LAND USE PLANNING WORKGROUP MEETING
Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Committee Members Present
Michael Maguire, Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation
Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Matt Damon, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Tony Marino, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
Nick Cammarota, Building Industry
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Tracy Rhine, Rural Counties Representatives of California (virtual)

Other Attendees
Tristan Lanza, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Ben McMahan,
Jillian Fisher, CAL FIRE
Danh Dao, CAL FIRE
Carrie Lewis, CAL FIRE

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome **Michael Maguire**
The meeting was called to order at 3:11 PM by Michael Maguire.

B. Introductions/Roll Call
A quorum was not established with six committee members present in-person and two attending virtually.

C. Approval of the July 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes (Motion Required) – **Michael Maguire**

The July 15, 2025, meeting minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum.

D. Approval of the August 19, 2025, Agenda (Motion Required) – **Michael Maguire**

The August 19, 2025, agenda was not approved as there was not a quorum.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Library of Wildfire Planning Resources, Presentation by Ben McMahon, Program Manager for Climate Services Team, Integrated Climate Advocation and Resilience Program, Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

1) LUP Workgroup is to develop a library of all planning resources to use as a reference for the work moving forward. Workgroup members will continue to have an opportunity to recommend and/or nominate specific wildfire planning documents or resources that the workgroup will assemble and make available to the members in a public and online centralized location.
2) If there are any recommendations please forward them to Chief Damon, Clay Kerchof or Michael Maguire via email.

3. MONTHLY DISCUSSION TOPIC

A. Draft LCI Vulnerable Communities Platform, Presentation by Ben McMahon, Program Manager, Climate Services Team, Integrated Climate Advocation & Resilience Program, Governor's Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation

B. Discussion led by Ben McMahan

J. Lopez – The CWMP was mandated by AB 38 to create a map using the same set of parameters, using wildfire and climate change impacts on the community. The problem now is that if we go to another community, we don't have ways to take it to a community level. We took it to the County Supervisors

Sean McGlynn – When you're making grant decisions on the state level, why are we not directing people to utilize the tool to build their case argument. So, we're making sure we're hitting the most vulnerable populations even for a city. It makes them think about problem solving in a different way. We're all using the same data set to define the problem. It would be great if we started using the tool actively, promote the tool. If you're going to put a funding mechanism on it, tell people what it is you're going to look at and don't have them jump around trying to find it. If you're using data, you're forcing whoever is writing the grants to use that data set to justify why they may be deviating from what's in their footprint. You have a better grant application if you're acknowledging why. Sometimes the reason we struggle is because we don't know where to go to find the data, especially smaller communities.

Michael Maguire – This could almost be utilized as a tool to further focus and direct where agencies in their grant review process can evaluate where grant dollars should be going.

Sean McGlynn – And you're asking questions, and you start the conversation. Some of the biggest struggles are where to find it. Where do I locate it?

J. Lopez – I don't want to speak for CAL FIRE, but CAL FIRE has grants so they're going to make a decision. They will know which areas are the most critical and prioritize those and give them a chance

Michael Maguire – Like a scoring criteria in compliance.

Sean McGlynn – Having the same vocabulary makes everybody reference the same material. (You get better applications). If you're struggling to articulate where the vulnerability is, and we agree that this is a good tool, then why aren't we sharing that to help some of these people support their application? Not saying that you're dictating

funding to go there but if they have the tool in front of them, they have a chance to utilize the resource that could build them a better application.

Clay Kerchof – We've been hearing about the Vulnerable Communities Platform for years at this point so it's exciting that there's this draft or test version available. It's exciting that its solutions-oriented. So many of these conversations about vulnerability are negative. This helps shift the tone of the conversation from the problem to the scale of the problem. Where are the areas where we can focus and target and have the most impactful action. I'm going to tie this back to what unfolds in the disaster recovery process because those are the funds that we're administering. This checks so many boxes of the factors of what federal guidelines require us to look at. We want to know, in our hazard mitigation set-aside, when we're working with counties and local governments, do they see themselves in these maps, in this matrix? Can they recognize the neighborhoods. Do they know who to work with in order to build community support for some kind of community adaptation effort that maybe we're spending post-disaster recovery dollars on. Without that it can be much more difficult to get on the same page about where we can make the most impact, which communities will be most ready for this type of investment. I think it can really be a useful tool in not only identifying where, but also what kinds of strategies would be most useful when you have limited resources to invest in these types of activities. A lot of what we talk about is messaging of wildfire resilience and land use strategies. Tools like this really hit the nail on the head on how to better communicate these complex topics.

J. Lopez – How granular are the spacial estimates?

Ben McMahan – The land scan data is at the 30-meter scale for where it identifies communities but we're averaging the census block group data across all squares that would be found within that census block group. If you look at a city you would see the shape of the census block groups in the outline of the squares because most of the census block groups in a city are occupied, but it is 30-meter squares within that. They all have the same data, because we're averaging it across the block groups, partly for privacy reasons, and partly because it would get messy if each one of those squares had its own value. When you get into the rural areas, you have the same 30-meter squares but if you looked at a rural community that you were familiar with, you would see that there were only squares found in the location where the community was at, as opposed to the entire census block group, which can be tracked and can be massive in some cases. We do see some of those census tracts and block groups, they span from high peaks down into the valleys so you get some weird outputs for the climate data. It's nice to be able to sample just the climate data where those communities are located. It comes with some downsides too, but that's one of the positives.

J Lopez – If we work in an area where we do the California Wildfire Mitigation Program and we do 500 homes and at the same time we do a forest treatment around the area, would we be able to measure the success or the change of that community in the category of improvement after the treatments were done? Can we see what we had before and after intervention?

Ben McMahan – The challenge would probably be what's the metric that we're shifting? You could certainly do it, like an overlay that shows we've made an investment in this area for fuel reduction and because some of the data is already baked in – the Fifth

Assessment climate data won't change until next time. Some of the other administrative boundaries like the CAL FIRE zones and a few others are what they are but what could show is a spatial overlay that we've done some intervention in this space and are tracking the outcomes because you would be able to identify where those were. Not all the places that are high risk fire burn every year. Tracking those outcomes can be difficult because of that.

Matt Damon – Is this tool intended for use by local governments or local community leaders to grade their areas on and set their own priorities on?

Ben McMahan – Yes, that would be ideal. One of our primary use cases is to help tee up some of that decision support for making their case for their grant applications, or it could be local government using it to help assess their vulnerability and identify some of those priority areas for projects. The goal is to help make it easier to use some of the data that has been produced. We've got good data on climate risk, good data on wildfire risk – the goal is to get that into the hands of folks that are making decisions.

Matt Damon – With CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants Program the emphasis in on local, that's why we have the open solicitation, to pull in that specific local knowledge so they can say, this is where we think this project would be best. And then they're encouraged to work with their local CAL FIRE unit to have integration into the unit fire plan to be working towards those same goals that the local CAL FIRE unit is working towards. This seems like a good tool to help shape those priorities locally and then they can say they've looked at their whole area and it's pointing them in this direction.

Ben McMahan – We've talked about using and ESRI-based tool so we have access to that suite of ways of interacting and some of their story map functionality that could pull in some of that community input and put it on a map so you can see the narrative about your community in addition to the fire risk, and get that in front of communities for review because people have slightly different opinions about that. That kind of conversation starters is one of the ways this could potentially be useful.

J. Lopez – Is it available and ready to go?

Ben McMahan – It's technically live but it's in draft format with a big disclaimer. It has a big caveat on the release because we're waiting for final approvals to get everything out. The data is all live and listed. We have a redevelopment, or an update plan built in and are game for any kind of input to help make sure it's doing the things we say it can do or that we want it to do. If you see something wrong let us know because we want to make sure we are integrating those improvements.

J. Lopez – Would like to offer CWMP as a possible case study.

Michael Maguire – They're doing investments in defensible space and all that can change the vulnerability metrics of a community and potentially this tool could capture that with data updates periodically.

Sean McGlynn – If the FEMA reforms start to be what they're saying they're going to be on the mitigation side with dollar amounts associated with it, being able to put it out as a

state, how to apply those you get the biggest hit to vulnerable populations it's going to be essential.

J. Lopez – Vibrant Planet is doing something similar; would they be a good resource if we can bring them in to work on this project

Ben McMahan – We've has some conversations with some of the First Street people as far as flood and what our flood stuff looks like compared to theirs. In some cases, they have really precise data, but a lot of the private sector is also focused on evaluating individual parcels from the insurance side and we're trying to steer clear of characterizing individual parcels because we don't have the data for it and due to insurance concerns. We really want to focus on that community scale. Both assessment of vulnerability but also what those interventions look like. It doesn't mean the parcel scale is not important, it has to happen from the ground up, but our maps don't necessarily include that parcel scale information.

Tony Marino – On the social vulnerability data set, are you and CalEnviroScreen using the same data for the vulnerability part or are there differences?

Ben McMahan – There are differences. It's the same general source, a lot of it comes from census. I hesitate to say we're trying to make a CalEnviroScreen for climate because I feel like that's probably a little too simplistic. I think there's a recognition of the powerful utility for CalEnviroScreen for a lot of the exposure and other work they've done. We've tried to identify some of the census variables on the social side that are relevant to those. Relevant to climate vulnerability more broadly or relevant to specific wildfire hazards or specific climate hazards. Some of those overlap with the CalEnviroScreen because they're income. Some of the other ones that are found in all indicators. Some of them don't because they're really tailored towards some of the questions we're asking that aren't necessarily related to pollution exposure or some of the questions they're asking. We have ongoing conversations with them, just to think through about alignment and also how do we refer back and forth on what we're doing and how we share. If somebody is looking for something and that's not what we do, we want to make sure and point folks in the right direction.

Tony Marino – On the wildfire data, where is the wildfire hazard data coming from?

Ben McMahan – It's a combination, because of the way we're focused – the general location we expect to see elevated fire risk – it includes the fire hazard severity zones, because that's an expected area. It includes burn probability, which is provided by the Forest Service right now. We've been waiting on the Fifth Assessment fire data, but it's been a little behind. We've also used the CAL FIRE Historic Fire Perimeters because if a place has burned then it can be understood to be at risk of burning. We've also pulled in from the Berkeley Smoke Lab some smoke data which is different from that because it's more like smoke exposure as opposed to direct wildfire exposure. We're also bringing in the climate data from the Fifth Assessment, which is the shift in temperature from September to November to capture some of that late season aridity and shift in the fuel conditions. We're not trying to design an extremely precise climate vulnerability assessment. We're trying to identify some common conditions that increase climate vulnerability and bring them together in a stacked index. What you end up with is that in that low, medium, and high framework is the general location of increased fire risk. We're

evaluating it against some of the other more precise or granular tools, and they bring similar patterns in because we're doing that low, medium, high framework. It comes across more coarse.

Tony Marino – Future projections, how are they incorporated? The climate assessment information for future, incorporating vulnerability into this. What is the time frame?

Ben McMahan – We've tried to convert it to more narrative format but effectively our current time frame is 2015 to 2044, which uses one of the most common files they put out and then we do 2045-2075 for future. We can only do that for the data for which there are future projections, for the social data somebody referred us to a gentleman at ODI that's done some work with the hard-to-count index and some other social data. Future social projections are tricky. We've generally framed this as, given the current social situation, what would the current social situation look like now under future climate conditions. We can't predict what the future social situation would look like so it's more like in a future climate, how would that look? What would that look in the communities of today, effectively? For the climate data it's either Fifth Assessment data or it's environmental data that's more like the domain. The fire hazard severity zones, and a few other ones that are actually administrative or historic, are the baseline for fire risk and then we use some of the Fifth Assessment data to bring in that future climate signal. We're wrapping up the documentation this week as part of the launch process to have the full methods report. It's like a series – a few technical white papers that bring together a couple of those component pieces of how do we pick the indicators, is one of the big questions, and how did we stitch it together into the final map is the other big question. We'll be putting all of the python code and our code for the climate data analytics on GitHub for open source, and then the method steps will also be there as well. In that case we'll just link to the data, we won't be able to provide all the data for download but we can link to the data we use and the code and source.

C. Future Meeting Topics
   1) *Community Engagement*
      Discussion on community engagement practices in high-risk communities
   2) *Update on Best Practices* (LCI/CAL FIRE)
      Review of local wildfire-related policies and strategies on General Plans
   3) *Technology & Data*
      Tracking how AI, wildfire hazard, and risk data can be incorporated into General Plan updates or CWPPs (CAL FIRE)
   4) *Evacuation Routes*
      Update on the Evacuation Route TA and implementation across the state
   5) Revisit Disaster Recovery
      Implementing resilience standards and focus on retrofits outside of FHSZs
   6) Housing Accountability and Wildfire Resilience
   7) Transfer of Development Rights
      Ken Alex/Louise Bedsworth – CARB funded TDR for Conservation and Housing Study
   8) Alternate Building Materials
      Invitation to Justine Massey and Chris Fano (SGC/LCI) to discuss bio-based building materials, per their recent outreach to HCD Codes & Standards

4. ROUNDTABLE

A. Due to timing constraints there was no roundtable.

5. PULIC COMMENT

A. There was no public comment.

6. UPCOMING MEETING

A. September 16, 2025, 3:05-4:00pm
CNRA Building, Room 2-221

B. 2025 Meetings:
Every third Tuesday of the month, 3:05-4:00pm

8. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:09 PM