



Town of New Castle
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Memorandum

To: Mayor & Council
From: Paul Smith, Orrin Moon
Re: Agenda Item: Consider Ordinance TC 2026-5 for the Adoption of the 2025 Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code with amendments on first reading.
Date: 6/2/26

Purpose:

In recognition of the increasing threat of wildland fire to the community, Town Council adopted the 2021 ICC Wildland Urban Interface Code with amendments to improve ignition resistance and fuel reduction for new structures. At the beginning of 2026, Council further codified more stringent ignition resistance requirements (Class A flamespread) for new structures. In both instances, requirements for *existing* structures were not considered.

Recently, the state of Colorado has mandated the adoption of its Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code (CWRC) statewide. After reviewing, Staff concludes that the Town's WUI code and the CWRC are quite compatible. One notable difference is that the CWRC does require resiliency upgrades with additions and alterations for existing structures beyond certain square footage thresholds. These thresholds and requirements include (CWRC Section 101.5):

- When the work increases the building footprint by 500sf or more, the increased footprint of the structure must comply with CWRC – Only the increased area shall comply.
- When 25% or more of the surface area of a roof is replaced – The entire roof shall comply.
- When 25% or more of the total exterior wall surface area is replaced or reconstructed – The entire wall surface area shall comply & the defensible space with 5' must comply.

Town permitting records demonstrate that very few existing properties would have been affected by these provisions had the code been in effect over the past 10 years. Staff anticipates that approximately one existing home a year may be affected by the CWRC.

The state board for the CWRC has also performed a baseline risk assessment (see mapping below) which projects varying levels of fire intensity throughout the Town and prescribes treatments for structure hardening and defensible space commensurate with those projections. Based on the CWRC mapping alone, different areas of New Castle have different levels of risk (sometimes even on the same street) and thus different levels of mitigation standards. However, upon review of the mapping, Colorado River Fire Rescue (CRFR) maintains that due to the surrounding topography, fuel sources, and evacuation constraints, New Castle in its *entirety*

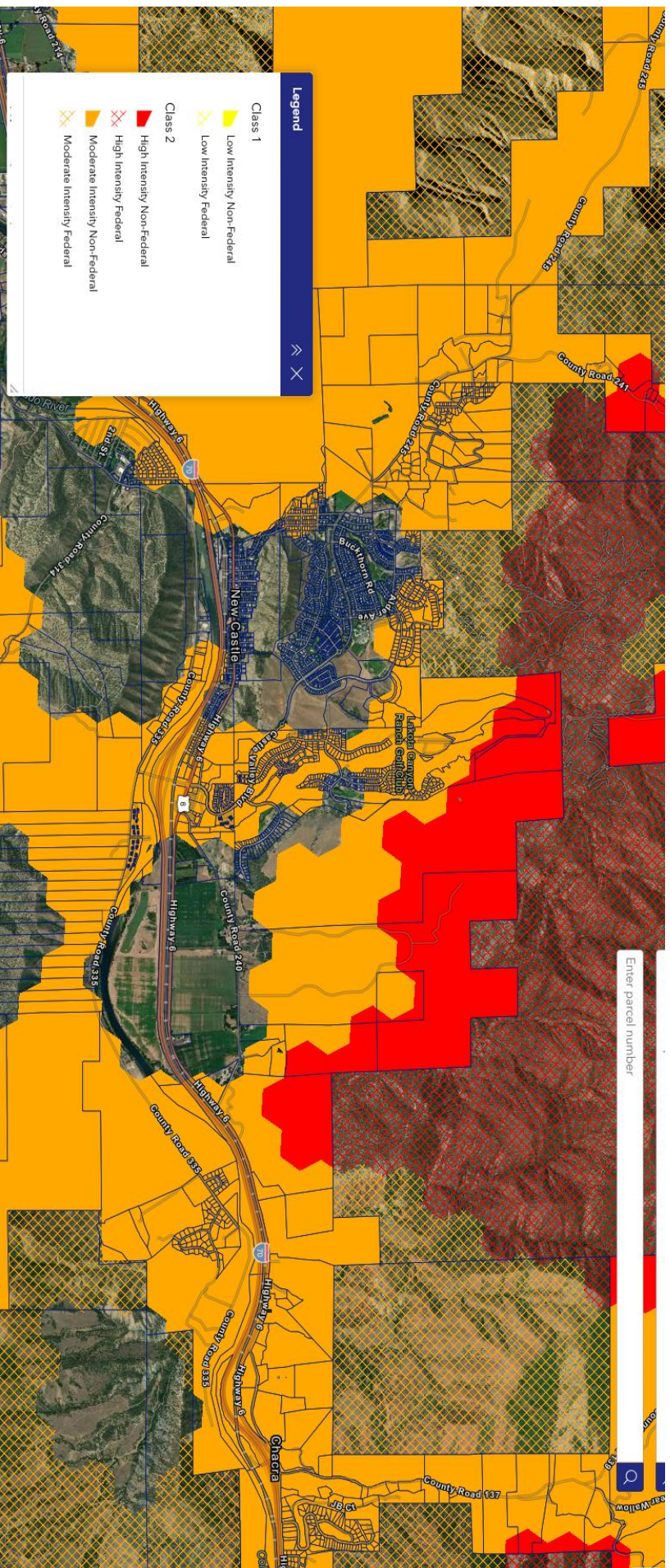
should be classified uniformly at the highest hazard level and therefore governed by CRWC's most stringent structure hardening. Since the provisions of the CWRC allow for local customization of the mapping, staff recommends amending the following section of the CWRC to read:

Section 303.1.2 shall read: "The AHJ may develop and adopt local maps designating wildfire hazard and fire intensity classifications within its jurisdictional boundaries in accordance with Sections 303.1 through 303.3. The AHJ shall adopt intensity classifications no less severe than those recommended by CRFR and/or other local fire authorities. Local maps shall be updated accordingly."

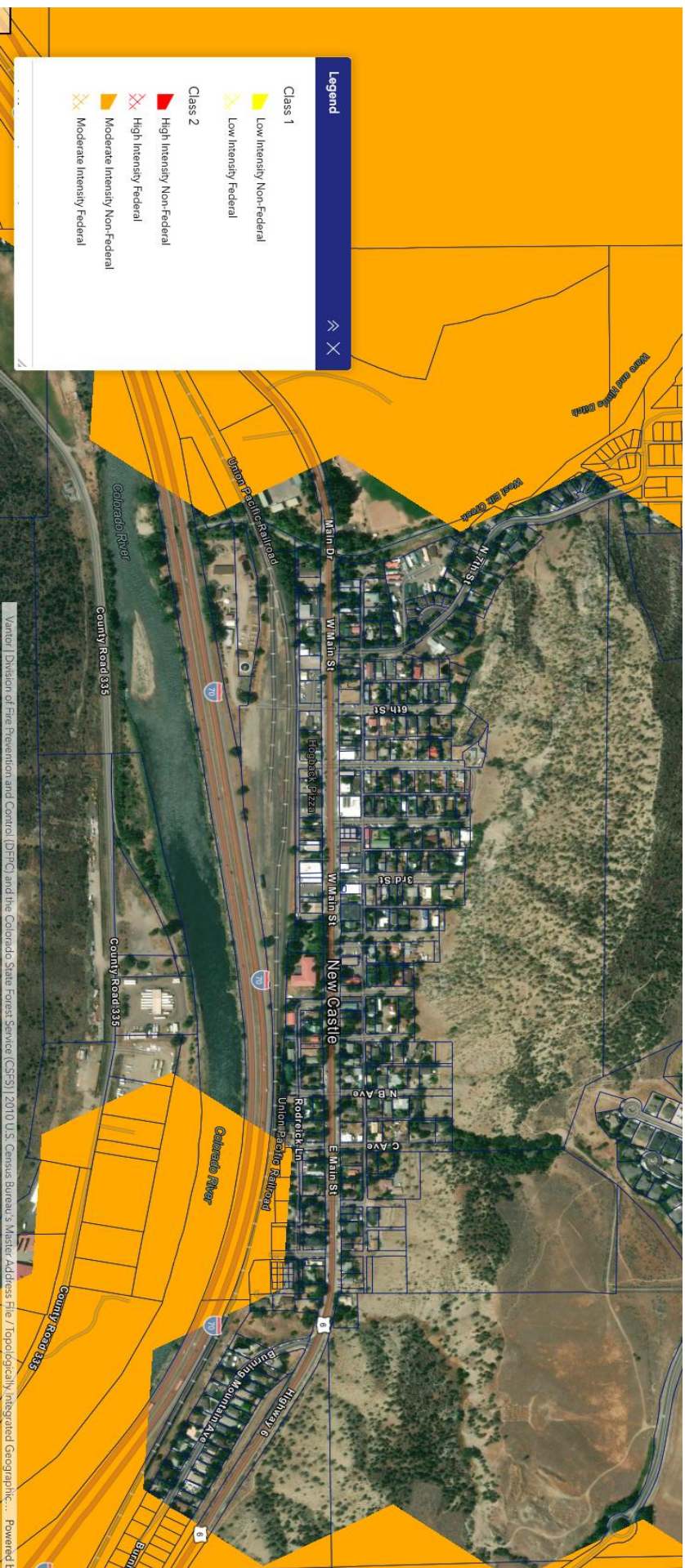
CRFR comments are provided in the packet for your consideration.

Thank you,
Paul Smith
Town Planner

2025 Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Risk Hazard for New Castle Area



Close up...



Close up...

