



# Ordinance Fact Sheet

July 14, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** City Attorney / City Prosecutor's Department

**SUBJECT:** **AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA AMENDING TITLE 14, CHAPTER 14.28, SECTION 14.28.500 OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE MAP**

## TITLE OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA AMENDING TITLE 14, CHAPTER 14.28, SECTION 14.28.500 OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE MAP**

## PURPOSE OF THE ORDINANCE:

This ordinance amends Section 14.28.500 of Title 14, Chapter 14.28, of the Pasadena Municipal Code ("PMC") to adopt the updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone ("FHSZ") Map released by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ("CAL FIRE") for the City of Pasadena's Local Responsibility Area as required by California Government Code section 51179.

## REASONS WHY LEGISLATION IS NEEDED:

Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps define areas of the City identified by the Fire Department, in consultation with CAL FIRE, wherein additional fire protective construction requirements are warranted due to the presence of increased fire hazards caused by the urban-wildland interface. FHSZ Maps classify land into three hazard levels which include moderate, high, and very high. Each level reflects how

MEETING OF 07/21/2025  
~~- 07/14/2025 -~~

AGENDA ITEM NO. 20 27

likely an area is to experience wildfire and level of intensity. The California Government Code requires CAL FIRE to periodically review and make recommendations regarding the delineation of fire hazard severity zones in consultation with local fire departments. The last FHSZ map for the City of Pasadena was issued on July 1, 2008.

On March 24, 2025, City staff received an updated FHSZ map for the City of Pasadena's Local Responsibility Area issued by the State Fire Marshal. Pursuant to California Government Code section 51179, no later than 120 days from receipt of official transmittal, the FHSZ Map must be brought to the City Council for consideration to adopt an ordinance either accepting the area of moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity as currently shown on the revised FHSZ Map or the City Council may expand the area of FHSZ following a finding supported by evidence. The state requires that such an ordinance be adopted no later than July 22, 2025, based on the March 24, 2025 release date. Once adopted, the Ordinance and related documents will be submitted to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for oversight and compliance.

Adoption of the 2025 FHSZ Map creates no new regulatory requirements. The changes to the Map are relatively minor. The two-tiered zoning previously used (High Hazard and Interface Zone) have been divided into three zones consistent with the new State nomenclature- Very High, High and Moderate. The boundaries of the various zones have shifted to reflect current science and local conditions of wildland fire behavior. Based on the 2008 map, there are 3,911 properties in the Very-High Fire Severity Zone. The March 2025 map will increase that to 4,610 properties. 887 parcels will be added and 188 will be removed.

#### **PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENTS OR GROUPS AFFECTED:**

The Pasadena Fire Department will complete annual inspections of properties Very-High Fire Severity zones, which will increase by 18%. These additional inspections will be completed with existing staff and resources. The updated FHSZ map will also be used by the Pasadena Fire Department and Fire Chief in administering the City's Fire Prevention Code (PMC Chapter 14.28).

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

On June 23, 2025, staff recommended that the City Council find the proposed action is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the common sense exemption because it can be seen with certainty that there no possibility that the adoption of this ordinance may have a significant effect on the environment. The effects of this action are adequately addressed and encompassed by the City Council's determination.


**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact from the proposed ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Beal Bagneris  
City Attorney

Prepared by:

*for*   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Danielle St. Clair  
Assistant City Attorney

Concurred by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ  
City Manager

WHQ7ZNDH0D2TOY