MEMORANDUM

This memo summarizes the in-person community workshop held as part of the second phase of outreach for the Safety Element Updates for both San Mateo County and the City of Half Moon Bay. It includes a description of the workshop activities and a summary of the feedback received from attendees, which is meant to support the development and refinement of the Safety Element goals, policies, and actions.

Overall, participants expressed strong support for proposed safety policies while highlighting key community concerns about evacuation constraints, wildfire risks near residential areas, creek maintenance needs, emergency communication, and the importance of coordinating with local emergency response teams like CERT. The workshop revealed a strong desire for more educational outreach, especially for youth, and emphasized the need for the County and City to be active partners in helping residents implement hazard reduction measures.

Community Workshop Summary

WORKSHOP PURPOSE AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

The workshop had two primary purposes. First, the project team shared information about the Safety Element update, including the status of the project and the results of the vulnerability assessment. Second, the project team provided draft policy concepts for the City and County's Safety Elements and invited members of the public to provide input. Attendees shared if they supported or opposed a draft policy concept, if they had any concerns or questions regarding a policy concept, and if they had other ideas or requests for policies in the Safety Elements. The project team will use attendee feedback to help inform the goals, policies, and implementation actions for the administrative drafts of these documents, which will be available for public review in Summer/Fall 2025.

AGENDA AND FORMAT

The County of San Mateo and the City of Half Moon Bay hosted an in-person community workshop at the Half Moon Bay Library from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 28, 2025. The workshop began with a welcome and an open-house period, during which time attendees were able to talk with staff, participate in interactive activities, and review information related to hazards and climate change impacts. Following this, the project team gave a short presentation, followed by a discussion and question-and-answer session with project staff. After the presentation, the workshop shifted back into an open house format for the remainder of the event.

The presentation provided an overview of the Safety Element update 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 other planning documents, and findings from the vulnerability assessments. Attendees were able to ask questions, discuss safety issues with project staff, and provide feedback after the presentation.

Before and after the presentation and discussion session, attendees were able to circulate between five stations with posters outlining the purpose and significance of the Safety Element, wildfire hazards, flooding and tsunami risks, other safety issues (including earthquakes, drought, extreme heat, landslides, hazardous materials, and emergent groundwater), and emergency response and communication. There was also a sixth station with representatives from partner agencies, including Coastside Fire Protection District, the San Mateo County Department of Emergency Management, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). These partner agencies displayed information and answered questions on topics of relevance to the Safety Element. The station content and associated activities were available in both English and Spanish, and Spanish-speaking staff were available to provide interpretation services as needed.

City and County staff set up the posters at public locations for multiple weeks following the workshop to gather additional feedback. Staff placed the English-language posters at Supervisor Mueller's office at Pillar Point Harbor, and the Spanish-language posters at the ALAS offices in downtown Half Moon Bay. Members of the public who were not able to attend the April 28th workshop could visit these locations for several weeks after the workshop and provide input.

Consultant, City, and County 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. City of Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County staff, along with the consultant team, staffed the information stations to explain components of the Safety Element, answer questions, and ask for feedback. Approximately six members of the community attended the workshop.

STATIONS

The open house offered participants the opportunity to engage with the following five stations:

- » Station 1: What is a Safety Element? This station explained what the Safety Element is and why the City and County are updating it as part of the PREP regional effort involving nine jurisdictions. The station described the various hazards addressed in both the City and County's Safety Elements, including airport hazards, coastal erosion, drought, emergency preparedness, emergent groundwater, extreme heat, fire hazards, flooding, hazardous materials, human health hazards, sea level rise, seismic and geologic hazards, severe weather, and tsunamis. It also highlighted climate change impacts affecting the region and how the Safety Elements work together with other plans like Climate Action Plans and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- » Station 2: Wildfire. This station summarized wildfire risks in Half Moon Bay and coastal unincorporated San Mateo County, including maps of the new proposed fire hazard severity zones. The station highlighted key wildfire challenges facing the communities, including rising property insurance costs, older buildings lacking fire-safe features, wildfire smoke impacts, transportation and evacuation constraints, and power outage vulnerabilities. The station presented approaches to address wildfire safety through City and County outreach, development requirements, vegetation management standards, and fire agency coordination.

Activity: At Station 2, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft wildfire policy concepts.

» **Station 3: Flooding & Tsunamis.** This station described flood conditions in Half Moon Bay and coastal San Mateo County, including areas of special flood hazard, tsunami inundation zones, and projected sea level rise impacts. The station highlighted how climate change is worsening flooding challenges through more intense storms and rising sea levels pushing coastal floodwaters further inland.

Activity: At Station 3, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft flood and tsunami policy concepts. Attendees could also weigh in on any implementation concerns about these policy concepts, what resources they would like to have available for flood and tsunami protection, and preferences for green infrastructure in their neighborhoods.

» Station 4: Other Safety Issues? This station highlighted additional hazards affecting the Mid Coast region, including earthquake risks, drought, extreme heat, landslides, hazardous materials, emergent groundwater, and sea level rise. The station explained how climate change is expected to bring longer dry periods, up to three times as many extreme heat days by 2050, more intense storms triggering landslides and debris flows, and rising sea levels that push groundwater higher and threaten coastal infrastructure.

Activity: At Station 4, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft policies addressing these other hazards. Additionally, a board with four open-ended questions invited attendees to share further feedback—such as thoughts on personal preparedness or other considerations—using sticky notes.

Station 5: Emergency Response & Communication. This station addressed the unique emergency response and communication challenges faced by the Coastside communities. The station presented draft policies related to critical facilities, evacuation routes, emergency alert systems, and recovery activities.

Activity: At Station 5, attendees were asked to provide feedback on whether they support, were unsure about, or opposed selected draft policies addressing emergency response and communication. Additionally, attendees participated in a dot voting activity to indicate what would help them be better prepared for emergencies.

» Station 6: Partner Agencies. This station featured representatives from partner agencies including the Coastside Fire Protection District and CERT, who provided information about their programs and resources related to emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation.

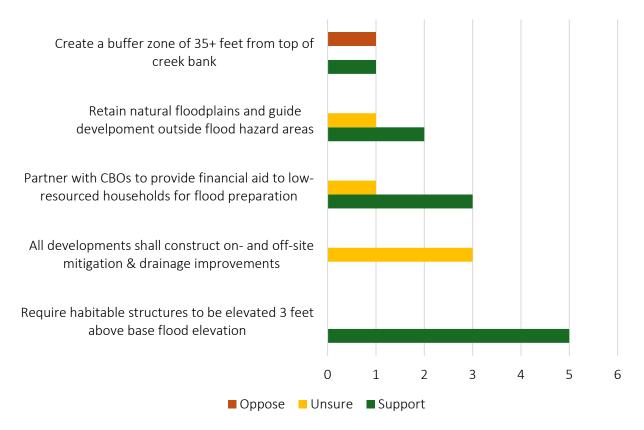
PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

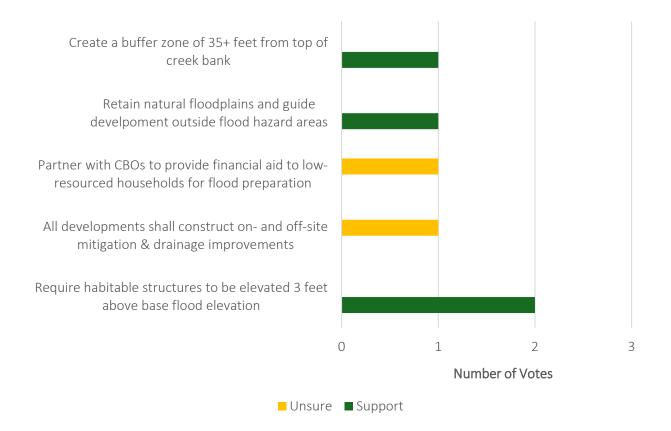
Attendees were able to ask questions before, during, and after the presentation. As attendees circulated between each of the six stations, members of the project team invited them to provide feedback on the content provided on each of the posters. Participants were able to write comments on sticky notes to have affixed to the poster, dictate comments to workshop staff, and use stickers to answer questions and identify areas of high concern on maps.

Activity Responses

Attendees were able to use stickers to answer questions at Stations 2, 3, 4, and 5. Questions and results are recorded in Figures 1 to 5 below. Overall, there was strong support for most policy concepts presented, with no opposition votes recorded for the evacuation and emergency alert-related policies (Figure 4). The other hazard-related policies (Figure 2) received mostly support, with a few "unsure" votes and comments requesting more clarity on implementation and partner agencies for low-cost assistance programs. Wildfire-related policies (Figure 3) garnered unanimous support, reflecting the community's concern about fire risks.

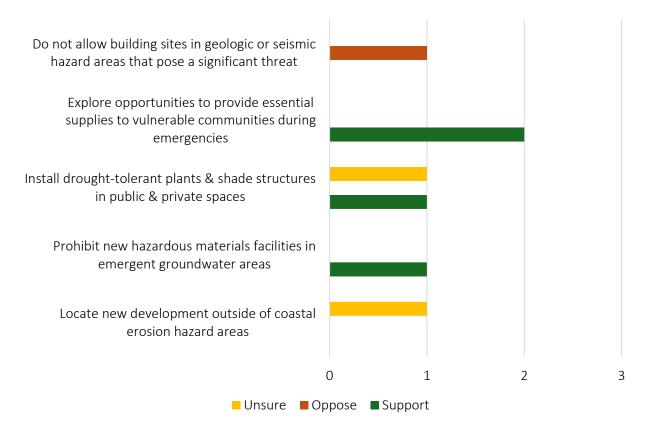
Figure 1: Which of the following flooding-related policies do you support, oppose, or are unsure about?





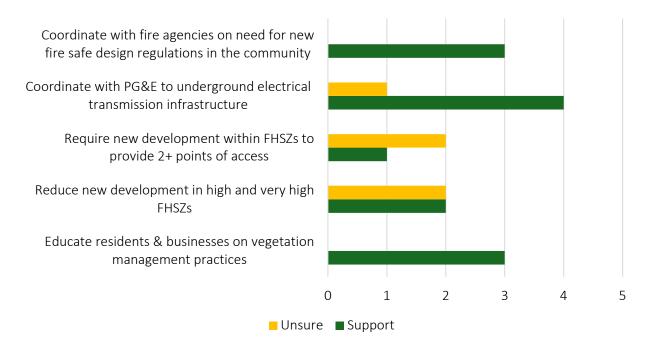
COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY

Figure 2¹: Which of the following other hazard-related policies do you support, oppose, or are unsure about?



¹ See Appendix for photos and transcribed comments explaining reasoning for certain votes.

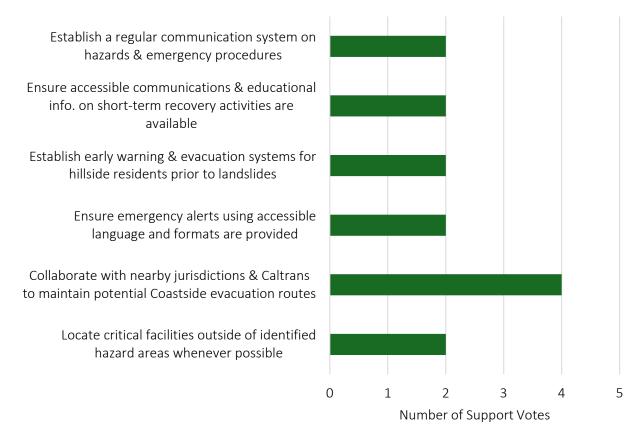
Figure 3: Which of the following wildfire-related policies do you support, oppose, or are unsure about?



There were no votes of opposition on any of the listed policies for this activity.

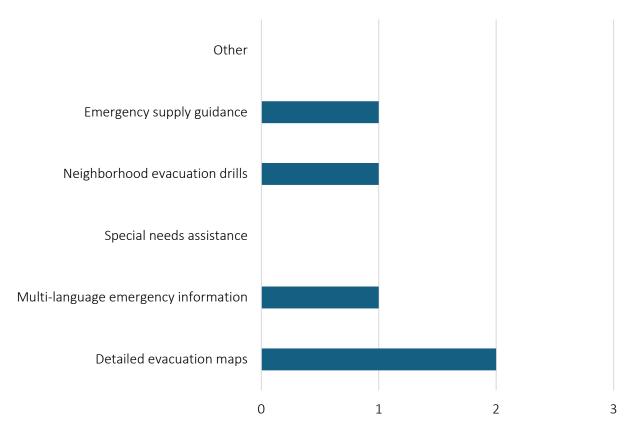
COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY

Figure 4: Which of the following evacuation and emergency alert-related policies do you support, oppose, or are unsure about?



There were no 'Oppose' or 'Unsure' votes on any of the listed policies for this activity.

Figure 5: What would help you be better prepared for emergency events?



Other Feedback

In addition to the structured activities, attendees were able to ask questions of project staff and provide feedback and recommendations in the form of verbal commentary and sticky notes left at each of the stations. The following topics emerged from community feedback:

Wildfire Concerns: Residents from Canada Cove mobile home park noted their proximity to eucalyptus trees and expressed concern about being in a fire hazard zone designated by CAL FIRE in the latest draft fire hazard severity zone maps. Some homeowners reported losing insurance coverage due to fire hazard designations, though City staff noted that they were informed insurance agencies were not using the maps to determine coverage and said they were looking into the issue.

Evacuation Issues: Attendees expressed concerns about evacuation routes, noting that Half Moon Bay and the unincorporated coastside has many bottlenecks and people are unsure how to plan effectively. One comment emphasized the need for "safe places on the coastside that don't require Highway 92 to be an evacuation route, since it is not a practical route for emergency evacuation." Participants also raised about shelter-in-place plans. One participant raised a specific concern regarding how evacuations would proceed if Highway 1 is closed at Surfers Beach, where high waves occasionally overtop the riprap and wash onto the roadbed.

Government Assistance: Attendees emphasized the need for government agencies to help with mitigation, management, and funding to aid residents in meeting new hazard and climate standards. Questions were raised about who would serve as partners for low-cost assistance programs.

Policy Implementation: One comment noted that "County regulations are based on stale information" and that "County needs to be a partner in this, not just walk away," citing Rancho Palos Verdes as a model. Another requested "more clarity" on how policies would be implemented, while someone else noted the challenge of "overcoming inaction or apathy."

Specific Local Issues: Power outages were identified as "a significant safety issue south of central Half Moon Bay." Residents from the Quarry Park neighborhood in El Granada reported experiencing flooding issues. Concerns were raised about properties on Pilarcitos Avenue in Half Moon Bay conducting brush clearance, , creating a "grey area where people are trying to protect properties but might not be following local laws." Participants identified erosion as a significant issue along Pilarcitos Creek. Attendees expressed a desire for a way to clean up and improve conditions in the creeks, including removal of dangerous eucalyptus trees. It City staff mentioned they were aware of these issues and are working on them, but the feedback from community members suggests that there is a desire for more rapid action.

Other Questions: Attendees asked whether the Safety Element would need to be certified by the Coastal Commission, how conflicting policies between different agencies would be managed, what other opportunities exist to provide input, and if there are programs designed for children to learn about environmental planning and sustainability.

Education and Coordination: Attendees asked whether City and County emergency/safety staff could tour schools to talk about hazard and safety issues. There was specific interest in outreach programs for children and adolescents to teach them about hazards and emergency preparations. Workshop participants also suggested developing more partnerships with other government agencies. Participants shared information about the home repair programs run by the Senior Coastsiders organization, which could potentially be leveraged to reduce home hazard vulnerabilities for older adults.

CERT Resources and Concerns: CERT is very popular in the Half Moon Bay and unincorporated coastside area, with hundreds of trained volunteers across 37 neighborhoods. Specific safety concerns highlighted by CERT representatives included high winds during storms frequently downing power lines into puddles of water, resulting in electrocution hazards when people walk their dogs during breaks in storms. CERT provides numerous services, including basic medical care and support with large animal evacuation. Suggestions included having City and County emergency response plans incorporate coordination with CERT and preparing a fact sheet informing residents about services that CERT volunteers can provide in an emergency. Another issue that participants raised was the lack of medical care facilities in the area, with a note that the Senior Coastsiders runs a clinic out of their building in Half Moon Bay that could potentially be used to provide basic medical care during emergencies.

Next Steps

This memo provides the summary of the community workshop for the Mid Coast Safety Element Update for both unincorporated Coastside San Mateo County and the City of Half Moon Bay. The project team will use the feedback gathered from community members to inform the development of the Safety Element goals, policies, and actions.

Following this community engagement phase, the project team will develop draft Safety Elements for both jurisdictions, which will be made available for public review in Summer/Fall 2025. The adoption hearings for the Safety Elements are expected to take place in Fall 2025.

Appendix: Workshop Photos and Transcript of Written Comments

This appendix presents photographs of the boards as presented at the workshop and at the locations where the boards were hosted for several following weeks.

STATION 1: WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

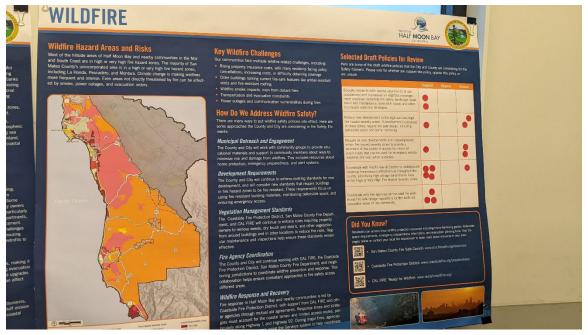


COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX



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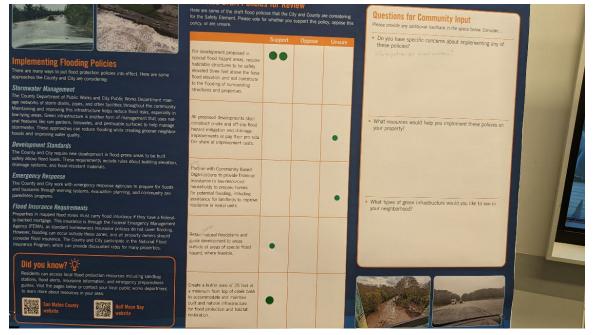
STATION 2: WILDFIRE

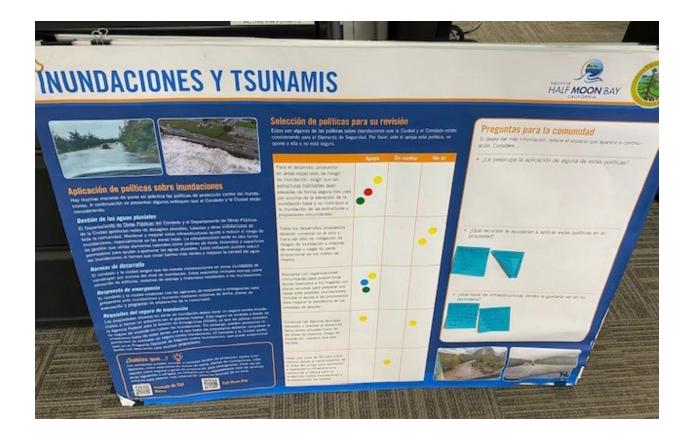




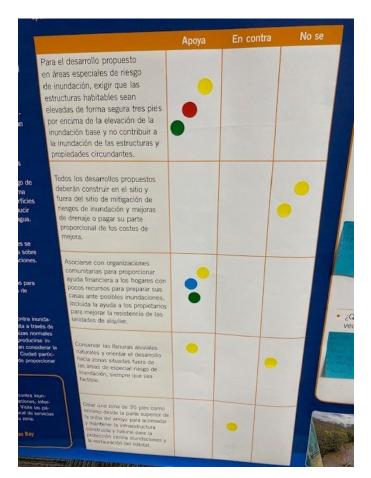
COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX

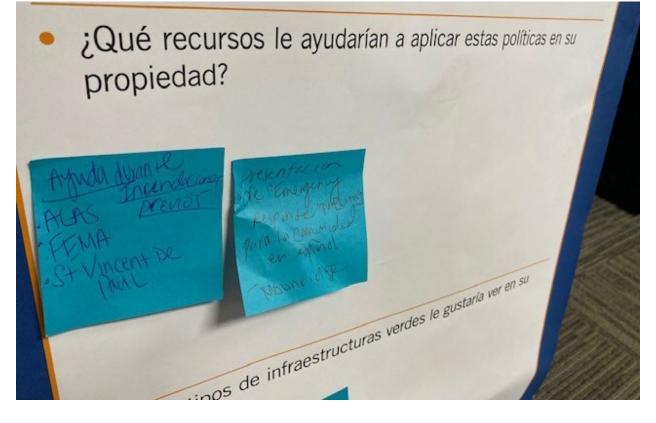
STATION 3: FLOODING & TSUNAMIS

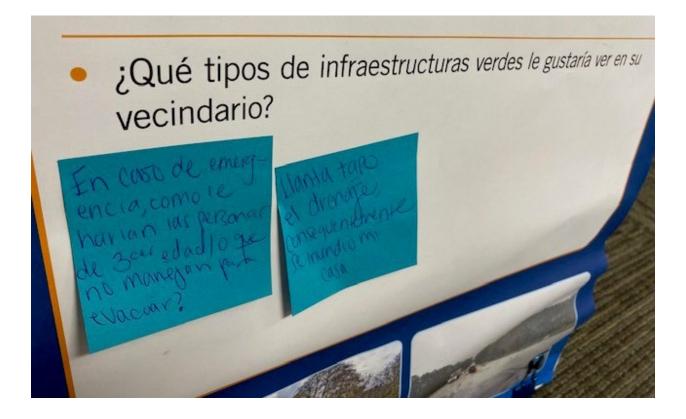




COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX

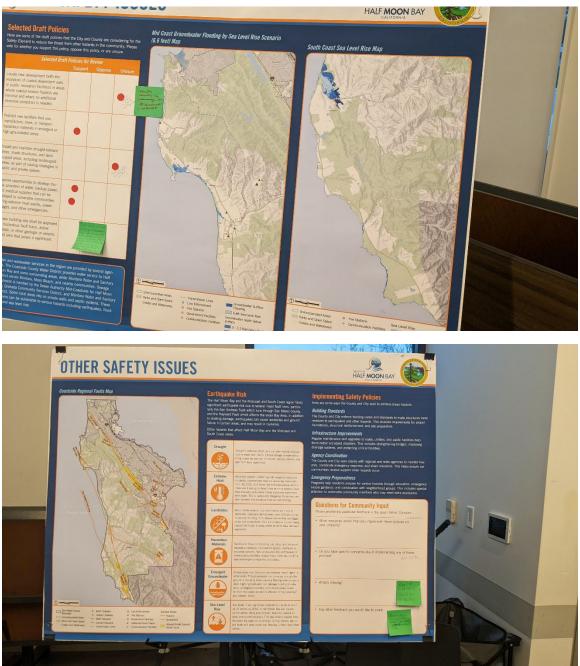




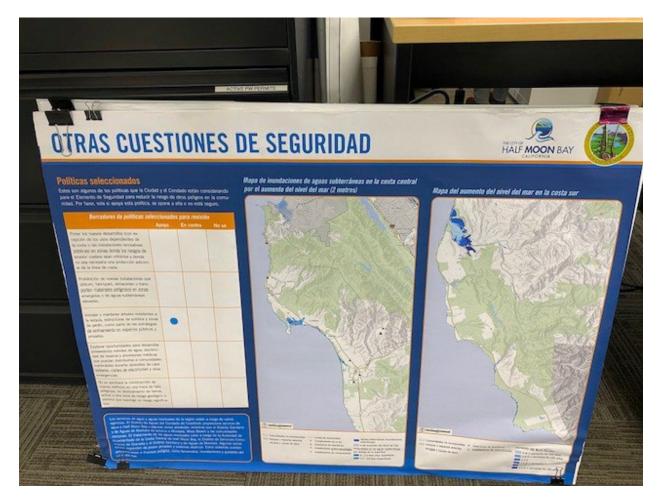


COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX

STATION 4: OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

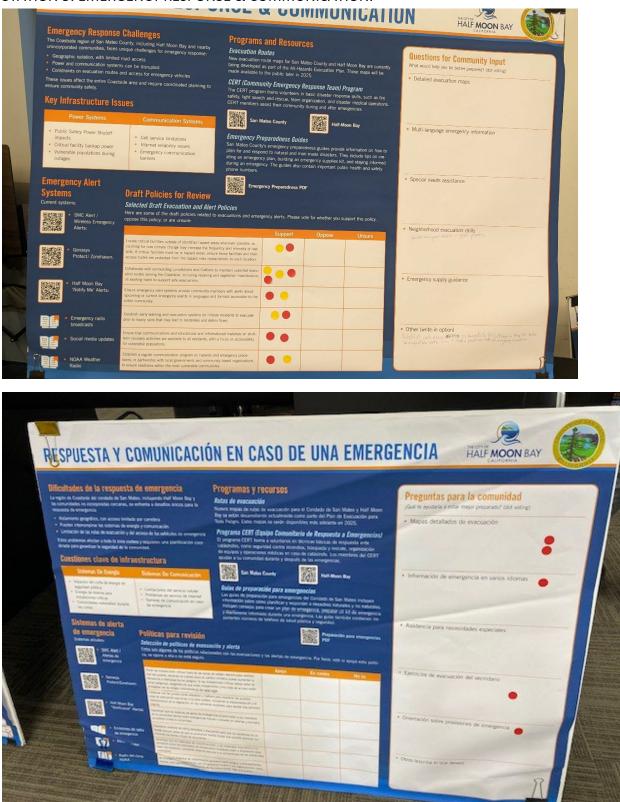


COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX



COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX

STATION 5: EMERGENCY RESPONSE & COMMUNICATION.



COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY- APPENDIX

TRANSCRIPT OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

Flooding & Tsunami Draft Policies:

- Policy 1 For development proposed in a special flood hazard area, require habitable structure to be elevated three feet above the base flood elevation and not contribute to the flooding of surrounding structures and properties: Or modest and can be mitigated. Want County to manage new development and hazards.
- Policy 3 Partner with Community-Based Organizations to provide financial assistance to low-resourced households to prepare homes for potential flooding, including assistance for landlords to improve rental units: Risks can be managed. County regulations are based on stale information. County needs to be a partner in this, not just walk away. For example, look at how much help the city of Rancho Pales Verdes provides to the residents in Portuguese.

Do you have specific concerns about implementing any of these [flooding] policies?

- Who are partners for low cost assistance?

Other Safety Issues - Questions for Community Input

- Do you have specific concern about implementing any of these policies? More clarity.
- What's missing? Ways to overcome inaction or apathy.
- Other feedback: Power outages are a significant safety issue south of central Half Moon Bay.

Emergency Response and Communication – Questions for Community Input

- Neighborhood evacuation drills What are your shelter in place plans?
- *Other:* Establish safe places on the coastside that don't require Highway 92 to be an evacuation route, since it is not a practical route for emergency evacuation.

What resources would help you implement safety policies on your property?

- Assistance during previous fires: ALAS, FEMA, St Vincent de Paul
- Emergency response preparations for the Spanish-speaking community (Moonridge)

What types of green infrastructure would you like to see in your neighborhood?

- In case of an emergency, how would seniors who do not drive manage to evacuate?
- Tires clogged the drains and consequently my house flooded.