

CELEBRATING



OREGON
Department of
Land Conservation
& Development

Wildfires in Oregon are getting bigger and more frequent, increasing risk to people and property. DLCD has identified six recommendations for changes to state and local land use planning programs to reduce wildfire risk and protect Oregon communities.

For 50 years, the statewide land use planning program has been preserving agricultural and forest lands, to support Oregon's resource-based economies. A cornerstone of the planning system, successful preservation of this land has resulted in fewer houses being built in the wildland urban interface (WUI), where they are exposed to greater wildfire risk. Additional land use strategies implemented at the local level could further reduce wildfire risk and protect Oregonians.

[Senate Bill 762](#) (2021) directed the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to recommend changes to the statewide land use planning program to create more wildfire adapted communities.

DLCD submitted the [Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report](#) to the Oregon Legislature and to the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council (WPAC) on September 30, 2022. During the 2023 session, the legislature is considering DLCD's recommendations and any additional recommendations from the WPAC. The legislature may direct DLCD to implement some or all of the recommendations.

Creating Wildfire Adapted Communities

DLCD's report, informed by a robust community engagement process, includes six recommendations, and identifies implementation options and needed state and local resources.

- The recommendations focus on land use and transportation actions that are intended to provide protection at a community, subdivision, or neighborhood scale. They complement other requirements of SB 762 and existing regulations that are more focused at the building scale, such as home hardening standards and defensible space.
- Each recommendation will require substantial state funding and technical assistance to support local implementation, particularly for cities and counties with limited capacity. The legislature, when deciding on the best means of implementation, may need to prioritize resources.
- Recommendations are focused on actions that DLCD and the Land Conservation and Development Commission can accomplish within the limits of the statewide land use planning system and do not represent the totality of work that is, or could be, done to better protect Oregonians and Oregon communities from wildfire.



"Wildfire" by USFWS/Southeast

Wildfire Impacts

Record-breaking wildfires have threatened communities, businesses, landscapes, and wildlife across Oregon.

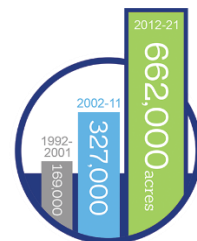
By the numbers...



1M+
ACRES BURNED
IN OREGON 2020



4,000
HOMES DESTROYED
IN OREGON 2020



**AVERAGE
ACRES**
BURNED ANNUALLY
OVER THREE DECADES



\$1.4B
SPENT
FIRE FIGHTING
SINCE 2017

Smoke from wildfires and the associated health and economic impacts are some ways that many Oregonians have been impacted by wildfires.

In addition to the devastating loss of life, homes, and businesses, other significant social, economic, and environmental implications include loss of infrastructure, cultural resources, and tourism; transportation and power interruptions; and negative impacts to watersheds, wildlife habitat, timber, agriculture, and recreation.

Sources: Office of Senator Jeff Golden; Doug Grafe, Wildfire Programs Director, March 2022

Recommendation 1: Cities and counties should prioritize robust and inclusive community engagement in planning efforts to create wildfire adapted communities.

- It is critical to broadly engage the community, particularly community members from traditionally under-served and under-represented populations, and representatives from a variety of agencies, districts, service providers, and community-based organizations.
- Recommendation 1 applies to cities and counties undertaking wildfire preparedness, evacuation, adaptation, mitigation, and recovery planning outlined in recommendations 2 through 6. It is not intended as a stand-alone activity.

Recommendation 2: Cities and counties should assess and improve transportation networks for safe evacuation and firefighting response.

- In coordination with emergency management, transportation, and fire agency professionals, jurisdictions should work across boundaries with regional, state, and federal partners and Tribal governments.
- Cities and counties may need to amend transportation system plans, policies, and programs to address identified gaps or deficiencies in transportation infrastructure.
- The need for safe evacuation is present in all areas of wildfire risk.
- Recommendation 2 applies at the community planning scale.

Recommendation 3: Cities and counties should review and amend local land use codes for areas of new development to ensure safe evacuation and efficient firefighting response.

- In consultation with state and local emergency management and fire protection professionals, communities should review and amend zoning and land division codes to increase street connectivity and site access.
- Recommendation 3 applies at the community, neighborhood, and subdivision planning scale.

Recommendation 4: Cities and counties should review and amend comprehensive land use plan policies and implement land use codes to incorporate wildfire risk mitigation requirements for areas of new development.

- Intended to reduce wildfire risk at the community or neighborhood and subdivision scale, standards or applications may differ depending on the scale or type of development.
- Recommendation 4 applies at the community, neighborhood, and subdivision planning scale.

Recommendation 5: Cities and counties should prepare for post-disaster recovery in communities through recovery planning.

- After a wildfire disaster, cities and counties often need additional capacity to process land use and related permit applications and engage in community recovery efforts to support rebuilding and the return of people who have been displaced in timely manner.
- Recommendation 5 applies at the community planning scale.

Recommendation 6: Cities, counties, special districts, and Tribes should increase the effectiveness of natural hazards planning through coordination of Community Wildfire Protection Plans and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans with local comprehensive land use plans and codes.

- Statewide Planning Goal 7: *Areas Subject to Natural Hazards* directs local governments to address natural hazards in their comprehensive land use plan by adopting a natural hazard inventory, policies, and supporting land use codes developed through a public planning process.
- Recommendation 6 applies at the community planning scale.



"Wildfire" by NPS Climate Change Response



"Wildfire in the Pacific Northwest" by BLM Oregon & Washington



"Fighting wildfires" by The U.S. Army