

5 COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGY

Community Outreach is intended to bring awareness of the community of the CWPP process and invite their involvement. Engaging interested parties is critical in the CWPP process; substantive input from the public will ensure that the final document reflects the highest priorities of the local community. A key element in the CWPP process is the meaningful discussions it generates among community members regarding their priorities for local fire protection and forest management (SAF 2004).

The Santa Clara County Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau, CAL FIRE, municipal fire departments, resource management agencies and FireSafe councils have been actively engaging communities throughout the county in wildfire prevention education and outreach (see Section 6.3). These current, ongoing programs span CERT programs, free chipping services, distribution of educational material and appearances at local events. In addition, several fire departments have embraced the One Less Spark Fire Prevention campaign, which offers a series of public service announcements aimed at fire prevention. As part of these outreach programs, physical reminders of wildfire prevention and fire safety are provided through signage throughout the county. Signs are used to inform the local population of extreme fire danger and alert them on current conditions. Local media are also engaged in public outreach for wildfire prevention in the area, with local television news stations (KTVU, for example), and local radio stations (KCBS, for example) covering many wildfire issues, particularly during periods of heightened fire risk.

Public involvement in the CWPP planning process has been encouraged through a range of media outlined below.

5.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY, WEBINAR, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

5.1.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY

In order to gather information from the community, an online survey portal was developed with a custom survey designed to gather public attitudes towards wildfire protection and perceived priorities. Dr. Sarah McCaffrey, a U.S. Forest Service Social Scientist, worked with the Core Team to craft questions to tease out attitudes regarding risk perception. The questions helped to identify barriers to taking actions that bolster fire safety, defined what services might best assist the community, and what the communities think of current services and programs. Since community perceptions and needs vary by locality, the survey was geo-tagged to assist agencies on the Core Team in developing more targeted services and programs.

The online survey was also distributed to all Core Team representatives and made available on the Santa Clara County and FireSafe Council websites. Paper copies were distributed at the second round community workshops, to one of the homeowner associations engaged in the CWPP process, and to the Core Team. The survey portal is located here: <https://sccfireplansurvey.com/>.

Preliminary Survey Results

The following section provides summary analysis of the online survey prior to public review. This analysis is based upon 77 responses. Much of these findings address results obtained from

Lexington Hills residents, who comprised the majority of responses. Additional survey analysis will be completed prior to submission of the Final document. .

- Risk to infrastructure is seen as high by residents living in the Lexington Hills with equal significance in addressing critical infrastructure issues.
- Lexington Hills residents have less sense that they can control their risk, which may reflect concerns relating to infrastructure and hazards on Highway 17 voiced by many residents.
- There is a clear sense that it is not easy to reduce personal wildfire risk.
- Approximately half of residents feel that the County is adequately prepared but would like more done.
- Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of residents feel overall that they are adequately or well prepared for wildfire.
- In relation to mitigation measures applied on personal property- $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents have carried out vegetation actions within the last 2 years – those activities that require more frequent maintenance (removing dead veg) have larger portions who had completed that maintenance within the past 6 months. In terms of structural resistance - almost all have (or intend to replace) fire resistance roofs, $\frac{1}{5}$ of people are not sure whether eaves are screened, and majority who either have not yet done and/or are not planning on doing a) fire resistant siding, b) boxing eaves and c) enclosing underside of decks.
- A large portion of respondents have had a risk assessment completed, with most having been completed by the Fire Department.
- Most people understand the role of embers in home destruction.
- Most people do not feel their household needs to make changes for the community to be better protected, but the vast majority agree that the community as a whole needs to take more action.
- Relating to barriers to action:
 - 80% of people agree that they know how to manage vegetation and 60% agree that they know how to make structural changes.
 - Only 3% agree in any way with the statement that preparation is not needed due to insurance (which undermines notion that insurance is a reason why people don't mitigate).
 - Cost is an issue for approximately $\frac{1}{3}$.
 - Approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ indicate that physical abilities are a barrier to action.
 - Lack of time is a barrier for roughly 30%.
 - Aesthetics is not a barrier as only 5% agree with the statement.
- Approximately 60% of people have a disaster plan – but it is not written down – a higher proportion of Lexington Hills residents have non-written disaster plans.
- Approximately 40% of people have identified a family meeting location- with 50% of Lexington Hills residents.

- Several items indicate that evacuation is a much bigger concern for Lexington Hills residents.
- Respondents had a positive feeling towards fire agencies.
- In relation to mitigation actions to prioritize:
 - High priority is placed on vegetation management on public lands (76%) with lowest priority on prescribed burning. Eastern county residents placed higher priority on grazing and mechanical thinning than western county residents.
 - Helping private property owner mitigate fire risk is a high priority (70%)
 - Animal issues are a high priority for roughly 1/3 with more emphasis on pets in western county and more on livestock in eastern county.
 - Protection of values other than homes is higher priority for non LH, in general and for historic structures.
 - Protection of critical infrastructure is high priority for 66% of all respondents.
 - A larger % of non-Lexington Hills residents find a number of activities very acceptable including retrofit ordinances (29% vs 11), veg mgmt. cost-share programs (52% vs 25%), veg management ordinances (39% vs 17.5), training landscape contractors (55% vs 30%), and development restrictions (32% vs 17.5%).

5.1.2 SOCIAL MEDIA

A Facebook page was developed for the CWPP (entitled Santa Clara County Community Wildfire Protection Plan), and the page received more than 100 “likes.” The page includes a description of the planning process and links to the online community survey and other relevant pages for the communities. The page has also been used to announce the two rounds of community workshops to gather input on the plan. The profile page is located here:

<https://www.facebook.com/SantaClaraCountyCWPP/>.

5.2 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Due to the varied natural, social composition, and geographic distribution of communities within Santa Clara County, a total of eight community workshops were hosted across the county over two rounds.

The first round of community workshops was held from February 17 to 23, 2016, and focused on the following areas:

February 17 - Morgan Hills, Gilroy, and South County Areas

Hiram Room,
Morgan Hill Community Center,
17000 Monterey Road
Morgan Hill

February 18 - East Foothills

Berryessa Community Center
3050 Berryessa Road
San Jose

February 22 - Cupertino, Saratoga, and Los Altos Hills (Figure 5.1)

Cupertino Community Hall
10350 Torre Avenue
Cupertino

February 23 - Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, and Lexington Hills

Pavilion at Redwood Estates
21450 Madrone Drive
Los Gatos



Figure 5.1. Cupertino Community Workshop

The goal of the first round of meetings was to introduce the communities to the CWPP planning process, present the community base maps, identify threats and risks to the area, solicit project ideas, and develop a list of CVARs. The workshops comprised a PowerPoint presentation, plus a series of large format maps that allowed attendees to locate areas of interest and review proposed projects. Additionally, flip charts were used to document ideas and comments that were not geographically based. Input was encouraged by requesting that participants mark up the maps with project ideas. Attendees were invited to meet and discuss the project with agency stakeholders who were also in attendance. Attendees of the meeting were informed on how to provide input through the survey and through the project's Facebook page.

A number of press releases were submitted to publicize the community workshop and inform the public of the planning process. Flyers and posters advertising the meetings were also produced and distributed by the Core Team. Other opportunities to engage specific communities were taken. For example, an article inviting community members of the Lexington Hills was distributed through

an electronic and mailed newsletter, and a member of the consulting team attended the annual pancake breakfast for the Spring Valley Volunteer Fire Department. Informational flyers were also distributed at the community workshops, which provided information on the planning process and outreach efforts. A sign-in sheet was distributed at each gathering to collect contact information for residents interested in receiving future project information. As a follow up to the first round of meetings, pdf versions of all project maps were made available with a solicitation that residents provide annotations to those maps and submit them back to the Core Team. These requests were provided through various channels.

A second round of community workshops was scheduled in May 2016. The second round of workshops was timed to coincide with the release of the draft document. These workshops were publicized through the same channels as the first workshop, including press releases, electronic and hard-copy newsletters. In addition, email list serves were used to inform communities of the workshops. The public was encouraged to review the document and provide comment.

Dates and locations are shown below:

May 2nd - East Foothills

Milpitas Senior Center Auditorium
40 N Milpitas Blvd,
Milpitas

May 3rd - Morgan Hills, Gilroy, and South County Areas

Hiram Room,
Morgan Hill Community Center,
17000 Monterey Road
Morgan Hill

May 3rd - Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, and Lexington Hills

Pavilion at Redwood Estates
21450 Madrone Drive
Los Gatos

May 9th - Cupertino, Saratoga, and Los Altos Hills

Cupertino Community Hall
10350 Torre Avenue
Cupertino

An additional workshop was held for resource management agencies only so these entities could provide specific projects and perspective.

5.3 CURRENT OUTREACH PROJECTS

5.3.1 SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Santa Clara County Fire Department offers a comprehensive community education service program throughout the District and within the following seven cities and towns: Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga. The Community

Education Office is staffed with six full-time employees and is delivered through specially trained department personnel and volunteer firefighters. Programs provided include community preparedness, wildland urban intermix/interface preparedness, and CPR.

The Community Education Office helps residents locate programs and services that will help keep them safe, reduce fires and injuries, and improve overall health and wellness. The Community Education Office functions as an information and referral service connecting individuals, organizations, and community audiences to agencies located within Santa Clara County.

The Santa Clara County Fire Department provides WUI inspections to property owners who live in a hillside community in order to provide information on actions property owners can take to minimize fire hazards and maximize fire resistance. For more information on property assessment, please contact the Fire Prevention Division at (408) 378-4010 or visit the website at: <http://www.sccfd.org/community-outreach-safety-education/community-outreach-safety-education-overview>.

Community Emergency Response Teams – The CERT program educates participants about emergency preparedness and provides basic disaster response training to assist others when first responders might not be immediately available to help. Some of the trainings include learning first aid, using a fire extinguisher, and organizing resources. A number of training opportunities are available throughout the county and current information can be found at www.sccfd.org/news-events.

5.3.2 SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRESAFE COUNCIL

The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council works actively in the community and offers a vast number of education and outreach programs as outlined on its website (<http://www.sccfiresafe.org/>). Below are example education and outreach programs that are available to county residents:

Youth education: The council offers youth targeted wildfire prevention activities and Smokey Bear visits.

Living with fire in Santa Clara County: The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council provides access to a 20-page homeowner's guide for fire mitigation activities.

100 feet of defensible space: The council provides information regarding defensible space parameters for home defense.

Making your home fire safe: The council provides links to relevant literature and defensible space programs such as Firewise.

Defensible space chipping programs: The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council has agreements, contributions, and federal grants for:

1. a defensible space chipping program for eligible residents, and

2. a special needs assistance program for seniors and/or others with physical and financial limitations that prevent them from preparing for chipping.

The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council will chip brush that has been cleared 100 feet from permanent structures and/or 30 feet from any roadside or driveway used for evacuation purposes. For more information visit: <http://www.sccfiresafe.org/santa-clara-county-fuel-reduction-programs>.

Older adults: The council provides fire safe tips for older adults living in the WUI.

Volunteer: The council provides a variety of fire mitigation related volunteer opportunities.

Environment: The council lists information sources regarding wildfires importance in the environment, fire safe planting, and native plants.

For more information on these and other programs, please visit:
<http://www.sccfiresafe.org/education-outreach>.

5.3.3 CAL FIRE SANTA CLARA UNIT

The Santa Clara Unit of CAL FIRE provides services to assist in fire prevention. CAL FIRE has a long history of providing fire prevention, fire safety, and natural resource protection education to the citizens and visitors of California. CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Education programs are spread statewide and come in the form of social media campaigns, school programs, fair exhibits, posters, flyers and thousands of other printed materials, radio and television spots, internet communications, community meetings, and one-on-one contacts with those who live, work, and recreate in wildland areas (CAL FIRE 2016).

Below are example education and outreach programs that are available to Santa Clara County residents:

Information on the Ready, Set, Go! program: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>

National Fire Prevention Week programs: Held annually in October (October 9–15 in 2016), <http://www.nfpa.org/fpw>

Community Fact Sheets for fire prevention:
http://calfire.ca.gov/communications/communications_factsheets

Children focused activities: http://calfire.ca.gov/communications/communications_justforkids

PreventWildfireCA.org programs and literature: <http://www.preventwildfireca.org/>

5.3.4 FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

Most fire departments (both county and municipal) within Santa Clara County offer fire prevention activities such as station open houses throughout the year in order to engage the local community in the workings of the department and in fire safety and prevention measures.

5.4 FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

Although many residents are familiar with Firewise Communities and the fire management agencies have already implemented Firewise workshops in the past, many others could benefit from greater exposure to this program. Workshops demonstrating and explaining Firewise Communities principles have been suggested to increase homeowner understanding of home protection from wildfire. One goal is for communities to apply to become a Firewise Community, recognized in the state as a shining example for fire prevention. Information about the program is available at <http://www.firewise.org/usa/index.htm>. Greater participation in the Firewise Communities program could improve local understanding of wildfire and, in turn, improve protection and preparedness.

5.5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The community outreach strategy provides a way to quantify improvements in community resiliency over time. The strategy includes a way to track the success of community outreach. Follow-up communication with stakeholder affiliations will foster formal and informal collaboration regarding priorities and project nomination.

There are four strategic goals for community education and outreach. For each strategic goal a strategy is identified to quantify the success of the project:

Project	Outreach Strategy to Gauge Success
Educate citizens on how to achieve contemporary WUI code compliance in retrofits/cost: benefit ratio. Provide workshops and/or demonstration site.	Number of workshops and demonstration sites focusing on WUI code compliance and retrofit opportunities. Reduction in scored risk due to structural mitigation measures taken.
Analyze playing with fire ignitions and focus education programs at vicinity schools.	Assess number of ignitions near schools, report on number of presentations at and/or focused on ignitions caused by playing with matches.
Fire agencies establish partnership with San Jose State University (or other colleges) for student intern programs for GIS, plans, weather, environmental reviews, etc.	Collaborative projects, attendance at joint meetings between San Jose State University, number of interns addressing GIS, plans, weather, environmental reviews, etc.
Provide webinars for homeowners to learn about fire safe communities and property.	Number of webinars about fire safe communities and property, and number of viewers.
Some individual communities (for example Jackson Oaks in Morgan Hill) identified a project to establish and support a new FireWise Community	count the number of Firewise Communities in the county when the CWPP is next updated.
Provide regular CWPP updates and opportunities for agency/community input.	Note the number of organizations, emergency response agencies and resource management agencies, homeowner associates, individual homeowners, and geographic distribution of projects engaged in next CWPP update.

The Fire Safe Council provides a natural framework to facilitate collaboration between fire agencies, land managers, and communities in fuel reduction activities, wildfire mitigation projects, and community education and outreach. Many members of the Core Team are already active participants in this organization. This organization embraces all homeowners, landowners, organizations and agencies in their effort to reduce damage from wildfire and thus their goal is aligned with those expressed in the CWPP.