



**Final Blueprint:  
Additional Context on Resilience Integration**

The Bay Area is a risk-rich region. No parcel escapes the full range of natural hazards and climate impacts. As part of the Horizon Initiative, the Bay Area's risk was explored in the Regional Growth Strategies Perspective Paper. The paper showed that while there are instances where the region has expanded into zones that are threatened by wildfire and flooding, as well as landslide and liquefaction, much of the region's current footprint has grown in the safest spaces in the region. This historic trend is continued in Plan Bay Area 2050's future Growth Geographies, which are largely located in less hazardous locations

The Plan Bay Area 2050 Final Blueprint balances the tradeoffs to achieve the affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant region envisioned. In addition to seeking to avoid high-risk locations for future growth, it relies upon a suite of strategies to limit risks for existing and future communities.

Plan Bay Area 2050 addresses wildfire with many strategies, relying on core adaptation principles: land use, land management, and structural hardening.

- **Land use strategies** ensure that future development is restricted in the most fire-prone places. Plan Bay Area 2050 includes the *Maintain Urban Growth Boundaries* strategy which restricts growth beyond current boundaries and does not allow for *Growth Geographies (PDAs, TPAs, HRAs)* to overlap with the worst fire hazard severity zones. Fire hazard zones are defined by CALFIRE's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in incorporated areas and by High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in unincorporated areas; these restrictions are augmented by county-adopted Wildland-Urban Interface zones where adopted. This restriction on growth only works because other, safer, and more easily mitigated areas of the region are proposed as areas for future growth. Together, these strategies limit further growth in the areas most at risk of wildfire.
- **Open space and working lands management** is included to reduce the intensity of future fires. The *Protect and Manage High-Value Conservation Land* strategy includes expanded new revenues beyond what already exist to support wildfire management. This strategy is unlikely to fund the level of wildfire management that may be warranted on the 2.2 million acres of existing and new lands as part of the strategy but is supportive of more expansive management programs.

- **Structural hardening** combats the risk in communities already built in the highest fire risk zones. The *Modernize Existing Residential Buildings* strategy is designed to reduce risk in all existing residential buildings (roughly 75,000 units) in the very-high fire hazard zone built before the 2009 wildland urban interface building code. The strategy would require proven structural hardening strategies like roofing and vent replacements and support homeowners with difficult defensible space work.

Together these strategies focus future growth away from the highest fire risk zones, support increased wildland management programs, and support residential building upgrades that reduce the likelihood for damage when fires occur in the wildland urban interface.

Plan Bay Area 2050 addresses sea level rise flooding with one large strategy, *Adapt to Sea Level Rise*. In addition to addressing the historic challenges of temporary riverine flooding, the region will increasingly have to address permanent inundation from sea level rise. While previous iterations of Plan Bay Area acknowledged sea level rise inundation, Plan Bay Area 2050 has integrated this issue area directly into the Plan itself with a built-in strategy to protect communities and infrastructure.

- To do so, staff identified areas with near-term sea level rise exposure and identified and estimated costs for generic adaptation options where permanent inundation occurred. The \$19 billion dollar Adapt to Sea Level Rise strategy included in the plans aims to focus adaption in areas with significant impact, while also ensuring the region has the resources needed to restore and adapt wetlands to hit the regional goal of 100,000 acres.
- All growth geographies, socially vulnerable communities, existing high population and job areas, and regionally significant transportation corridors were protected. Staff also included buyouts for residences that were not protected by the strategy, with those costs included in the \$19 billion dollar total. A longer [six-page briefer](#) describes all the details of how sea level rise was integrated into the plan.

It is not just wildfire and flooding events that will impact the Bay Area region over the next 30 years. There is a 3 in 4 chance of a major earthquake during the plan timeframe and the region and State will continue to need to address drought in addition to other climate change impacts. The *Modernize Existing Residential Building* Strategy addresses residential seismic safety for buildings with proven solutions and expands efforts to lessen the water and energy footprints of older buildings. The region should not stop with the strategies included in Plan Bay Area 2050, with work on local hazard mitigation plans and upcoming housing element updates as ways to advance resilience and reduce risks. Furthermore, there may be opportunities to partner with special districts like flood control and water agencies to advance a larger suite of strategies that meet these important issues.

The Final Blueprint includes an important set of strategies that will help reduce risks for existing and future Bay Area residents. As the Plan Bay Area 2050 process pivots toward the Implementation Plan, there is an opportunity to further strengthen and prioritize strategies that ensure resilience strategies advance over the next five years, making sure that future growth is planned for with key hazards in mind.