



City of Clearlake

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June 5, 2025

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 900
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps

Dear Governor Newsom,

The City is writing to express our deep concern and dissatisfaction with the state's requirements and process that jurisdictions adopt the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. While I recognize the importance of fire safety and responsible land management, I believe that mandating these maps without sufficient local input places an undue burden on municipalities and property owners. Clearlake has suffered from three significant wildfires since 2017, all of which were state and/or federally declared disasters, so we understand the need for an impactful response.

However, the blanket adoption of these maps fails to consider the unique characteristics and existing mitigation efforts of individual communities. Many cities, including Clearlake, have already implemented fire prevention strategies that differ from the state's prescribed zoning and yet have proven effective. Additionally, the designation of properties within these zones can have significant financial consequences, including higher insurance costs and restrictions on development, which may not be justified based on actual risk assessments. Our community suffers from a high level of poverty and many will not be able to meet the standards of the ordinance on their own. We expect significant numbers of insurance non-renewals that are likely to devastate a large percentage of our population.

We urge you to respect more local input into similar mandates and instead allow for a more collaborative process that respects local decision-making. Providing cities with flexibility in determining fire hazard zones based on their own expertise and conditions will lead to more effective and equitable outcomes.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and do not hesitate to contact our City Manager (aflora@clearlake.ca.us) with a response on how our input can be incorporated into this process.

Sincerely,

Russ Cremer
Mayor