



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 09/16/2025

ITEM NO: 13

DATE: September 9, 2025  
TO: Mayor and Town Council  
FROM: Chris Constantin, Town Manager  
SUBJECT: **Wildfire and Emergency Management Initiatives Update and Adopt the Updated Emergency Operations Plan**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Receive an update on emergency preparedness initiatives and adopt a resolution approving the updated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No new fiscal impact. All commitments noted herein are funded within the \$1,000,000 Emergency Management allocation the Town Council authorized in January 2025. The table below summarizes expenditures to date, committed items, and the resulting balances.

Item	Amount
<b>Funds Spent:</b>	
Emergency Manager staffing and salary (FY 2024–25)	\$31,413.06
Public outreach (Firewise education and mailers)	\$2,709.32
Grant writing support	\$5,000
<b>Spent Total:</b>	\$39,122.38
<b>Funds Reserved:</b>	
Tree removal along Hilow Road (per Council direction 5-20-25)	Up to \$80,000
Grant match commitments for active/pending applications (per Council direction 8-5-25)	Up to \$550,000
<b>Reserved Total:</b>	Up to \$630,000

If all match allocations are realized, an estimated \$330,877.62 would remain from the original allocation. If no grants are awarded, \$880,877.62 would remain available.

**PREPARED BY:** Chris Todd  
Emergency Manager

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Finance Director

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

These efforts align with the strategic priority to further the Town's emergency preparedness, resiliency, and response capabilities, particularly in the area of wildfire risk.

BACKGROUND:

In January 2025, the Town Council directed staff to provide regular updates on emergency preparedness initiatives and the \$1,000,000 Emergency Management allocation. These updates track progress on planning, public outreach, vegetation management, training, and grant applications, and are aligned with the companion Council presentation (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION:

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVES

Below are updates on emergency preparedness initiatives since the last report provided at the May 20, 2025, Town Council meeting. These updates summarize progress on grant applications, vegetation management, planning efforts, training, and regional coordination activities.

**1. Community Outreach**

The Town continues to expand community engagement around wildfire safety and emergency preparedness. The Town hosted two public Firewise USA® information sessions on August 16 and August 26 to promote wildfire preparedness and neighborhood participation. This work increases resident readiness, supports defensible space compliance, and aligns with Fire Risk Reduction Community and grant program priorities. A total of 31 residents participated in these sessions, representing 11 neighborhoods across the wildland urban interface (WUI). In addition, staff delivered emergency preparedness presentations to community groups on June 18 and July 14. Preparedness and safety messages are also regularly promoted through the Town's social media channels, extending outreach to a broader audience of residents and businesses.

**2. Fire Risk Reduction Community Certification**

The Town's application for inclusion on the State Board of Forestry's Fire Risk Reduction Community (FRRRC) list has been recommended for approval following technical review. FRRRC designation confirms that the Town meets state-defined best practices in wildfire risk planning, defensible space, and community preparedness. This certification will strengthen Los Gatos' competitiveness for future CAL FIRE mitigation grants and supports resident eligibility for insurance discounts under California's Safer from Wildfires regulations. The final Board of Forestry action for this is expected in June 2026.

### **3. Evacuation Plan with Simulation-Based Modeling**

The Town is moving forward with the development of a new evacuation plan incorporating simulation-based modeling to assess wildfire evacuation scenarios. The Request for Proposals closed on July 29 and three submissions are under review. The plan will provide updated zone-based evacuation strategies, support integration with the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and ensure compliance with SB 99, AB 747, and SB 1241. Implementation will include traffic-flow mitigations (signal timing, phased strategies, signage, and roadway management) derived from model outputs.

The Town submitted a CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention grant on August 6 requesting \$323,061 (no local match requirement) for this work. Award decisions are expected in December 2025, ensuring consultant work and state funding opportunities are closely coordinated.

### **4. Vegetation Management**

The Town has completed open space vegetation management on over 194 acres. These efforts, conducted in alignment with the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP), reduce potential fire intensity and improve conditions for safe evacuation egress.

To fund the VMP update and related planning, the Town submitted three applications: a CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention grant on August 6 for \$250,000 with no local match; a California Fire Safe Council State Fire Capacity grant on August 31 requesting \$100,000 with a \$150,000 Town match; and a USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant currently under review for \$250,000 with a \$62,500 match. Only one award will be accepted to fund the VMP update.

### **5. Virtual EOC Platform (VEOCI)**

Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has provided licenses for VEOCI, a cloud-based platform to support EOC activation and operations. For Los Gatos, VEOCI will centralize incident logs and mission assignments, standardize Incident Action Plan development, track resources and tasks, and host evacuation-zone maps and forms for damage assessments and public information. Templates are being configured, and staff will be trained.

### **6. Outdoor Emergency Warning System**

The Town is preparing a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (via Cal OES) application for a proposed Outdoor Emergency Warning System. The application seeks funding for the installation of Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) sirens at strategic sites within the Town's Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), with an emphasis on areas where cellular coverage is limited

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or unreliable. The sirens are intended to provide both distinct warning tones and voice messages, creating redundancy with existing electronic alerting systems and enhancing the Town's evacuation readiness.

The project budget is \$1,661,700, with a federal request of \$1,246,275 (75%) and a Town match of \$415,425 (25%), reflecting a 19% inflation adjustment from the original 2019 estimate. Scope and final design will depend on grant award, engineering review, and Council direction.

## **7. Emergency Management Training and Planning**

Emergency Management staff completed Emergency Operations Center training in July to support Emergency Operations Center (EOC) functions. Training on EOC Action Planning and ICS Overview for Executives and Senior Officials is planned for winter 2025.

## **8. Rep. Liccardo's Wildfire Resilience Partnership**

Town staff supported Congressman Liccardo's Wildfire Safety press conference to promote wildfire preparedness and announce a regional Wildfire Resilience Partnership. The press conference received significant media attention, amplifying regional messaging and public awareness.

Following Congressman Liccardo's Wildfire Safety press conference announcing a regional partnership, staff is participating in ongoing coordination meetings. The partnership's intended outcome is to identify top regional initiatives and select up to three where federal coordination can accelerate implementation. Los Gatos will emphasize shared risk modeling, the need for region-wide funding mechanisms, and improved integration of alerting.

## **9. Emergency Operations Plan Update – September 2025**

The EOP serves as a guidance document, establishing the Town's framework for preparedness, response, recovery, and coordination. The last full review and adoption occurred in 2016. Since then, the Town has advanced its emergency management program, and most recently, the Emergency Manager has done a thorough review and update of the EOP. Normally, updates are conducted administratively to ensure the document remains relevant and useful, but due to the timing since the last formal Council approval and the high priority for the Town, staff is bringing forward this update for Council adoption. Future updates will occur administratively, while the next major revision will be presented for Council's consideration and approval. The Town plans to conduct the next major revision in alignment with the County's revision, which is expected in Fiscal Year 2026-27.

The September 2025 update improves clarity and consistency while keeping the plan's overall

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structure and policies intact. It refreshes references and terminology, updates organizational titles, and relocates the Access and Functional Needs section from an annex into the body of the plan as a dedicated chapter. The update also clarifies resource request and notification procedures, documents the order of succession for emergency management leadership, sets baseline training expectations, expands guidance on disaster cost recovery documentation, summarizes public alerting pathways, and refreshes hazard profiles to align with current County planning baselines.

Staff recommends that Council adopt the updated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). If adopted, staff will record this action in the Record of Changes and continue to manage administrative updates between major revisions.

CONCLUSION:

The Town continues to make progress across multiple emergency initiatives, including grant applications, planning, vegetation management, and regional coordination. Staff will return with further updates as grant awards and project milestones occur.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachments:

1. Wildfire Initiatives Presentation
2. Los Gatos EOP September 2025
3. September 2025 EOP Resolution