



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting: March 9, 2026

Subject

Update to the Health and Safety Element of the Cupertino General Plan: 2015 – 2040
Community Vision

Recommended Actions

Receive the presentation and provide input on the Public Draft of the Health and Safety Element.

Discussion

Background

The Health and Safety Element is a State-mandated element of the General Plan that addresses the threats posed by natural and human-caused hazards to Cupertino and establishes goals and policies to reduce risk to the community. The current Health and Safety Element was adopted in 2014. Since that time, State law has expanded requirements related to wildfire, flooding, climate change adaptation, and evacuation planning.

The California Government Code requires all local jurisdictions to review and, as necessary, update their Safety Element upon each revision of the Housing Element or Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), or at least once every eight years. The City adopted updates to the Housing Element and the Santa Clara County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the City-specific LHMP section, in 2024, triggering this update.

Analysis

The updated Health and Safety Element ensures compliance with current State law, integrates climate vulnerability findings, incorporates detailed evacuation capacity analysis and mapping, reflects updated wildfire hazard designations, and strengthens policies addressing both new and existing developments across all major hazard categories.

In 2025, City and PlaceWorks staff presented the broad policy areas that the Health and Safety Element Update would cover to the Planning Commission and Public Safety Commission during scheduled study sessions. Commissioners and members of the public provided comments on several policy areas, many of which were incorporated into the public draft.

Details regarding the updates to the Health and Safety Element are available in the attached memo (see Attachment A) from Placeworks. At this time, the project team seeks input from the Planning Commission, and subsequently from the City Council, prior to submission for state agency review.

Next Steps

The public draft of the Health and Safety Element will be presented to the City Council after presentation and input from the Planning Commission. Following study sessions, the draft will be submitted to the Department of Forestry and Wildfire (CAL Fire). Upon completion of state agency review, staff will bring the updated Health and Safety Element forward for public hearings to consider adoption later this year.

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Reviewed and Approved for Submission by: Luke Connolly, Assistant Director of
Community Development

Attachments:

A – Placeworks Memo re: Health and Safety Element update

Exhibit 1 – Draft Health and Safety Element and Appendices E and H of General
Plan

Exhibit 2 – 2025 Evacuation Route Capacity Assessment