



NEWS RELEASE

City of Santa Barbara

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City of Santa Barbara Awarded \$310,000 Fire Prevention Grant

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The Santa Barbara City Fire Department has been awarded a \$310,000 Cal Fire grant to update the existing Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Recent California fires that have devastated urban communities have heightened our community's perception of our vulnerability to wildfire. The city recognizes the need to update the existing CWPP and EIR which will replace the 2004 Wildland Fire Plan aimed at mitigating wildland fire impacts based on a history of catastrophic fires within the City.

The \$310,000 cash grant, which includes matching in-kind work by city staff, is part of the combined California Climate Investments and Cal Fire Community Wildfire Prevention Program which is releasing \$43,000,000 in local Fire Prevention Grants throughout the state. California Climate Investments uses cap and trade dollars to help offset greenhouse gas emissions. Large fires generate enormous amounts of those emissions, particularly black carbon, according to the California Air Resources Board, and reducing the number and intensity of fires helps the initiative achieve its goal. The CWPP will identify projects that will result in the removal of vegetation that would otherwise be consumed by wildfire. This is the first such grant to the city, tying wildfire prevention and mitigation to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

For the past 14 years the City has successfully implemented the majority of the policies and programmatic actions set forth in the Wildland Fire Plan. These include designation of risk areas, establishment of defensible space standards, updating fire and building codes with more stringent provisions, establishing funding sources and enforcement programs for risk reduction, identifying and implementing evacuation procedures and public education programs, reducing response times, providing training, obtaining additional equipment, implementing vegetation management programs, and providing guidelines for post-fire recovery.

Updating the CWPP and EIR will allow the City to use the best available science to proactively respond to the rapid increase seen locally (2017 Thomas Fire and 2018 Post Fire Debris Flow) and statewide in fire behavior, loss of life, large numbers of structure losses, post fire flooding, and economic impacts from wildfire. By updating the CWPP, the city will use the lessons learned from the Wildland Fire Plan to address the increased wildfire threat.