



City of Grass Valley City Council Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment for the City of Grass Valley

CEQA: Not a Project

Recommendation: That Council review and provide comments on the administrative draft of the Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment for the City of Grass Valley.

Prepared by: Timothy Kiser, City Manager

Council Meeting Date: 02/05/2024

Date Prepared: 01/30/2024

Agenda: Administrative

Background Information: Wildfires pose a significant concern for our community, prompting the City to take proactive measures in identifying and mitigating potential hazards. In a strategic initiative, the City has enlisted the services of the reputable consultant, "Dudek," to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment. This assessment aims to identify and prioritize areas of concern within the City of Grass Valley, its Sphere of Influence, and regions within 1.5 miles of the City and its Sphere of Influence. Notably, Dudek is also collaborating with Nevada County on a similar project, showcasing their expertise in tackling wildfire challenges at a broader scale.

The assessment area, which encompasses the City of Grass Valley and its surroundings, reveals a heightened potential for damaging wildfires. This conclusion is drawn from an analysis of regional fire and ignition history, existing vegetation types, fuels composition, terrain characteristics, local climate conditions, and the proximity of structures and infrastructure to wildland vegetation. An alarming statistic emerges, indicating that approximately 63% of the assessment area falls under the classification of a wildland urban interface or wildland urban intermix - areas where human development intersects with wildland vegetation. Throughout this extensive region, vegetation conducive to ignition and wildfire spread poses substantial risks to human life, safety, and property.

To comprehensively assess the potential wildfire impacts, a Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment was conducted, employing advanced modeling tools. This process involved integrating spatial datasets that influence wildfire risk to the community. The distinction between wildfire hazard and risk was crucial; while hazard signifies the existing wildfire environment and potential behavior, risk represents the intersection of hazard and resources or assets vulnerable to fire impact. By basing the assessment on wildfire hazard in areas adjacent to developed zones, the community's overall wildfire risk was determined. The results of this assessment indicate that approximately 77% of developed areas within the assessment zone face High, Very High, or Extreme relative risk.

The attached administrative draft report encapsulates Dudek's meticulous modeling and assessment efforts, providing an in-depth exploration of the assessment area's fire environment. The discussion delves into terrain, vegetation and fuels, weather patterns, and fire history, offering valuable insights into the factors influencing wildfire risk. The report also presents a detailed overview of model inputs and results, including a mapped depiction of regions categorized as Low to Extreme relative wildfire risk. The identification of these regions serves as a foundation for recommending targeted approaches to reduce wildfire risk, forming a crucial aspect of Dudek's comprehensive wildfire mitigation strategy.

The plan is attached for City Council's review and comment.

Council Goals/Objectives: This item executes portions of work tasks towards achieving/maintaining the Strategic Plan - High Performance Government & Quality Service.

Fiscal Impact: The study's cost is capped at \$33,000, and ample funds have been allocated in the City's contingency to cover the assessment expenses.

Funds Available: Yes

Account #: Various

Reviewed by: __ City Manager

Attachments: Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment for Grass Valley