



Wildfire Adapted Communities

The Department of Land Conservation and Development's (DLCD) charge under Senate Bill 762 (2021) – Oregon's landmark comprehensive wildfire legislation – is to recommend potential changes to the statewide land use planning program and local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that minimize wildfire risk and create more wildfire adapted communities.

DLCD is Receiving Written Comment through September 16, 2022

[Read DLCD's Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report: Public Review Draft](#)

[Provide comments using the online form here.](#)

Guiding Principles: Through a robust and diverse community engagement process supported by research into best practices, review of policies currently in use by Oregon jurisdictions, and feedback from the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC), DLCD developed the following guiding principles for development of recommendations:

1. *Protect human life from the growing risks of wildfires*
2. *Increase the ability of Oregon communities to withstand and recover from wildfires*
3. *Focus on achieving equitable outcomes and increase community capacity, with greater attention given to historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities*
4. *Protect and increase the resilience of important infrastructure and community assets, particularly those critical for survival and recovery*
5. *Protect the natural environment we all depend on, and the places people live, work, and gather*
6. *Work with communities to identify regional and local differences for consideration within the context of Statewide Land Use Planning Goals to mitigate wildfire risk*
7. *Consider local capacity and state support in the implementation of wildfire mitigation measures*

URLs:

www.oregon.gov/lcd/NH/Documents/20220819_DLCD-Wildfire-Draft-Recommendations-Report-Public-Review.pdf
<https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/NH/Pages/WAC-Public-Comment-Form.aspx>
<https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/NH/Pages/Wildfire-Adapted-Communities.aspx>

Wildfire Impacts

Record-breaking wildfires have threatened communities, businesses, landscapes, and wildlife across Oregon.

By the numbers...



1M+
ACRES BURNED
IN OREGON 2020



4,000
HOMES DESTROYED
IN OREGON 2020



**AVERAGE
ACRES**
BURNED ANNUALLY
OVER THREE DECADES



\$1.4B
SPENT
FIRE FIGHTING
SINCE 2017

Smoke from wildfires and the associated health and economic impacts are some ways that many Oregonians have been impacted by wildfires.

In addition to the devastating loss of life, homes, and businesses, other significant social, economic, and environmental implications include loss of infrastructure, cultural resources, and tourism; transportation and power interruptions; and negative impacts to watersheds, wildlife habitat, timber, agriculture, and recreation.

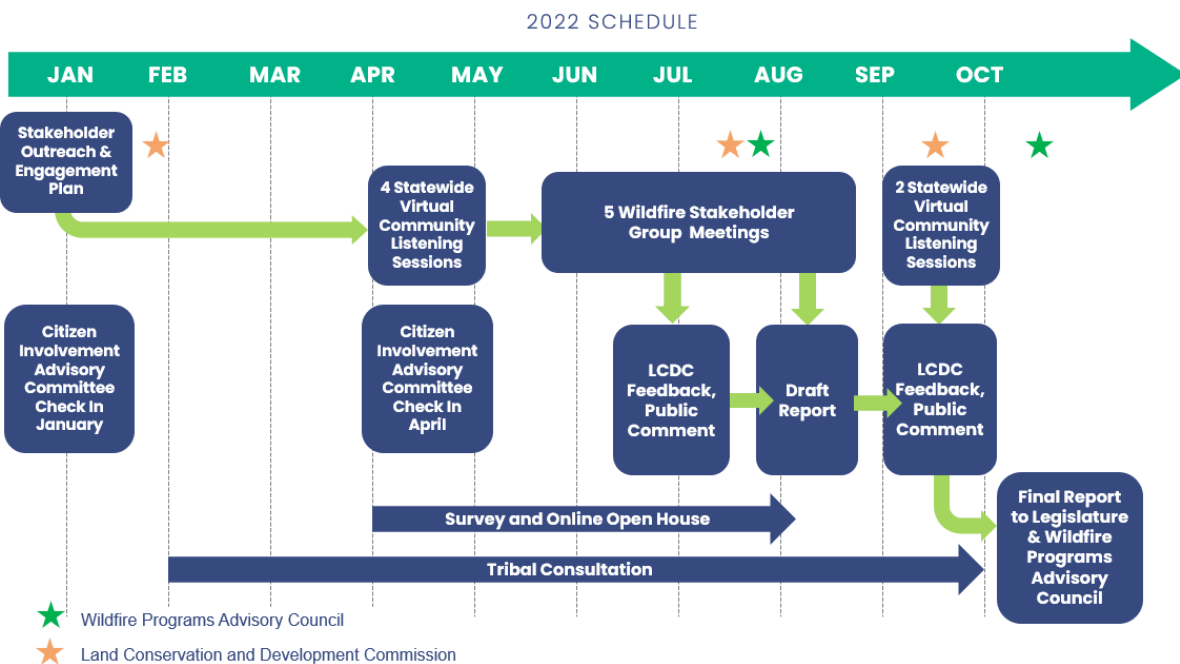
Sources: Office of Senator Jeff Golden and Doug Grafe, Wildfire Programs Director



Process: DLCD has invited community engagement throughout the process of developing the recommendations. The department has sought feedback through Community Listening Sessions, meetings with a [Wildfire Adapted Communities Stakeholder Group](#), one-on-one interviews, feedback from LCDC and the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council, an [online open house](#) and [survey](#), and Tribal consultation.

DLCD staff encourage written comments on the recommendations will be received through September 16, 2022. Staff will present a final Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report to LCDC at their September 22-23, 2022 meeting.

DLCD Community Engagement & Reporting



What is included in DLCD's recommendations?

DLCD evaluated many possible recommendations raised during the community and stakeholder engagement process. After careful consideration, staff have included the following recommendations that align with the guiding principles and have the highest potential for reducing wildfire risk. Recommendations cover the following topics:

- Community Information and Engagement
- Safe Evacuation and Firefighting Response
- Wildfire Risk Mitigation Requirements for Areas of New Development
- Recovery Planning
- Areas Subject to Natural Hazards



DLCD's Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report: Summary of Recommendations

As directed by SB 762 and consistent with the goal of minimizing wildfire risk in updating state and local land use planning programs, DLCD presents the following recommendations. While the growing threat of wildfires is an urgent issue and action must be taken to protect Oregon, DLCD recognizes that policies integrating land use and wildfire risk can raise complex and controversial questions. For these reasons, these recommendations focus on actions that will most effectively protect people and property and are within the authority and capacity of the state and cities and counties to implement.

Community Information and Engagement

Recommendation 1: Cities and counties prioritize robust and inclusive community information and engagement in planning efforts to create wildfire adapted communities

DLCD recommends that cities and counties use best practices and a meaningful participatory process to engage community members, particularly those from traditionally under-served and under-represented populations, in planning wildfire adapted communities, which includes preparedness, evacuation, adaptation, mitigation, and recovery planning. Planning for wildfire is most likely to be successful when the entire community participates in the effort. Plans to mitigate wildfire must recognize the many ways that people interact with and depend on the built and natural environment. Understanding Oregonians' lived experiences and needs, especially socially and economically vulnerable community members, and prioritizing such needs in planning outcomes can increase overall community resilience and the ability to recover.

Safe Evacuation and Firefighting Response

Recommendation 2: Cities and counties assess and improve transportation networks for safe evacuation and firefighting response

DLCD recommends that cities and counties, in coordination with emergency management, transportation, and fire protection professionals, work across jurisdictional boundaries with regional, state, and federal partners and Tribal governments to assess the existing transportation network, identifying gaps or deficiencies that may hinder safe evacuation of residents and visitors and efficient access for firefighting response. The need for safe evacuation is present in all areas of wildfire risk.

Recommendation 3: Cities and counties review and amend local land use codes for new development to ensure safe evacuation and efficient access for firefighting response

DLCD recommends cities and counties, in coordination with state and local emergency management and fire protection professionals, review and amend zoning and land division codes to increase street connectivity and site access for new development to allow for safe evacuation of residents and visitors and efficient access for firefighting and other emergency response vehicles. Because of constant change in the landscape and wildfire conditions, it is vital that communities ensure that subdivisions, manufactured home parks, retail centers, and other areas with multiple structures are planned and built to have more than one access road in and out with sufficient grade and widths for firefighting equipment and personnel. DLCD acknowledges that a waiver process should be provided in certain circumstances.



Wildfire Risk Mitigation Requirements for Areas of New Development

Recommendation 4: Cities and counties review and amend comprehensive plan policies and implement land use codes to incorporate wildfire risk mitigation requirements for new development

DLCD recommends that in areas of greatest wildfire risk³⁴ cities and counties review and amend comprehensive plan policies and implement zoning, development, and land division codes for new development to: (1) incorporate requirements and standards to reduce wildfire risk, (2) ensure the provision of services, such as adequate water supply and pressure to fight fires, and (3) limit siting of facilities with concentrated, vulnerable populations, such as schools, hospitals, assisted living facilities, clean air shelters, and prisons; critical facilities, infrastructure, and lifelines; and hazardous facilities and materials. DLCD acknowledges that a waiver process should be provided in certain circumstances.

Recovery Planning

Recommendation 5: DLCD provides support to cities and counties for post-disaster recovery in local communities through recovery planning services

DLCD recommends that the Legislature provide funding to DLCD to develop a programmatic approach to support cities and counties after wildfire or other disasters. Funding would support the delivery of professional services post-disaster by planning consultants and provide DLCD capacity to assist with pre-disaster recovery planning.

While DLCD's recommendations primarily focus on wildfire mitigation, recovery professionals and those with lived experience recognize that hazards overlap; that Oregon is vulnerable to a wide range of hazards; hazard events can recur; and that many hazards will increase with climate change.

Areas Subject to Natural Hazards

Recommendation 6: DLCD provides support to cities, counties, special districts, and Tribes to increase the effectiveness of natural hazards planning through coordination of Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan processes and adoption of policies and actions into comprehensive plans and codes

Statewide Planning Goal 7: Areas Subject to Natural Hazards directs a local government to address natural hazards in their comprehensive land use plan by adopting a natural hazard inventory, policies, and supporting land use codes developed through a public planning process. Lack of information needed to assess risk and make decisions about mitigation priorities, issues of staff capacity, and lack of adequate funding has resulted in minimal natural hazards planning in some communities. DLCD recommends that funding from the Legislature be provided for DLCD to develop and implement a programmatic approach to support cities, counties, special districts, and Tribes to better coordinate the timing of Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP) development and updates, and their subsequent integration into Comprehensive Plans and land use regulations.

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[Provide comments in the online form here.](#)

Questions? Contact Susan Millhauser, Natural Hazards Planner - Wildfire, susan.millhauser@dlcd.oregon.gov, 971-718-1584
Related agency work: www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/wildfire-programs-council