

Peninsula Resilience Planning  
**Community Input Report**

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# COMMUNITY INPUT REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Peninsula Resilience Planning (PREP) project represents a groundbreaking collaborative effort between nine San Mateo County jurisdictions to identify vulnerabilities to climate change and other natural hazards, develop strategies to adapt to future hazards, conduct collaborative and community-based engagement and outreach, and update Safety Elements of their General Plans with a comprehensive focus on climate resilience and community equity. Conducted between 2023 and 2025, the project employed an extensive community engagement process guided by principles of inclusion, equity, transparency, broad participation, and accountability. These principles helped to ensure that Safety Element updates reflected local knowledge, lived experiences, and community priorities, particularly from historically underserved populations. The consultant project team led the engagement efforts in partnership with the participating agencies and local community-based organizations. The community engagement conducted as part of PREP used multiple complementary methods, including virtual community workshops, focused outreach to hard-to-reach communities led by CRC service provider discussions, Planning Commission and City Council study sessions, and comprehensive digital engagement tools.

Several key themes emerged consistently across the diverse engagement activities. Community members identified flooding as a top priority. Many participants expressed concerns about both recent storm-related flooding events and future sea level rise impacts, along with cascading effects including power outages and transportation disruptions. Wildfire risks were another major concern, including challenges with rising insurance costs, evacuation route constraints, and smoke impacts on air quality. Infrastructure vulnerabilities and emergency communication gaps were emphasized as critical issues. Community members also highlighted the particular vulnerability of non-English speaking communities, older adults, low-income households, and individuals with access and functional needs.

The project team integrated this extensive community feedback throughout the project, validating technical vulnerability assessments with on-the-ground knowledge and informing policy development. The engagement process accessed long-term partnerships with community-based organizations and created a foundation for continued collaboration during the future Safety Element implementation. This

### Project Participants

#### Participating Agencies:

- Town of Atherton
- City of Belmont
- City of Brisbane
- City of Burlingame
- City of East Palo Alto
- City of Half Moon Bay
- City of Pacifica
- City of San Bruno
- County of San Mateo

#### Consultant Team:

- PlaceWorks (Lead Consultant)
- Climate Resilient Communities (CRC)
- Atlas Planning Solutions
- Nexus Planning & Research

#### Supporting Partners:

- OneShoreline
- San Mateo County Public Health
- San Mateo County Environmental Health
- San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- San Mateo County Office of Emergency Management
- North Fair Oaks Community Alliance
- Ayudando Latinos A Soñar
- Arriba South Coast (previously known as Sustainable South Coast)
- El Concilio of San Mateo County
- Pal Center

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approach demonstrates that when provided with accessible, culturally appropriate opportunities, community members are eager partners in resilience planning who willingly contribute essential local expertise to creating safer, more equitable communities prepared to address current and future climate challenges.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Peninsula Resilience Planning (PREP) project is a collaborative multi-jurisdictional effort to improve community resilience through updated Safety Elements of participating jurisdictions' General Plans. Nine jurisdictions are participating in PREP. The project includes all steps of a comprehensive Safety Element update, such as preparation of community-wide vulnerability assessments, updated hazard mapping, an assessment of evacuation-constrained residential parcels, agency collaboration, community engagement and outreach, and preparation of Safety Element goals, policies, and implementation actions. Six of the participating jurisdictions, the cities of Belmont, Burlingame, East Palo Alto, Half Moon Bay, San Bruno, and unincorporated San Mateo County, collaborated on community engagement as part of this project. The three other participating communities: the Town of Atherton, City of Brisbane, and City of Pacifica, did not participate in joint engagement efforts. Atherton staff led separate engagement efforts. Brisbane and Pacifica did not take part in the full Safety Element update as their focus was to gather data and information for a future full Safety Element update. The collaborative approach is meant to share analysis and resources for greater efficiency for the jurisdictions participating in this effort.

Community engagement was essential to the PREP project to ensure that Safety Element updates reflect local knowledge, lived experiences, and community priorities. The project team designed the engagement process with an equity-focused approach to connect with residents and businesses, create transparency throughout the planning process, and offer meaningful involvement opportunities. The team prioritized engaging hard-to-reach and underrepresented communities who have historically been excluded from similar planning processes, ensuring their voices were centered in developing policies to address climate hazards and build community resilience.

This Community Input Report synthesizes all community engagement efforts conducted during the PREP project and documents how the project team incorporated community input into the updated Safety Element. The report fulfills the project commitment to transparency and accountability by detailing outreach efforts, summarizing feedback received, and describing how community input influenced project deliverables. This report serves as both a record of the comprehensive engagement process and a demonstration of how local knowledge and community priorities shaped the final Safety Element policies and implementation measures.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Five core principles guided the PREP project team through the community engagement process, established in the Community Engagement Plan, which outlined the project's overarching vision and approach to meaningful community participation and stakeholder involvement. The Community Engagement Plan is attached as **Appendix A**.

- **Inclusion** focused on creating safe spaces for all groups to feel heard through carefully considered meeting times, locations, and language accessibility.
- **Equity** emphasized meeting residents where they are by addressing barriers to participation, providing translation services, and offering family-oriented events with food and financial compensation.
- **Transparency and Responsiveness** ensured clear communication about project timelines, decision-making processes, and how community input would be incorporated into Safety Element updates.
- **Accountability** promoted regular reporting back to the community on feedback integration and continuous evaluation of the engagement process.
- **Broad Participation** prioritized engaging diverse demographic and economic segments of the population while centering voices from historically underserved communities.

Community engagement targeted four primary groups:

1. **Community stakeholders** such as residents, business owners, property managers, neighborhood associations, and other groups who could provide lived experiences and local knowledge.
2. **Hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations**, particularly non-English speaking communities, historically underserved and underrepresented groups, and residents in neighborhoods with higher hazard risks.
3. **Service providers** encompassed public and private organizations involved in emergency preparedness, including transit operators, healthcare providers, environmental advocates, business groups, utility companies, faith-based organizations, and special interest groups.
4. **Local decision makers** included Planning Commissioners, City Council members, and Board of Supervisors who would review and approve the final Safety Elements.

The engagement strategy employed multiple complementary methods to maximize participation and accessibility.

- Virtual and in-person community workshops offered county-wide opportunities using presentations, polls, and small group discussions in English and Spanish. All supporting materials were available in English and Spanish.
- In-person open house events provided greater flexibility for participation, allowing community members to provide input at any time during the event to better accommodate people with more limited schedules.
- In-person small, community group meetings led by Climate-Resilient Communities (CRC) focused on hard-to-reach communities using culturally appropriate formats with food, translation, and compensation.
- Service provider discussions gathered insights from key organizations through structured virtual meetings.
- Planning Commission and City Council study sessions engaged decision makers through presentations and interactive feedback on draft policies.
- Digital engagement tools included an interactive mapped survey platform, project website, and online map viewer to remove barriers of time and accessibility while allowing location-specific input.

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### SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EFFORTS

The PREP community engagement process spanned from 2024 through 2025. The project team organized the engagement activities into two primary phases aligned with the project’s technical work. **Phase 1 (March-June 2024)** focused on vulnerability assessment development, gathering community input on hazard experiences, identifying vulnerable populations and assets, and understanding preparation and recovery challenges. **Phase 2 (November 2024-May 2025)** focused on presenting vulnerability assessment results and draft policy concepts to gather community feedback on proposed resilience strategies and implementation approaches. There has also been additional public engagement as part of the public review and adoption process, from **November 2025 to summer 2026**, during which draft Safety Elements were made available for formal public review and comment, followed by Planning Commission and City Council/Board of Supervisors adoption hearings. While not a formal outreach phase, the public comment and adoption process provides opportunities for additional public engagement with the PREP project.

Throughout both phases, members of the project team employed comprehensive engagement activities designed to reach diverse audiences through multiple channels, including:

- **Digital Engagement** – Project website, interactive mapped survey platform, and online map viewer (ongoing throughout the project).
- **Virtual Community Workshops** – Three county-wide virtual workshops (March and April 2024; May 2025).
- **Service Provider Discussions** – Virtual meetings with 24 representatives from organizations serving San Mateo County residents (June 2024).
- **Communities of Concern Meetings (CRC-Led)** – In-person meetings in North Fair Oaks, Pescadero, and Half Moon Bay area, and East Palo Alto focus groups (May-June 2024; April-July 2025).
- **Planning Commission and City Council Study Sessions** – Study sessions with local decision makers in San Bruno and Burlingame (November 2024; April 2025).

The following sections describe each engagement activity in chronological order, detailing the format, participation, and key themes that emerged from community input.

### PROJECT WEBSITE

The PREP project team maintained a comprehensive website (prepsmc.com) that served as the central hub for project information and community engagement. Key website components included project descriptions and timelines, document libraries with all public materials, links to participating jurisdiction pages, frequently asked questions, upcoming event and outreach announcements, and contact information for the project team. The website also hosted recordings of virtual workshops in both English and Spanish, allowing community members who could not attend live sessions to access the same information and presentations.

## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Digital engagement platforms provided accessibility and convenience for community members to participate in the PREP project on their own schedule and from any location. These online tools were designed to remove barriers of time and transportation while enabling location-specific input and broader community reach beyond traditional in-person meetings.

**Mapped Survey Tool:** An interactive, map-based online survey platform allowed community members to provide location-specific input about hazard experiences, vulnerabilities, and resilience needs throughout the PREP region. This feature was available to access through the project website (described above) through jurisdiction-specific links and promoted through virtual promotional materials and at the community engagement workshops (described below). The tool included an automated translation feature, allowing users to toggle between English and Spanish. This tool enabled users to place geographically specific comments, attach images to illustrate conditions or concerns, and interact with other community members' contributions through likes and responses. The project team moderated this tool to ensure appropriate content and constructive dialogue. The mapped survey tool proved particularly valuable for gathering detailed, location-based insights that complemented broader community input from workshops and meetings.

**Online Map Viewer:** A comprehensive GIS data viewer hosted on the PREP website provided community members, stakeholders, and decision makers with access to the same mapping layers and datasets used in the technical vulnerability assessment. Built using ArcGIS Online technology, this user-friendly platform allowed users to explore current and projected climate hazards, vulnerable populations and assets, and environmental conditions across participating jurisdictions. The project team used the same datasets presented in the online map viewer to prepare maps used in the project documents, including the updated Safety Elements. The map viewer supplemented San Mateo County's existing hazard mitigation plan mapping tools and provided transparency into the data informing policy development.

**Story Map:** An interactive story map platform combining dynamic mapping with narrative content, images, and multimedia to present vulnerability assessment results and draft policy concepts in an accessible, engaging format. This "living document" provides a comprehensive way for community members to explore the relationship between hazards, vulnerabilities, and proposed solutions. Each participating jurisdiction will have a tailored story map presenting their community's specific vulnerability assessment results and potential policy solutions, allowing residents to explore how climate hazards uniquely affect their area. The story map complements traditional printed materials and enables deeper exploration of data and findings. *Development of the story map is ongoing, and this tool will be made available to the public as part of the draft Safety Element review process.*

**Multilingual Content and Accessibility:** All digital platforms prioritized multilingual accessibility, with website translation capabilities and key materials available in English and Spanish at minimum. The project team designed digital engagement tools to be accessible across devices and internet connection speeds, recognizing varying levels of technological ability and access within the community. Online materials included translated fact sheets, recorded presentations with interpretation, and visual content designed to communicate complex information clearly across language barriers.

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### VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The project team conducted three virtual community workshops (see full summaries in **Appendix B** for the first two workshops and **Appendix C** for the third) to provide county-wide opportunities for public input on the PREP project. The first round included two workshops held on March 13 and April 3, 2024, focusing on hazard experiences and vulnerability assessment preparation. A total of 138 individuals registered for these two workshops, with 70 attending. The third workshop was held on May 21, 2025, during the policy development phase, with 80 registrants and 28 attendees. The PlaceWorks consultant team facilitated all workshops, with participating agency staff serving as small-group discussion facilitators and notetakers to support breakout room activities.

**Format and Accessibility:** All workshops were held via Zoom from 6:00-7:30 p.m. and followed a consistent format of 30-minute presentations on the PREP project, introductory polls, question and answer periods. After the presentation and question and answer periods, the attendees split into small groups using breakout rooms and participated in more detailed discussions, facilitated by members of the project team. To ensure accessibility, the project team provided simultaneous Spanish interpretation and dedicated Spanish-speaking discussion groups. All workshop materials, including presentations and promotional content, were available in both English and Spanish, with recordings posted on the project website for later viewing.

**Participant Demographics:** The introductory polls revealed that 52 percent of participants lived in communities participating in PREP, while 18 percent lived elsewhere in San Mateo County and 27 percent lived outside the county. When asked about hazards of greatest concern, participants prioritized flooding, sea level rise, and wildfires. Most participants were already familiar with their community's General Plan, indicating a relatively engaged audience.

**Promotion and Outreach:** Participating jurisdictions promoted the workshops through their communication channels, including community event calendars, e-news distribution lists, and social media platforms like NextDoor and Facebook. Some jurisdiction staff printed project flyers and posted them in prominent locations in the community. The project team also shared event details with community-based organizations and advertised through the project's mailing list. Promotional materials were made available in English and Spanish to ensure broad accessibility. All materials included a link to the event registration page.

### COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

The City of Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County jointly hosted an in-person community workshop at the Half Moon Bay Library on April 28, 2025, as part of the second phase of outreach for the Coastsides Safety Element Updates. This open house format workshop from 6:00-7:30 p.m. allowed community members to engage with vulnerability assessment results and provide feedback on draft policy concepts through five interactive stations covering Safety Element basics, wildfire risks, flooding and tsunamis, other safety issues, and emergency response and communication. Approximately six community members attended the workshop. See **Appendix D** for the full workshop summary.

**Format and Accessibility:** The workshop included a welcome and open house period, followed by a project presentation, question-and-answer session, and a return to open house format for detailed station interactions. Each station featured information posters with interactive activities, including dot-voting on policy support and sticky-note feedback opportunities. To extend opportunities for community input, City and County staff placed English-language posters at Supervisor Mueller’s office at Pillar Point Harbor and Spanish-language posters at ALAS offices in downtown Half Moon Bay for several weeks following the workshop, allowing community members who could not attend the live event to provide feedback.

**Key Feedback Themes:** Participants expressed strong overall support for proposed safety policy concepts while highlighting critical concerns about evacuation constraints given the Coastside’s limited transportation routes, wildfire risks near residential areas (particularly for Canada Cove mobile home park residents near eucalyptus trees), and the need for better emergency communication systems. Community members emphasized the importance of coordinating with local Community Energy Response Teams (CERT), which involve hundreds of trained volunteers across 37 neighborhoods in the Coastside area, and requested more educational outreach programs, especially for youth. Additional concerns included power outages as significant safety issues, flooding problems in specific neighborhoods like Quarry Park in El Granada, and the need for improved creek maintenance and eucalyptus tree removal along Pilarcitos Creek.

## SAN BRUNO CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AND SAFETY ELEMENT WORKSHOP

The City of San Bruno hosted a joint community workshop for the Safety Element update and the community’s first Climate Action Plan (CAP) at San Bruno City Hall from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on April 24, 2025. This collaborative approach recognized the interconnection between climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, allowing approximately 26 community members to provide input on both greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies and climate hazard preparedness through a comprehensive open house format with six interactive stations. See **Appendix E** for the full workshop summary.

**Format and Outreach:** The workshop began with a 15-minute presentation covering the CAP and Safety Element update process, findings from the community-wide GHG emissions inventory and vulnerability assessment, and project next steps, followed by a question-and-answer session. The open house part featured six stations addressing project purposes, San Bruno’s GHG emissions and targets, climate hazards and vulnerable populations, resilience strategies, and partner agency resources. Staff representatives from San Bruno Community Development, Fire, and Public Works Departments, OneShoreline, and CRC provided additional expertise and answered questions about local and regional climate resilience and sustainability programs. The City promoted the workshop through direct outreach to nearly 50 community groups, flyer distribution in Downtown San Bruno, school district and Skyline College promotion, and multilingual website and social media campaigns.

**Community Priorities:** Attendees highlighted several key themes, including concerns about the affordability of climate adaptation requirements for homeowners, strong interest in emergency preparedness resources and CERT training expansion, and support for distributed energy resources and solar installations to address frequent power outages. Attendees supported the CAP and Safety Element, placing an emphasis on environmental protection with specific requests for tree replacement ratios and eucalyptus removal and a desire for improved sustainable transportation options, including electric buses

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and green infrastructure integration. Participants also expressed desire for the City to actively promote resilience programs for electric vehicles and home energy efficiency.

### BURLINGAME COMMUNITY WORKSHOP AND JOINT STUDY SESSION

The City of Burlingame hosted an in-person community workshop and joint Planning Commission and City Council study session at the Burlingame Community Center on April 16, 2025, as part of the second phase of outreach for both the Safety Element update and Environmental Justice Element update. This combined format event from 5:00-7:30 pm brought together all five City Council members, four Planning Commissioners, and approximately 10 members of the public to review vulnerability assessment results and provide feedback on draft policy concepts. See **Appendix F** for a more detailed summary of this event.

**Format and Accessibility:** The workshop was conducted in an open-house format with six interactive stations covering Safety Element basics, climate change vulnerability assessment results, Environmental Justice Element fundamentals, including Equity-Focus Areas, wildfire risks, flooding and sea level rise challenges, and other safety issues. Following the initial open-house period, the project team delivered presentations on both element updates, followed by a discussion and question-and-answer session with elected officials and community members before returning to open-house format for additional station interactions. Each station featured information posters with dot-voting activities on policy support and opportunities for written feedback through sticky notes and large writing pads.

**Key Feedback Themes:** Participants demonstrated strong overall support for proposed safety policies, with only five opposition votes out of 37 total votes across all policy concepts. Council members and Planning Commissioners emphasized critical community concerns, including wildfire risks in Mills Canyon, sea level rise impacts on Bay infrastructure and the wastewater treatment plant, the urban heat island effect and lack of tree canopy in certain neighborhoods, and hazardous eucalyptus trees during drought periods. Discussion highlighted tensions between competing priorities such as vegetation management for fire prevention versus intensifying urban heat island effects and increasing density while maintaining adequate evacuation routes and defensible space. Participants specifically requested information on policy funding approaches, recommended frequency for hazard analysis updates, and called for more equitable outreach particularly to Burlingame's Chinese community with more granular demographic data in Equity-Focus Areas. Strong support emerged for nature-based shoreline infrastructure, building Bay defenses to protect structures, groundwater vulnerability assessments for new development, and establishing resilience centers and cooling facilities for extreme heat events.

### SERVICE PROVIDER DISCUSSIONS

The project team conducted a series of virtual discussions with representatives from organizations providing important services to San Mateo County community members. These discussions aimed to understand each organization's role in building community resilience, their experiences with natural hazards, and how participating communities could support their work to improve local adaptation and resilience. See **Appendix G** for additional details on these discussions.

**Participation and Scope:** The consultant team identified 74 individuals representing 54 different organizations and successfully sent invitations to 64 people. Ultimately, 24 individuals confirmed their

interest and participated in the discussions held between June 3-18, 2024. Organizations were grouped into eight categories: (1) chambers of commerce and business groups; (2) community service organizations; (3) energy providers; (4) environmental groups; (5) faith-based organizations; (6) public health organizations; (7) transit providers; and (8) water/wastewater providers.

**Format and Structure:** The project team hosted a virtual discussion with representatives from each of the eight groups of organizations. These virtual discussions lasted 30 to 60 minutes each and were facilitated by senior consultant team members, supported by dedicated notetakers. Participants received seven discussion questions in advance covering their organization's programs, hazard experiences, vulnerable populations, partnership opportunities, and barriers to resilience. The format allowed for detailed exploration of each organization's unique perspective while maintaining consistency across all sessions.

**Key Themes:** Participants highlighted infrastructure vulnerabilities affecting large-scale facilities like pump stations and power lines, with extreme heat emerging as a commonly cited concern for which communities are underprepared. Almost all representatives identified funding as the primary barrier to accomplishing resilience goals, while many emphasized the importance of nature-based solutions and green infrastructure for addressing climate hazards. Representatives strongly advocated for community education and preparedness as essential components of resilience building. Multiple service providers stressed the importance of interjurisdictional cooperation, noting that unified regional approaches are more effective than individual jurisdictions acting alone.

## COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN MEETINGS

CRC led focused outreach to hard-to-reach communities across San Mateo County in both phases of engagement activities. These meetings focused on centering the voices of traditionally underrepresented populations often marginalized or excluded from planning processes in unincorporated areas and select incorporated communities. CRC and the project team designed the format of these in-person meetings to gather diverse perspectives on safety concerns and resilience strategies throughout different stages of the PREP project. Following the approach outlined in the Community Engagement Plan, the project team and participating agency staff identified target communities based on several factors. These criteria included neighborhoods with residents whose primary language is not English, areas with higher exposure to climate hazards, and communities historically underrepresented in planning processes. Priority areas were East Palo Alto and the unincorporated communities of North Fair Oaks, Pescadero, and coastal areas near Half Moon Bay.

CRC collaborated with established local organizations throughout all phases in each priority area, including Sustainable South Coast/Arriba South Coast in Pescadero, North Fair Oaks Community Alliance and the Pal Center in North Fair Oaks, and Ayudando Latinos a Soñar (also known as ALAS) in the Half Moon Bay area. These partnerships were essential for building and maintaining community trust, conducting culturally appropriate outreach, and ensuring effective facilitation.

Each meeting followed a 1.5- to 2-hour format. The meetings began with food provided to all attendees, followed by a 15-minute presentation on PREP and Safety Elements, a question-and-answer period, and roundtable discussions about specific safety hazards and community solutions. Facilitators used interactive materials, including community maps and large poster boards organized by safety hazards

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(flooding, wildfire, sea level rise, etc.) to capture geographic input and specific concerns. To remove barriers to participation and honor community members' time, all meetings provided food from local restaurants and \$40 gift cards (VISA or Trader Joe's) to participants 16 years and older. Meetings were held in accessible community venues, and those with predominantly Spanish-speaking participants were conducted entirely in Spanish to create comfortable spaces for meaningful participation. Meeting organizers also provided childcare services at all events.

**Phase 1 (May-June 2024):** CRC conducted three workshops during the vulnerability assessment development stage of the PREP project. A total of 63 residents participated: 18 in Pescadero (12 Spanish speakers, 6 English speakers) on May 19, 2024; 26 in North Fair Oaks (11 bilingual English/Spanish speakers, 15 monolingual Spanish speakers) on June 18, 2024; and 19 in the Half Moon Bay area (19 monolingual Spanish speakers) on June 27, 2024. These meetings used a 15-minute presentation format followed by roundtable discussions with community maps and poster boards organized by safety hazards. See **Appendix H** for a summary of the Phase 1 workshops.

**Phase 2 (April-May 2025):** CRC conducted three additional workshops during the policy development stage to gather feedback on draft policy concepts and ground-truth vulnerability assessment findings. This phase involved workshops in North Fair Oaks on April 15, 2025 (22 Spanish-speaking participants at PAL Center); Pescadero on May 4, 2025 (18 participants with concurrent Spanish and English sessions at Pescadero Middle School); and Half Moon Bay area on May 1, 2025 (22 Spanish-speaking participants at Half Moon Bay Library). See **Appendix I** for a summary of the Phase 1 workshops.

**East Palo Alto Safety Element Focus Groups (June-July 2025):** Building on the success of earlier workshops, CRC conducted three additional focus groups specifically for East Palo Alto residents to gather community input on Safety Element priorities. These sessions were held on June 26th (in Spanish), July 15th (in English), and July 17th (in English with Samoan and Tongan interpretation). In total, these meetings brought together approximately 50 total East Palo Alto residents at the YMCA facility. Each focus group was limited to approximately 15 residents to ensure in-depth conversation and active participation, facilitated by CRC staff members. See **Appendix J** for a summary of these focus group meetings.

## PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSIONS

Study sessions with local decision makers provided opportunities to keep Planning Commissioners and City Council members informed of project progress while gathering input during key project phases. The Community Engagement Plan outlined three rounds of study sessions: first during project launch for vulnerability assessment overview (agency staff-led without PlaceWorks attendance); second during policy development for presenting vulnerability assessment results and policy concepts (agency staff-led without PlaceWorks attendance); and third during draft Safety Element review (with PlaceWorks attendance for feedback incorporation). These were recommended touchpoints for study sessions; however, agency staff had discretion to schedule study sessions at any point during the project, depending on need and availability.

These study sessions provided opportunities for project staff and consultants to discuss climate resilience issues and policies with Planning Commissioners and City Council members. Planning Commissioners and City Council members expressed support for draft policies while providing specific input on wildfire safety,

flooding, environmental justice, and implementation considerations. To date, three communities have conducted study sessions during which time consultant team members were present to facilitate presentations and gather feedback: Burlingame, Half Moon Bay, and San Bruno.

**Burlingame.** The City of Burlingame’s joint Planning Commission and City Council workshop occurred during the second phase on April 16, 2025. This in-person meeting at the Burlingame Community Center included all five City Council members, four Planning Commissioners, and approximately 10 members of the public. This event is discussed in greater detail above, in the section titled “Burlingame Community Workshop and Joint Study Session.”

**Half Moon Bay.** A joint special meeting Study Session of the City of Half Moon Bay Planning Commission and City Council took place on November 18, 2025, featuring a report on updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps and a presentation on the progress of the City’s Safety Element Update. This hybrid-style meeting took place in person at the Ted Adcock Community Center and provided the option for remote participation via Zoom. The meeting provided the opportunity for Councilmembers to receive the presentation and report, hold a discussion, and provide any direction or recommendations in response. It also allowed community members the opportunity to review and provide public comment.

**San Bruno.** A joint Study Session of the City of San Bruno Joint Planning Commission and City Council took place on November 19, 2024, featuring integrated presentations on both the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Safety Element update. The PlaceWorks team presented on the collaborative approach between the two planning efforts, emphasizing how the shared vulnerability assessment served as a common foundation for both projects, and that comparable adaptation strategies would be incorporated into both the Safety Element and CAP. The presentation covered the Safety Element’s role as a mandatory part of the General Plan, recent State law requirements, and the integration benefits with San Bruno’s CAP development. Planning Commissioners, City Council members, and members of the public had the opportunity to ask questions related to the projects and the planning process.

## SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT RECEIVED

### HAZARDS OF GREATEST CONCERN

Through virtual workshops, community meetings, service provider discussions, and digital engagement platforms, participants consistently identified five primary climate hazards as their greatest concerns across the PREP region, including:

- **Flooding and sea level rise** emerged as the top priority, with participating community members expressing concerns about both current storm-related flooding events (such as the severe winters of 2022 and 2023) and future sea level rise impacts on low-lying areas. Participants highlighted cascading effects of flooding, including power outages, transportation disruptions, and impacts to aging stormwater infrastructure.
- **Wildfire risks** ranked as the second major concern, particularly among residents in higher-risk areas with dense vegetation or steep slopes, who emphasized challenges including rising insurance costs, older buildings lacking fire-safe features, wildfire smoke impacts, and evacuation route constraints.

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- **Extreme weather events**, including heat waves, severe storms, and drought conditions were frequently mentioned, with participants noting the lack of air conditioning in many older homes, the vulnerability of outdoor workers to extreme heat, and inadequate access to shaded public spaces and parks for cooling during heat events. Community members emphasized the need for shade structures at parks, bus stops, and public trails, particularly for children, elderly residents, and those without home air conditioning.
- **Infrastructure vulnerabilities** encompassed concerns about aging utility systems (such as overhead power lines, water and stormwater systems, and underground substations), power shutoffs (both planned and unplanned), and the reliability of transportation networks during emergencies.
- **Emergency communication gaps** emerged as a critical concern, particularly among non-English speaking communities who emphasized the need for multilingual emergency notifications and the challenges of maintaining communication during power outages when cell and radio signals may be compromised.

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND ASSETS IDENTIFIED

Community input revealed consistent identification of specific populations and assets requiring prioritized attention in resilience planning, including:

- **Non-English-speaking communities or linguistically isolated households** were universally recognized as particularly vulnerable, facing barriers to accessing emergency information, understanding risks, and navigating recovery resources. Participants emphasized that these communities, including the large Spanish-speaking populations in North Fair Oaks, Pescadero, and Half Moon Bay areas, require culturally competent outreach and dedicated multilingual resources. Community members from these populations also stressed the importance of regular, ongoing engagement and communication from local governments, requesting relationships that build trust and ensure they remain informed about planning processes and available resources.
- **Older adults** were consistently identified as vulnerable across all hazards due to potential mobility limitations, reliance on electricity for medical devices, limited access to lifelines (such as communication and transportation systems), and challenges with evacuation or accessing cooling centers during emergencies.
- **Low-income households** face multiple vulnerabilities, including habitation in older, potentially unmaintained buildings, inability to afford home hardening improvements or emergency supplies, and location in areas with higher environmental risks. Workshop participants specifically noted that low-income renters and mobile home park residents are uniquely vulnerable as they cannot control structural improvements to their housing.
- **Individuals with access and functional needs**, including people with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness, and people with chronic health conditions requiring electricity for medical equipment, require specialized emergency planning and resources.

Critical community assets identified included:

- **Essential infrastructure** such as hospitals and assisted living facilities, fire and police stations, schools (which can serve as emergency shelters), water treatment facilities, and transportation networks.

- **Small businesses and economic assets**, which are vulnerable to prolonged or repeated closures during hazard events, affecting both individual livelihoods and community recovery.
- **Natural assets**, including wetlands, tree canopy, and open spaces are valuable for both hazard mitigation and community resilience, noting their role in flood management, air quality improvement, and cooling.

## GEOGRAPHIC-SPECIFIC CONCERNS

Community engagement revealed distinct location-based vulnerabilities and challenges across the PREP region that require targeted attention in resilience planning. **Coastside flooding and evacuation constraints** emerged as a major concern for coastal communities including Half Moon Bay, Pescadero, and unincorporated areas along Highway 92. Residents emphasized the particular vulnerability of areas like Moonridge Apartments and central Pescadero to recurring flooding, with limited evacuation routes during emergencies due to the geography of coastal areas with few alternative transportation corridors. Participants highlighted challenges when Highway 1 or Highway 92 become impassable, effectively isolating coastal communities from emergency services and evacuation routes.

**North Fair Oaks infrastructure needs** were consistently identified as critical, with residents pinpointing specific flooding hotspots, including Bay Road, 5th Avenue, Broadway, Page Street, and Spring Street. Community members expressed frustration with inadequate drainage systems, aging infrastructure, and the need for proactive maintenance of storm drains and sewer systems. **Pescadero emergency communication challenges** were emphasized due to frequent power outages, poor cell and radio reception, and the community's relative isolation from emergency services. Residents noted the particular difficulty of maintaining communication during emergencies when roads are closed and power is out for extended periods. Additionally, participants identified **urban heat island effects and tree canopy gaps** as concerns in more developed areas, with participants noting the need for increased shade structures, tree plantings, and green infrastructure to reduce surface temperatures and provide cooling, particularly in environmental justice communities and areas with limited green space.

## EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCERNS

Communities of concern consistently raised issues of fairness and inclusion in disaster preparedness and recovery processes throughout all engagement activities. **Fair distribution of resources during disasters** emerged as a central concern, with residents from North Fair Oaks, Pescadero, and Half Moon Bay areas expressing frustration about historic inequities in emergency response and recovery support. Participants emphasized that low-income communities and communities of color often face longer recovery times and receive less assistance and attention from government agencies, while also bearing disproportionate impacts from climate hazards due to their location in more vulnerable areas and housing conditions.

**Need for multilingual emergency communications** was universally identified as a critical equity issue, with Spanish-speaking communities specifically noting that emergency information often arrives late, in a format that is not widely used by the community, or not at all in their primary language. Residents emphasized that language barriers create life-threatening situations during evacuations and emergency response and asked that all emergency planning include multilingual communications as a fundamental requirement, not an afterthought. **Infrastructure improvements in underserved areas** were consistently

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prioritized, with communities noting that areas like North Fair Oaks face chronic flooding and drainage problems that receive insufficient attention and resources compared to wealthier neighborhoods. Participants expressed that climate resilience investments should prioritize communities that have historically been overlooked and face the greatest risks. Additionally, **community involvement in decision-making processes** emerged as essential for ensuring equity, with residents demanding meaningful participation in planning, implementation, and evaluation of resilience strategies rather than being treated as passive recipients of services. Communities emphasized that their lived experience and local knowledge are essential resources that must be centered in resilience planning to achieve truly equitable outcomes.

## ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE STRATEGIES

Community input revealed strong support for comprehensive resilience strategies that combine technical solutions with community-based approaches. **Nature-based infrastructure solutions** emerged as a top priority, with participants consistently advocating for green infrastructure, including rain gardens, restored wetlands, increased tree canopy, and permeable surfaces to manage flooding and reduce heat impacts. Residents specifically supported developing buffer zones along the Bay and Pacific shorelines, integrating drainage and flood-control systems with ecosystem enhancement, and using vegetation management to reduce wildfire risks while preserving natural habitats.

**Improved emergency communication systems** were universally identified as essential, with communities requesting multi-channel notification systems that work during power outages, multilingual emergency information, and better coordination between agencies and utility providers. Participants emphasized the need for backup communication systems, including satellite phones in remote areas and enhanced alert systems that reach non-English speaking populations. **Community resilience programs** received strong support, particularly expansion of CERT training, localized emergency preparedness education, and neighborhood-level organizing for disaster response. Residents requested more accessible training schedules, childcare and transportation support for training participation, and certification programs that build community capacity for self-sufficiency during emergencies. Finally, participants prioritized **equitable resource distribution** and **enhanced public transportation and evacuation routes**, emphasizing the need for pre-positioned emergency supplies in vulnerable communities, improved evacuation planning that considers transit-dependent populations, and infrastructure investments that prioritize historically underserved areas.

## INTEGRATION OF COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input from across all engagement activities was systematically integrated into the PREP project deliverables through a multi-stage process that confirmed technical analyses, shaped policy development, and informed implementation approaches.

The project team used community feedback to refine the vulnerability assessment by confirming hazard priorities identified through technical analysis with on-the-ground community experiences. Residents validated and revised the scope of several risk areas, particularly highlighting specific flooding locations in North Fair Oaks (Bay Road, 5th Avenue, Broadway) and coastal evacuation constraints that were not fully

captured in initial technical modeling. Community input also led to the identification of additional vulnerable assets and populations, such as outdoor workers vulnerable to extreme heat and air quality impacts, and specific infrastructure like schools and community centers that serve critical emergency shelter functions.

The development of Safety Element goals and policies was directly shaped by community feedback received through workshops, meetings, and digital engagement platforms. **Wildfire preparedness and response policies** incorporated community concerns about rising insurance costs, the need for vegetation management coordination, and evacuation route limitations in areas with steep terrain or limited access. **Flood management and sea level rise adaptation** reflected strong community support for nature-based solutions, with policies emphasizing green infrastructure, riparian corridor restoration, and buffer zones along shorelines. **Emergency preparedness and communication improvements** were significantly influenced by multilingual community input, resulting in policies requiring multi-channel notification systems, multilingual emergency information, and backup communication infrastructure for areas with poor connectivity.

**Equity-focused resilience policies** emerged directly from communities of concern input, with specific provisions for prioritizing infrastructure investments in historically underserved areas, ensuring equitable resource distribution during disasters, and requiring meaningful community participation in resilience planning processes. The dot-voting activities at community workshops demonstrated strong overall support for draft policy concepts, with participants showing unanimous support for wildfire-related policies and overwhelming support for nature-based flood management approaches and emergency preparedness improvements.

Community input also shaped implementation considerations by identifying partnership opportunities with local organizations, helping to inform resource allocation recommendations. Service provider discussions revealed funding as the primary implementation barrier while highlighting the importance of coordination between agencies, utilities, and community-based organizations. The engagement process established ongoing relationships with organizations like North Fair Oaks Community Alliance, Sustainable South Coast, and ALAS that will continue beyond the project timeline to support implementation efforts.

While the project team incorporated most community suggestions into the Safety Elements, some considerations could not be incorporated due to scope limitations, resource constraints, or the need for additional study. Items outside Safety Element scope, such as specific infrastructure projects requiring separate environmental review or topics that would be better addressed in other General Plan elements like the Environmental Justice or Land Use Element, were noted for future consideration through other planning processes. Suggestions requiring significant additional resources or conflicting recommendations from different community groups were flagged for further evaluation during implementation phases, ensuring transparency about what could and could not be addressed through the Safety Element updates.

## **NEXT STEPS AND ONGOING ENGAGEMENT**

The completion of the PREP community engagement process marks the beginning of a new phase focused on Safety Element implementation and sustained community partnership. Draft Safety Elements

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incorporating community input were made available for public review in late 2025/early 2026, followed by formal adoption hearings by Planning Commissions and City Councils / Board of Supervisors by June 2026.

Long-term partnerships developed through the PREP process will continue beyond the project timeline, particularly relationships with community-based organizations such as CRC, North Fair Oaks Community Alliance, Sustainable South Coast, and ALAS. These partnerships provide ongoing channels for community input during policy implementation and will support the locally led preparedness and planning approaches that communities consistently advocated for throughout the engagement process.

Moving forward, successful implementation of the Safety Elements will depend on maintaining the equity-focused engagement principles established during PREP, ensuring continued meaningful participation from historically underserved communities, and adapting engagement strategies to keep pace with changing community needs and environmental conditions. The project has demonstrated that community members are eager partners in resilience planning when provided with accessible, culturally appropriate opportunities to contribute their local knowledge and lived experiences to creating safer, more resilient communities.



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### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Community Engagement Plan

Appendix B: Virtual Community Workshop 1 and 2 Summary Report

Appendix C: Virtual Community Workshop 3 Summary Report

Appendix D: Coastside Community Workshop Summary

Appendix E: San Bruno Community Workshop Summary

Appendix F: Burlingame Community Workshop and Joint Study Session Summary

Appendix G: Service Provider Discussions Summary

Appendix H: Communities of Concern Meetings Phase 1 Summary

Appendix I: Communities of Concern Meetings Phase 2 Summary

Appendix J: East Palo Alto Community Workshop Summary

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

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**APPENDIX B: VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 1 AND 2 SUMMARY  
REPORT**

## APPENDIX C: VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY REPORT

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**APPENDIX D: COASTSIDE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY**

## APPENDIX E: SAN BRUNO COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY

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**APPENDIX F: BURLINGAME COMMUNITY WORKSHOP AND JOINT STUDY  
SESSION SUMMARY**

## APPENDIX G: SERVICE PROVIDER DISCUSSIONS SUMMARY

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**APPENDIX H: COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN MEETINGS PHASE 1 SUMMARY**

**APPENDIX I: COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN MEETINGS PHASE 2 SUMMARY**

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**APPENDIX J: EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY**