

MEMORANDUM

This memo summarizes the in-person community workshop and joint study session with the City Council and Planning Commission of the City of Burlingame. The City hosted this workshop as part of the second phase of outreach for the City of Burlingame Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element Update. It includes a description of the workshop activities and a summary of the feedback received from Planning Commissioners, City Council members, and members of the public. The feedback is meant to support the development and refinement of the Safety Element and Environmental Justice Element goals, policies, and actions.

WORKSHOP PURPOSE AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

The workshop had two primary purposes: 1) to share information about the Safety Element and Environmental Justice Element Updates, including the status of the projects and the results of initial technical analyses; and 2) to receive input on the high-level draft policy concepts for the City's Safety and Environmental Justice Elements.

Community Workshop Summary

AGENDA AND FORMAT

The City of Burlingame hosted an in-person community workshop at the Burlingame Community Center from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2025. Consultants and City project team staff jointly staffed the workshop, with consultant team members delivering the presentation and all staff circulating during the open house period to help answer questions. All five City Council members, four Planning Commissioners, and approximately ten members of the public attended the study session.

The workshop began with an open-house period to allow attendees to circulate between six stations outlining the purpose and significance of the Safety Element and Environmental Justice Element, key climate change hazards impacting Burlingame, and the priority vulnerabilities (populations and community assets facing the greatest risk of harm from climate change). Attendees reviewed workshop boards with information about hazards and climate change impacts affecting Burlingame, as well as analyses and study results to support the Environmental Justice Element Update. Participants were also able to talk with project team staff and participate in interactive activities during this phase of the event. Following this phase of the workshop, the project team gave a short presentation to participants, Planning Commissioners, and City Council members and then participated in a discussion and question-and-answer session with participants. After the joint session, the workshop shifted back into an open house format for the remainder of the event.

The presentation on the Safety Element Update provided an overview of the project process, including the structure and purpose of the Safety Element, the Peninsula Resilience Planning (PREP) regional coordination effort, new state Safety Element requirements, the relationship with Burlingame's other planning documents, and findings from the vulnerability assessment. The presentation on the Environmental Justice Element Update provided an overview of the Equity-Focus Areas or EFAs (neighborhoods where community members experience disproportionate environmental injustices), key environmental justice issues in Burlingame, and initial policy concepts to address environmental justice topics. Planning Commission and City Council members and members

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of the public were able to ask questions, discuss safety and environmental justice issues with project staff, and provide feedback on policy concepts and other issues after the presentation.

ACTIVITY STATIONS

The six stations were organized as follows:

- » **Station 1: What is a Safety Element?** This station explained what the Safety Element is and why the City is updating it as part of the PREP regional effort involving nine jurisdictions. The station described the State requirements for safety elements and how Burlingame's Safety Element relates to other City and County plans and programs. It also listed the various hazards and emergency topics that the Safety Element will address.
- » **Station 2: Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Results.** This station provided an overview of the vulnerability assessment results, which included a list of the priority vulnerabilities in Burlingame (populations and community assets). The station listed the priority climate hazards that have the potential to cause the most harm to people and assets in Burlingame. These priority hazards are sea level rise, emergent groundwater, flooding, extreme heat, and wildfire.
- » **Station 3: What is an Environmental Justice Element?** This station explained what the Environmental Justice Element is and what analysis has been done to date. The station identified the three EFAs, which are areas of the City that are disproportionately impacted by environmental justice issues. These areas are the Northwest Burlingame EFA, El Camino Real Corridor EFA, and East Burlingame EFA.
- » **Station 4: Wildfire.** This station summarized wildfire risks in Burlingame, including maps of the new proposed fire hazard severity zones. The station highlighted key wildfire challenges facing the community, including rising property insurance costs, older buildings lacking fire-safe features, wildfire smoke impacts, vegetation management, and power outage vulnerabilities. The station presented approaches to address wildfire safety through public education, development requirements, vegetation management standards, and regional fire agency coordination.

Activity: At Station 4, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft wildfire policy concepts. There was also space for attendees to provide feedback on additional questions/considerations they had related to the policy concepts.

- » **Station 5: Flooding, Sea Level Rise, and Emergent Groundwater.** This station described flood conditions in Burlingame, including flood hazard zones and projected sea level rise impacts. The station highlighted how climate change is exacerbating flooding challenges through more intense storms and rising sea levels, which also pushes up fresh groundwater in low-lying areas of the City (a hazardous condition called emergent groundwater).

Activity: At Station 5, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft flood and sea level rise policy concepts. Attendees could also share any implementation concerns they had about these policy concepts, what resources they would like to have available for flood and sea level rise protection, and preferences for green infrastructure in their neighborhoods.

- » **Station 6: Other Safety Issues and Policies.** This station highlighted additional hazards affecting Burlingame, which are drought, extreme heat, landslides, human health hazards, ecosystem pests, severe weather, and airport hazards. The station also explained Burlingame's current approach to emergency preparedness and response.

Activity: At Station 6, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft policies addressing these other hazards. Additionally, a space with four

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open-ended questions invited attendees to share further feedback, such as thoughts on personal preparedness or other considerations.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Attendees were able to ask questions during the initial open-house period and after the presentations on each element. As attendees circulated between each of the six stations, members of the project team invited them to provide feedback on the content provided on each of the posters. Participants were able to write comments on sticky notes to affix to the poster or a large writing pad near the poster, dictate comments to workshop staff, and use stickers to answer questions.

Feedback Summary

During the dot-voting exercise, participants showed strong overall support for the draft policy concepts related to wildfire, flooding and sea level rise, and other safety issues. At Station 4 (Wildfire), attendees supported policies focused on infrastructure hardening, regional coordination, public education, and water supply management though one comment questioned why Mills Canyon was rated only “moderate” fire risk. At Station 5 (Flooding, Sea Level Rise, and Emergent Groundwater), participants favored nature-based shoreline infrastructure and building protective defenses into the Bay, periodically reassessing development requirements for vulnerable properties, groundwater vulnerability assessments for new development, and restoration of riparian corridors. At Station 6 (Other Safety Issues), although there was no additional written feedback, the sticker voting indicated support for resilience centers, drought-tolerant landscaping, extreme heat public education, and climate-adaptive land management practices. Across all stations, only five out of 37 total votes expressed opposition. Some participants opposed the promotion of drought-tolerant landscaping, climate-adaptive land management, regionally coordinated adaptation strategies for groundwater resilience, and fire service readiness.

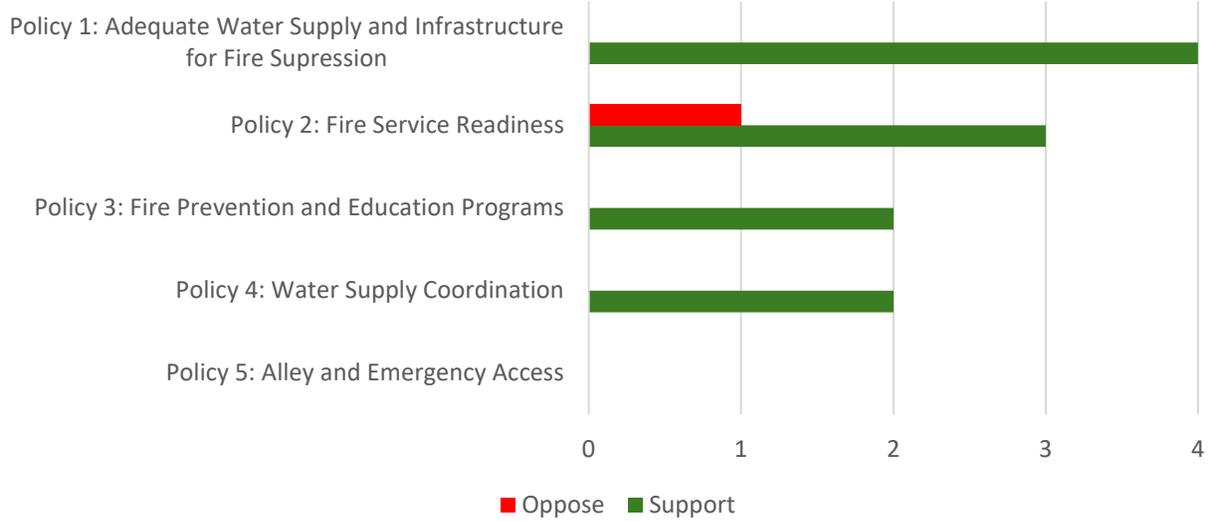
During the discussion period, City Council members and Planning Commissioners expressed support for the draft policy concepts, especially those related to wildfire safety, flooding, and environmental justice. Participants emphasized the need to address vulnerabilities such as wildfire risks in Mills Canyon, sea level rise impacts on infrastructure, the urban heat island effect, hazardous trees during drought-periods, and the lack of tree canopy in certain neighborhoods. Comments also highlighted the importance of equitable outreach, particularly to Burlingame’s Chinese community, and called for more detailed demographic data in Equity-Focus Areas. Attendees raised questions about policy funding, hazard analysis frequency, and balancing resilience strategies with urban development.

Activity Responses

Attendees were able to use stickers to show their support of or opposition to a set of draft policy concepts at Stations 4, 5, and 6. Overall, there was strong support for most policy concepts presented, with only five opposition votes out of 37 total votes. The figures below depict the total count of opposing or supportive votes on each policy concept and a transcription of any written comments received.

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Station 4. Selected draft policies for review: Wildfire

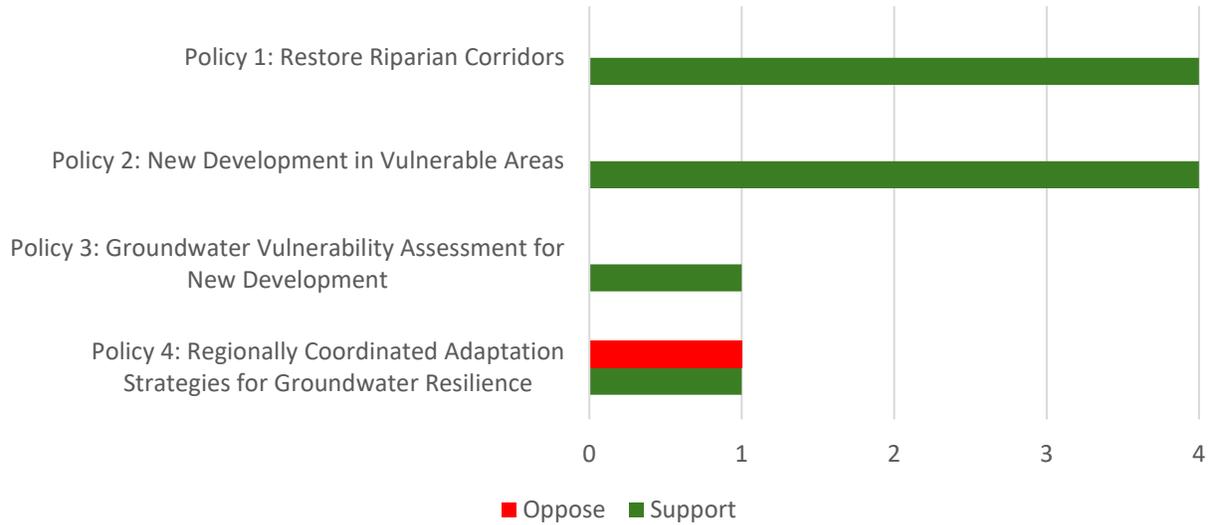


Additional feedback:

- Harden water delivery infrastructure.
- Why is Mills Canyon rated only “moderate” fire risk?
- To get ahead of the curve, council should be aware of different levels of biohazard risks at life science operations and regulate with a reasonable balance.
- Declining height equals ugly architecture.

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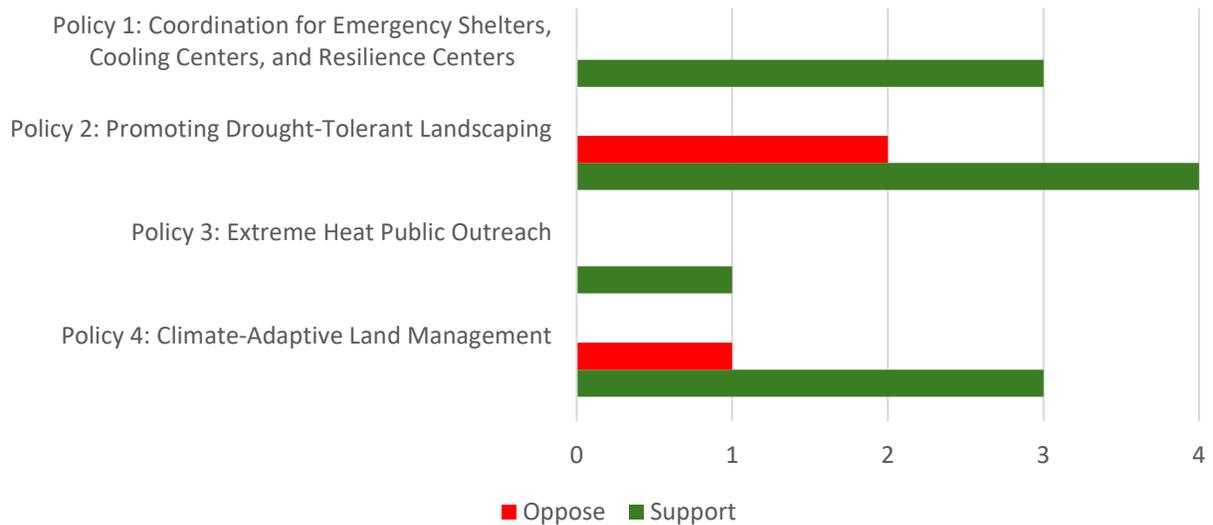
Station 5. Selected draft policies for review: Flooding, Sea Level Rise, and Emergent Groundwater



Additional feedback:

- Nature-based sea level rise infrastructure on shoreline.
- Building defenses into the Bay to save and protect buildings.

Station 6. Selected draft policies for review: Other Safety Issues



There was no additional written feedback at this station.

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Other Feedback

In addition to the open house activities, members of the public, Planning Commissioners, and City Council members were able to ask questions of project staff and provide feedback and recommendations in the form of verbal commentary following each presentation. Below is a summary of the questions and comments received.

Safety Element

- Highlight children as a vulnerable population.
- There is a tension between vegetation management for fire prevention and potentially intensifying the urban heat island effect. Similarly, there is a tension between increasing density and the requirements for evacuation or defensible space between buildings in urban areas. How do we solve these seeming conflicts?
- The sea level rise and flooding policies are missing strategies for constructing defenses into the Bay. This is a topic of conversation within the City currently.
- The wastewater treatment plant is also vulnerable to sea level rise.
- Large eucalyptus limbs are at risk of falling in drought conditions. The City has already done some analysis and planning for tree removal, especially around El Camino Real.
- Mills Canyon is a significant fire risk and should be added to the local responsibility area fire hazard severity zones.
- Older homes on hillsides that are not being retrofitted are at risk of landslides and erosion following heavy rains.
- Most homes in Burlingame don't have air conditioning and don't necessarily need it.
- Transit needs to be a focus as Burlingame and the surrounding region adds density.
- Linguistically-isolated individuals are vulnerable in the event of an emergency and evacuation.
- Attendees asked if there would be any cost estimates of the Safety Element policies included in the final element and noted that they would like to have visibility into how other communities are funding these strategies. They also asked if there would be recommendations on how frequently to analyze various hazard risks and what should be a localized effort or a coordinated countywide effort.

Environmental Justice Element

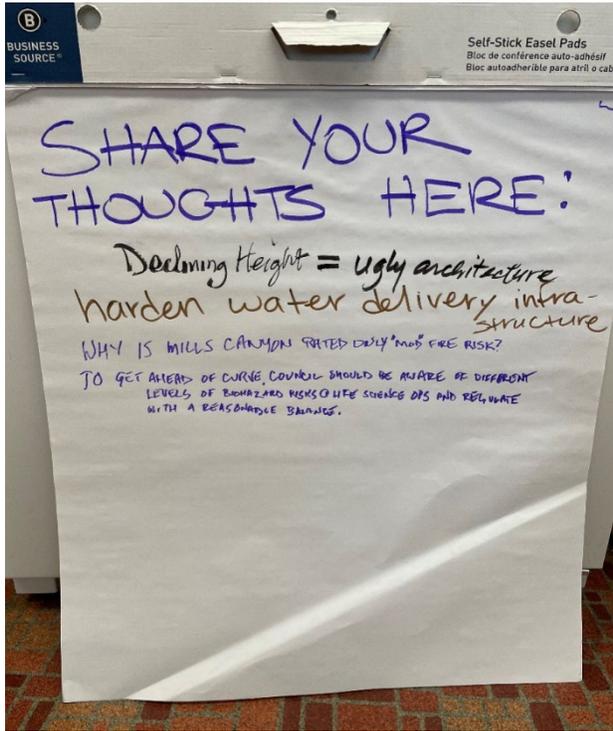
- There is a lack of tree canopy in some areas of Burlingame. Review and consider incorporating the 30-300 recommendation from Cecil Konijnendijk, a Dutch researcher and educator, which recommends 3 mature trees for every home, 30 percent tree canopy cover in every neighborhood, and that all residents should be at least 300 meters from the nearest public park or green space.
- The Chinese population should be more involved in these efforts and language is often a barrier for them. The project team should perform targeted outreach to the Chinese community in Burlingame.
- Attendees asked how the Equity-Focus Areas were defined and if they considered future conditions. There was a request to see more granularity in the social demographics of these areas.

Next Steps

This memo provides a summary of the community workshop for the Burlingame Safety Element and Environmental Justice Element Updates for the City of Burlingame. The project team will use the feedback gathered from community members to inform the development of the Safety and Environmental Justice Element goals, policies, and actions. Following this community engagement phase, the project team will develop draft Safety and Environmental Justice Elements, which will be made available for public review in the late summer/fall of 2025.

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Flooding, Sea Level Rise, and Emergent Groundwater Overview and Policies In Burlingame

Flood Risk in Burlingame

Flooding occurs when water overflows the banks of local water bodies, then either drains rapidly, or cannot soak into the soil fast enough. It is usually caused by heavy or consistent rainfall. In Burlingame, flooding is a chronic issue, particularly along Milk Creek, Easton Creek, Burlingame Creek, and Sanchez Creek. Serious areas are flood-prone, including properties along creeks, areas west of California Drive, and along the highway. Parts of the Burlingame shoreline are protected by a levee in front of Anza Lagoon, which helps to safeguard major hotels and recreational areas.

Climate change is expected to make flooding worse due to more intense rainfall events, less regularly atmospheric events, heavier storms, and sea level rise. Flooding is expected to lead to new flood-vulnerable areas. Additionally, longer drought periods will cause soil to harden, resulting in increased runoff when rain arrives.

Flood Hazard Zones Map

Emergent Groundwater

Emergent groundwater occurs when fresh water is pushed upward by denser saline water traveling further inland as sea levels rise. By 2050, 1/3 of the metropolitan area of the land is, for inland as El Comino local. Higher groundwater, even below the surface, can infiltrate storm drains. Overfilled pipes, ground contamination in the soil, and other conditions, compound this risk, and increase the likelihood of flooding. The impacts can be just as significant as surface flooding, but are less visible and more difficult to address. As sea levels rise, rising groundwater puts new individuals and properties at risk of damage and other adverse consequences.

Key Challenges

Burlingame faces several key challenges related to flooding, sea level rise, and emergent groundwater:

- Inadequate stormwater management system
- Overcapacity in Burlingame's local drainage infrastructure
- Inadequate "hard edge" levee and natural buffers
- Critical local flood response and preparedness investment on the risk
- Public awareness and preparedness for emergency response
- The City's Waterwise Program Plan, located in the 103-year long-term

Implementing Flooding Policies

Regional Coordination

- Regional planning and coordination with neighboring cities, including the MFLC and Burlingame, to address flood risk.
- Collaborate with neighboring cities to address flood risk.

Infrastructure and Planning

- Review and update the city's infrastructure plan to address flood risk.
- Review and update the city's infrastructure plan to address flood risk.

Development Standards

- Review and update the city's development standards to address flood risk.
- Review and update the city's development standards to address flood risk.

Did you know?

Burlingame offers several flood protection resources to residents, including:

- Flood insurance (FEMA) available for the Corporation (not for home owners)
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) available for home owners
- State Flood Insurance Program
- Homeowner's Flood Insurance

More information on Flood Protection in Burlingame, visit: www.burlingame.org/1674366/1674366

Selected Draft Policies for Review

Here are some of the draft flood policies that the City is considering for the Safety Element. Please vote with a green dot for policies you support or a red dot for policies you oppose, and please add any comments below.

Draft Policy	Support (Green Dot)	Oppose (Red Dot)
Policy 1: Review Report Card: Review and update the city's report card on flood risk.	●	
Policy 2: New Development in Vulnerable Areas: Review and update the city's development standards for new development in vulnerable areas.	●	
Policy 3: Groundwater Vulnerability Assessment for New Development: Review and update the city's development standards for new development in vulnerable areas.	●	
Policy 4: Regionally Coordinated Adaptation Strategies for Groundwater Resilience: Review and update the city's development standards for new development in vulnerable areas.	●	

Sea Level Rise in Burlingame

Sea levels in Burlingame could rise as much as 5.1 inches by 2030, 16 inches by 2050, and 73 inches by 2100. Storm surge and king tides events can add an additional 2.5 to 26 inches of temporary flooding.

Under the Regional Climate Change Committee, Burlingame is joining with other cities to address sea level rise. The city is currently reviewing a report on sea level rise. The report will include a study of the city's vulnerability to sea level rise, and will provide recommendations for the city to address sea level rise. The report will also include a study of the city's vulnerability to sea level rise, and will provide recommendations for the city to address sea level rise.

Questions for Community Input

Please provide any additional feedback in the space below. Consider:

- How can we better communicate about these policies to our property?
- Do you have any suggestions or comments on any of these policies?
- What types of green infrastructure systems are most feasible, practical, or possible in Burlingame? How can we help address or prevent these issues? How can we help address or prevent these issues?

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