

# Wildfire Urban Interface & Mitigation Efforts

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- Emergency Preparedness
- Natural Areas
- Environmental Services
- PFA



- Departmental Collaboration Efforts

## **"Protecting People, Property, and Natural Areas through Process, Partnerships, and Preparedness"**

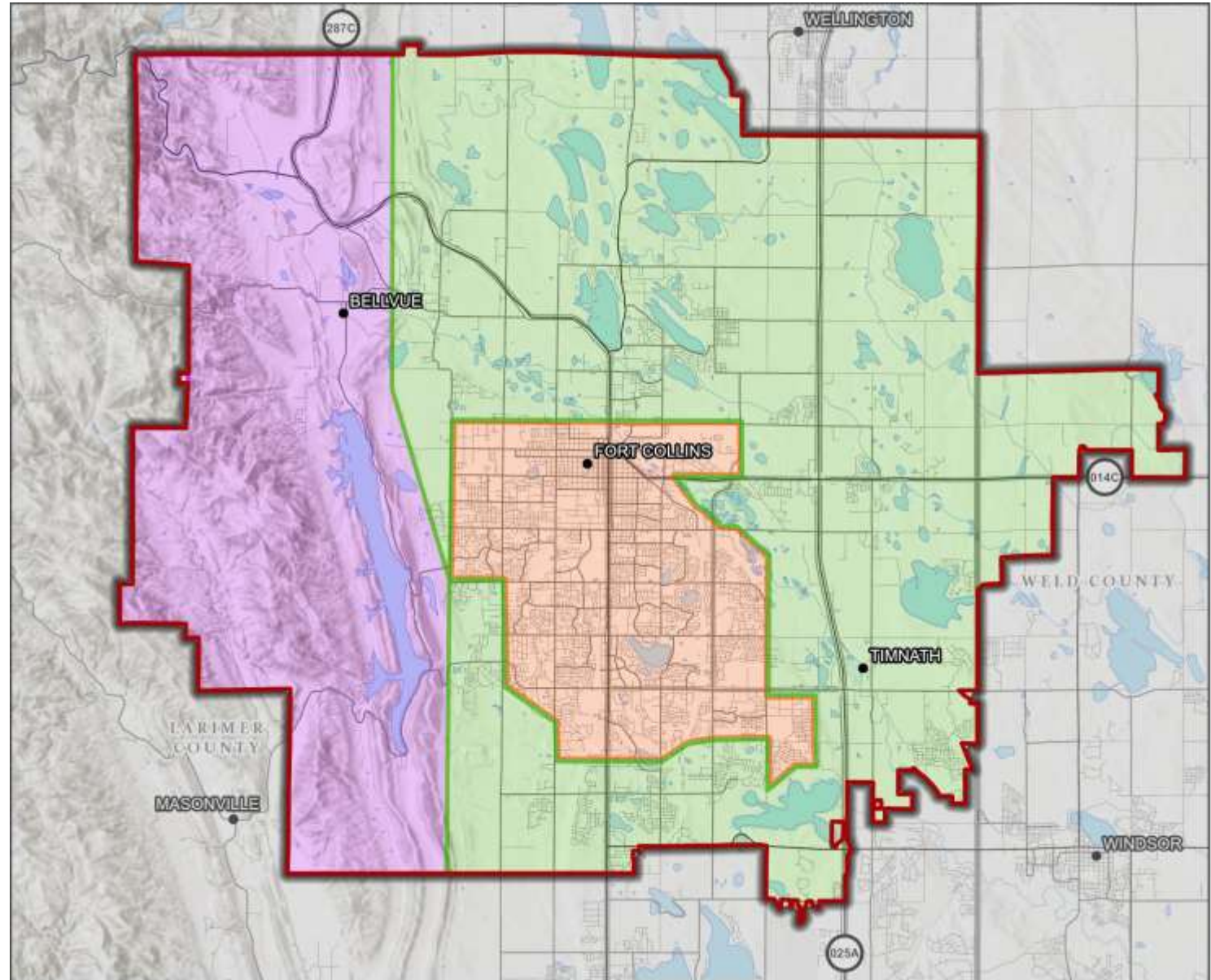
- Discussion of City's participation in Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
- City of Fort Collins Fire hazard risk. Previous Mitigation Efforts
- Definition of WUI and recap of PFA's Critical Wildfire Protection Plan
- Mitigation Efforts by Natural Areas
- Climate impacts on mitigation efforts provided by the city's Environmental Services Department
- Partnerships and Collaboration across agencies in these plans

- Based on Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, the areas in and around Fort Collins are at risk of Wildfire. The overall significance of this hazard is **Medium**.
- City has 298 parcels and 305 buildings and an estimated 736 residents at moderate or high risk of wildfire areas. (2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan)
- While a relatively low percentage of the city's parcels and structures is at direct risk of wildfire, a significant portion of the land immediately west of the City are at a high wildfire risk.
- Many of the 2016 and 2021 mitigation efforts of the city had primarily focused on Flood Mitigation because of prior identified risks.
- Cameron Peak, Marshall Fire, and Alexander fires put a spotlight on mitigation and planning efforts related to urban and wildland interface.



# Types of Wildland-Urban Interface

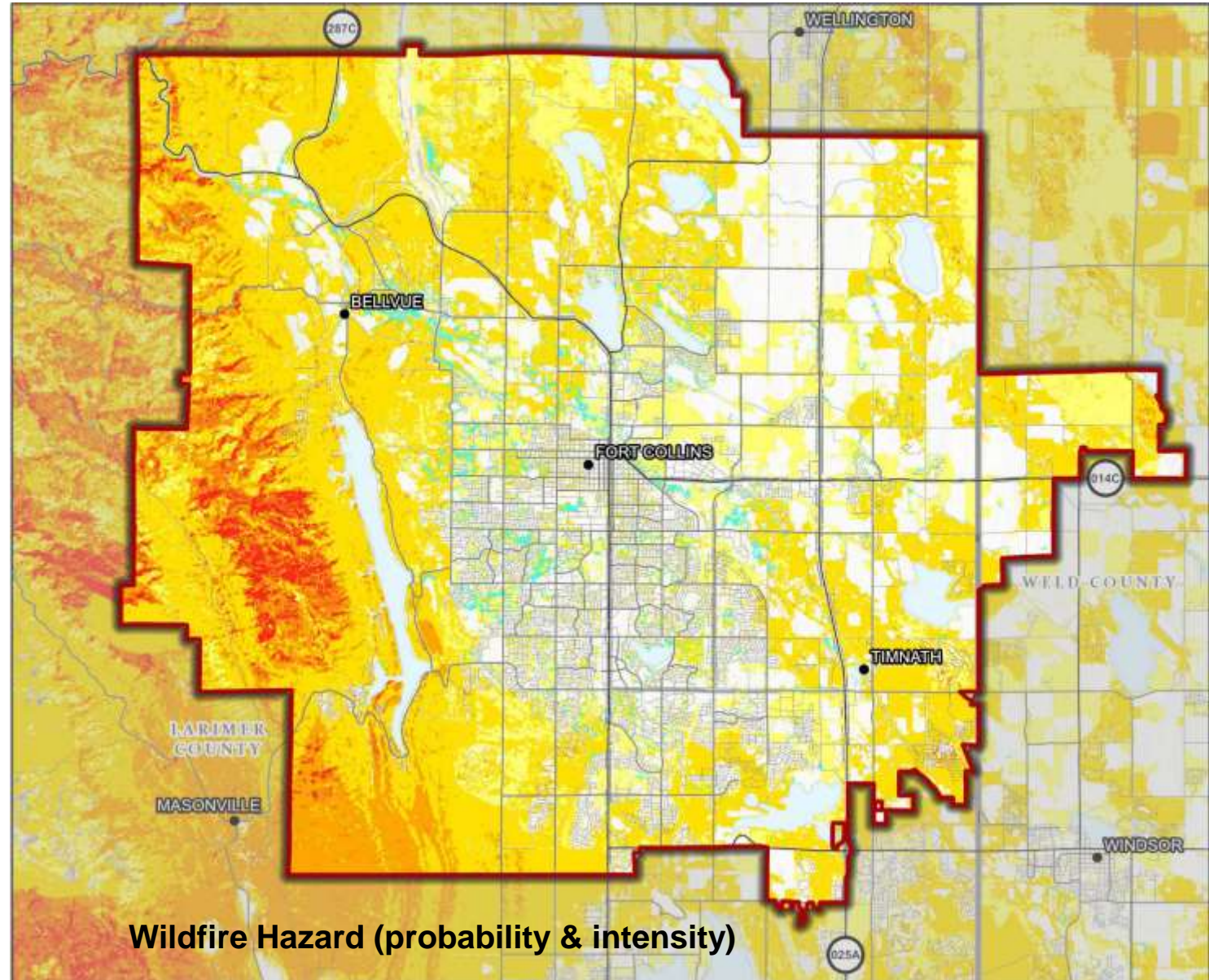
- Classic Intermix
- Occluded Interface
- Grass/Agricultural Lands





# Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2025

- Updated Hazard/Risk Analysis
- Collaborative Development of Action Items
- Reengaged Community Members
- Improve Community Resilience





- Training
- Planning
- Public Education
- Hazard Mitigation  
(e.g., Poudre River)
- Prescribed Fire



***To conserve and enhance lands with natural resource, agricultural, and scenic values, while providing meaningful education and appropriate recreation opportunities.***

City Code – grants exception to grass height (12”+) for natural areas, however NAD regularly mows along some roadsides and sidewalks for infrastructure maintenance, aesthetics, and fuel mitigation

# Description of Fuels and Risk Reduction Actions

- 46 sites within or adjacent to City Limits
  - Trees - foothills and riparian forests
  - Predominate fuel type is grass/flowers, some shrublands
  - Good Grasses, Bad Grasses, and Weeds
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- Natural Areas looks at multiple criteria to guide mowing actions
  - Does the adjacent property owner have ability to provide mitigation?
  - Other fuel breaks; bodies of water, rocky outcrops, trails, roads, prairie dog colonies



- Managing for the dominant conditions, not the extreme
- Management against Cheatgrass
- Native grass risk vs. non-native grass risk
- Individual homeowners can mow 5' onto the natural area
- Active education efforts, both informal and through PFA sessions, sharing action-oriented steps homeowners can take to reduce risk
- Mowing of specific areas where ignition is likely, opportunities for breaks are limited, and HOA does not have buffer to reduce risk
- Working with regional partners to build stronger disturbance regime including grazing and Rx fire.

A warming climate and increased temperatures worsen existing wildfire risk due to:

- Earlier snowmelt
- Creation of drier fuel sources (trees, grass and other vegetation)

Other Climate-Driven Impacts and Considerations:

- Enhanced fire ignition and spread of large or very large fires (100-500% increase with climate projections)
- Some grassland and shrubland ecosystems could be fire limited as fuel accumulation lowers with burns or mitigation

- Emergency Preparedness & Security have continued focused efforts to build volunteer group (FCVRT) Fort Collins Volunteer Response Team into community outreach events.
- Poudre Fire Authority leads wildfire response, community risk reduction, and wildfire preparedness outreach.
- Natural Areas staff manage ecological fire practices and land stewardship along with other outreach events.
- Each department along with nearly a dozen other city departments will collaborate on the 2026 Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, to include assessment and implementation of collaborative fire mitigation efforts.





# Questions?



**Thank you!**