
LAND USE PLANNING WORKGROUP MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, December 16, 2025



Committee Members Present

Michael Maguire, Governor’s Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation
Tony Marino, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
Matt Damon, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
J. Lopez, Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Deborah Halberstadt, Department of Insurance
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Nick Cammarota, Building Industry Association (virtual)
Tracy Rhine, Rural County Representatives of California (virtual)
Victoria Lamar-Haas, CalOES (virtual)
Alex Goelzer, Department of Housing and Community Development

Other Attendees

Jillian Fisher, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Carrie Lewis, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Danh Dao, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 PM by Michael Maguire.

Michael Maguire

B. Introductions/Roll Call

A quorum was established with five committee members present in-person and two attending virtually.

D. Approval of the December 16, 2025, Agenda (**Motion Required**)

Michael Maguire

Motion: J. Lopez moved to accept the December 16, 2025, meeting agenda; Sean McGlynn seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Submit all Clearinghouse document recommendations to [Michael Maguire](#).

3. MONTHLY DISCUSSION TOPIC

A. Short Review of Previous Month Discussion Topics
Clay Kerchof presented a draft of the WMAC Land Use Planning Workgroup 2026 Outline

Michael Maguire – For #4, Evacuation Routes and Planning, maybe someone from LCI from the Planning and Land Use team could do a presentation considering it was started concurrently with the WUI Best Practices Guide and with the Fire Hazard TA Guide unless there's someone at the local government or regional level that may be practitioners of that planning guidance, rather than developers of it, that may be more appropriate to speak on it.

Clay Kerchof – There are examples of community developments or jurisdictions that have done a good job of either retrofitting communities so that there would be more evacuation capacity or rebuilding a different way after a disaster.

Michael Maguire – There are two communities I can think of, like Paradise with the Campfire in 2018, having serious evacuation route challenges. There were only two or three routes coming in and out of town and with power lines coming down on Clark Road, that really only left one route to get out of town. And then there was the Woolsey fire and recently the Palisades Fire in Malibu. If there are any practitioners at the local level that could speak to the challenges or what they learned from that, either the City of Paradise or City of Malibu, it may be interesting to hear.

Sean McGlynn – I'm setting up some appointments with ILS and Cal Cities staff at the beginning of the year to go through the list and wanted to clarify next steps. We could start to figure out who is working in this space that's experienced. Leadership from both Paradise and Malibu has changed significantly since those events but I think there are plenty of case studies. I like the list and think we can start to move on it.

J. Lopez – In terms of evacuation routes, the City of Malibu is just a small, narrow stretch for 37 miles which received most of the impact, but all of the Santa Monica mountains are involved as well. I recommend involving the counties because it's more than just the city of Malibu.

Sean McGlynn – CAL FIRE might know some good examples of who's pushing good evacuation routes.

Matt Damon – The problem with the evacuation stuff is that we don't like when the land use planning program looks at safety elements and they look to see if there is planning done to meet the requirements of SB 99 and AB 747. We're not looking at any of the quality of it because we don't have any authority to do that. While we might informally look at things that are better or worse, our main thing is to look at what they've done. It gets a bit touchy in light of some of the things that have come down on the evacuation planning stuff.

J. Lopez – The Board of Forestry also doesn't have the authority. We just make sure that it gets done after land use planning. It's incident driven.

Sean McGlynn – I was thinking more that we find good examples of a good process as opposed to a specific incident. Who's gone through the process? We got the report from NIST – has anyone taken what NIST reported and tried to incorporate it into a planning document? Those are the things, as a City Manager, that I would be curious about – application of research into the planning. Has anyone taken the research and creatively applied the research in the field?

Matt Damon – Another resource could potentially be APA to see what different planning departments have done.

J. Lopez – It might be a good idea to hear from researchers as well. What they currently have and how they can help us bring it together.

Clay Kerchof – This was a last-minute agenda topic so if it's a challenging one that might be hard to find an angle, then we don't have to do it or revisit it later in the year.

Deborah Halberstadt – InnSure will be presenting to WMAC in the future.

Clay Kerchof – At HCD we have a hazard risk land use housing and insurance planning and pilot program that could be a complimentary discussion to the InnSure presentation if we want to continue to explore that topic. I have some different land use tools or programs that are of interest to us. We could coordinate with Wildfire Prepared Neighborhoods to have someone present on the Dixon Trail community in Escondido but there are others as well. The idea of reducing wildfire risk for adjacent communities is a powerful idea.

Kimberly Carr – Incline Village in the Lake Tahoe Basin recently completed a homeowner's association wildfire mitigation project where they did a lot of mastication to create a break around the houses that were on a hillside and were very high fire risk. They negotiated with the insurance company to account for that as well as looking at hardening and some other factors. That might be an interesting group to hear from. They can now operate masticators remotely so they can get on a very steep slope, and it has improved access substantially.

Clay Kerchof – One of the benefits of those machines is that they masticate the vegetation and they burn internally as well to avoid excess and it dramatically reduces the amount of smoke that it puts off.

Kimberly Carr – The lead company on this is BurnBot, they're driving it in order to pick up the brush, the branches and then burn on site and reduce the smoke because it's all within the chamber.

Michael Maguire – PG&E has a wood innovations program where they contracted out to BurnBot to do some of these experiments on landscapes.

J. Lopez – In Tuolumne and Lake counties they have done quite a bit of work similar to that, but the insurance companies have not acknowledged that work even though it's been extensive. It's not only been in private and county properties but in the forest service areas as well. I've heard that it's not a fixed thing, if you don't do anything with it, it'll come back in 5-10 years.

Kimberly Carr – Caltrans is working on a project in Southern California, it's called the Southern California Ignitions Reduction Program, SCRIP. Caltrans has picked two interstates, and they did CEQA across a very large swath, beyond their right-of-way, to encourage partners and themselves to do more vegetation management with the idea of fuel breaks. They selected the interstates based on fuel breaks, so proximities to

communities in high-risk areas. We've been thinking about how to fold the utilities in because some of those Caltrans corridors are key and have extensive utility lines running along them.

Clay Kerchof – The roads are the ignition source for 97% of wildfires in Southern California. This also connects to the evacuation topic as well – fuel breaks, major transportation corridors, and major utility infrastructure running along them. It seems like a great case study. Another topic could be hazard avoidance in density steering. It could be a smart land use topic focusing on how we are dealing with hazard exposure and making space to build more and different kinds of housing. That's where the safety and housing elements and alignments come into play. Examples of this would be where communities are planning forward in implementing land use strategies that address these kinds of dual realities to an extent there's a requirement to do this. An example is how Altadena's rezoning went through in December 2024 and it downzoned some of the hillier areas that were in very high-risk hazard severity zones and then allowed for different types of land use and more density along the commercial corridors. A lot of the losses in Altadena were not officially in a fire hazard severity zone. There's a powerful image that shows a multi-family building under construction that has burned structures all around it, the construction trailer across the street burned down but it didn't burn. It shows that we can achieve multiple objectives, more housing, more resilience. Another topic would be Zone Zero regulations such as what Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority is doing.

J. Lopez – Shasta County also has their own Zone Zero regulation.

Michael Maguire – On special assessments districts, there are other examples from other states like Colorado, Washington, and Oregon that have done some similar work. Nobody has used SB 852 yet, as far as we know, so it's a shame that we can't point to an example in state.

Clay Kerchof – More topics – insurance incentives, like what Mercury Insurance is doing with Safer from Wildfires; working with communities that have demonstrated physical risk reduction actions; and finally, homeowner or community financing like PACE for home hardening.

J. Lopez – We are working with NPHS to create a pilot program with the CWMP to provide financing to property owners outside the program but adjacent to us. Coming up is the Resilient Delta Fund that more for rebuilding.

Kimberly Carr – CDI, Energy Safety, CAL FIRE, PUC, and CalOES are all involved with this effort that came out of SB 254, that recommends addressing the anticipated shortfall of the wildfire fund. It recommends how to improve wildfire safety using insurance incentives, new sources of funding, it's an opportunity to put forward some innovation but it's on a very fast track. Comments from state agencies are due at the end of January and the report goes live April 1.

4. ROUNDTABLE

A. There were no roundtable comments.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. There was no public comment.

6. UPCOMING MEETING

A. January 20, 2026

3:05-4:00pm

CNRA Building, Room 2-221

B. 2026 Meetings:

Every third Tuesday of the month, 3:05-4:00pm

8. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:02 PM