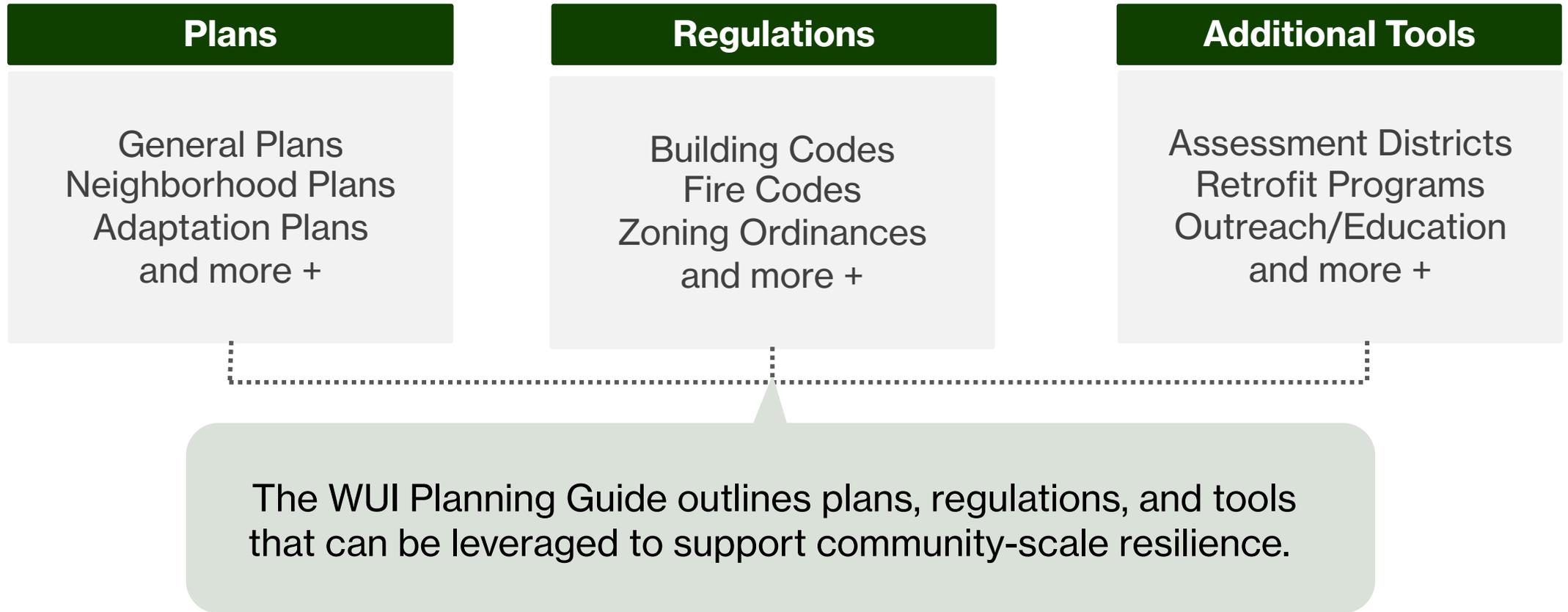
Collaboration/Engagement



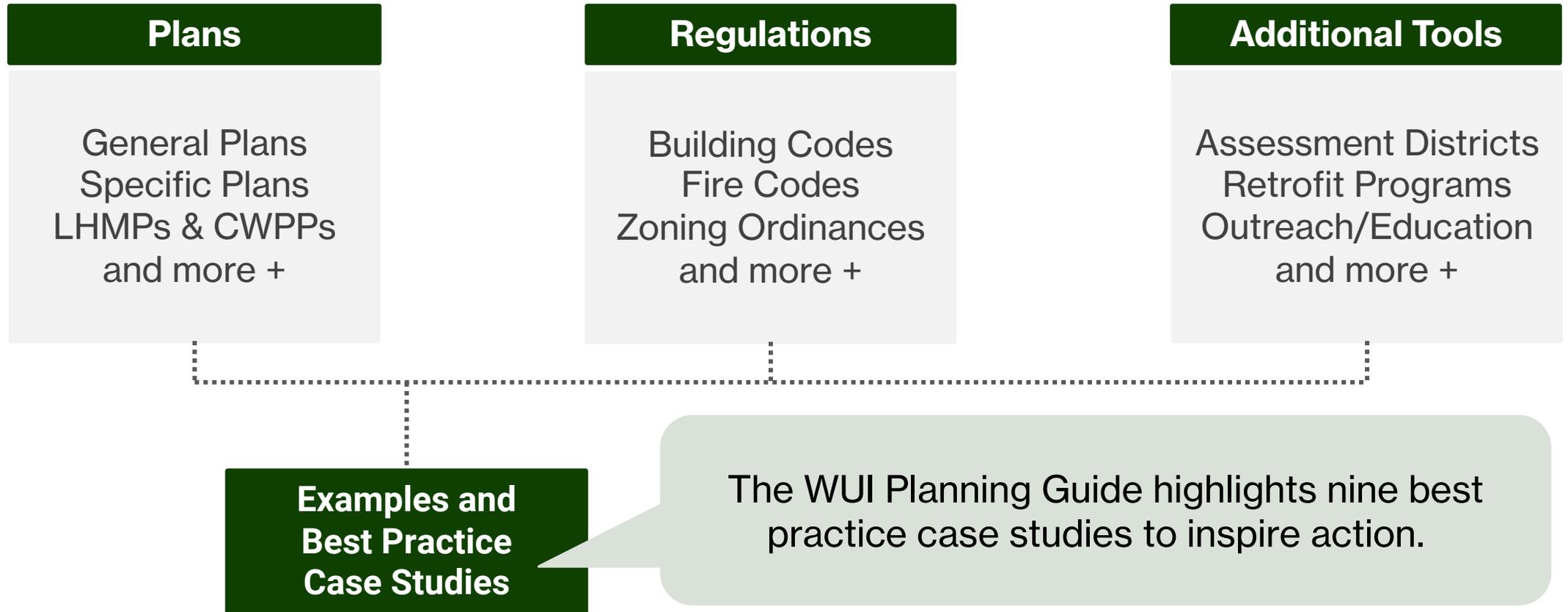
Additional Considerations



Planning Guide Framework



Connecting the Dots

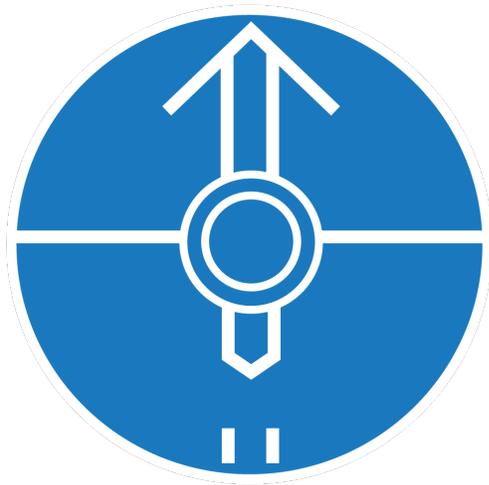


Additional Resources

Upcoming opportunities to plan for wildfire



Plan Alignment Guides



OPR is developing a suite of plan alignment guides to help local and regional agencies increase coordination to address wildfires and flood after fire events. The guides will...

- Outline local plans and their respective requirements
- Discuss strategies for aligning and leveraging planning processes
- Highlight relevant tools and guidance documents

The guides will be published in 2023 in both an interactive online format and print booklet format.

Evacuation Planning TA



SB 99 (2019), AB 747 (2019), and AB 1409 (2021) – as codified in GC § 65302(g) and 65302.15 – require local governments to update their general plan safety elements to...

- Identify residential developments in hazard areas with less than two evacuation routes
- Assess evacuation routes and locations under a range of emergency scenarios

OPR will publish a draft Evacuation Planning TA for public comment by the end of 2022. The final TA will be available in 2023.

State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations

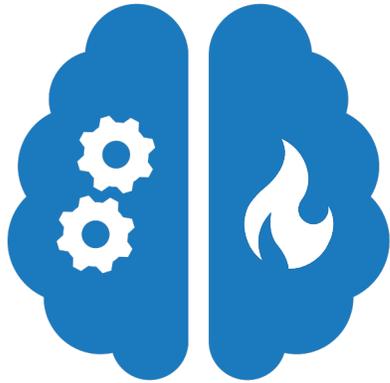


Recently the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection approved amendments to the Minimum Fire Safe Regulations to...

- establish standards for fuel breaks and greenbelts around communities
- Preserve undeveloped ridgelines designated as strategic

The amendments are currently being reviewed by the Office of Administrative Law with an anticipated effective date of January 1, 2023.

Land Use Planning for Wildfires in California – New Trainings



Learning Objectives for the trainings include:

- Expand knowledge of wildfire vulnerabilities in the built environment
- Increase understanding of state land use planning and regulatory requirements in fire hazard areas
- Gain insights to address wildfire challenges through best practices
- Foster peer learning opportunities

Trainings will launch in January 2023. Event and registration information will be available in November 2022 at www.communitywildfire.org



Questions?

Please use the Q&A function



Feedback Survey

After the webinar, please answer our 3-question survey.

Answers can help us provide better technical assistance and improve future webinars.

Thank you for attending the webinar

Please take a moment to fill out the survey below.

1. Please describe any wildfire planning technical assistance needs you have.

2. How helpful was this webinar?

 1 2 3 4 5

Not Helpful

Extremely Helpful

3. Please describe any suggestions you have for future webinars.

By submitting, I agree to the [Privacy Statement](#) and [Terms of Service](#) and share my answers with the meeting host.

Submit

 Who can see your responses?



Contact

Wildfire Technical Assistance

OPR's Wildfire TA inbox will be monitored by staff. Please reach out to us via email with any questions related to OPR's wildfire resources.

WildfireTA@opr.ca.gov

Thank you for joining!

For more info visit:
www.opr.ca.gov



Resources – Part 1

- [Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory](#)
- [Wildland-Urban Interface Planning Guide](#)
- [OPR General Plan Guidelines](#)
- [State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations](#)



Resources – Part 2

- [Land Use Planning for Wildfires in California](#)
- [State Adaptation Clearinghouse](#)
- [Office of Planning & Research E-Lists](#)
- OPR [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) Profiles

