

City of Prescott

City Council - Study Session



April 21, 2026 | 1:00 PM
201 N Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 1st Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

AGENDA

The following Agenda will be considered by the **Prescott City Council** at its **Study Session** pursuant to the Prescott City Charter, Article II, Section 13. Notice of the meeting is given pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431.02. One or more members of the Council may be attending the meeting through the use of a technological device.

Viewing & Participation

This meeting may be viewed on Channel 64, Facebook Live or on the City's website: [City of Prescott Live Meeting Feed](#)

Public comments for Council may be submitted through the City website: [Public Comment Form](#)

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. DISCUSSION

- A. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the City of Prescott Hillside Development Standards & Overall Land Development Code Updates.
- B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Proposed Updates to and Future Adoption of the 2024 Wildland Urban Interface Code Amendments.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Upon a public majority vote of a quorum of the City Council, the Council may hold an executive session, which will not be open to the public, regarding any item listed on the agenda but only for the following purposes:

- (1) Discussion or consideration of personnel matters (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(1));
- (2) Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(2));
- (3) Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the city's attorneys (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3));
- (4) Discussion or consultation with the city's attorneys regarding the city's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation, or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid litigation (A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4));
- (5) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its

position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations with employee organizations (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(5));

(6) Discussion, consultation or consideration for negotiations by the city or its designated representatives with members of a tribal council, or its designated representatives, of an Indian reservation located within or adjacent to the city (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(6));

(7) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(7)).

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Prescott City Hall on 4/16/26 at 11:00 a.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Prescott City Council with the City Clerk.

Sarah M. Thornhill

Sarah M. Thornhill, City Clerk



TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA: April 21 Special Study Session
DATE: April 21, 2026
DEPT: Community Development
ITEM #: 3.A
SUBJECT: Presentation & Discussion Regarding the City of Prescott Hillside Development Standards & Overall Land Development Code Updates.

ITEM SUMMARY

This item is for discussion regarding the city of Prescott Hillside Development standards and overall Land Development Code updates. Per direction from Council, staff was asked to review Section 6.8 Hillside Development Standards in the Land Development Code to address applicability for single-site development of multifamily and commercial projects. Currently, this section only applies to subdivisions.

BACKGROUND

It was recently brought to Council's attention that the Hillside Development Standards in the Land Development Code are not applicable to single-site projects consisting of multifamily and commercial developments. Staff was directed to review the standards in the Land Development Code to address applicability for multifamily and commercial developments that have slopes but are not part of an existing subdivision already subject to the Hillside Development Standards.

Staff did an extensive review of the Land Development Code to evaluate how the Hillside Development Standards can be applied to multifamily and commercial developments that have slopes over 20 percent. The proposed amendment will apply to all proposed residential land splits/subdivisions and the development of commercial or multifamily projects on lots that are 2 acres or greater with slopes greater than 20 percent.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This item is for discussion only. No formal action will be taken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. LDC Section 6.8 Hillside Development Standards_Proposed Changes
2. Hillside Development & LDC Updates Presentation

Sec. 6.8 / Hillside Development Standards

6.8.1 / Purpose

Prescott is surrounded by rolling hills and mesas. These hilly areas exhibit steep slopes, which may contain unstable rock. Development on potentially unstable rock can be hazardous to life and property. Development in these areas should include construction methods that ensure slope stabilization; and minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and hillside scarring.

Prescott's hills and mesas are valuable scenic resources that should be considered for preservation to the maximum extent possible, while allowing for the development and beneficial use of private property located in and around the hills and mesas. Dominant scenic ridges and mesas should be identified and developed with the goal of maintaining the city's unique visual setting, promoting its economic well being, and encouraging tourism and quality living. Regulating the intensity of development according to the natural characteristics of hillside terrain, such as degree of slope, significant landforms, and slope stability and existing drainage patterns, allows for development in hillside areas while minimizing the physical impacts of such development.

6.8.2 / Applicability

Unless otherwise addressed/specified herein, The ~~the~~ regulations of this section shall apply ~~unless otherwise addressed / specified herein. Notwithstanding these provisions, the City Council has full discretion in which to waive or modify Hillside Development Standards to all proposed residential land splits and subdivisions with slope areas greater than 20 percent, or as otherwise specified herein. Where the standards of this section are in conflict with other provisions of this Code, the more restrictive shall apply.~~ **To the following developments with slopes greater (steeper) than 20 percent:**

- 1. Proposed residential land splits and subdivisions; and**
- 2. For commercial or multi-family development on lots that are 2 acres or greater; and**

For all areas of the lot or parcel with less than a 20 percent slope, these provisions do not apply.

Modifications may be made to the Hillside Development Standards in accordance with Section 6.8.7.

6.8.3 / Residential Density Allocation and Maximum Site Disturbance

~~For all areas of the lot or parcel with less than a 20 percent slope, 100 percent site disturbance may occur where densities are being transferred from higher slope areas. Development~~

projects proposing such density transfers shall be subject to the Planned Area Development requirements of Sec. 9.5. For slope areas greater (steeper) than 20 percent, the standards of this section shall apply.

A. Maximum site disturbance (disturbable area), as used in this section, shall include all grading for the development of the property. **In residential land splits and subdivisions the maximum disturbance area** but shall not include any public or private street. Disturbable Area includes that portion of a lot or tract approved for grading and grubbing, which shall be indicated as disturbable area envelopes in conjunction with the **development plans or plat**. Preliminary Plat.

B. For Residential Land Splits and Subdivisions

1. Encroachments into sloped areas may be approved by the City Council for PAD subdivisions using the density transfer option where doing so helps achieve an efficient subdivision layout that works with the terrain. Such encroachments shall be limited to maximum disturbable areas, as specified for each slope category detailed in Table 6.8.3, except the maximum disturbable area provision shall not be applicable to a clustered unit development proposal located within a steep slope category greater than 20% but less than or equal to 25% in instances where it can be clearly demonstrated that such clustering would result in a more efficient use of land, create smaller networks of utilities, streets, and driveways, and overall reduced hillside scarring. The following criteria shall be utilized in determining the adequacy of a clustered development proposal:

- Minimizes the disturbance to the terrain, avoiding cuts or fills unless they are necessary;
- Preserves and incorporates natural features and vegetation, saves significant mature trees, rock formation and stands of vegetation, particularly in front yards;
- Mitigates visual impacts by keeping structures below ridgelines, stepping structures with the slope, and minimizing the height of structures;
- Places utilities and driveways in the same cut;
- Adds supplemental natural landscaping to compensate for vegetation losses;
- Buildings are designed to fit the site, rather than the site being modified to fit the building;
- Architectural features conform to hillside characteristics, utilizing natural materials, earth-tone colors, and broken roof and wall components;
- Streetscape appearance is enhanced by saving front yard vegetation, staggering setbacks, and utilizing minimal-sized driveways that take up grade;
- Proposed clustered unit developments located within a >20% to 25% steep slope category shall be subject to the processing of a Planned Area Development (PAD) application and approval at the sole discretion of the City Council.

2. ~~C.~~ Additionally, remediation of resulting disturbed ground shall be a requirement of final plat approval and noted for the related disturbable area envelopes. ~~Subdivisions approved for this additional site disturbance allowance may only gain an increase~~

beyond what was approved at final plat by a revised approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

3. D. For approved Hillside Subdivisions which were not approved with minor encroachments per Section 6.8.3.B, a maximum of 10 percent increase in maximum site disturbance shall be allowed for the construction of a driveway subject to approval of an Administrative Adjustment by the Community Development Director pursuant to the requirements of Sec. 9.516, Administrative Adjustments. Notwithstanding other provisions to the contrary, any increase in excess of 10 percent shall be subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval and to additional mitigation requirements as necessary to reduce the potential for erosion and slope scarring.

CE. Density and **A slope category map shall be required to determine the** maximum site disturbance shall be determined in accordance with the following table:

Table 6.8.3 (Refer to Sec. 6.8.3F – Table Interpretation below)

HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY			
Steep Slope Categories	Maximum Disturbable Area per Sec. 6.8.3.A	Minimum Lot Area	Density Transfer Option (Bonus) – Adds To Base Density Of Underlying Zone On Slopes 0% To 20%
0% to 20% (Base Density)	Per Underlying Zoning	Per Underlying Zoning (Base Density)	Receiving Area For Density Transfers
>20% to 30%	30%	½ acre (21,780 sf)	2.5 DU per AC
>30% to 40%	15%	2 acres	1 DU per one AC
>40%	10%	3 acres	1 DU per one AC
* “disturbable area” shall be defined as “all grading for the development of a property except any public or private street,” (Sec. 6.8.3A).			

DF. Table 6.8.3.C Interpretation

1. **Maximum Disturbable Area** For non-PAD preliminary plat designs;

In instances where the lot(s) contain a combination of slope categories 20% or greater as listed under column heading “Steep Slope Categories”, the maximum disturbable area for each slope category shall be limited to those percentages listed within the table under the column heading “Maximum Disturbable Area” and shall apply to any/all disturbable areas of an affected lot.

- a. In instances where a proposed lot is located in a steep slope category greater than 20%, and the disturbable area* within such lot would exceed the allowable percentage referenced in the “Maximum Disturbable Area” column in Table 6.8.3 (herein referred to as “Table”), then such lot shall either be reconfigured so as to not exceed the maximum disturbable percentage identified in said Table, or,

reconfigured to conform to the lot size identified in the "Minimum Lot Area" column referenced in said "Table."

b.—In instances where the disturbable area of a proposed lot contains a combination or mixture of slope categories greater than 20%, as listed in the Table column heading "Steep Slope Categories", the calculation for determining "Minimum Lot Area" shall be based upon the slope category occupying the largest portion of the proposed disturbable area.

2.—Minimum Lot Area For Planned Area Development (PAD) preliminary plat designs:

a. In instances where the disturbable area of a proposed lot within a subdivision contains a combination or mixture of slope categories greater than 20%, as listed under column heading "Steep Slope Categories", the calculation for determining "Minimum Lot Area" shall be based upon the slope category occupying the largest portion of the proposed lot.

a.—In instances where proposed lot contains a slope category or mixture of slope categories 20% or greater as listed in Table 6.8.3 (herein referred to a "Table"), under the column heading "Steep Slope Categories", the maximum disturbable area for each slope category shall be limited to those percentages listed in said Table under the column heading "Maximum Disturbable Area" and shall apply to any/all disturbable areas of an affected lot.

b. The "Minimum Lot Area" provisions listed in the Table shall not apply to PAD designations; however, lot design shall be limited by the maximum disturbable area percentages listed in the Table for the respective steep slope category. Increasing the overall area of a proposed lot may be necessary to compensate for the size of the proposed disturbable area envelope to ensure that the maximum allowable percentages of disturbable area are not exceeded for each steep slope category that may be present.

c. The "Minimum Lot Area" provisions listed in the Table shall not apply to single site development.

6.8.4 / Residential Density Allocation and Site Disturbance Transfer

Subject to Council's sole discretion and the Planned Area Development requirements of Sec. ~~9.5~~, residential density and site disturbance may be transferred from portions of a lot or parcel with a slope greater than 20 percent to an area of less than 20 percent slope.

Development projects proposing such density transfers shall be subject to the Planned Area Developments of Sec. 9.5. Areas from which density and site disturbance are transferred shall be designated as "natural areas" in accordance with Sec. 6.8.4C, below. Density and site disturbance shall be transferred only on-site, within the boundaries of the subject tract or parcel.

A. Density Transfer Bonuses and Considerations

- 1. Density transfers encourage preservation of the hillsides by shifting density away from 20% or greater slopes and allowing for a density bonus subject to the following ratios:**

<u>Steep Slope Categories</u>	<u>Density Transfer</u>
<u>0% to 20% Base Density</u>	<u>Receiving Area For Density Transfer</u>
<u>20% to 30%</u>	<u>2.5 dwelling unit per acre</u>
<u>30% to 40%</u>	<u>1 dwelling unit per acre</u>
<u>>40%</u>	<u>1 dwelling unit per acre</u>

Example: *insert sample*

- 2.** Aspects for consideration of a density transfer design may include but are not limited to:
- a.** 1. Locations and distribution of the clustered housing;
 - b.** 2. Depth and quality of buffering between the clustered housing and the adjoining properties off-site;
 - c.** 3. Degree of difference between housing types, heights, lot sizes, visibility of on-site and adjacent off-site developments; and
 - d.** 4. Amount, type and location of open space that results from a density transfer; scarring, erosion, sedimentation and road building reductions.

B. Density Clustering / Housing Types

Notwithstanding other provisions of this Code to the contrary, transferred density rights may be developed as Attached Single-Family Dwellings, in addition to other residential use types allowable in the underlying zoning district.

C. Natural Areas

The intent of natural areas is to provide for retention of hillside areas in their natural state. The density and site disturbance shall be transferred to other less steep portions of a site. Specific criteria for natural areas include the following:

- 1.** Natural areas shall be at least 1/2 acre in size or immediately adjacent or contiguous to other land also designated as a natural area, which, in aggregate, total at least 1/2 acre in size.
- 2.** Site disturbance other than hiking trails shall not be permitted within the geographical area of a natural area.
- 3.** The natural area shall be delineated on the Preliminary and Final Plats of a subdivision or on any development plan required for development other than a subdivision (including land splits), and shall be designated by legal description on a

document recorded with the Yavapai County Recorder for lot division and denoted as an open space tract or a “No Build Easement”.

4. Natural areas may be designated as a deed-restricted or easement-protected portion of a privately owned lot, or as a separate parcel. Such parcel may be under the ownership of a property owners’ association or deeded to any organization that accepts responsibility for the perpetual preservation and maintenance of the natural area, subject to approval and acceptance by the City of Prescott. To protect the natural areas, covenants that run with the land shall be recorded in favor of the City of Prescott and of all owners with record interest in the natural area. Alternatively, rezoning to an open space designation may be requested for such areas.

D. Hillside Wall Standards moved to 6.8.5

E. Drainage Design moved to 6.8.6

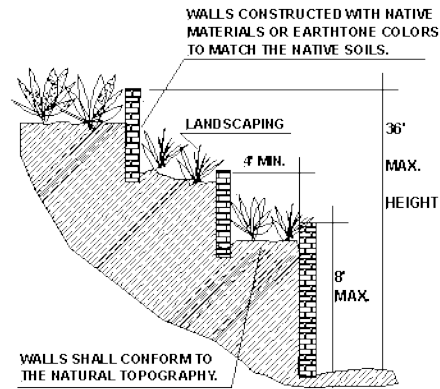
D.F. Driveways, Single-family

1. Driveways in hillside area shall be limited to one per residence; provided, however, additional driveways may be permitted at the discretion of the Community Development Director where site grading provisions are met and where traffic circulation is not compromised.
2. The minimum driveway width shall be 10 feet. A single driveway that serves more than one residence shall be 20 feet in width.
3. Driveway grades should not exceed a 20 percent grade.
4. Driveways shall be paved to stabilize slopes and minimize erosion and sedimentation.
5. Proposed driveways shall be in accordance with the City of Prescott General Engineering Standards.

6.8.5.D. Hillside Wall Standards

The intent of wall standards is to reduce the visual impact of screening and retaining methods used on hillside developments. Walls shall be constructed in conformance with the City of Prescott General Engineering Standards with specific criteria for design, which includes but is not limited to the following:

1. The maximum height of retaining walls is 36 feet. For each 8 feet of vertical height, a



4-foot horizontal offset shall be provided.

2. Walls shall conform to the topography of the site.
3. Walls with a change in alignment shall incorporate the use of graduating steps rather than sharp corners to the greatest practical extent.
4. Walls shall either incorporate the use of native materials or be earth tone colors to match the native soils.

6.8.6 E. Drainage Design

Drainage facilities shall be designed in conformance with the City of Prescott General Engineering Standards. All drainage plans are subject to approval by the City Engineer, including multi-family residential and commercial development, all subdivisions and subdivision exemptions. In all cases and with or without City review, it is the responsibility on the property owner to maintain the natural, preconstruction drainage flows that characterize the location. Private drainage facilities, driveway culverts, cross lot drainage easements, or rear lot drainage easements shall be privately maintained.

6.8.7 6.8.5 / Exceptions to Hillside Development Standards

City Council may modify or approve ~~e~~Exceptions to otherwise required minimum Hillside Development Standards **for residential lot splits and subdivisions** including, but not limited to: maximum site disturbance, clustering, and the provisions outlined in Table 6.8.3 “Hillside Residential Density” relating to minimum lot area, minimum disturbable area, and density transfer options. ~~, may be modified and approved by the City Council.~~ If the provisions of this Section (6.8) are in conflict with provisions found in the City’s Planned Area Development (PAD) or subdivision Provisions, the provisions herein shall control.

Board of Adjustment may approve exemptions to the otherwise required minimum Hillside Development Standards for commercial or multi-family developments on lots 2 acres or greater in accordance with the Variance process found in Sec. 9.13.



Land Development Code: General Updates & Hillside Development Standards

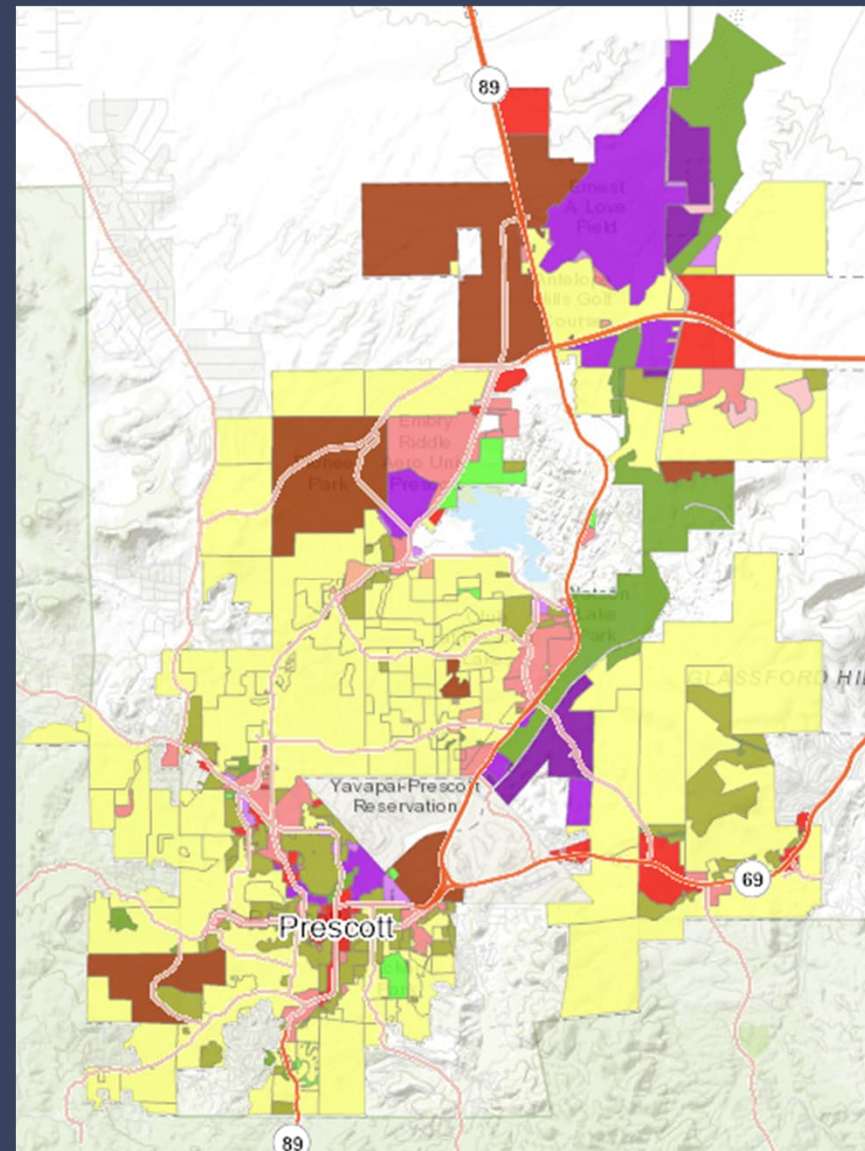
Alex Bramlette
Planning Manager

April 21st, 2026
City Council Study Session



Land Development Code (LDC) Updates

- The LDC last major update was completed in 2005
- There have been minor updates made over the years
- Staff have identified several areas for improvement and clarification within the LDC
- We have budgeted for a consultant to help with the updates of the LDC



Hillside Development Standards

Prescott is surrounded by rolling hills and mesas. These hilly areas exhibit steep slopes, which may contain unstable rock. Development on potentially unstable rock can be hazardous to life and property. Development in these areas should include construction methods that ensure slope stabilization; and minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and hillside scarring.

Prescott's hills and mesas are valuable scenic resources that should be considered for preservation to the maximum extent possible, while allowing for the development and beneficial use of private property located in and around the hills and mesas. Dominant scenic ridges and mesas should be identified and developed with the goal of maintaining the city's unique visual setting, promoting its economic well being, and encouraging tourism and quality living. Regulating the intensity of development according to the natural characteristics of hillside terrain, such as degree of slope, significant landforms, and slope stability and existing drainage patterns, allows for development in hillside areas while minimizing the physical impacts of such development.



Hillside Development Standards

HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY			
Steep Slope Categories	Maximum Disturbable Area*	Minimum Lot Area	Density Transfer Option (Bonus) - Adds To Base Density Of Underlying Zone On Slopes 0% To 20%
0% to 20% (Base Density)	Per Underlying Zoning	Per Underlying Zoning (Base Density)	Receiving Area For Density Transfers
>20% to 30%	30%	½ acre (21,780 sf)	2.5 DU per AC
>30% to 40%	15%	2 acres	1 DU per one AC
>40%	10%	3 acres	1 DU per one AC

* "disturbable area" shall be defined as "all grading for the development of a property except any public or private street," (Sec. 6.8.3A).

Maximum Disturbable Area

In instances where the lot(s) contain a combination of slope categories 20% or greater as listed under column heading "Steep Slope Categories", the maximum disturbable area for each slope category shall be limited to those percentages listed within the table under the column heading "Maximum Disturbable Area" and shall apply to any/all disturbable areas of an affected lot.

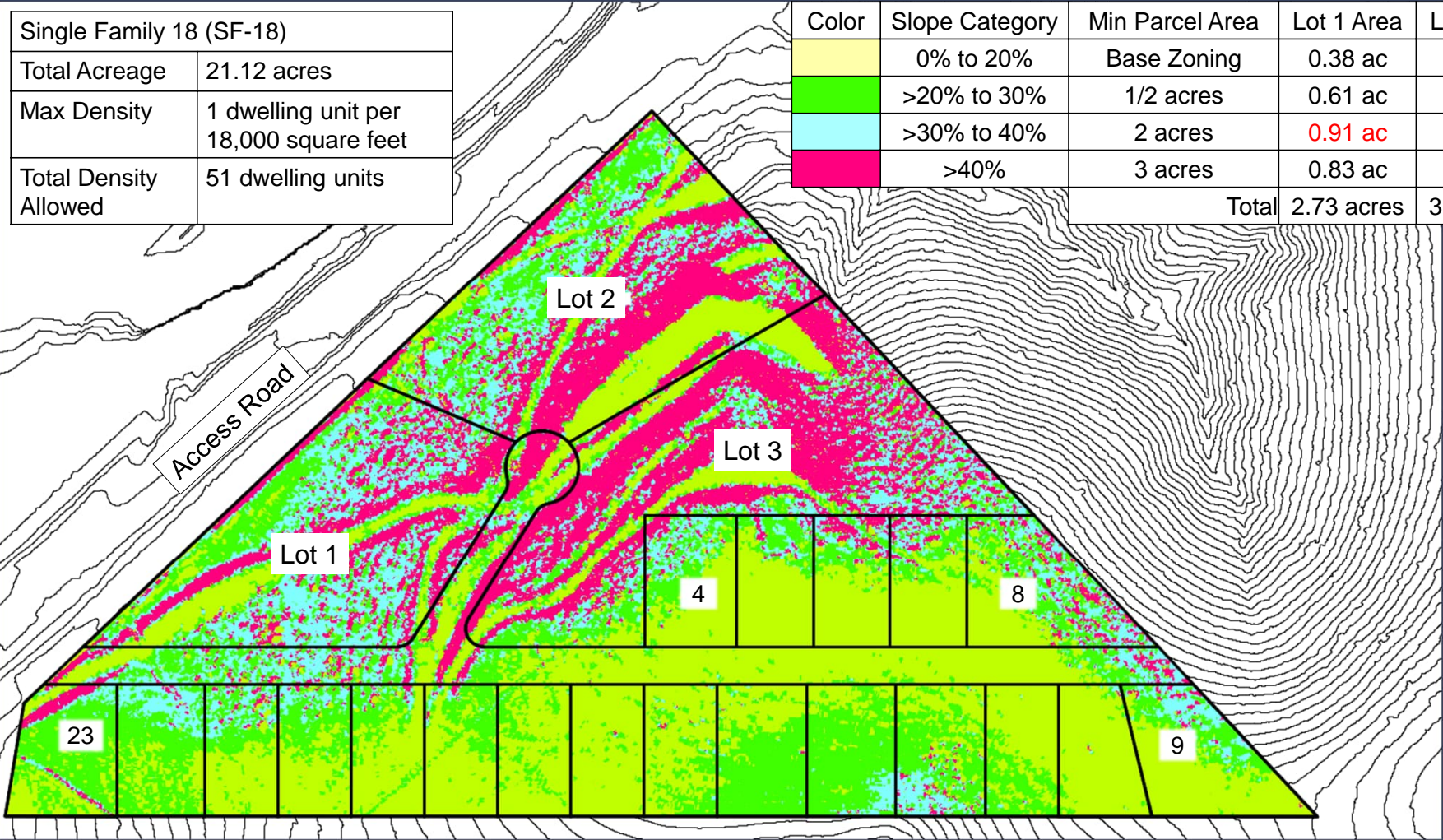
Minimum Lot Area

- In instances where the disturbable area of a proposed lot within a subdivision contains a combination or mixture of slope categories greater than 20%, as listed under column heading "Steep Slope Categories", the calculation for determining "Minimum Lot Area" shall be based upon the slope category occupying the largest portion of the proposed lot.
- The "Minimum Lot Area" provisions listed in the Table shall not apply to PAD designations; however, lot design shall be limited by the maximum disturbable area percentages listed in the Table for the respective steep slope category. Increasing the overall area of a proposed lot may be necessary to compensate for the size of the proposed disturbable area envelope to ensure that the maximum allowable percentages of disturbable area are not exceeded for each steep slope category that may be present.
- The "Minimum Lot Area" provisions The "Minimum Lot Area" provisions listed in the Table shall not apply to single site development.

Hillside Subdivision

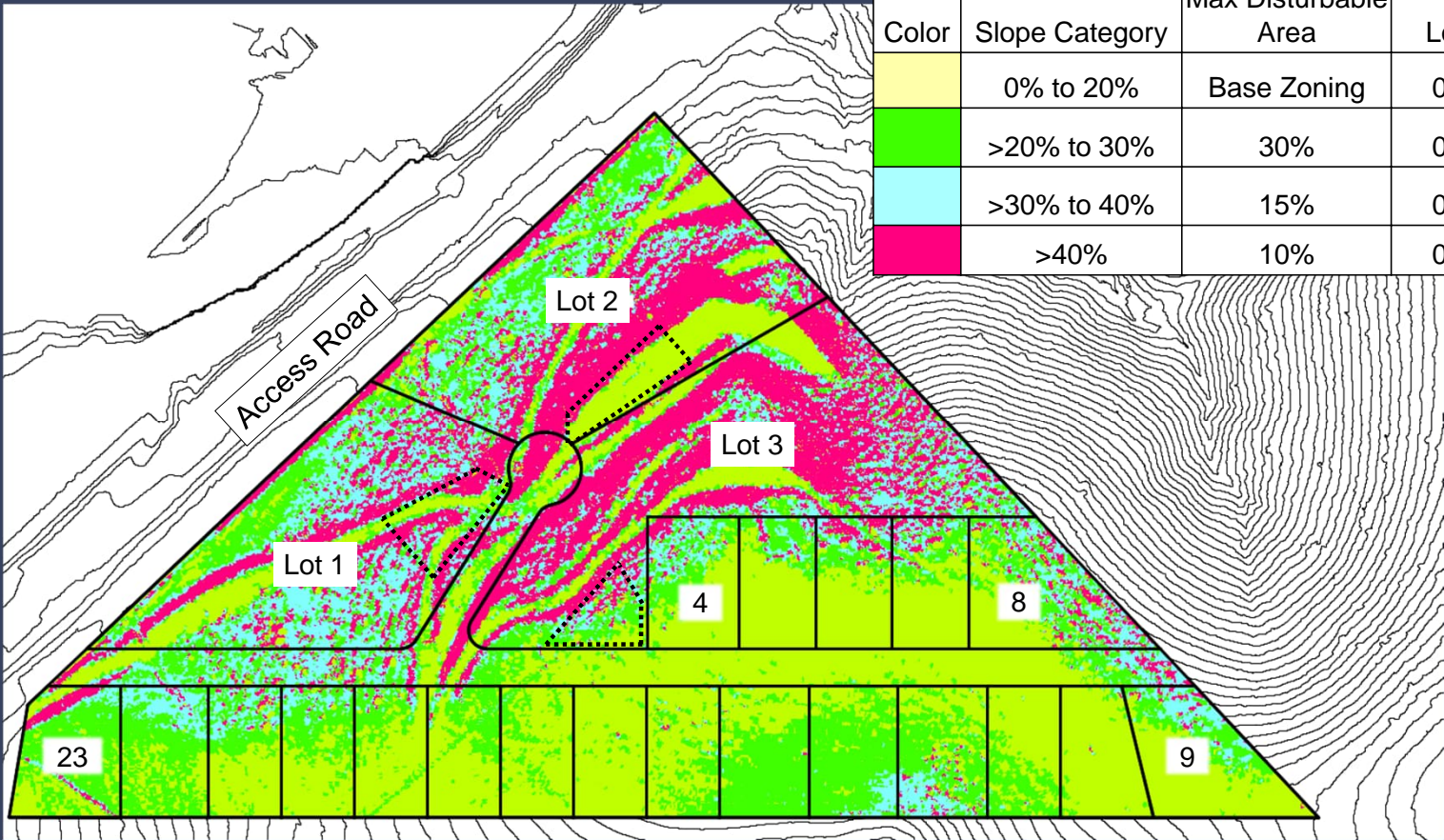
Single Family 18 (SF-18)	
Total Acreage	21.12 acres
Max Density	1 dwelling unit per 18,000 square feet
Total Density Allowed	51 dwelling units

Color	Slope Category	Min Parcel Area	Lot 1 Area	Lot 2 Area	Lot 3 Area
Yellow	0% to 20%	Base Zoning	0.38 ac	0.64 ac	0.45 ac
Green	>20% to 30%	1/2 acres	0.61 ac	0.61 ac	0.45 ac
Cyan	>30% to 40%	2 acres	0.91 ac	0.75 ac	0.71 ac
Magenta	>40%	3 acres	0.83 ac	1.17 ac	1.85 ac
Total			2.73 acres	3.17 acres	3.46 acres



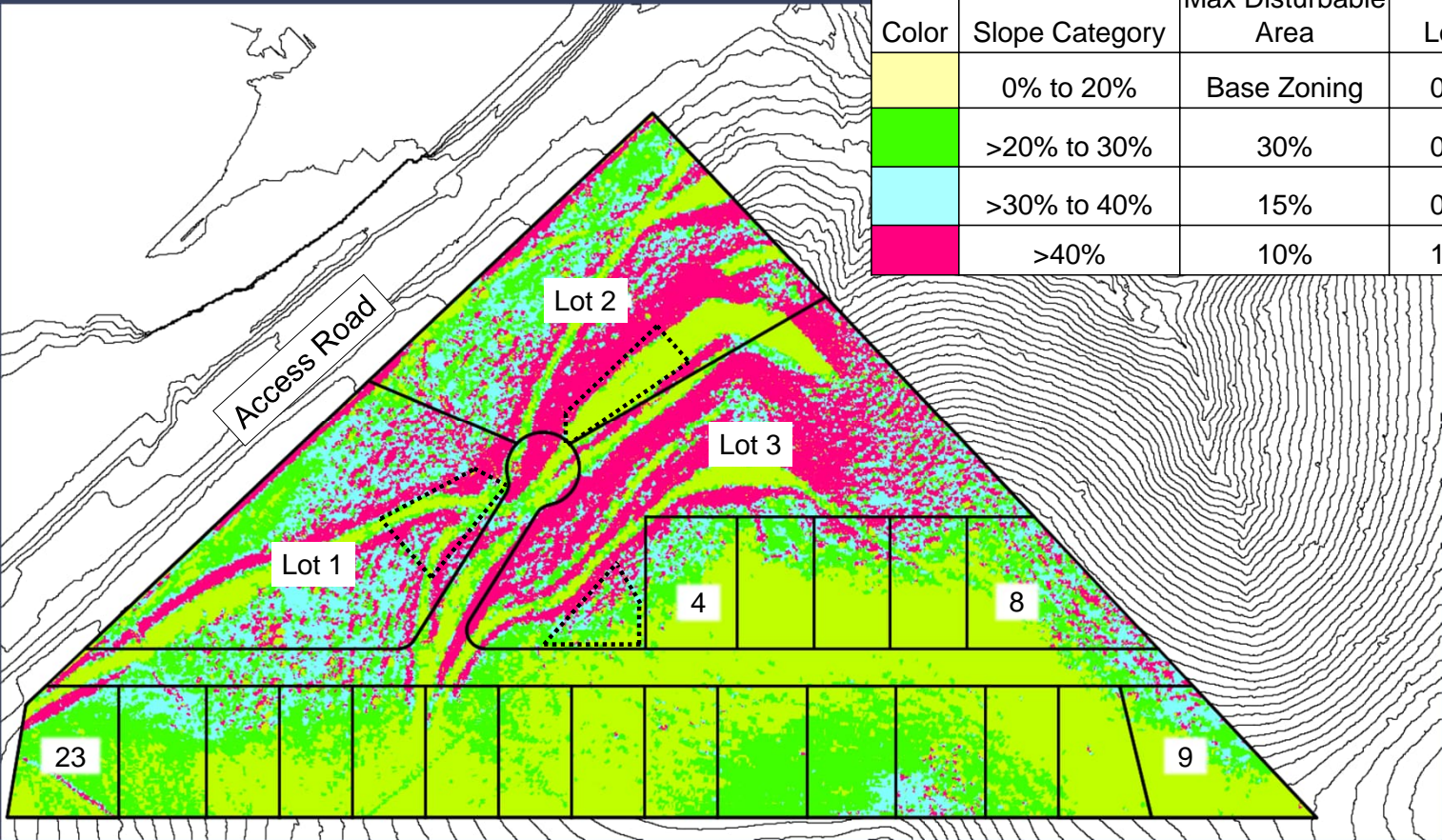
Hillside Subdivision – Lot 1 Disturbable Area

Lot 1 = 2.73 acres					
Color	Slope Category	Max Disturbable Area	Lot Area	Disturbable Area	% Disturbed area
Yellow	0% to 20%	Base Zoning	0.38 ac	0.06 ac	base zoning
Green	>20% to 30%	30%	0.61 ac	0.05 ac	8.20%
Cyan	>30% to 40%	15%	0.91 ac	0.04 ac	4.40%
Magenta	>40%	10%	0.83 ac	0.08 ac	9.90%



Hillside Subdivision – Lot 3 Disturbable Area

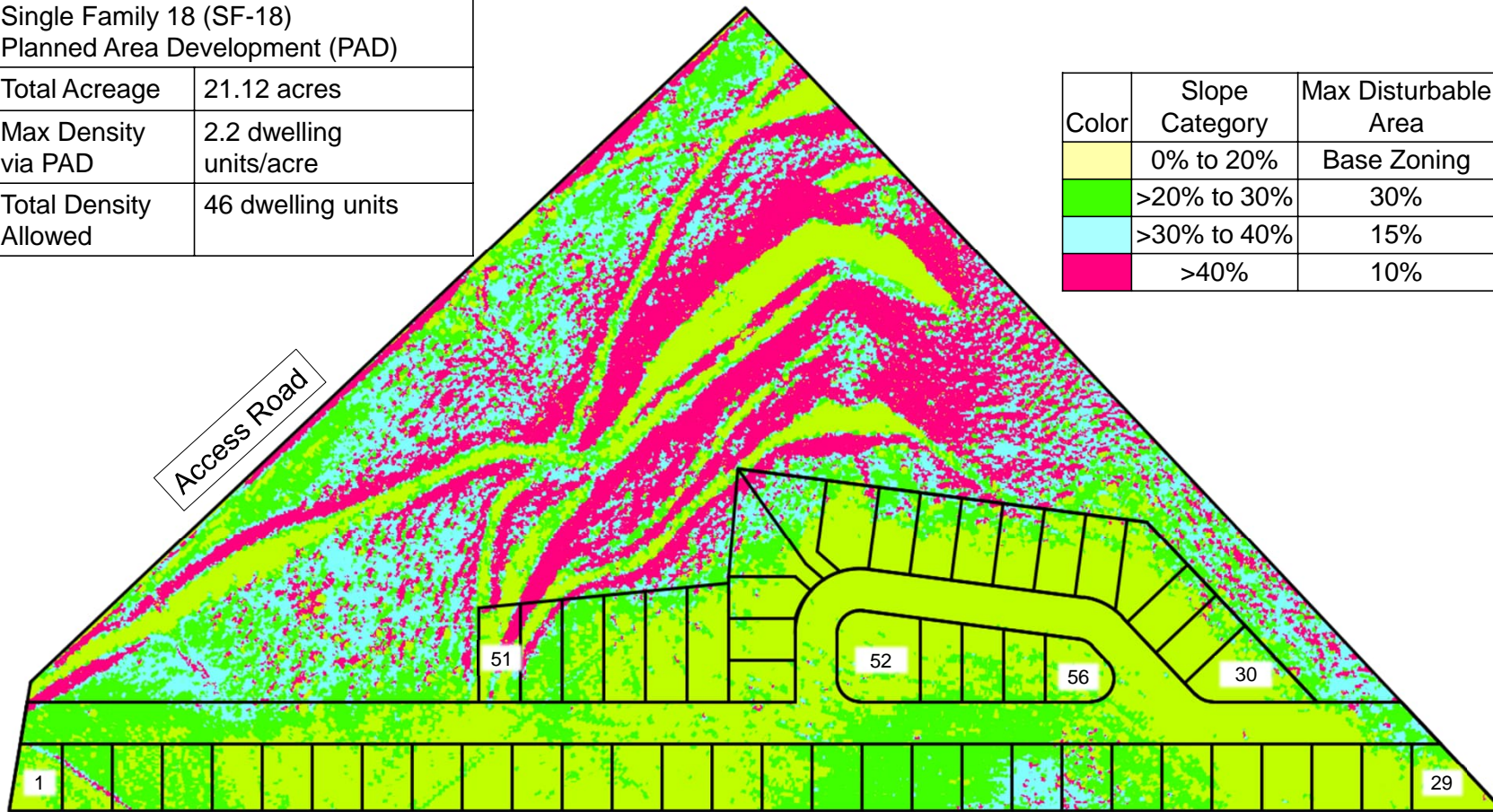
Lot 3 = 3.46 acres					
Color	Slope Category	Max Disturbable Area	Lot Area	Disturbable Area	% Disturbed area
Yellow	0% to 20%	Base Zoning	0.45 ac	0.03 ac	base zoning
Green	>20% to 30%	30%	0.45 ac	0.07 ac	15.60%
Cyan	>30% to 40%	15%	0.71 ac	0.05 ac	7.04%
Magenta	>40%	10%	1.85 ac	0.04 ac	2.16%



Planned Area Development (PAD) Subdivision

Single Family 18 (SF-18) Planned Area Development (PAD)	
Total Acreage	21.12 acres
Max Density via PAD	2.2 dwelling units/acre
Total Density Allowed	46 dwelling units

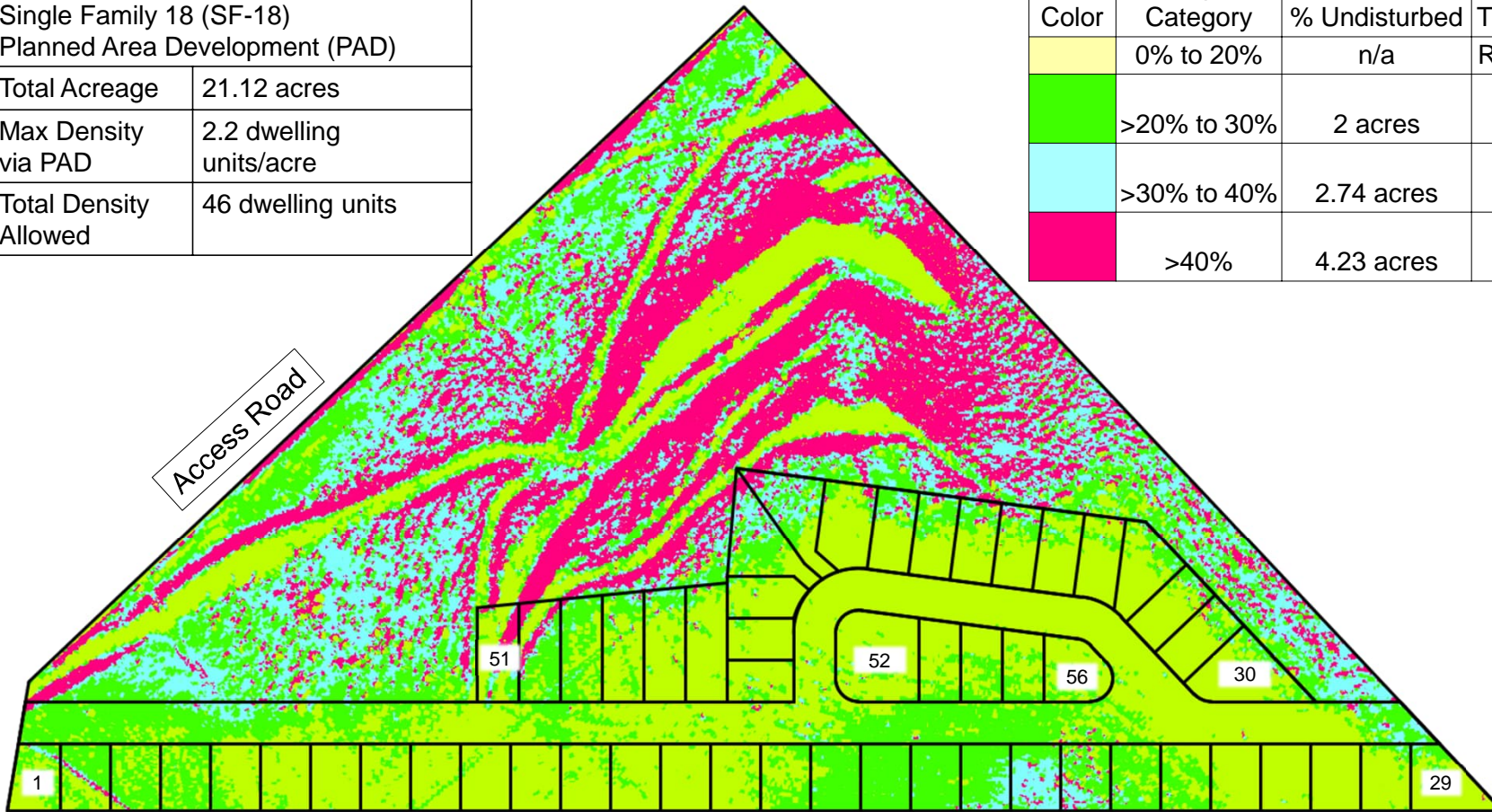
Color	Slope Category	Max Disturbable Area	Disturbed Area	% Disturbed area
Yellow	0% to 20%	Base Zoning	6.02 ac	80%
Green	>20% to 30%	30%	3.32 ac	62%
Cyan	>30% to 40%	15%	0.91 ac	25%
Magenta	>40%	10%	0.35 ac	8%



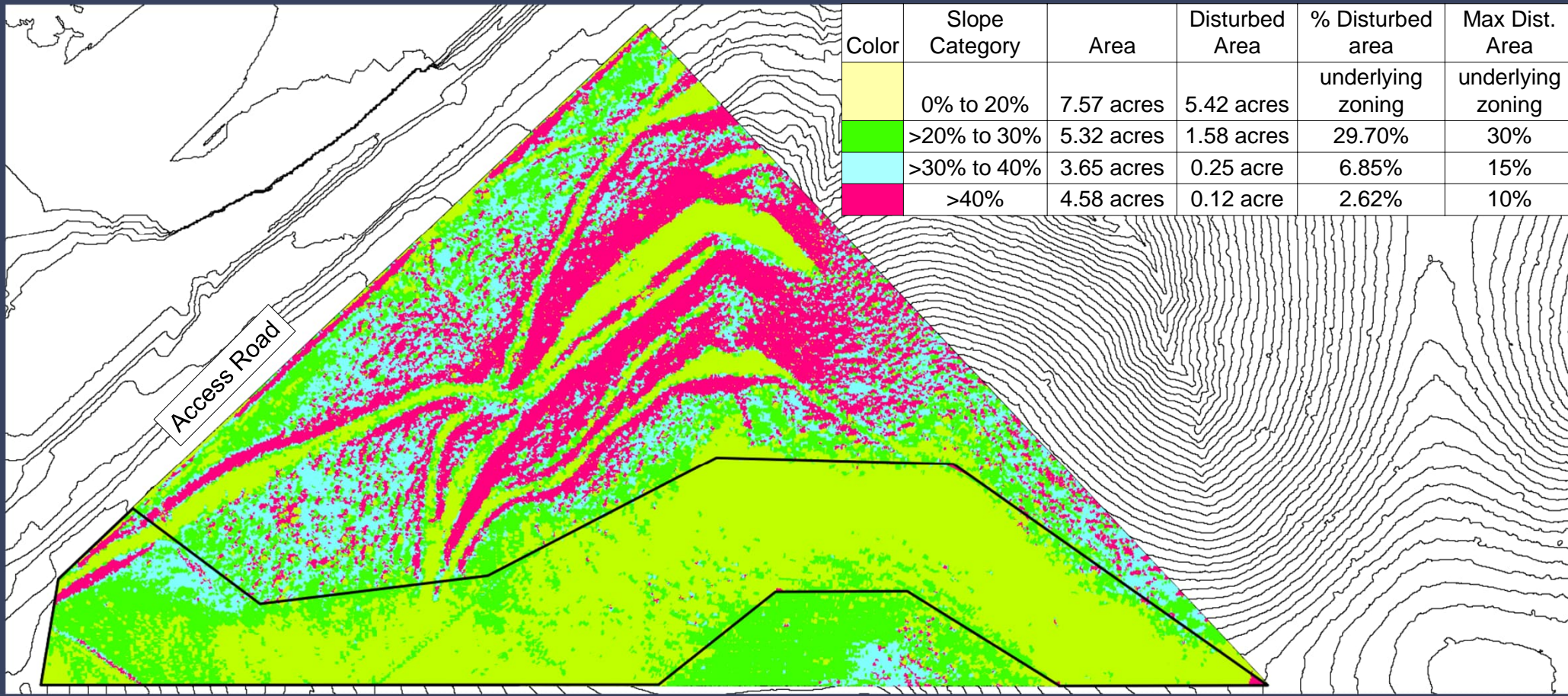
PAD Subdivision – Density Transfer Bonus

Single Family 18 (SF-18) Planned Area Development (PAD)	
Total Acreage	21.12 acres
Max Density via PAD	2.2 dwelling units/acre
Total Density Allowed	46 dwelling units

Color	Slope Category	% Undisturbed	Density Transfer Bonus	Dwelling Unit Bonus
Yellow	0% to 20%	n/a	Receiving Area	n/a
Green	>20% to 30%	2 acres	2.5 dwelling units/acre	4 dwelling units
Cyan	>30% to 40%	2.74 acres	1 dwelling units/acre	2 dwelling units
Magenta	>40%	4.23 acres	1 dwelling units/acre	4 dwelling units



Single Site Development: Commercial/Multi-Family





Questions or Comments

11





TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA: April 21 Special Study Session
DATE: April 21, 2026
DEPT: Fire Department
ITEM #: 3.B
SUBJECT: Presentation & Discussion Regarding Proposed Updates to and Future Adoption of the 2024 Wildland Urban Interface Code Amendments.

ITEM SUMMARY

This item is a presentation regarding the proposed update to the City's adopted Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC), transitioning from the 2012 edition to the 2024 edition. The presentation will provide an overview of the IWUIC's purpose and scope, and how the proposed updates aim to improve wildfire resilience through enhanced building standards, vegetation management, and risk-based approaches. This item is intended to inform and gather feedback.

BACKGROUND

The Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) establishes critical safety regulations to protect people and property from fires in areas that have an increased likelihood of wildfire. The City first used the IWUIC in 2002 and has updated it in 2008 and 2014. These regulations have shown to reduce the severity of wildfires and damage to homes.

The proposed 2024 update was developed using current data and experience shown to reduce the impact from wildfires. Important updates include new rules for managing vegetation, using construction techniques that resist fires, and using specific risk factors rather than universally applying these regulations. The revised code emphasizes that efforts to safeguard individual properties are most effective when initiated at the neighborhood level and done collaboratively.

This discussion directly supports the city's adopted strategic efforts to reduce wildfire risk, good governance by improving code clarity, and promoting a more fire-adapted community.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This item is for discussion only. No formal action will be taken.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026 IWUIC Presentation



The Wildfire Threat in Prescott

Prescott Fire Department

Why are we in this situation?

- We Live in a Fire Adapted Ecosystem
- A Century of Suppression
- A Century of Increasing Population
- Buildings Without Defensible Space
- Hot & Dry Climate Cycle

Understanding Some Differences

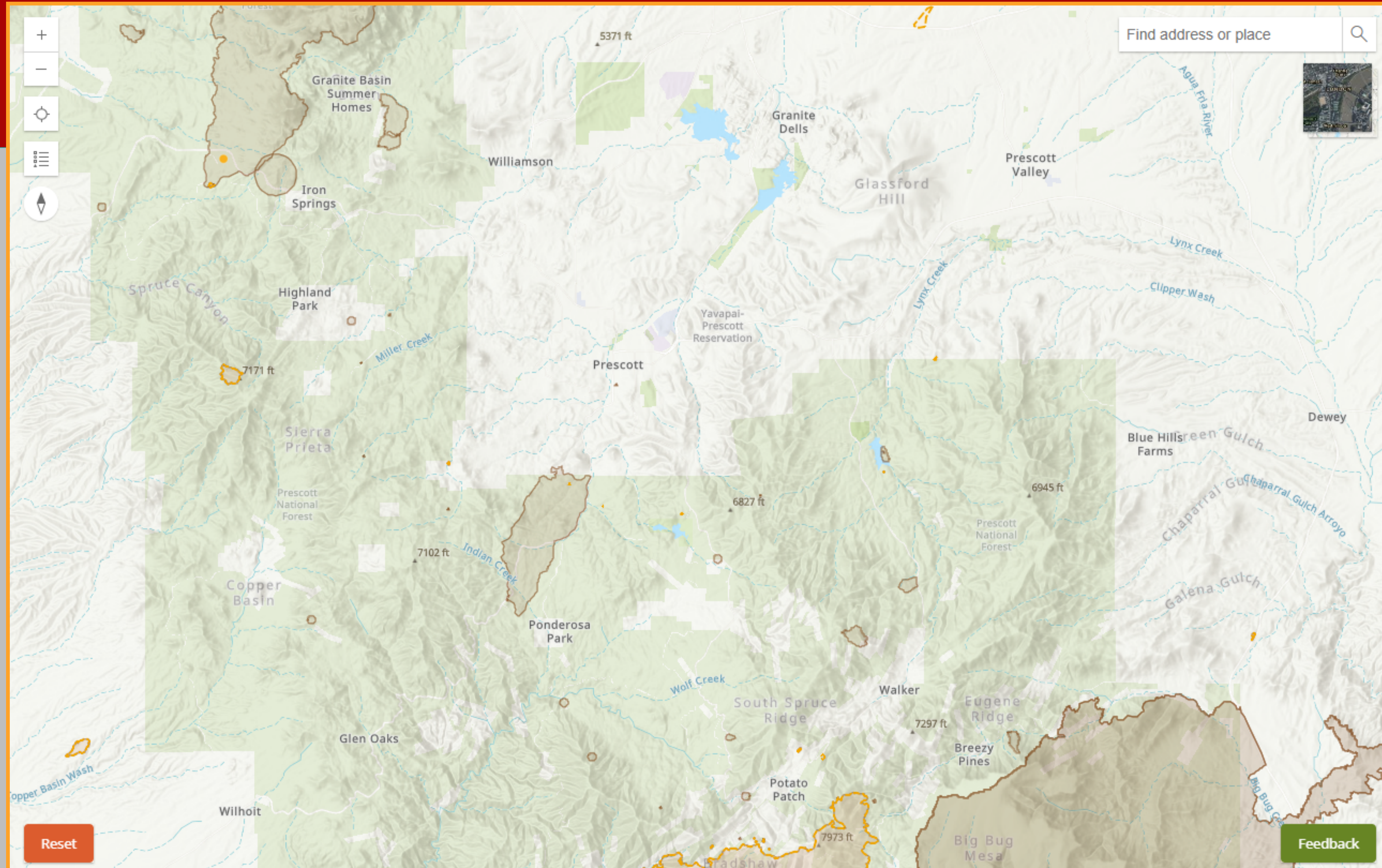
- Wildfire vs. Urban Conflagration
- Hazard Map vs. Risk Maps
- IWUIC's Role



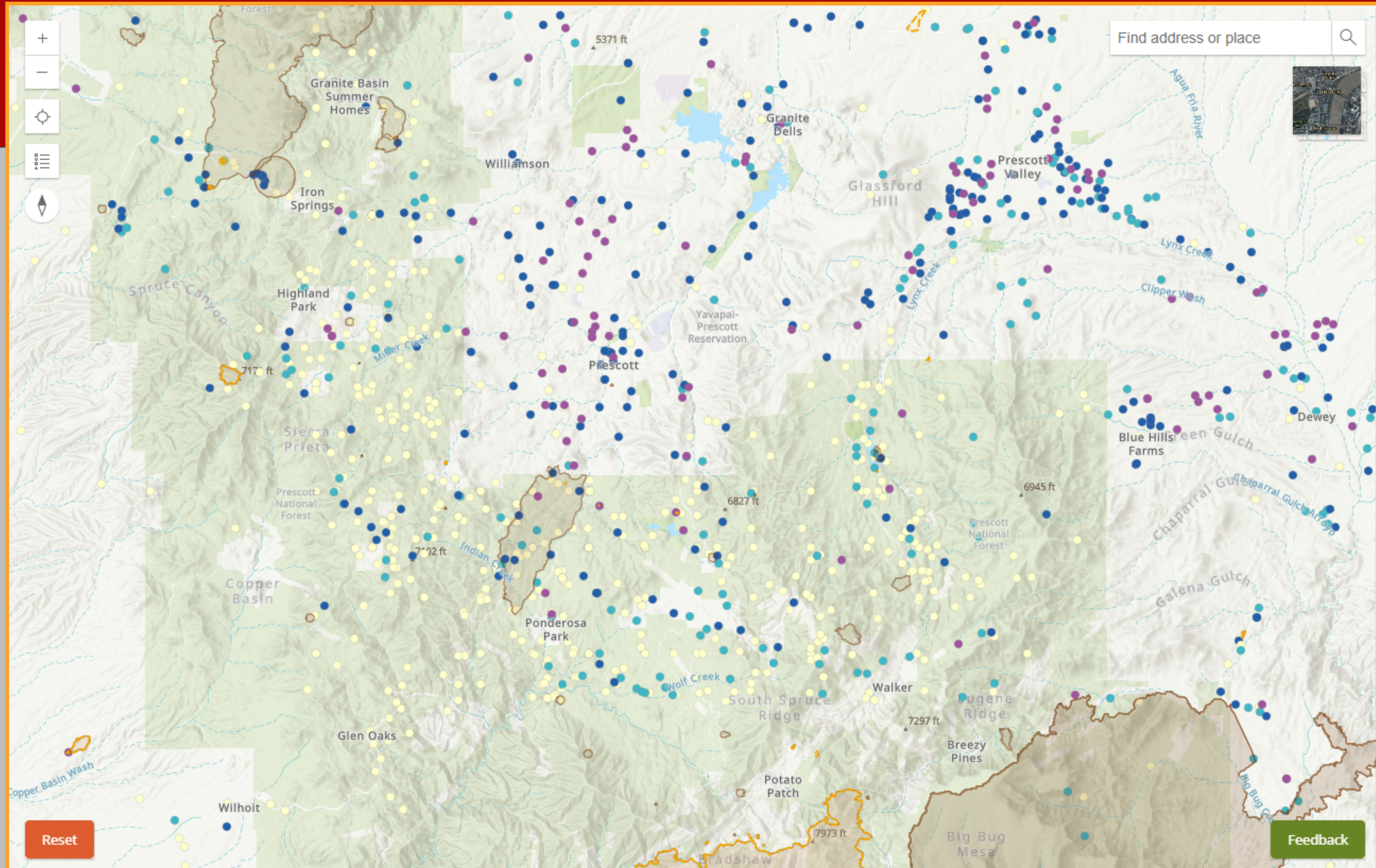
The Three Pillars of Urban Conflagrations

- **Structure Separation** – at less than 30ft spacing, damage risk increases (IBHS wants 60ft)
- **Connective Fuels (NOT just Vegetation)** – first 5 ft most important. If Zone 2 exceeds 25% vegetation, almost guaranteed to get damaged or destroyed (87% in L.A.)
- **Building Materials** – Class A roof, noncombustible siding, double-pane windows, enclosed eaves, 1/8” vent screens (Just these components improved L.A. homes’ survivability from 36% to 50%)

Significant Wildfires in the Prescott



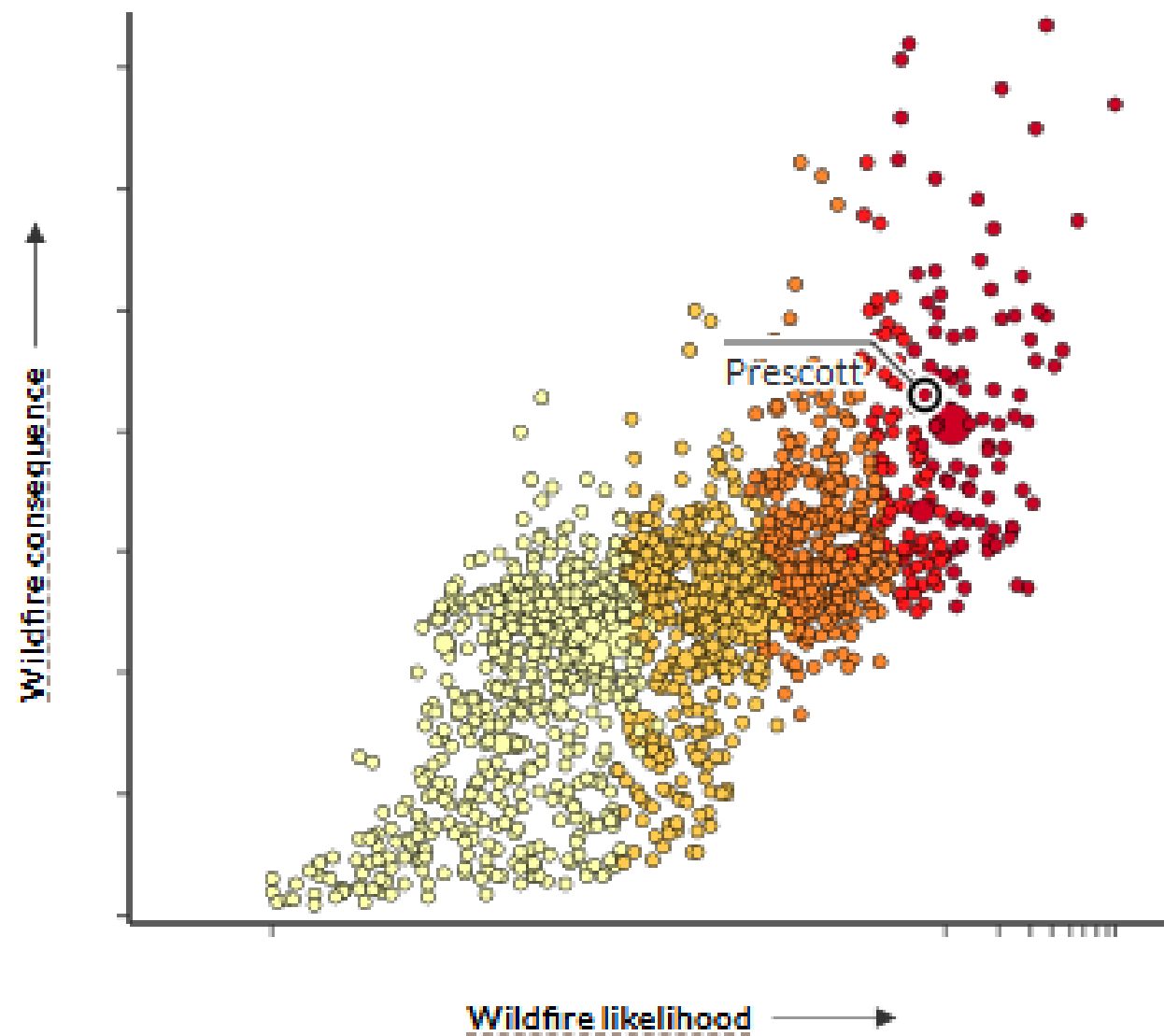
Wildfires stopped by Local Agencies



The Insurance Conundrum: Nonrenewal

Non-renewals have increased 3-fold in 200 counties across the USA

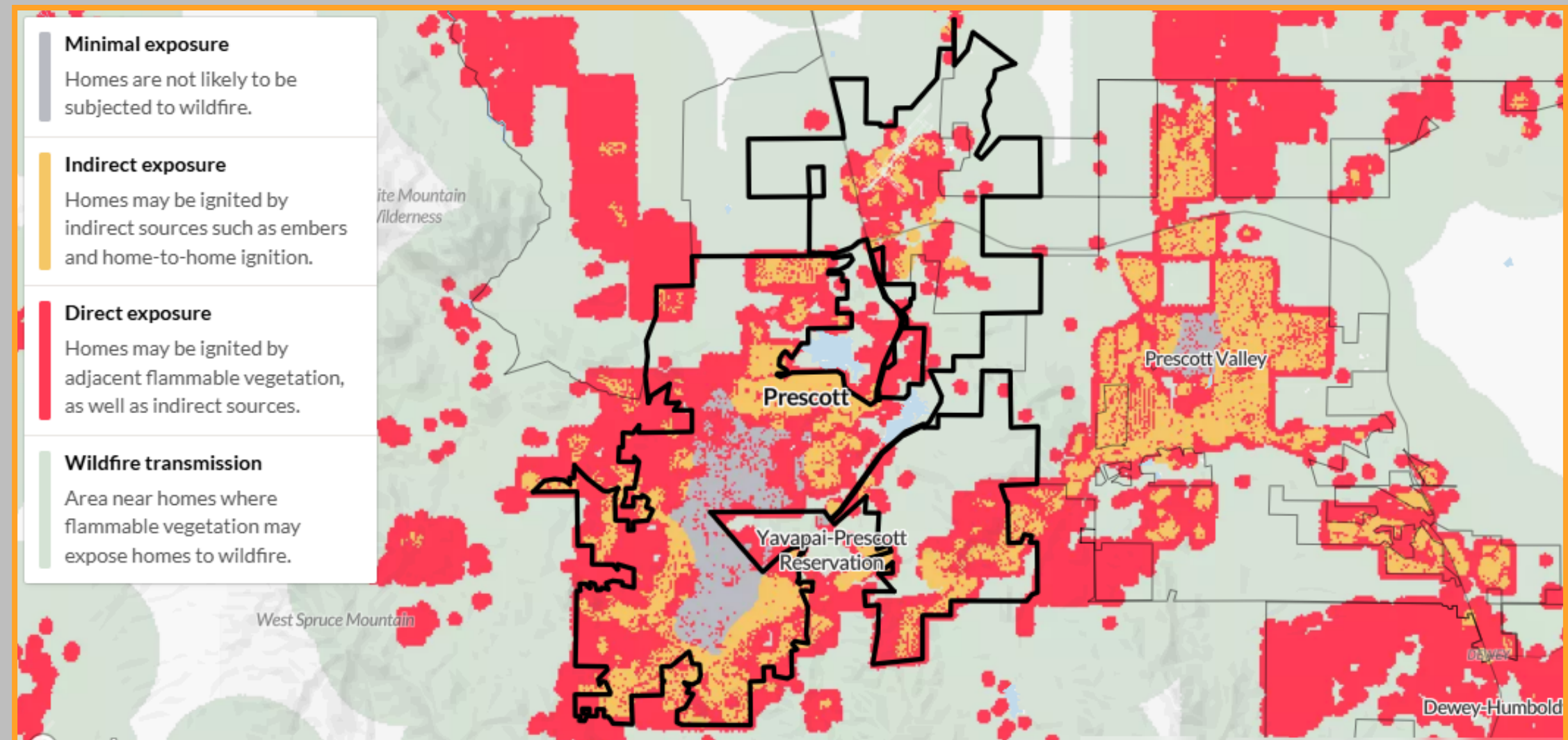
Compare risk to homes



Risk to homes in US



Population



Images: wildfirerisk.org (Department of the Interior)

IBHS – Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety

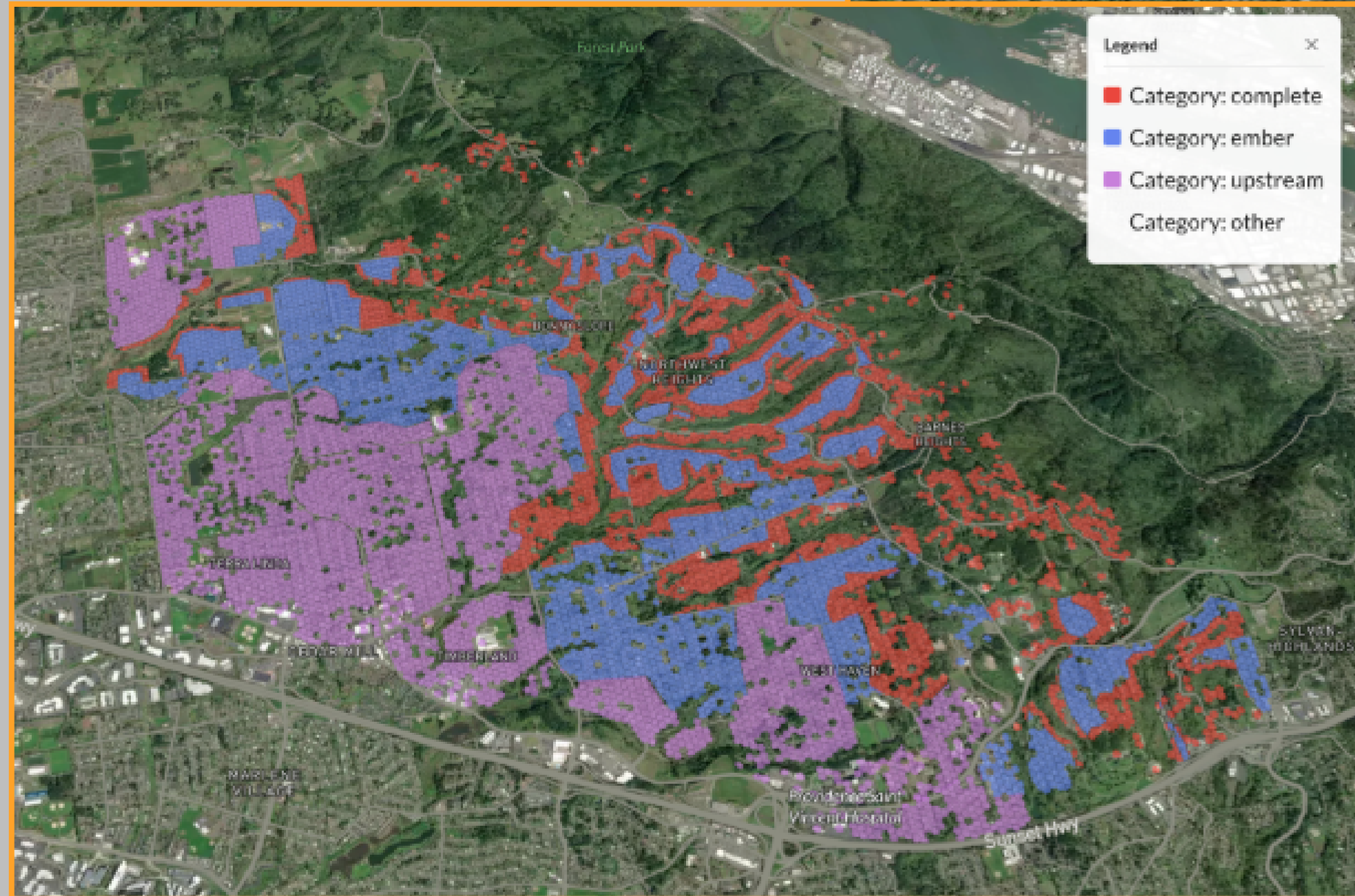


“Everyone should do everything everywhere”

- Vegetation Management – *“moats in the landscape are not the answer”*
- Parcel Hardening – WUI code use, home hardening, defensible space
- Ember Cast Issues – Class A roof & assembly, retrofit attic screens, Zone 1 w/ zero combustibles
- Scale-level neighborhood hardening – one home improved is not enough to change the course



Risk Mapping



What is a City's role in promoting wildfire resilience?

- Is resiliency the City's responsibility or the homeowners?
- How about the State and the Federal government? Do they have a role?
- Should we penalize or incentivize?



The City of Prescott:

PREVENTION

- Wildland-Urban Interface Building Codes
- Wildfire Risk Manager
- Public Outreach
- Defensible Space Inspections
- Chipping Service
- May brush on-site pick-up
- Mitigation Grants
- Roll-off Dumpster
- Yavapai Firewise (PAWUIC) relationship
- Forestry Crew

SUPPRESSION

- Prescott Fire Wildland Firefighters
- Automatic Aid Agreements
- Basin Drill
- Co-housing at Station 71

ON THE HORIZON

- CWPP – Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Grant Funding

Prescott Fire Department

ANTHONY VALDEZ
DIVISION CHIEF | FIRE MARSHAL



2024 International Wildland-Urban
Interface Code (IWUIC)
City Council Study Session





EARLY
2025

SEP - DEC
2025

JAN
2026

FEB - MAR
2026

APR - MAY
2026

Early 2025: Designers, Contractors, and Homeowners Providing Feedback



Sept. 2025: Decision to Remove from Code Adoption



Nov. 2025: Internal Fire Department Meetings and meetings with YCCA Director



Dec. 2025: Solidified Outreach Strategy for Public Input, Fire BOA, and Council Orientation



Jan. 2026: Advertising through YCCA Mailer, Social Media Posts, Radio (KYCA) Interview



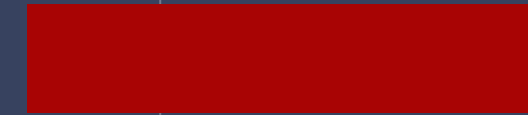
Feb. 2026: Hosted Public Engagement Meetings, Focused Meetings with Com. Dev., and Conducted Radio Interview (KQNA)



Mar. 2026: Held Meetings with YCCA Board, Contractors and Designers, Provided Council Orientation, and Fire Board of Appeals



Apr. 2026: Council Study Session, Amendments Drafted and Sent to Stakeholders



May 2026: Council Voting Session



Collaboration in Action:



Public Engagement Meetings

- Thursday, December 11 | 7:30am - 9:00am - Chino Valley Community Center - PAAR
- Monday, January 19 - KYCA | Afternoon Show
- Saturday, February 7 | 9:30am - 12:30pm - Farmers Market
- Thursday, February 12 | 5:00pm – 7:00pm held at City Hall – Council Chambers
- Wednesday, February 18 - KQNA | Prescott Talk of the Town
- Friday, February 20 | 9:00am – 11:00am held at The Center on Rosser
- Friday, March 13 | 11:00am - 1:00pm Contractor & Designer Engagement

Stakeholder Input & Internal Advisory Group Meetings

- Meetings with Executive Director at YCCA
- Meeting with YCCA Board
- CAFMA
- Building Department
- Community Development Operations Team
- Existing Amendment Discussion
- Proposed Amendment Discussion
- Fire Board of Appeals

Advertising & Community Feedback

Advertisement Methods

- Social Media
- YCCA Mailing
- Daily Courier Article - Published Feb 26th

Feedback Opportunities

- In Person
- Email
- Phone
- QR Survey
- End of Presentation Q&A

Community Feedback



“Have all of Prescott in WUI, not parts. Be consistent. Have all additions meet modern building codes, not old codes. City be more assertive in notifying property owners to Firewise their property. Good job overall. Prescott FD in leading position!”

“I felt you both did a great job! The history of why the code is needed and explaining the updating process was particularly helpful. I also enjoyed the visual graphs that helped illustrate the risks Prescott has in comparison to other areas.”

“...Prescott building code does not require what are considered design and materials needed for residential structural hardening (roof and siding materials, closed eaves, double-pane windows, etc), despite the fact that 80% of Prescott is in a WUI, with the desire to increase this to 100%. Some are concerned about the cost, but the tradeoff is potentially not being able to get home insurance. To me this should be the top priority: that all new construction is WUI compliant...”

Actionable Insight:

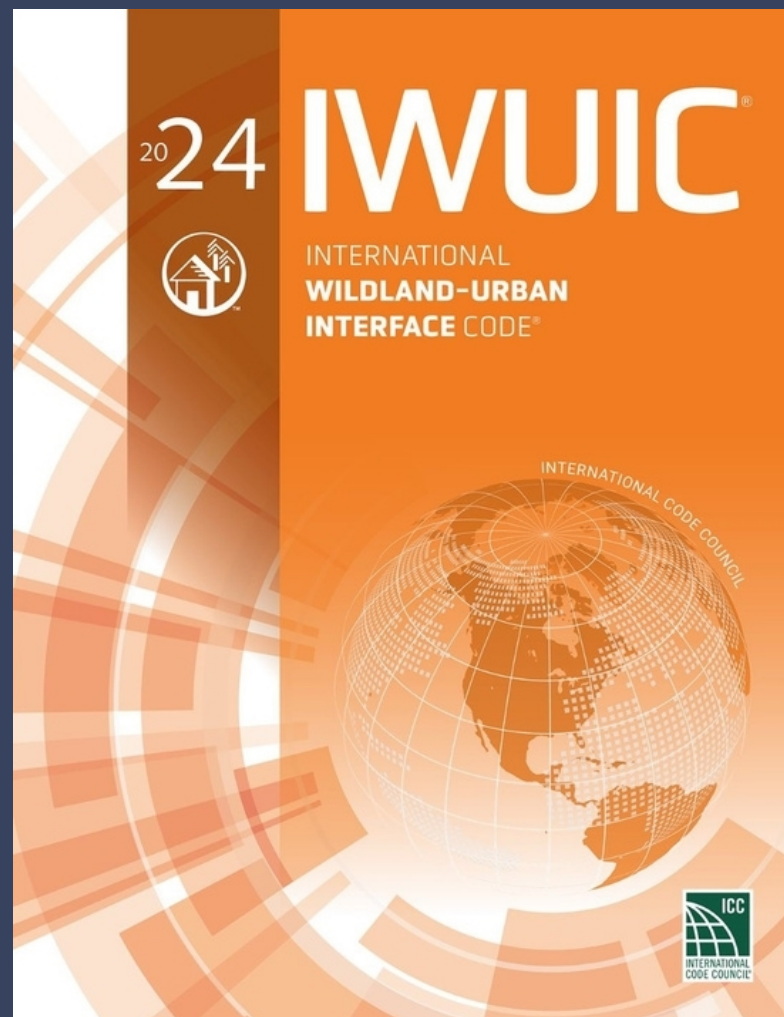
Remove the requirement of hose bibs on each exterior wall and limit to the installation of one on the front side and one on the back side.

Overview of the IWUIC



Scope:

Applies to all buildings and structures constructed in the designated Wildland-Urban Interface area.



Purpose:

- *Establishes minimum regulations for the safeguarding of life and for property protection.*
- *Intended to mitigate risk to life and structures from intrusion of fire from wildland fire exposures, fire exposures from adjacent structures, and mitigate fires originating in structures spreading to wildland fuels.*
- *Intended to be commensurately tiered to the relative level of risk present.*
- *Supplements other locally adopted codes and standards.*

Historic View



- August 28, 1990 City of Prescott created the “Prescott Area Wildland/Urban Interface Commission” to advise local government in the identification and prioritization of Wildland/Urban Interface issues.
- November 2002 the City of Prescott adopted the first version of the International Code Council’s Wildland Urban Interface Code – “Urban-Wildland Interface Code”
 - Created the first version of the Wildland Urban Interface designated area that is used to this day.
- The City has since adopted the 2006 and 2012 editions of the IWUIC.



Current Experience Enforcing the IWUIC

- Has not been consistently enforced since its inception.
- Many facets of the locally amended code create confusion with interpretation and understanding.
- Existing structures present complexity with new additions or alterations to those structures.
- Industry challenges in adapting to code requirements.
- Many design professionals and contractors are not familiar with the provisions of the IWUIC.
- Resulted in significant progress in reducing risk across our community by improving structure hardening and strengthening our vegetation management efforts.



GOALS OF ADOPTING THE 2024 IWUIC

- Develop a collaborative solution that fosters an effective strategy for ongoing efforts to minimize wildfire risks and cultivate a fire-adapted community.
- Utilize data-driven decisions for local code amendments.
- Align initiatives with industry best practices.
- Promote community resilience and assist homeowners in acquiring and maintaining their insurance policies.



Highlights of Proposed Changes



(Image credit: FEMA)

- Redesignating our wildland-urban interface to encompass the entire city limits.
- Data and science informed risk assessment to determine ignition-resistant construction and materials.
- Updating our vegetation management requirements to incorporate modern best practices.
- Creating a base standard construction requirement to, include Class A roofs, enclosed eaves, and protected vents.
- Existing structures that undergo minor modifications are exempt from the IWUIC construction regulations; however, they must still adhere to the vegetation management provisions.
- Building department will be assuming authority having jurisdiction over the construction provisions.
- Historical buildings exemption for complying with the construction provisions but vegetation management requirements may be applicable.



We Welcome Your Feedback & Direction



Together, we are committed to adopting the 2024 IWUIC code to ensure safety, consistency, and community resilience.



Image credit - South Metro Fire Rescue