


# Wildfire Risk Mitigation Options and Cost Scenarios

Town Council Meeting

December 16, 2025

Presented by Chris Todd, Emergency Manager

## Mitigation Priorities




Protect Life

- Resident & Visitor Evacuations
- First Responder Safety



Protect Property & Economic Stability

- Homes
- Businesses
- Critical Infrastructure

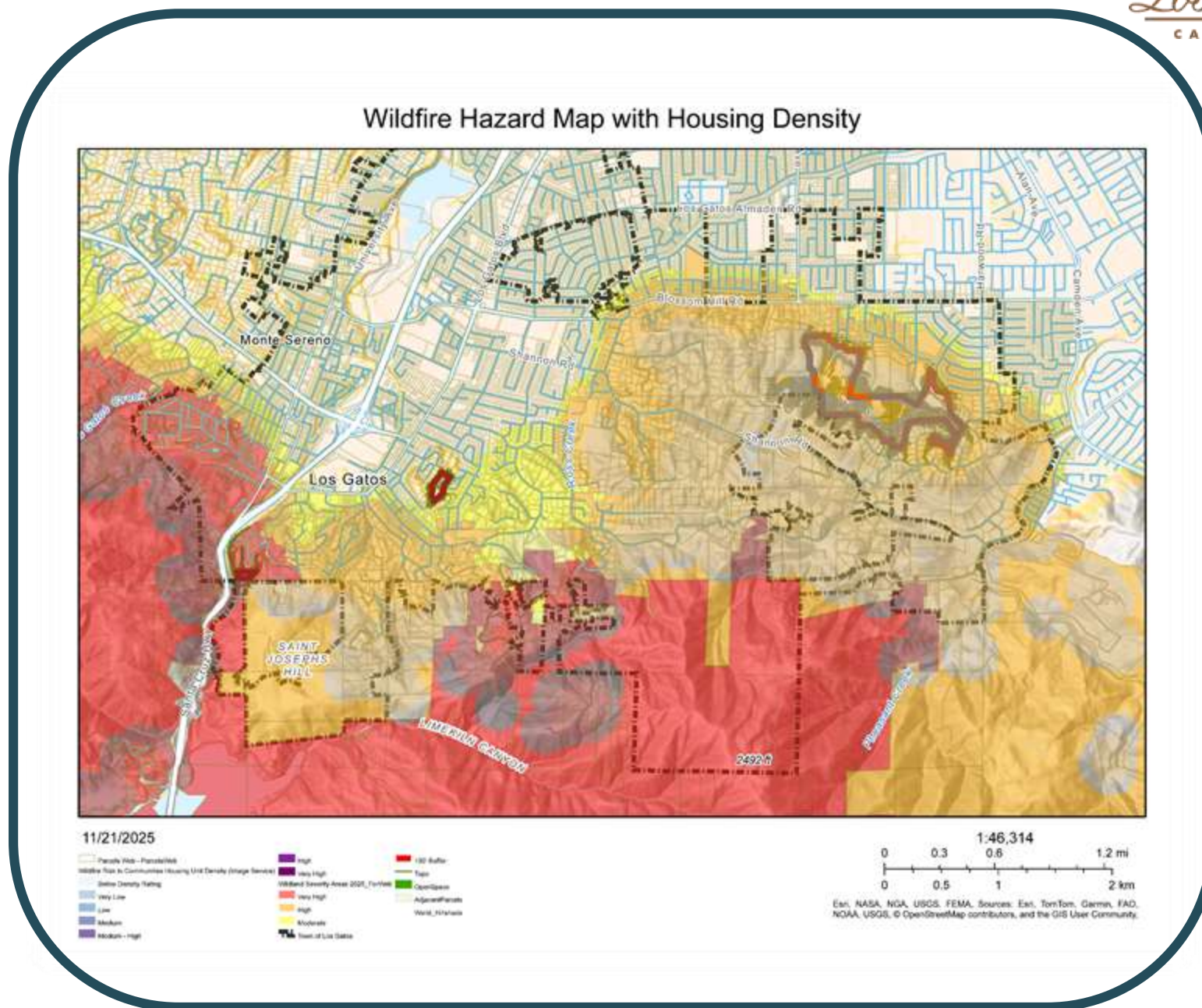


Environmental Stewardship

- Extreme Fire Behavior
- Ecological Health
- Recreation

Goal of preventing wildfire spread from vegetation to structure, structure to structure, and ember-cast

- Educate: clear guidance, community outreach
- Guide: non-punitive home ignition zone assessments
- Reduce barriers: chipping, curbside green waste, grants/rebates
- Code enforcement



# Current Wildfire Mitigation Work

- Adoption of Updated Fire Code
  - Firewise Community Support
    - Evacuation Modeling
    - Outdoor Warning Sirens
  - Vasona Fire Crew Coordination
- Open Space Vegetation Management
- Urban Forest Management Plan Update
- Vegetation Management Plan Update
  - EOC Staff Training & Infrastructure
    - Emergency Plan Updates
    - County Weed Abatement
- Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council Fuels Reduction Projects

## Comparable Wildfire Programs

### Traditional Community Programs

(Truckee, Montecito, other CA WUI towns)

- Roadside vegetation / fuel reduction
- Open space fuel treatments and shaded fuel breaks
- Neighborhood chipping and green-waste pickup programs
- Defensible space inspections & weed abatement enforcement
- Home hardening rebates / grants for residents
- Community wildfire prevention grants (HOAs, roads, partners) Dedicated wildfire prevention staff and admin support

### “Fire Smart” / Data-Driven Pilots

(Tahoe Fire Smart, Tyrolian / Incline area, Sonoma County)

- Parcel-level wildfire risk and ember exposure modeling
- Focus on structure density and Zone 0 (0–5 ft) around homes
- Block-level contractor crews (whole-street mitigation at once)
- Standardized home-hardening packages (vents, decks, fences)
- Targeted outreach to highest-risk clusters
- Shared tracking dashboards for completed work and risk reduction

# Budget Scenarios – Planning-Level Ranges

Cost projections are approximations based on costs from similar wildfire programs and adjusted for scope.

- **Scenario 1 – Foundational**

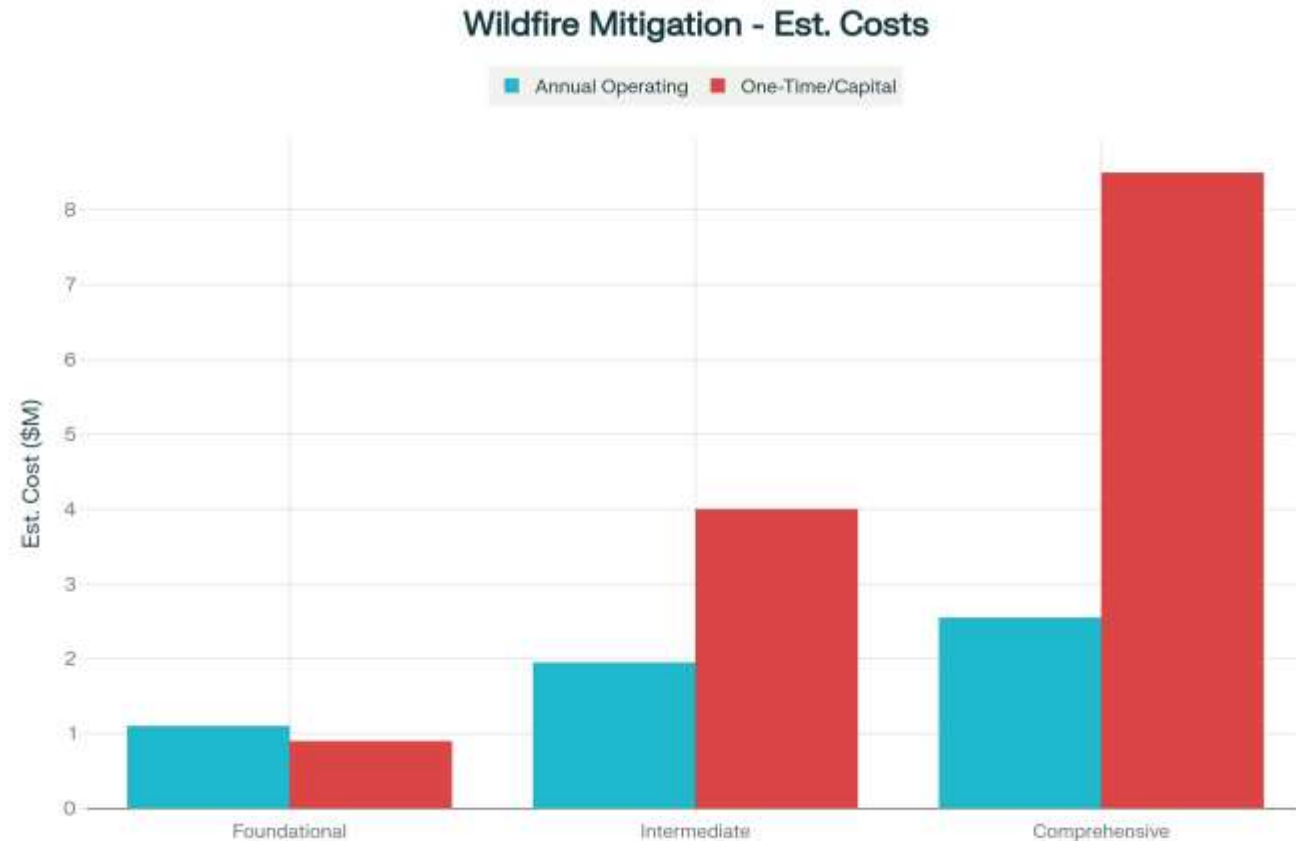
- Annual operating: \$1.1–\$1.15M per year
- One-time / capital & planning: \$.8–\$1M 5 years
- Core, sustainable program focusing on highest priorities

- **Scenario 2 – Intermediate**

- Annual operating: \$1.6–\$2.3M per year
- One-time / capital & planning: \$3–\$5M over several years
- Expanded resident support, fuels work, and EOC capability

- **Scenario 3 – Comprehensive**

- Annual operating: \$2.1–\$3.0M per year
- One-time / capital & planning: \$6–\$11M+
- Whole-community program comparable to leading WUI communities.



*Scenarios are illustrative, not prescriptive, and can be phased or blended.*

# Scenario 1: Foundational

*Approx. \$1.1–\$1.15M per year Includes:*

- **Roadside Vegetation Management:** Move from ad hoc, grant-funded projects to consistent annual maintenance on key evacuation routes.
- **Open Space Vegetation Management:** Maintain and modestly expand fuels work in Town open spaces that most directly threaten WUI neighborhoods.
- **Community Outreach:** Continue Firewise outreach and align Town support with defensible space / weed abatement inspections.
- **EOC & Admin Support:** Strengthen EOC training/exercises and add 0.5–1.0 FTE to coordinate the baseline program.
- **One Time / Capital Costs** ( $\approx$  \$0.8–\$1.0M over the first 5 years): Targeted backlog reduction roadside and open-space, limited early urban-forest hazard-tree work along key evacuation corridors ( $\approx$  \$0.8–\$1.0M total over the first 5–10 years).



# Scenario 2: Intermediate Program

*Approx. \$1.6–\$2.3M per year (plus moderate one-time investments)*

All Foundational elements **plus:**

- **Roadside Vegetation Management:** Increase miles treated on key evacuation routes and begin moving the highest-risk corridors toward an annual maintenance model.
- **Open Space & Park Fuel Treatments:** Expanded open space and park areas that most directly threaten WUI neighborhoods.
- **Resident Support Programs:** WUI chipping/curbside green-waste service and launch a starter home-hardening / defensible-space grant program in priority neighborhoods.
- **EOC & Program Administration:** Ensure at least one dedicated wildfire program manager FTE, plus targeted contract support (e.g., Fire Safe Council) for outreach, assessments, and neighborhood projects.
- **One Time / Capital Costs (≈ \$3–\$5M over the first 5–10+ years):** Open-space backlog reduction and shaded fuel breaks, urban-forest hazard-tree work along priority evacuation routes, and initial low- to moderate-cost evacuation route improvements (e.g., turnouts, shoulder work, signage and striping).



# Scenario 3: Comprehensive Program

*Approx. \$2.1–\$3.0M per year (plus larger capital over time)*

All Foundational & Intermediate elements **plus:**

- **Roadside Vegetation Management:** Annual/biannual treatment across all priority evacuation routes and regular fuels treatment.
- **Open Space & Park Fuel Treatments:** Maintain and expand a connected network of treated open-space units and fuel breaks where Town lands influence structure risk or evacuation routes.
- **Resident Support Programs:** Neighborhood chipping/green-waste, home-hardening / defensible-space grants, and community wildfire-mitigation projects (e.g., block- or HOA-level work).
- **EOC & Program Administration:** Fully staffed wildfire/emergency management program with dedicated Town positions and sustained contracted support to coordinate multi-year vegetation projects, grants, and neighborhood programs.
- **One Time / Capital Costs (≈ \$6–\$11M+ over the first 5–10+ years):** Full 12-year urban-forest tree cycle, expanded strategic fuel breaks and open-space backlog reduction, and a substantial portion of the long-term evacuation-route capital program (e.g., roadway widening, added turnouts, and other major improvements).

# Emergency Management Fund (\$1M Council Allocation)

Budget	
<u>Spent</u>	<u>\$42,420</u>
Emergency Manager staffing and salary (FY24–25)	\$31,413
Public outreach (Firewise education and mailers)	\$2,709
Grant writing support	\$5,000
50yr Emergency Potable Water	\$3,298
<u>Allocated</u>	<u>\$81,700</u>
Hilow Road tree removal	\$80,000
Sierra Azule Dr Brush Removal	\$1,700
<u>Reserved for Grant Matches</u>	<u>\$462,500</u>
FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant (Siren Sys)	\$400,000
USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (VMP)	\$62,500
<u>Remaining funds</u>	<u>\$413,380</u>