

Wildfire Initiatives Update



Town Council Meeting
September 16, 2025

Agenda

- 1 Context & Risk
- 2 Completed & Ongoing Work
- 3 Potential Future Action

National Risk Index

Santa Clara County, CA

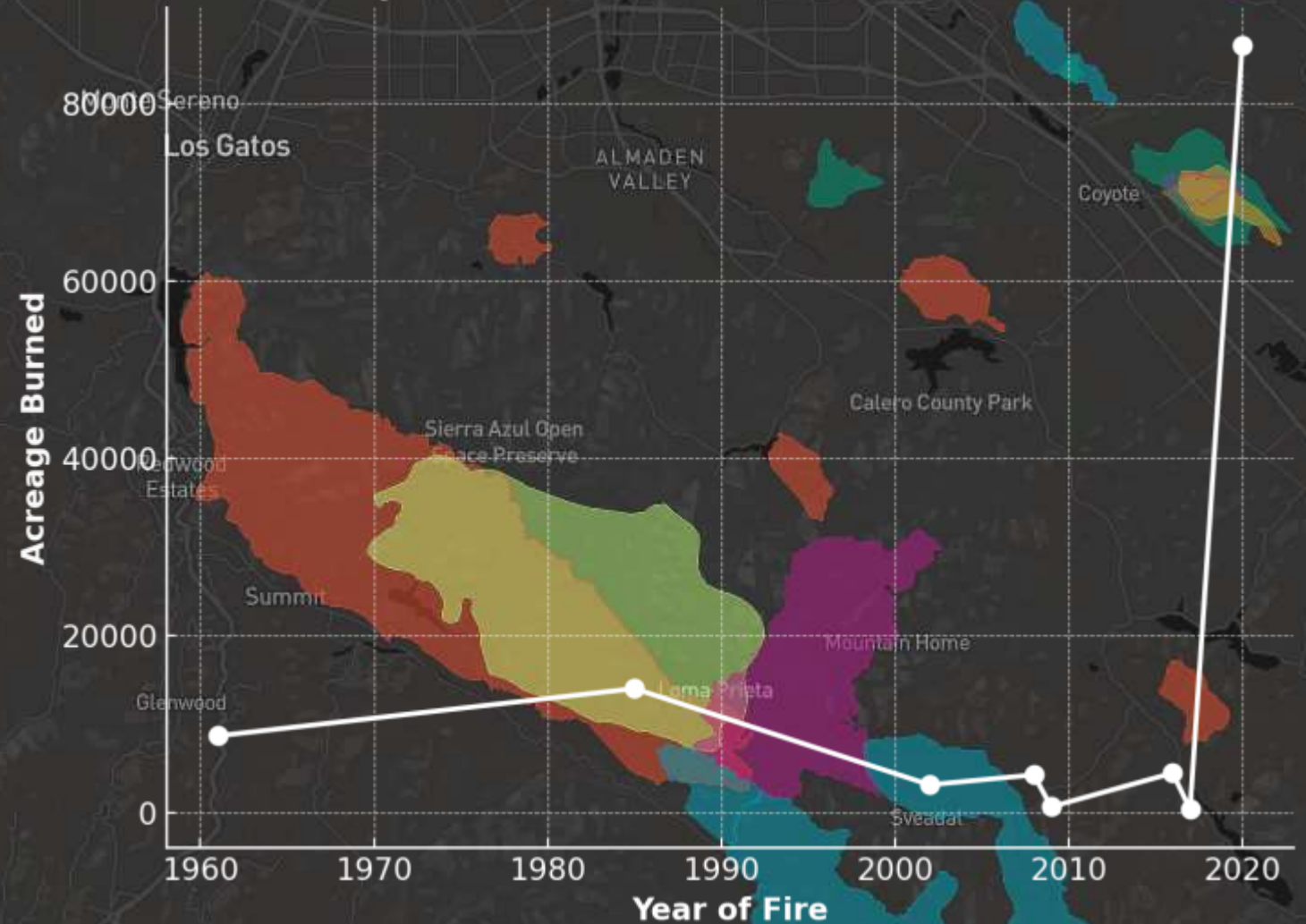
Hazard	Risk Index Rating	Risk Score	National Percentile	Annualized Loss
Earthquake	Very High	100	0  100	\$1.2B
Wildfire	Relatively High	97	0  100	\$8.4M

- Santa Clara County ranks among the top 1% of U.S. counties for disaster losses. (FEMA, 2025)
- Estimated 4 in 10 Los Gatos addresses (homes and businesses) are in the Wildland Urban Interface.

Los Gatos Wildfire History

- CZU Complex (2020) – 86,509 acres
- Bear Fire (2017) 391 acres
- Loma Fire (2016) 4,474 acres
- Loma Fire (2009) 669 acres
- Summit Fire (2008) 4,270 acres
- Croy Fire (2002) 3,150 acres
- Cats Fire (1997) 15 acres
- Lexington Fire (1985) 14,000 acres
- Austrian Gulch Fire (1961) 8,670 acres

Major Los Gatos Area Fires: Year vs. Size



Los Gatos Vegetation Growth

1948 to Present



Wildfire Preparedness Initiatives

Completed

- **Emergency Management Staffing**
- **Emergency Operations Center Training Series**
- **Rep. Liccardo Wildfire Safety Press Conference**
- **Open-Space Vegetation Management** – Over 194 acres
- **Firewise Outreach:** 31 participants & 11 neighborhoods
- **Fire Risk Reduction Community Application** – Pending board approval June 2026
- **Grant Applications Submitted:**
 - CAL FIRE Prevention Grant (2): Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) & Evacuation Planning
 - California FireSafe Council State Fire Capacity Grant: VMP
 - FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant: Wildfire Sirens

Ongoing

- **Roadside Vegetation Management** – 31 miles
- **Traffic Modeling & Evacuation Planning** – Selecting contractor
- **Outdoor Warning Sirens**– Pending grant selection
- **Rep. Liccardo | Wildfire Resilience Partnership Meetings** – Establish regional priorities
- **Updated Town Emergency Operations Plan**
- **Integrating Virtual EOC Platform (VEOCI)** – Training EOC staff
- **Advanced EOC Training for staff** - Q4 '25
- **Emergency Training for Council Members** – Q4 '25
- **Emergency Planning Coordination with Community Stakeholders**

Emergency Management Fund (\$1M Council Allocation)

Budget	
<u>Spent</u>	<u>\$39,122.38</u>
Emergency Manager staffing and salary (FY24–25)	\$31,413.06
Public outreach (Firewise education and mailers)	\$2,709.32
Grant writing support	\$5,000.00
<u>Allocated</u>	<u>\$80,000.00</u>
Hilow Road tree removal (per council direction 5-20-25)	\$80,000.00
<u>Reserved for Grant Matches</u>	<u>\$462K-550K</u>
California Fire Safe Council Grant (VMP)	\$150,000.00
FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant (Siren Sys)	\$400,000.00
USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (VMP)	\$62,500.00
<u>Remaining funds</u>	<u>\$330,877.62 to \$418,877.62</u>

Potential Future Actions

Traffic Flow Mitigations

- Consider recommendations from evacuation traffic modeling (signal timing, phased evacuations, signage, roadway improvements).

Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI) Clearance

- Explore opportunities to improve standards and remove barriers for homeowners to achieve defensible space compliance.

Expanded Fuels Reduction

- May use fire and traffic modeling to develop targeted vegetation management.
- Explore coordinated efforts with neighboring jurisdictions.

Community Resilience Measures

- Options could include expanding evacuation drills and preparedness exercises.
- Potential support of Firewise neighborhood development and progress towards Fire Risk Reduction Community certification.