

5.20 WILDFIRE

The two components of the proposed Project analyzed herein are:

- 1) Adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan); and
- 2) Adoption and implementation of the revised Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

Of the two Project components, the revised Zoning Ordinance is not considered to have impacts related to wildfire because they address site planning, building design, and community aesthetics, rather than physical changes to the land and were prepared for compatibility with the proposed General Plan Update.

Impacts related to the adoption and implementation of the Beaumont 2040 Plan and adoption and implementation of the DAP will be addressed herein. The revised Zoning Ordinance/Zoning Map will have similar types of land uses as the General Plan Update for consistency purposes; therefore, all discussions which apply to the General Plan Update shall also apply to the revised Zoning Map.

Since an initial study was not prepared with the issuance of the Notice of Preparation (Appendix A), the focus of the following discussion is related to potential impacts to the Project from risk of wildfire.

5.20.1 Setting

A wildfire is an unplanned fire that burns in a natural area such as a forest, grassland, or prairie (FEMA 2018). The potential for exposure to wildfire hazards can be reduced by: elimination of wildfire hazards areas; land use plans and policies that discourage or prohibit development proximate to known wildfire hazards areas; and site plans and tract/parcels maps that incorporate adequate clear areas acting to protect structures from wildfire hazards, and facilities that evidence fire-resistant designs. (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-3).

Primary fire protection services within the City are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). These services are supplemented by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). In addition to protection and response services, RCFD also implements programs designed to help prevent fires and reduce fire hazards, including but not limited to: participation in land use and development review processes, building inspection, and public education and awareness (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-4).

Wildfire Severity

The severity of potential is influenced by four factors: fire origin, vegetation, climate, and slope (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-3).

Fire Origin

A wildfire is defined as occurring in a natural, outdoor area (FEMA). However, wildfires can affect buildings if they spread to nearby communities. Urban development can exacerbate wildfire risk, specifically areas with low- to intermediate- housing density were most likely to burn, potentially due to intermingling with wildland vegetation or difficulty of firefighter access. Fire frequency also tends to be highest at low to intermediate housing density, at least in regions where humans are the primary cause of ignitions (CNRA 2018, pp 86-87).

Per the City's General Plan Land Use Plan (**Figure 3-4**), the City and the Sphere of Influence contains areas of open space as well as residential development of various densities and other urban land use designations (commercial, industrial, etc.) in proximity to these open space areas. Thus, the potential for structures in developed areas to become involved in wildfire exists within the Project area.

Vegetation

The amount and concentration of vegetation available is considered potential fuel for a fire (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-4). The amount of moisture within vegetation is the most important factor in determining its flammability; the less moisture, the less flammable. Generally, dead vegetation has less moisture than living vegetation, and thus is more flammable. In addition, the chemical makeup of the vegetation, the density of plant growth, and moisture in the underlying soil also determine the effectiveness of vegetation as fire fuel (NPS 2017).

The amount and concentration of vegetation available is defined as the “fuel load.” Light fuel loads typically consist of flammable grasses and annual herbs; medium fuels are brush and shrubs less than six feet in height; and heavy fuel loads consist of heavier brush and timber over six feet high. The majority of the fuel loads in the City are characterized as light fuels with some medium fuels in the southern and western portions of the Project area (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-4).

Climate

Weather conditions such as wind, temperature, and humidity also contribute to fire behavior. Wind is one of the most important factors because it can bring a fresh supply of oxygen to the fire and push the fire toward a new fuel source (NPS 2017). The majority of fires in Southern California occur when the marine airflow is displaced by the dry Santa Ana winds after long dry periods. Wind velocities can reach up to 100 miles per hour in exposed open space areas and relative humidity sometimes reaches zero. The westerly winds that blow with considerable force through the eastern portion of the San Gorgonio Pass can also contribute to fire hazards in the Planning Area (GP EIR 2006, p. 4.8-4).

Slope

Topographical features, specifically slope, can help or hinder the spread of fire as well as during fighting the spread of fire. Slope can determine how quickly a fire will move up or down hills. For example, if a fire ignites at the bottom of a steep slope, it will spread much more quickly upwards because it can pre-heat the upcoming fuels with rising hot air, and upward drafts are more likely to create spot fires (NPS 2017). The Project contains various steepness of slopes ranging from 0 to 5 degrees to 41 to 70 degrees (see **Figure 5.6-5, Steep Slopes**); thus, some areas could be susceptible to additional wildfire risk due to steep slopes.

Wildfire Hazards

CalFire classifies wildfire hazard areas in California. CalFire maps fire hazards within State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) and Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs). LRAs are lands on which neither state nor federal government have any legal responsibility for providing fire protection (NWCG 2019). SRAs are defined as land exclusive of cities and federal lands regardless of ownership, which are classified by the State Board of Forestry as areas in which the primary financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires is that of the State of California (CalFire 2013). Per California Public Resource Code 4201-4204, SRAs are mapped based on relevant factors such as fuels, terrain, and weather, and their potential for causing ignition to buildings (CalFire 2007).

Per California Government Code 51175-89, CalFire is required to identify very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs). Fire hazards can be in state responsibility areas (SRA) or Local Responsibility Areas (LRA), and within either SRAs or LRAs, there are VHFHSZs, or non-VHFHSZs. Mapping of the VHFHSZ is based on data and models of potential fuels over a 30-50 year time horizon and their associated expected fire behavior and expected burn probabilities which quantifies the likelihood and nature of vegetation fire exposure (including firebrands) to buildings (CalFire 2009).

Figure 5.20-1 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones depicts the zones pursuant to the latest CalFire information (<https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>). As shown on **Figure 5.20-1**, the majority of the City limits are within a LRA (CalFire 2020), while a large portion of the Sphere of Influence is identified being within a SRA. There are a few pockets of VHFHSZ within the City Limits, as the majority of the SOI in the southern portion of the Planning Area is VHFHSZ. This VHFHSZ area is associated with the open space and conservation lands within the SOI.

5.20.2 Related Regulations

Federal Regulations

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (FEMA DMA) requires mitigation planning requirements for State, local, and Indian Tribal governments as a condition of mitigation grant assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Specifically, a State mitigation plan is required in order to receive disaster assistance from FEMA and adds incentives for increased coordination and mitigation of disaster plans. The Act has also established new requirements for local mitigation plans.

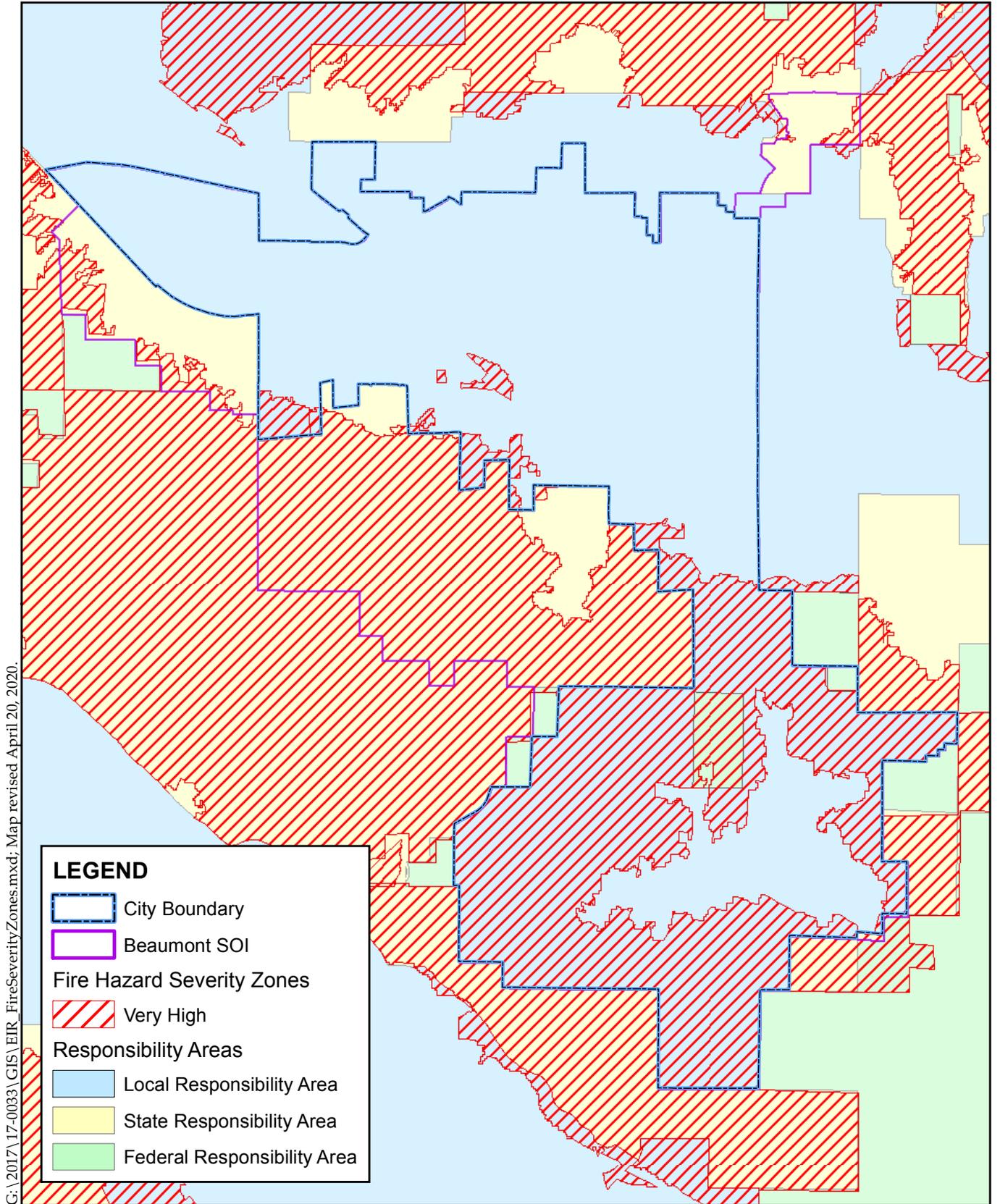
National Fire Plan

In 2000, the National Fire Plan was developed by the Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior as a report on how to respond to severe, ongoing fire activity, reduce impacts of fires on rural communities and the environment, and ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future. This report, entitled *Managing the Impacts of Wildfire on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President in Response to the Wildfires of 2000*, became the basis of the National Fire Plan (CHDS 2007). The National Fire Plan addresses five objectives: Firefighting, Rehabilitation, Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Community Assistance, and Accountability (FAR NFP). The National Fire Plan developed its implementation strategy via its *10-Year Comprehensive Strategy* and its *Implementation Plan*. Based on these two reports, in 2002 the President at the time (George W. Bush) announced the Healthy Forest Initiative to implement the National Fire Plan; this became the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The National Fire Plan, as enacted under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, works towards the goals of reducing the devastation of wildland fires and improving the health of forests and rangelands (CHDS 2007).

The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy

Under the direction of the *Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009* (the FLAME Act), the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture created the *National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy* report. This report contains a cohesive wildfire management strategy as directed by the FLAME Act and under the advisement of the intergovernmental Wildland Fire Leadership Council. The most recent version of this report is 2014's *The National Strategy: The Final Phase in the Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy* (FAR 2014, p. 1).

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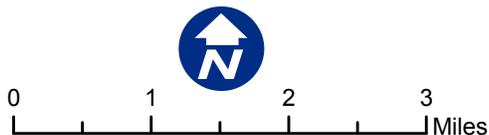


C:\2017\17-0033\GIS\EIR_FireSeverityZones.mxd; Map revised April 20, 2020.

Sources: CalFire, 2020; Raimi+ Assoc. 2019.

Figure 5.20-1 Fire Hazard Severity Zones

City of Beaumont General Plan Update



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State Regulation

2018 California State Hazard Mitigation Plan

Created by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CGOES), the 2018 California State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) represents the state's primary hazard mitigation guidance document. The primary goal of the SHMP is to reduce or eliminate potential risks and impacts of natural and human-caused disasters to help communities with their mitigation and disaster resiliency efforts. It includes an updated statewide risk assessment, disaster history, and statistics; recent mitigation progress, success stories, and best practices; updated state hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and strategies; and updated climate mitigation progress and adaptation strategies (CGOES HMP). The SHMP is required by FEMA under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which requires states to have disaster mitigation plans as described above (CGOES 2018, FEMA 2015).

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire)

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) is dedicated to the fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately owned wildlands. The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) supports the Cal Fire mission to protect life and property through fire prevention engineering programs, law and code enforcement, and education. The OSFM provides for fire prevention by enforcing fire-related laws in state-owned or operated buildings, investigating arson fires in California, licensing those who inspect and service fire protection systems, approving fireworks as safe and sane for use in California, regulating the use of chemical flame retardants, evaluating building materials against fire safety standards, regulating hazardous liquid pipelines, and tracking incident statistics for local and state government emergency response agencies (CalFire About).

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9) is based on the 2015 International Fire Code and includes amendments from the State of California fully integrated into the code. The California Fire Code contains fire safety related building standards referenced in other parts of CCR 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR 24).

California Fire Plan

The California Fire Plan is the state's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire through planning and prevention to reduce firefighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and to contribute to ecosystem health. The California Fire Plan is a cooperative effort between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CalFire. The main objectives of the California Fire Plan are as follows: involve the community; assess community risk; and develop solutions and implement projects (CalFire CFP).

California Government Code Section 51182

California Government Code Section 51182 specifically requires people who own, lease, control, operate, or maintain a building or structure on or adjoining land within a VHRHSZ, to do all of the following: (A) Maintain defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, (B) Remove that portion of a tree that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe, (C) Maintain a tree, shrub, or other plant adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood, (D) Maintain the roof of a structure free of leaves, needles, or other vegetative materials, and (E) Prior to constructing a new dwelling or structure that will be occupied or rebuilding an occupied dwelling or occupied structure damaged by a fire in that zone, the construction or rebuilding of which requires a building permit, the owner shall obtain a certification from the local building official that the dwelling or structure, as proposed to be built, complies with all applicable state and local building standards (CGC 51182).

California Public Resource Code 4290

California Public Resource Code 4290 require the following measures related to fire hazards (CPRC 4290):

- 1) Road standards for fire equipment access.
- 2) Standards for signs identifying streets, roads, and buildings.
- 3) Minimum private water supply reserves for emergency fire use.
- 4) Fuel breaks and greenbelts.

California Public Utilities Commission General Orders

General Order 95

General Order 95 contains requirements for overhead electric line design, construction (including reconstruction) and maintenance, to ensure adequate service and safety (CPUC 95, p. I-3). General Order 95 includes fire safety requirements; these requirements are implemented by the California Public Utilities Commissions by several other Rules and General Orders, as follows:

- Rule 18A requires utility companies take appropriate corrective action to remedy safety hazards (CPUC 95, p. I-8).
- Rule 18B requires that each utility company establish an auditable maintenance program (CPUC 95, p. I-9).
- Rules 31.2 requires that lines be inspected frequently and thoroughly to ensure they are in good condition (CPUC 95, p. III-6).
- Rule 35 requires that vegetation management activities be performed in order to establish necessary and reasonable clearances. These requirements apply to all overhead electrical supply and communication facilities that are covered by General Order 95, including facilities on lands owned and maintained by California State and local agencies (CPUC 95, pp. III-19 – III-21).
- Rule 38 establishes minimum vertical, horizontal, and radial clearances of wires from other wires (CPUC 95, p. III-28).

General Order 165

General Order 165 sets requirements for electrical distribution facilities inspections to ensure safety. Utilities must perform both “patrol” (a simple visual inspection meant to identify obvious problems) and “detailed” inspections (a more careful, detailed) examination over a specific time period based on the type of equipment (CPUC 165, p. 2, 5). Utilities must also submit an annual report of their inspections to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC 165, p. 4).

General Order 166

General Order 166 requires that investor-owned utilities develop fire prevention plans. The fire prevention plans must include the measures the utility plans to implement to mitigate the threat of power-line fires, identify areas in the utility’s service territory where there are specific fire-weather conditions and fire-threat indicators (CPUC 166, pp. 6-7). Utilities must also report annually to the California Public Utilities Commission on their compliance with this order (CPUC 166, p. 13).

Executive Order N-05-19

On January 9, 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-05-19 in order to address the recent damaging wildfires happening in California. Executive Order N-05-19 directs CalFire, in consultation with other state agencies and departments, to recommend immediate, medium and long-term actions to help prevent destructive wildfires. In response, CalFire (with the contribution of several other state agencies) created the *Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report* (February 22, 2019) which contains recommendations to reduce the damage from wildfires across the state. Specifically, they focus on reducing wildfire fuel (such as vegetation clearing), long-term community protection (creating defensible space in communities), wildfire prevention, and forest health (CalFire 2019, pp. 1-3).

Senate Bill 1241

Senate Bill 1241 required the Office of Planning and Research, the California Natural Resources Agency, and CalFire to develop “amendments to the initial study checklist of the [CEQA Guidelines] for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as state responsibility areas, as defined in section 4102, and on lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, as defined in subdivision (i) of section 51177 of the Government Code.” (CNRA 2018, p. 70). These amendments were incorporated into the Office of Planning and Research’s updated CEQA thresholds, including the new Wildfire section. The new thresholds for Wildfire are included in this section of the DEIR.

State of California Emergency Plan

The most recent version of the *State of California Emergency Plan* (CEP) was distributed as of October 1, 2017 from the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. It addressed California’s response to emergency situations associated with natural disasters or human-caused emergencies (CGOES 2017, p. 1). It is a requirement of the *California Emergency Services Act* (CGOES CEP), and is consistent with the *California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement* (MMAA). The MMAA obligates each signatory (which includes the State of California, its various departments and agencies, and the various political subdivisions, municipal corporations, and public agencies) to provide aid to each other during an emergency without expectation of reimbursement (CGOES 2017, p. 59). The CEP provides a consistent, statewide framework to enable state, local, tribal governments, federal government, and the private sector to work together to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of emergencies regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity (CGOES 2017, p. 5).

Subdivision Map Act

The Subdivision Map Act, California Government Code Section 66474.02, requires that before a jurisdiction approves a tentative map or parcel map in an area located in a SRA or VHFHSZ, a legislative body of a county shall make the following findings (CGC 66474.02):

1) A finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the subdivision is consistent with regulations adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Sections 4290 and 4291 of the Public Resources Code or consistent with local ordinances certified by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as meeting or exceeding the state regulations.

(2) A finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that structural fire protection and suppression services will be available for the subdivision through any of the following entities:

(A) A county, city, special district, political subdivision of the state, or another entity organized solely to provide fire protection services that is monitored and funded by a county or other public entity.

(B) The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection by contract entered into pursuant to Section 4133, 4142, or 4144 of the Public Resources Code.

Regional Regulations

Riverside County Ordinance No. 787

Riverside County Ordinance No. 787 adopts the 2016 California Fire code with amendments. It includes the requirement that all water mains and fire hydrants meet fire flow standards included in the California Fire Code and review and approval by CalFire (ORD 787).

Riverside County Ordinance No. 659

Riverside County Ordinance No. 659 requires the payment of mitigation fees to provide sufficient fire service for new development (ORD 659).

County of Riverside Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The County of Riverside's Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) identifies the County's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate the probability of future occurrences and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and man-made hazards. The LHMP was prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to achieve eligibility and potentially secure mitigation funding through grant programs (CREMD 2018, p. 4). The City is one of the participating jurisdictions in the LHMP (CREMD, p. 20).

County of Riverside Development Impact Fees

Development Impact Fees (DIFs) leveled per Riverside County Ordinance 659 (ORD 659) and Riverside County Code Chapter 4.60, to offset the project-related demand on existing fire services (RCCO 4.60).

Local Regulations

City of Beaumont Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Dated June 2012, the City of Beaumont prepared a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The LHMP was prepared to document the City's compliance with Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to achieve eligibility for funding of mitigation through FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance, Pre-Disaster Mitigation and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs. One of the hazards identified in the LHMP is wildfire and the LHMP outlines many measures to work with and coordinate other emergency management agencies during fire or other hazard events.

Beaumont Municipal Code Chapter 15.20 – Fire Code

Chapter 15.20 of the City of Beaumont Municipal Code adopts the County of Riverside Ordinance No. 787, which adopts the 2016 California Fire Code with amendments (CBMC 15.20).

5.20.3 Beaumont 2040 Plan

Implementation of the following General Plan goals and policies will assist in minimizing adverse impacts related to wildfire. The City's Beaumont 2040 Plan includes the following goals and policies, the adherence to which will reduce potential environmental impacts to wildfire:

Beaumont 2040 Plan, Chapter 3 – Land Use and Community Design

Goal 3.1: A City structure that enhances the quality of life of residents, meets the community's vision for the future, and connects new growth areas together with established Beaumont neighborhoods.

- Policy 3.1.6 Preserve and protect natural open space areas in south and southwest Beaumont and its sphere of influence.
- Policy 3.1.9 Prioritize public investments and guide private investments around existing neighborhoods and districts to locate expansion areas contiguous to the existing footprint.
- Policy 3.1.12 Establish buffers between open space areas and urban development by encouraging less intensive rural development within proximity to the open space areas.

Goal 3.2: A City that ensures the timely provision of services with phased development.

- Policy 3.2.3 Continue to oversee the development of adequate and dependable public services and facilities to support both existing and future development.

Goal 3.11: A City that maintains and enhances open space used for resource preservation and/or recreation.

- Policy 3.11.5 Preserve watercourses and washes necessary for regional flood control, ground water recharge areas and drainage for open space and recreational purposes. These include San Timoteo Creek, Little San Gorgonio Creek and Noble Creek, among others.
- Policy 3.11.6 Encourage residential clustering and allow transfer of development rights as a means of preserving open space.
- Policy 3.11.7 Preserve permanent open space edges or greenbelts that provide a buffer for separation between adjoining developments.

Goal 12: A City that minimizes the extent of urban development in the hillsides, and mitigates any significant adverse consequences associated with urbanization.

- Policy 3.12.2 Limit the extent and intensity of uses and development in areas of unstable terrain, steep terrain, scenic vistas, and other critical environmental areas.
- Policy 3.12.3 Control the grading of land, pursuant to the City's Municipal Code, to minimize the potential for erosion, landslides, and other forms of land failure, as well as to limit the potential negative aesthetic impact of excessive modification of natural landforms.

Beaumont 2040 Plan, Chapter 7 – Community Facilities and Infrastructure Element

Goal 7.1: City-wide infrastructure to support existing development and future growth.

- Policy 7.1.8 As feasible, identify the long-term risks from climate change, including changes in flooding, storm intensity, water availability, and wildfire, during infrastructure planning and design to adapt to those changes. This policy is implemented through the Safety Element.
- Policy 7.1.9 Encourage designs that treat infrastructure elements as amenities, not hazards, when considering development applications and infrastructure improvements

Goal 7.2: A clean and sustainable water supply that supports existing community needs and long-term growth.

- Policy 7.2.2 Coordinate with the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District to ensure that adequate water supplies and pressures are available during a fire, earthquake, or both.

Goal 7.4: Incorporate sustainable and improved stormwater management practices.

- Policy 7.4.1 Incorporate low-impact development (LID) techniques to improve stormwater quality and reduce run-off quantity.
- Policy 7.4.3 Require new development and redevelopment projects to reuse stormwater on-site to the maximum extent practical and provide adequate stormwater infrastructure for flood control.

Goal 7.8: City-wide access to high-quality energy utility and telecommunication services.

- Policy 7.8.3 When feasible, place new utilities underground to promote attractive neighborhoods and streetscapes and reduce wildfire risk.
- Policy 7.8.5 Ensure that siting of telecommunication facilities provides efficiency and quality services to emergency response providers in the City.

Beaumont 2040 Plan, Chapter 8 – Conservation and Open Space Element

Goal 8.7: A City where open space is preserved and used for resource conservation and/or recreation.

- Policy 8.7.5 Preserve watercourses and washes necessary for regional flood control, ground water recharge areas, and drainage for open space and recreational purposes.
- Policy 8.7.6 Preserve permanent open space edges or greenbelts that provide a buffer for separation between adjoining developments.

Goal 8.9: A City where the extent of urban development in the hillsides is minimized and mitigated.

- Policy 8.9.3 Control land grading to minimize the potential for erosion, landsliding, and other forms of land failure, as well as to limit the potential negative aesthetic impact of excessive modification of natural landforms.

Beaumont 2040 Plan, Chapter 9 – Safety Element

Goal 3: A City that provides effective emergency response following a natural or human-caused disaster.

- Policy 9.3.1 Ensure that the City's Emergency Operations Plan is regularly updated to be compatible with Federal, State and local emergency requirements and latest FEMA Best Practices.
- Policy 9.3.2 Continue to partner with local emergency management organizations to implement coordinated emergency response planning.
- Policy 9.3.3 Continue to educate City staff, residents, and businesses regarding appropriate actions to take during an emergency.
- Policy 9.3.4 Promote community-based, emergency preparedness programs and disaster education awareness, including the City's annual emergency system training.
- Policy 9.3.5 Support the existing Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program to educate volunteers about disaster preparedness and train them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.
- Policy 9.3.6 Maintain emergency procedures for the evacuation and control of population in identified flood hazard areas in accordance with Section 8589.5 of the California Government Code.

Goal 9.4: A City that is protected from the effects of natural and manmade disasters.

- Policy 9.4.1 Continue coordinated review of development proposals with the Police Department and Fire Safety Specialist to ensure that police and fire staff and resources keep pace with new development planned or proposed in the City and City's Sphere of Influence.
- Policy 9.4.2 Conduct a community risk assessment or hazard profile in partnership with fire crews, community members, and city staff to identify specific target hazards, including critical facilities, community assets, and historical buildings.
- Policy 9.4.3 Maintain adequate levels of staffing for fire protection and emergency services by
- Retention of current staffing positions,
 - Forecast of future demand, and
 - Provision of additional staff, equipment and technology acquisition, and facilities when fiscally appropriate and needed.
- Policy 9.4.4 Ensure that backup power is maintained in critical facilities across the City.
- Policy 9.4.5 Require new development to provide access roads that allow both safe and efficient access of emergency equipment and community evacuation.
- Policy 9.4.6 Restrict new development in areas where adequate access cannot be achieved, unless remedies are proposed that alleviate the constraints.
- Policy 9.4.7 Develop a fire service standards study, including identification of existing and future needs and recommendations to address challenges posed by Beaumont's topography, vegetation hazards, road network, extent of fire emergency, and safety personnel capacity.

Goal 9.5: A City with enhanced fire and emergency response services.

- Policy 9.5.1 Ensure that the locations of new and existing fire protection facilities provide a consistent level of service across the City. Fund and support new fire stations, personnel, and equipment as needed to meet NFPA and County Fire response standards. Partner with CAL FIRE to establish minimum staffing levels for each fire company or each duty shift.
- Policy 9.5.2 Increase Fire Department resources and facilities to the western portion of Beaumont to decrease current response times to the targeted response time of five minutes.
- Policy 9.5.4 Continue code enforcement efforts to reduce fire hazards associated with older buildings.
- Policy 9.5.5 Coordinate with the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District to ensure that water pressure for existing and future developed areas is adequate for firefighting purposes.
- Policy 9.5.6 Provide fire suppression water system guidelines and implementation plans for existing and acquired lands, including fire protection water volumes, system distribution upgrades, and emergency water storage.
- Policy 9.5.7 Continue to provide technical and policy information regarding structural and wild land fire hazards to developers, interested parties, and the general public through all available media.
- Policy 9.5.8 Continue to support and promote the Riverside County Fire and CAL FIRE Ready Set Go program.
- Policy 9.5.9 Coordinate with CAL FIRE, Riverside County Fire Department, and other agencies to provide emergency services training for residents and City staff, and promote fire

prevention programs, including raising awareness about fire safe landscaping and buffer zones in areas of wildfire risk.

Goal 9.6: A City that protects human life, land, and property from the effects of wildland fire hazards.

- Policy 9.6.1 Inventory and assign risk levels for wildfire hazards to assist in regulating the allowable type, density, location, and/or design and construction of new developments, both public and private.
- Policy 9.6.2 Update development standards to meet or exceed the California Code of Regulations Title 14 State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations.
- Policy 9.6.3 Ensure that development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones minimizes the risks of wildfire through planning and design of structures in accordance with the California Building Code Chapter 7A. Ensure adequate provisions for vegetation management, emergency access, and firefighting.
- Policy 9.6.4 Require new development in the High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to develop a fire protection and evacuation plan and ensure that the plan includes adequate fire access to new development.
- Policy 9.6.5 Prohibit new public or critical facilities in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, except when other options do not exist.
- Policy 9.6.6 Require property owners to clear brush and high fuel vegetation and maintain fire-safe zones (a minimum distance of 30 feet from the structure or to the property line, whichever is closer) to reduce the risk of fires. For structures located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, the required brush distance is up to 200 feet from structures up to their property line.
- Policy 9.6.7 Continue to enforce the weed abatement ordinance to mitigate potential fire hazard risks.
- Policy 9.6.8 Require that developments located in wildland interface areas incorporate and enforce standards for construction, including a fuel modification program (i.e., brush clearance, planting of fire-retardant vegetation) to reduce the threat of wildfires.
- Policy 9.6.9 Ensure that re-development after a large fire complies with the requirements for construction in the High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones for fire safety.
- Policy 9.6.10 Evaluate soils and waterways for risks from flooding, water quality, and erosion to ensure that they are suitable to support redevelopment following a large fire.

Goal 9.8: A City with reduced potential flood hazards.

- Policy 9.8.3 Work closely with Federal and regional partners to perform timely reviews of potential flood hazards and identify mitigation strategies.
- Policy 9.8.4 Require all new developments to mitigate potential flooding that may result from development, such as grading that prevents adverse drainage impacts to adjacent properties, on-site retention of runoff, and the adequate siting of structures located within flood plains.
- Policy 9.8.7 Support regional efforts to control and mitigate existing potential flood related problems.
- Policy 9.8.8 Evaluate the feasibility of expanded joint-use of open space lands and utility easements for flood control.

Policy 9.8.9 Encourage property owners and residents to purchase flood insurance for areas outside of the FEMA-mapped 100-year flood zones, especially in areas that have experienced flooding in the past.

Goal 9.9: A City that promotes preparedness related to the adverse effects of high winds common in the Pass area.

Policy 9.9.1 Consider potential risk posed by high winds in the City in the review of new development applications including those for signs.

Policy 9.9.4 Continuously monitor multi-hazard threats during high wind and associated wildfire conditions. Allocate appropriate firefighting and emergency personnel resources to effectively respond to multi-hazard threats.

5.20.4 Thresholds of Significance

The City has not established local CEQA significance thresholds as described in Section 15064.7 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Therefore, significance determinations utilized in this section are from Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. If located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ), a significant impact would occur if the Project would:

- (Threshold A) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- (Threshold B) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;
- (Threshold C) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; and/or
- (Threshold D) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes;

5.20.5 Environmental Impacts before Mitigation

At the programmatic level addressed in this EIR, a variety of regulatory measures, including compliance with and implementation of Federal, State, Regional, and Local regulations as well as City's applicable General Plan goals and policies, would serve to ensure potential impacts to wildfire are reduced to the point where impacts are less than significant. In addition, future implementing projects would be subject to further CEQA review focusing on the specifics of the proposed project which cannot be foreseen at this time since no specific development proposals are included as part of the Beaumont 2040 Plan.

Threshold A: *If located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ), would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

CalFire identifies areas of VHFHSZs within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA)s and SRAs. As shown on **Figure 5.20-1**, the City Limits are within a LRA (CalFire 2020). Within the SOI of the Planning Area, there are areas of SRA and Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) associated with the open space and conservation areas in the southern portion of the Planning Area. Lastly, the majority of the SOI is within a VHFHSZ, with a few pockets of the City Limits having some VHFHSZ.

The Riverside County Fire Department Office of Emergency Services is responsible for planning for and managing emergency responses for the County; specifically, the County's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), as discussed above, includes assessments of the nature, locations, probabilities, and severities of a wide variety of hazards, as well as mitigation goals and strategies and action plans for reducing disaster risks (LHMP, p. 4). It specifically contains recommendations for dealing with wildfire risks, primarily through creating defensible space by keeping fire fuel away from buildings (CREMD, pp. 395 – 396). Since the City is one of the participating jurisdictions in the LHMP, the City will comply with the LHMP (CREMD, pp. 423 - 424).

The City's GP Safety Element contains additional policies, shown above, for reducing potential losses from disasters and for emergency responses. Evacuation routes designated under the Safety Element of the General Plan are shown in **Figure 5.20-2 Evacuation Routes**. Additionally, the Circulation Element of the General Plan provides for appropriate access and circulation throughout the General Plan area and allows for appropriate access for rapid response for emergency situations and routes for evacuation purposes.

Goals 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 in the General Plan support and provide for updates, coordination, programs and promotion by the City and other public agencies for emergency services, support, and responses. Specifically, Policies 9.4.5 and 9.4.6 address the need to maintain and provide emergency access and evacuation planning. Lastly, Implementation Plan S13 also requires standards for new development and requiring emergency/evacuation access and routes.

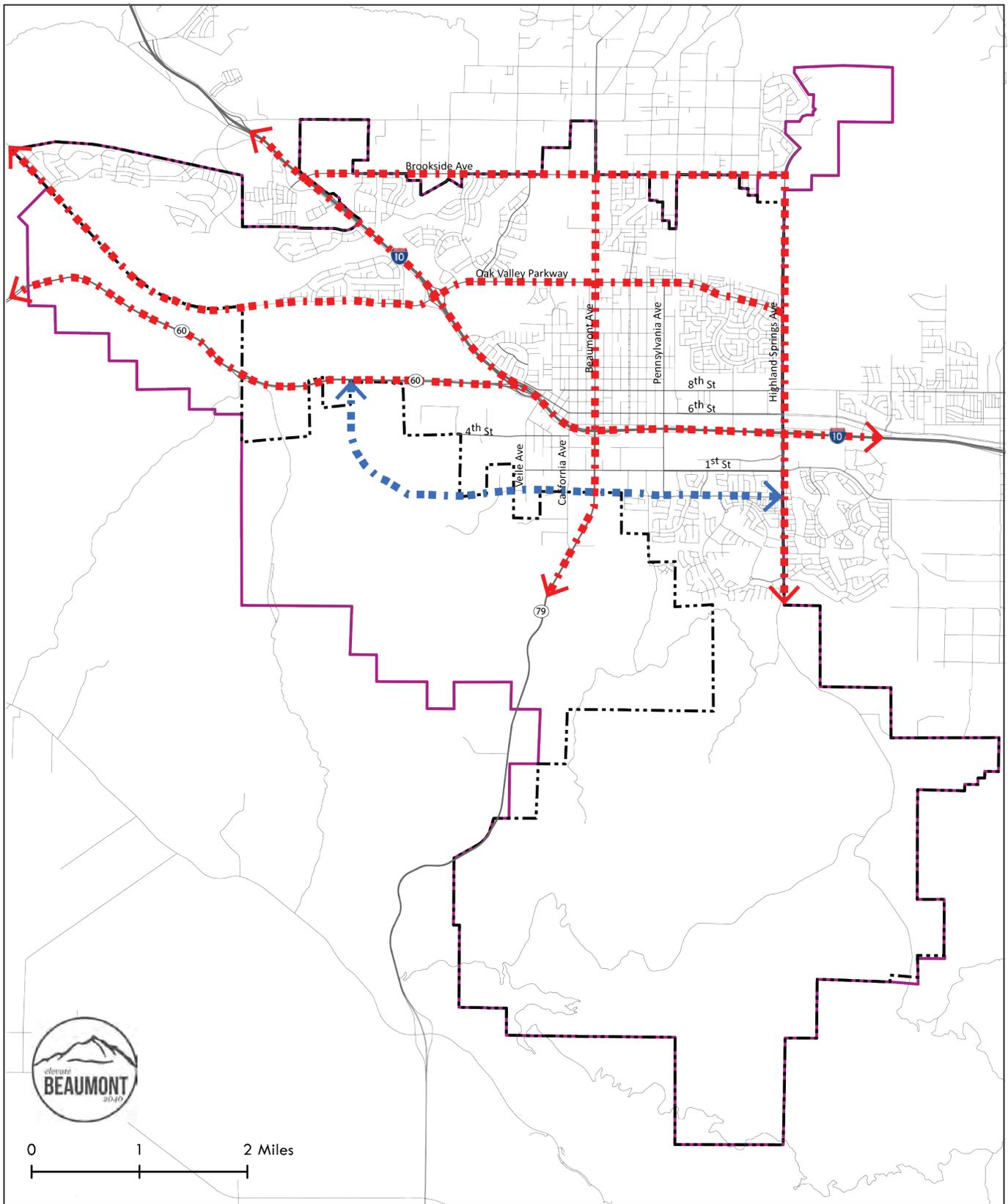
Thus, the implementation of the General Plan and Revised Zoning does not propose any changes that will impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan because the City will comply with the LHMP and applicable GP Goals and Policies ensuring that emergency response plans and evacuation plans are provided. Impacts are considered **less than significant with no mitigation necessary**.

Threshold B: *If located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ), would the Project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

As discussed in Threshold A above, The Planning Area does include areas of SRAs and VHFHSZs, mainly in the southern portion of the City and Sphere of Influence, so the Project has a potentially significant impact on wildfire. As discussed above, factors such as vegetation (potential fuel for wildfires), climate, slope, and fire origin (proximity to development) could possibly exacerbate wildfire risks.

Protection from wildfire is realized through creation of defensible areas around structures and the use of fire-resistant building materials (CREMD, pp. 395 – 396). Standard City Building and Safety Department and City Fire Department environmental and building permit review processes are intended to ensure that new developments are safely designed to avoid exacerbating wildfire risk.

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- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Evacuation Route
- Future Evacuation Route

Figure 5.20-2 - Evacuation Routes

City of Beaumont General Plan Update



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For instance, General Plan Goal 9.6 and supporting Policies along with General Plan Policies 3.1.12, 3.11.5, 3.11.6, 3.11.7, and 9.3.3 promote public awareness of wildland fire hazards and require appropriate protection from these hazards. Buffering and distancing development through the General Plan policies listed above, will help to limit the exposure of residents to pollutants during fires. Evacuation routes and emergency preparedness outlined above in Threshold A will also further to remove residents from exposure during wildfire events to also reduce exposure during fire events. Therefore, with implementation of the applicable General Plan goals, policies, and implementation plans, impacts are considered **less than significant with no mitigation necessary**.

Threshold C: *If located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ), would the Project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

The Planning Area does include a few SRAs and VHFHSZs, so the Project has a potentially significant impact on wildfire. The Project does not include any implementing development projects, and thus does not require the installation of new infrastructure. However, the General Plan does include Goals and Policies related to the planning for infrastructure and needed to support the development contemplated by the General Plan and subsequently the Zoning Map revisions.

Specifically, General Plan Goal 9.5 and supporting Policies along with General Plan Policies 3.1.9, 7.1.8, 7.1.9, 7.2.2, 7.4.3, 9.4.4 all further the planning for infrastructure in terms of protection against wildfires. Implementation Plans S12, S13, S14 and S16 also address the need to plan for and consider wildfire risk related to important infrastructure plans. Because development in or near the SRA and VHFHSZ's are low density and will have restraints from the goals and policies listed above, temporary or ongoing fire risk is also not envisioned.

Maintenance of existing infrastructure and the potential installation of new infrastructure for future projects in the Project area would comply with the City of Beaumont's fire code requirements new development projects and as such, will be reviewed by the Fire Department to determine the specific fire requirements applicable to ensure compliance with these requirements. In addition, any development in the City would need to comply with the City's building code and standard building permit review process as designated by the City Building and Safety Department, to ensure that new developments have access to necessary utilities, and any additional utility construction complies with all code requirements. Therefore, because development implemented through compliance with the General Plan and Revised Zoning Map will comply with applicable General Plan Goals, Policies and Implementation Plans, impacts related to installation and maintenance needs that can exacerbate fire risk are considered **less than significant with no mitigation necessary**.

Threshold D: *If located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ), would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

The Planning Area is in and near SRAs and VHFHSZs, so the Project has a potentially significant impact on wildfire. As discussed in DEIR Sections 5.6, Geology and Soils, landslide risks from the Project are less than significant with compliance with existing codes and regulations, including the California Building Code (as adopted by the City's Municipal Code). Project flooding and drainage is discussed in DEIR Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality; runoff, flooding, and drainage impacts are less than significant

with no mitigation required with implementation of relevant General Plan policies and existing regulations, such as compliance with the City’s municipal code.

Specifically, General Plan Goal 8.5 and its supporting Policies, and General Plan Policies 3.1.6, 3.1.9, 3.1.12, 3.12.2, 3.12.3, 7.4.1, 7.4.3, all help to address and maintain open areas, preserve or discourage development in hillside areas, or drainages that can lead to flooding or downstream risk after fire events. Through compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Goals and Policies there are no significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes, and impacts are considered **less than significant with no mitigation measures necessary**.

5.20.6 Proposed Mitigation Measures

An EIR is required to describe feasible mitigation measures which could minimize significant adverse impacts (*CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15126.4). Since all impacts related to wildfire are less than significant before mitigation, mitigation is not necessary and no mitigation measures are proposed.

5.20.7 Level of Significance after Mitigation

Since all impacts related to wildfire are less than significant before mitigation, mitigation is not necessary and no mitigation measures are proposed. Impacts are **less than significant**.

5.20.8 References

The following references were used in the preparation of this section of the DEIR:

CalFire 2009	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program. <i>Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA, As Recommended by CALFIRE – Beaumont</i> , December 21, 2009. (Available at https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/5907/beaumont.pdf , accessed July 11, 2019).
CalFire 2007	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program. <i>Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA – Western Riverside County</i> , November 7, 2007. (Available at https://frap.fire.ca.gov/media/6243/fhszs_map60.pdf , accessed July 11, 2019).
CalFire 2013	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program. <i>State Responsibility Area and Facilities</i> , updated 2013. (Available at https://frap.fire.ca.gov/media/2136/facilities_sra_map.pdf , accessed July 11, 2019).
CalFire 2019	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. <i>Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report</i> , February 22, 2019. (Available at https://fire.ca.gov/media/5584/45-day-report-final.pdf , accessed July 12, 2019).
CalFire 2020	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Fire Hazard Safety Zone Viewer. https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/ (accessed April 27, 2020).
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CalFire CFP	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. <i>California Fire Plan Overview</i> . (Available at https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/4934/fireplan.pdf , accessed July 12, 2019).

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- CGOES CEP California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. *State of California Emergency Plan (NEW)*. (Available at <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/planning-preparedness/state-of-california-emergency-plan-emergency-support-functions>, accessed July 12, 2019)
- CGOES HMP California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. *2018 California State Hazard Mitigation Plan*. (Available at <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/hazard-mitigation/hazard-mitigation-planning/state-hazard-mitigation-plan>, accessed July 12, 2019)
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