



CITY OF DEL REY OAKS

Staff Report

DATE: June 24, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: John Guertin, City Manager

SUBJECT: Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending Municipal Code Chapter 15.08 By Adding Section 15.08.10 Designating Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

CEQA: This action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(B)(3) of the CEQA guidelines.

Recommendation

Conduct a public hearing and second reading.

Summary & Discussion

The State of California, through the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), is responsible for classifying areas of the state into Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) based on scientific data and modeling of fire behavior, fuel loading, weather patterns, and topographic features. These classifications are part of a broader statewide effort to assess and reduce wildfire risk.

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 51175–51189, local jurisdictions are required to identify, adopt, and enforce Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). These designations are used to implement defensible space regulations, apply fire-resistant building standards (California Building Code Chapter 7A), and guide community wildfire mitigation strategies.

CAL FIRE recently completed an update to the FHSZ maps for LRAs, which includes the City of Del Rey Oaks. The updated map designates areas within the city as Moderate or High fire hazard zones. These updated designations reflect the latest data and modeling and will serve as the foundation for future fire prevention policies and enforcement.

Adoption of these newest maps for the LRA is required by Legislative Assembly Bill 211 (AB211). The City has 120 days to adopt these map updates. The City received these maps on March 10, 2025 and posted them for 30 days for public review and comment. We received no comments in that time.

The updated regulations will apply to those areas located within the City boundaries. The City has no influence over downgrading hazard levels, we can only increase them if justified.

Key Takeaways:

- **FHSZ Classification:** Properties are categorized as **Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones** based on terrain, vegetation, fire history, and climate conditions.
- **Fire Hazard vs. Risk:** The maps indicate hazard potential, not immediate risk, and do not account for mitigation efforts like defensible space or fire-resistant construction.
- **Impact on Property Owners:**
 - Homeowners in Very High FHSZ must comply with stringent defensible space and home hardening requirements.
 - 100-foot defensible space clearance is mandatory around structures in the Very High FHSZ, in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) zone, and as designated by city ordinance.
 - New construction in the Very High FHSZ must adhere to WUI building codes.
 - Property sellers must disclose in the High and Very High FHSZ designations during real estate transactions.

The adoption of the updated FHSZ map is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the “common sense exemption.” The map adoption itself does not authorize or require any specific development activity, nor does it have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment.

Fiscal Impacts

There will be no direct financial impact as a result of this action.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Ordinance
- FHSZ Map
- CAL FIRE Letter

Respectfully Submitted,

John Guertin
City Manager

ORDINANCE NO. 321

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DEL REY OAKS, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 15.08 BY ADDING SECTION 15.08.010 DESIGNATING THE FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES FOR LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS (LRA) AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

WHEREAS, the State of California, through the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), is responsible for classifying areas of the state into Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) based on scientific data and modeling of fire behavior, fuel, weather, and topography; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section [51179](#) requires “A local agency shall designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very-high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178; and

WHEREAS, CAL FIRE completed and transmitted updated recommendations from the State Fire Marshal identifying moderate, high and very-high fire severity zones on an update to the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map on or about March 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the updated FHSZ map enhances public safety by providing the basis for implementing defensible space regulations, fire-resistant building standards (California Building Code Chapter 7A), and community wildfire preparedness efforts (collectively, Chapter 49 of the Fire Code); and

WHEREAS, the City of Del Rey Oaks posted the information publicly about the new FHSZ on March 24, 2025, allowing for public input and consideration of the FHSZ map and its implications; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of the FHSZ map is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the “common sense exemption,” as the ordinance itself does not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF DEL REY OAKS, CALIFORNIA, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Del Rey Oaks Municipal Code Chapter Section 15.08.010 added in whole to read as follows:

"The City hereby adopts moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones as depicted on the map from the State Fire Marshall dated March 10, 2025, for the land within the local responsibility area of the City of Del Rey Oaks."

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby adopts the updated Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) map for Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) within the City of Del Rey Oaks, as prepared and finalized by CAL FIRE in 2024, which classifies certain areas of the city as Moderate, High, or Very High fire hazard severity zones.

SECTION 3. The City Manager or designee is hereby directed within thirty (30) days to transmit a copy of this ordinance and a map to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. The City Manager or his designee is further authorized and directed to take all necessary steps to implement the provisions of this Ordinance and incorporate the adopted FHSZ map into applicable City programs, regulations, and development review procedures.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance is exempt from CEQA under the common sense exemption set forth in Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

SECTION 5. This Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after its final passage and shall be published in accordance with applicable law.

SECTION 6. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase hereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

INTRODUCED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Del Rey Oaks, California, held on the 20th day of May 2025.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Del Rey Oaks duly held on the 24th day of June 2025, by the following vote:

| | |
|----------|-----------------|
| AYES: | COUNCIL MEMBERS |
| NOES: | COUNCIL MEMBERS |
| ABSENT: | COUNCIL MEMBERS |
| ABSTAIN: | COUNCIL MEMBERS |

APPROVED:

Scott Donaldson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Karen Minami, City Clerk

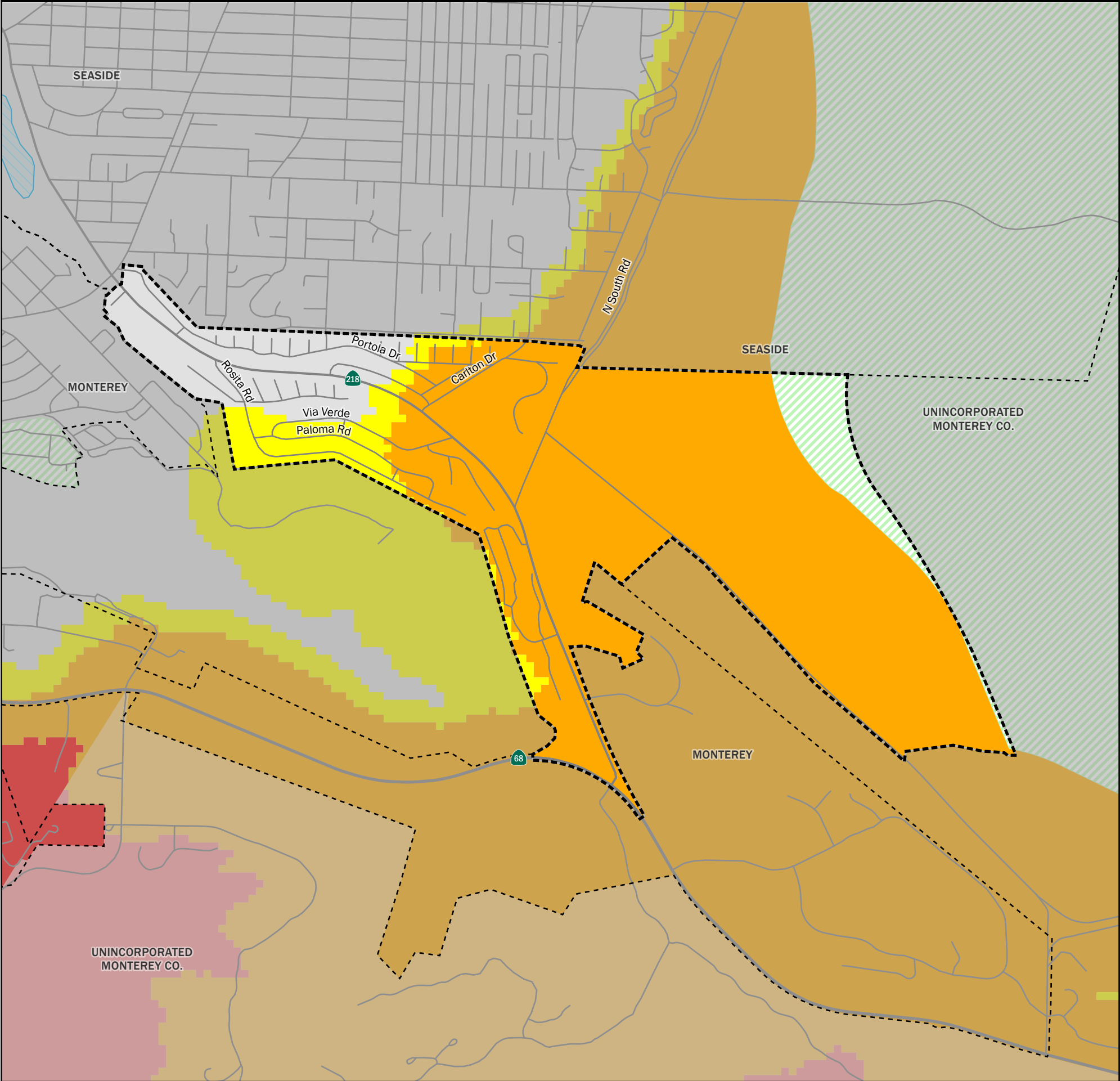
APPROVED TO FORM:

Alex Lorca, City Attorney



Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones

As Identified by the
State Fire Marshal
March 10, 2025

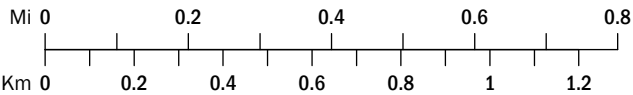


Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in Local Responsibility Area (LRA), as Identified by the State Fire Marshal

Very High High Moderate

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area (SRA), Effective April 1, 2024

Very High High



Projection: NAD 83 California Teale Albers
Scale: 1:17,000 at 11" x 17"

- Incorporated City
- Unzoned LRA
- Waterbody
- Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)

Government Code section 51178 requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent

statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather,

and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.

The State of California and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy of data or maps. Neither the State nor the Department shall be liable under any circumstances for any direct, special, incidental, or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or third party on account of, or arising from, the use of data or maps.

Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources, CA Natural Resources Agency
Joe Tyler, Director/Fire Chief, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Data Sources:
CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZSRA23_3, FHSZLRA_25_1)
CAL FIRE State Responsibility Areas (SRA25_1)
City and County boundaries as of 10/22/24 (CA Board of Equalization)



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
(916) 568-3800
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



March 10, 2025

Dear: County Chief Administrative Officer, City Manager, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal

Re: Official Transmittal of Fire Hazard Severity Zones

The State Fire Marshal is mandated by Government Code (GC) 51178 to identify levels of fire hazard based on consistent statewide criteria and the expected severity of fire hazards. Government Code 51179 requires the State Fire Marshal to make recommendations of fire hazard severity zones to local agencies, as defined per GC 51177(e), for their designation and adoption by ordinance. This letter serves as the official transmittal of the recommendation. For the Statutory requirements for local adoption please review [California Code, GOV 51179](#).

Your City/County has been identified as having Moderate, High, Very High or a combination of Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) within your jurisdiction. The maps and data are available in the FHSZ HUB at <https://fire-hazard-severity-zones-rollout-calfire-forestry.hub.arcgis.com/>.

Please complete the Public Contact Survey in the FHSZ HUB using the link above. This information will be used for a public Webmap on the CAL FIRE-Office of State Fire Marshal website to guide your constituents to the appropriate contact person or website for the Local Responsibility Area FHSZ in your jurisdiction.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact our Team at FHSZinformation@fire.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Daniel Berlant
State Fire Marshal
CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal