

**Town of Paradise  
Housing Element Update  
Wildfire Resiliency & Recovery**

**Review of Projects,  
Goals, and Outcomes**

Portola Valley Housing Element Ad Hoc Committee

January 18, 2022



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# Background

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- Paradise Housing Stock (+/-12,000 homes)
  - 1979 – 69% already built-out (at time of incorporation)
  - 2011 – New construction required to comply with the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fire resistant construction standards, only 205 homes built to the WUI standards since 2011 (75 of the 81 homes in construction in 2018 withstood the fire)
  - 2018 – 90-95% of all housing destroyed by Camp Fire
- Community Recovery Plan
  - The Town's long-term recovery plan details Town-led projects consisting of an updated General Plan and updating building standards to improve fire resiliency.

# Resiliency Projects



- To meet those objectives, the Town moved forward with the following:

## Building Code Updates

Through a series of community listening sessions, identified ideas and gauged support for building code changes that were above & beyond WUI.

## Zoning Code Updates

Update zoning ordinances relative to house sizes and manufactured housing.

## Housing Element Update

With updated building & zoning codes in place, prepare policies and programs to support the regional allocation of housing including a new focus on fire resiliency.

# Project #1

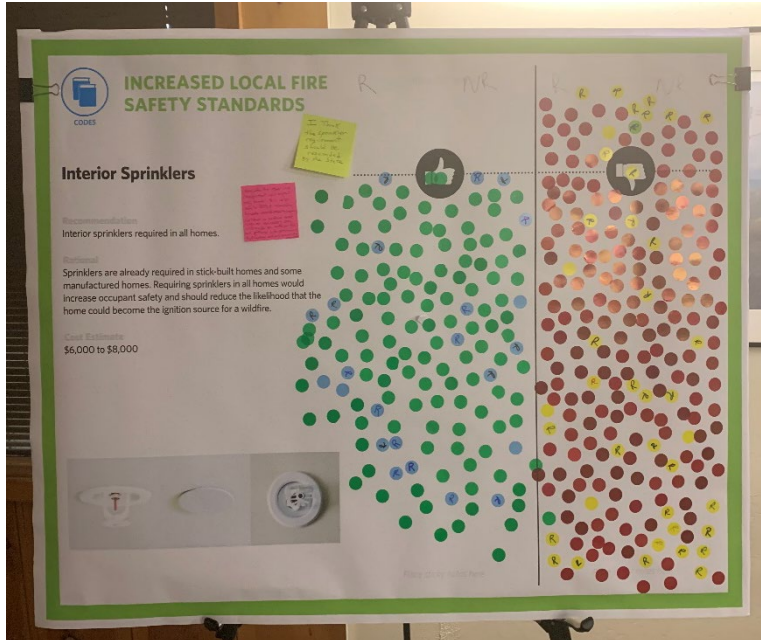
# Building Code Updates



# Community Feedback



- Dot Exercise at Community Meeting & Town Hall
- Online Surveys
- Engaged in guidance from industry experts at:



- National Institute of Safety and Technology (NIST)
- CAL FIRE
- Insurance Institute for Business & Housing Safety
- Wildfire Planning International (WPI)

# Summary of Recommendations



Item No.	Description	Community Support	Industry Expert Support	Council Adopted
1	Interior Sprinklers (MHUs)	Mixed	2 of 4	No
2	Permanent Perimeter Foundations (MHUs)	Mixed	1 of 4	No
3	Roof Obstructions	Mixed	0 of 4	No
4	Prohibit Gutters	Not Supportive	3 of 4	Yes (Modified)
5	Roof Overhang	Supportive	0 of 4	No

# Summary of Recommendations



Item No.	Description	Community Support	Industry Expert Support	Council Adopted
6	Siding 12 Inches Above Grade	Supportive	2 of 4	No
7	Detached Accessory Structures over 120 sqft subject to WUI	Mixed	4 of 4	Yes
8	Detached Accessory Structures 120 sqft or less, 30' from house	Mixed	4 of 4	Yes
9	Require 80 sq ft Garage or Shed	Mixed	1 of 4	No
10	Carpports setback 50' from buildings	Not Supportive	1 of 4	No

# Summary of Recommendations



Item No.	Description	Community Support	Industry Expert Support	Council Adopted
11	Prohibit Railroad Tie Retaining Walls	Supportive	4 of 4	Yes
12	Defensible Space	Supportive	4 of 4	Yes
13	5' Firebreak	Supportive	4 of 4	Yes (Modified)
14	Underground Utilities (Service Lines)	Supportive	3 of 4	Yes



# Project #2

# Zoning Code Updates



# Manufactured Homes



## Recommendation

Manufactured homes no older than 10 years of age (HCD does not allow a jurisdiction to restrict to new units only) and must be WUI-compliant.

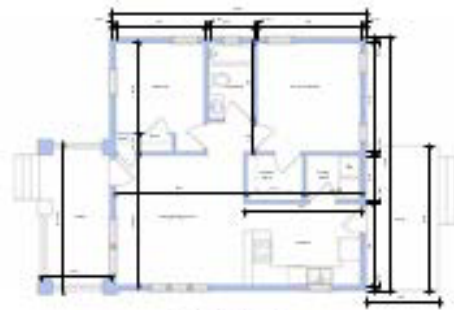


# Primary Residence Size



## Recommendation

Minimum size of primary dwelling must be 750 square feet or greater. Add a sunset date to the municipal code for owners to be able to rebuild a previously existing primary dwelling which was less than 750 sq ft.



**750**

**square feet**



# Project #3

## Housing Element Update



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# Project Goals

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1. By summer 2022, provide a Housing Element that includes goals, policies, and programs relative to a wildfire resilient rebuild and reflective of the current housing needs for a displaced population as well as an influx of first-time residents.
2. A Housing Element with successful goals, policies, and programs that can be mirrored by other jurisdictions located within a VHFSZ or that have been impacted by wildfires.

# Outcomes to-date

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1. The very first Housing Element for the Town which includes policies and programs dedicated to wildfire resiliency including:
  1. *Identifying high hazard areas of Town along the periphery (canyons) as a Wildfire Risk Reduction Buffer Area and prohibit development in those areas or incentivize development in accessible areas outside of the Buffer.*
  2. *Increase residential densities along the main arterials to encourage more housing outside of the Buffer.*
  3. *Work with local insurance companies about home hardening programs and vegetation management which would allow for policyholders to lower their rates.*
  4. *Encourage and assist in acquisition of high hazard parcels for open space that can serve as wildfire buffers.*

# Lessons Learned

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- Successful decision:
  - Including an emphasis on wildfire resiliency as part of the RFP for the Housing Element Update.
- Things we wish we'd started pre-fire:
  - Non-combustible fencing within 5' of a structure. The post-fire investigation (NIST) showed fences being a large reason fires were carried throughout neighborhoods.
  - Property surveys for building permits as authorized by California Building Code Section 107.2.6. Majority of Paradise was created through deed with metes and bounds legal descriptions. Properties were very hard to identify post-fire (surveys are now required for rebuild).
  - Prohibiting the use of railroad ties for landscaping purposes; they will burn for days.
  - Requiring all accessory buildings over 120 sq ft to be WUI compliant regardless of their building setback.



# Questions?

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