



Chapter

9

PUBLIC SAFETY

A place where all citizens enjoy opportunities to thrive in a safe, healthy, and productive community.
- The Tuolumne County Vision

Introduction

The Public Safety Element is the primary vehicle for relating local safety planning to County land use decisions. The variety of communities and topography create challenges to ensure public safety. Tuolumne County has a unique role to collaborate with various special districts to promote the delivery of efficient and cost effective public services that meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. Tuolumne County promotes land use policies that empower landowners and communities to mitigate hazards within public lands that are managed by underfunded state and federal agencies.

Purpose

Reduce death, injuries, property damage, and the economic and social dislocation resulting from natural hazards, thereby improving the quality of life within the County.

Within Tuolumne County, the interface of the natural and manmade environments create potential safety hazards, including wildland fires and flooding. This Element, while focusing on fire, also addresses other public safety issues relevant to Tuolumne County, including emergency services, crime, and hazardous waste. Hazards related to seismic, geologic, and drought hazards are addressed in the Natural Hazards Element.

Overarching Vision

OAV1. Promote development in Tuolumne County that reflects the values and vision of the community and implements the latest legal, statutory, scientific, and technical changes and advances.

OAV2. Achieve, enable and preserve maximum flexibility within the constraints of state and federal law and an ever-evolving legal, cultural and environmental landscape.

OAV3. Recognize that the County has a unique role to collaborate with special districts/stakeholders within the County to promote the delivery of efficient and cost effective public services.



GOAL 9A:

Consult with all affected agencies on fire protection planning within Tuolumne County.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.A.1: Actively involve fire protection agencies within Tuolumne County in land use planning decisions.

Implementation Programs

9.A.a - Assess the effects of land development applications on fire protection capability during the review of applications. The assessment should incorporate comments from all affected fire protection agencies, not just those with jurisdiction over the project site because wildland fire originating on the site could cross jurisdictional boundaries. Appropriate measures should be formulated and implemented to reduce the safety concerns and fire hazards which could result from approval of the application. Recommendations should specify the source of funding for implementation and maintenance of identified fire protection measures.

9.A.b - Actively involve all fire agencies, including local fire agencies, within the County when considering revisions to County fire protection regulations which may affect the districts.

Policy 9.A.2: Encourage all fire protection agencies (Federal, State, and local) within the County to maintain communication with each other and with the Office of Emergency Services and the Community Resources Agency to promote an integrated approach to fire protection planning.

Implementation Program

9.A.c - Work cooperatively with CAL FIRE and local fire agencies to manage wildland fire hazards.

Policy 9.A.3: Integrate County policies and land use designations with the strategies of the fire protection agencies within the County to provide adequate service to existing, as well as, future development.

Policy 9.A.4: Actively support efforts to maintain and improve Federal and State fire service capabilities.

Implementation Program

9.A.d - Support efforts of CAL FIRE, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, other government land management agencies, the Southwest Interface Team (SWIFT), the Highway 108 Fire Safe Council, the Yosemite Foothills Fire Safe Council and other regional fire safe entities, to secure adequate funding for their fire protection and fuel reduction programs, and support their efforts to reduce the wildland fire potential on lands under their jurisdiction within Tuolumne County.

Policy 9.A.5: Consult with CAL FIRE, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and local fire agencies on fire prevention programs in order to maximize the distribution of information to the public.

Implementation Program

9.A.e - Work with the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE, local fire agencies, the Southwest Interface Team (SWIFT), the Highway 108 Fire Safe Council, the Yosemite Foothills Fire Safe Council, and community fire prevention auxiliary groups within the County to distribute information regarding



the wildland fire hazard present within the County, recommended fire prevention practices, and required fire protection measures.

Policy 9.A.6: Support the Strategic Fire and Resource Protection Planning program within Tuolumne County.

GOAL 9B:

Create plans to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of natural or manmade disasters or other emergencies.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.B.1: Maintain an effective Tuolumne County Emergency Operation Plan to direct the response for a natural disaster or other emergency.

Implementation Programs

9.B.a - Periodically review and update Chapter 2.40 (Emergency Services) of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code to evaluate consistency with State and Federal laws and regulations, to assess the current emergency response organization, and to ensure an accurate composition of the Tuolumne County Emergency Services Operational Area Committee.

9.B.b - Ensure the Emergency Operations Plan for Tuolumne County is consistent with the provisions of Articles 1-8 of Division 2 of Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations regarding the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The Emergency Operations Plan for Tuolumne County should be reviewed every two years and updated as necessary, in order to incorporate changes in governmental regulations and operational practices.

Policy 9.B.2: Continue to encourage interagency interaction and cooperation in responding to and in recovering from an emergency situation.

Implementation Programs

9.B.c - Organize response between the Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services, the Tuolumne County Fire Department, CALFIRE, U.S. Forest Service, the County Sheriff, and other public and private agencies to respond to a natural disaster efficiently.

9.B.d: Integrate local fire agencies into operational activities and recovery planning efforts, coordinated by Tuolumne County Fire Department/CALLFIRE, in response to emergency situations.

Policy 9.B.3: Train County personnel in their responsibilities in preparation for a natural or man-made disaster or other emergency pursuant to the SEMS, NIMS and the Tuolumne County EOP.

Implementation Programs

9.B.e - Conduct training exercises on a regular and ongoing basis to establish and maintain a required level of emergency response preparedness. Training should involve all agencies anticipated to respond in emergency situations.

9.B.f - Actively pursue funding for continued emergency response training, planning and specialized emergency equipment.



Policy 9.B.4: Assist property owners in the recovery process so they can rebuild structures damaged in a natural or man-made disaster or other emergency.

Implementation Program

9.B.g - Apply the "Recovery and Reconstruction Ordinance", contained in Chapters 15.30, 15.32 and 15.34 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code for implementation following natural disasters. The ordinance streamlines processing of permits required for reconstruction of destroyed or damaged structures, while requiring attention to safety improvements necessary to prevent, or reduce the likelihood of, a reoccurrence of such damage.

Policy 9.B.5: Ensure that current emergency services are adequate to protect public health and safety in the event of natural and manmade hazards, including terrorist incidents and public health pandemics.

Implementation Programs

9.B.h - Implement the Tuolumne County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to protect life, safety, and property by reducing the potential for future damages and economic losses that result from natural and manmade hazards.

9.B.i - Improve interdepartmental communications in order to coordinate fire emergency response between the Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services, the Tuolumne County Fire Department, local fire agencies, CAL FIRE, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the County Sheriff and other agencies.

9.B.j - Coordinate maintenance of and improvements to emergency communications systems in the County so that they are capable of supporting use by emergency services during large fire emergencies and incidents in the higher elevations of the County. Coordination should include the Stanislaus National Forest, Yosemite National Park and fire protection agencies responsible for areas located east of Twain Harte.

9.B.k - Work with the Office of Homeland Security for terrorist preparedness and security training and to upgrade the County’s emergency communication facilities.

9.B.l - Work with State and Federal agencies to obtain funding to train first responders to prepare for public health pandemics and other biological emergencies.

GOAL 9C: **Protect and enhance the quality of life by continuing to provide the highest quality and cost-effective emergency services to the citizens of, and visitors to, Tuolumne County.**

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.C.1: Provide participating first responder medical aid units with the equipment necessary to efficiently and safely provide emergency first aid, along with the training programs necessary for the safe and effective use of the equipment.

Policy 9.C.2: Provide ambulance service within the County which maintains a professional level of service to the public in a cost-efficient manner.



Policy 9.C.3: Periodically review emergency medical services to maintain an acceptable level of service as the County population changes.

Policy 9.C.4: Assist in recovering costs associated with Search and Rescue missions and ambulance services, wherever or whenever possible.

GOAL 9D: Protect and enhance the quality of life in Tuolumne County by providing a criminal justice system that offers peace of mind to the citizens of Tuolumne County that their lives and personal property will be protected from crime.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.D.1: Provide a stable, adequate level of funding for the criminal justice system in Tuolumne County.

Implementation Program

9.D.a - Review the County Services Impact Mitigation Fee on a regular basis to determine if the criminal justice component remains adequate. The heads of the County's criminal justice system should be consulted as to an adequate level of funding.

Policy 9.D.2: Provide law enforcement, such as patrol, investigation, supervision, administration, clerical support, dispatch, coroner, crime laboratory, prosecution, probation, and jail services within the unincorporated area of Tuolumne County and assure that the established level of service is maintained and maintain this level.

Implementation Programs

9.D.b - Establish a definitive measure of what constitutes an adequate level of service for the criminal justice system in Tuolumne County. This comprehensive definition should identify all necessary services provided by the County's criminal justice system law enforcement, such as patrol, investigation, supervision, administration, clerical, support, dispatch, coroner, crime laboratory, prosecution, probation and jail services. In the absence of this determination, the County should continue to maintain the existing level of service and upgrade it to meet the needs of the County's increasing population.

9.D.c - Maintain options for a long-range, cost-effective correctional program for juvenile offenders, which includes apprehension, detention and education.

9.D.d - Support and expand crime prevention programs. Investigate providing an active schools resources officer to work on school campuses.

Policy 9.D.3: Assure that the established level of service in the criminal justice system is maintained prior to approving new development.

Implementation Programs

9.D.e - Consider including provisions for reimbursement of criminal justice services in the terms of future annexation agreements between the City of Sonora and the County, to provide reimbursement to the County by the City for the expansion of services which it requires.

9.D.f - Consider implementing law enforcement options as new urban areas develop and expand in order to increase patrol time and reduce response time to citizen requests for law enforcement services.



Policy 9.D.4: Require new development to be designed so as to discourage criminal activity.

Implementation Programs

9.D.g - Encourage the use of private patrols and security personnel in large residential and commercial developments to assist the Sheriff's Office in crime prevention.

9.D.h - Actively involve the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office in the review of land development applications and incorporate law enforcement recommendations as conditions of land use entitlements.

Policy 9.D.5: Continue to support a cost-effective, cooperative approach to criminal justice within the Stanislaus National Forest.

Policy 9.D.6: Continue to investigate illegal and unauthorized dumping to protect the health, safety and welfare of the County's residents and the environment. Illegal and unauthorized dumping is deemed to be a public nuisance subject to the administrative/abatement procedures set forth in Chapter 7.30 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code.

GOAL 9E:

Provide structural fire protection to persons and property within Tuolumne County consistent with the needs dictated by the level of development and in accordance with current Federal, State, and local fire protection agency regulations and policies.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.E.1: Evaluate the circulation system to identify areas causing delay of emergency vehicle response and evacuation due to traffic congestion.

Implementation Programs

9.E.a - Encourage cooperation between the Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC), the Tuolumne County Fire Department (TCFD) and the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Department regarding transportation issues prior to each revision of the Regional Transportation Plan by the TCTC. Fire Department and Sheriff's Department comments regarding emergency response corridors, evacuation routes and needed improvements, such as helispots, should be considered when revising the list of Circulation Improvement Projects.

9.E.b - Require that new development be provided with access roads that allow for safe and efficient response by emergency apparatus and the safe evacuation of residents in the event of structural or wildland fire.

9.E.c -Consider roadways designated as arterials in the Transportation Element as primary evacuation routes on a County-wide basis. Such routes provide the highest vehicle capacity and serve as the primary means of egress from the County.

The routes designated as collector routes shall be considered secondary evacuation routes on a Countywide basis. These routes provide egress from local neighborhoods and communities.



Require new development to be served by roads which provide safe emergency vehicle response and safe evacuation routes to the nearest arterial or collector route in the event of wildland fire emergency pursuant to Chapter 11.12 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code.

9.E.d - Consult with the Tuolumne County Fire Department when reviewing plans for new County-maintained roads and improvements to existing County-maintained roads in order to minimize emergency equipment response times.

Policy 9.E.2: Maintain adopted levels of fire protection service.

Implementation Program

9.E.e - Strive to improve the County’s Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings through improved infrastructure of hydrants and water availability, and by reducing response time with a greater number of strategically placed and fully staffed fire stations. ISO ratings should not exceed 9 for areas without hydrants and should not exceed 6 for areas with hydrants within the jurisdiction of the Tuolumne County Fire Department as outlined in fire protection service reports. Provide assistance to fire protection agencies in their efforts to improve ISO ratings wherever possible.

Policy 9.E.3: Require new development to be consistent with State and County regulations and policies regarding fire protection.

Implementation Programs

9.E.f - Forward applications for new development to the Tuolumne County Fire Department/CAL FIRE for evaluation and identification of necessary fire protection measures for such development based upon contemporary fire prevention measures and protection standards.

9.E.g - Revise Title 15 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code as necessary to require new structures to incorporate all fire protection measures required by the current editions of the California Building Code and the California Fire Code, including Automatic Engineered Fire Sprinkler Systems and Automatic Electronic Fire Alarm Systems, referenced in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13 and 72, where necessary.

9.E.h - Review and, if appropriate, amend height regulations for structures, contained in Section 15.20.010(F) of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, so that they consistently reflect the ability of the fire protection agencies within the County to provide service.

9.E.i - Support the efforts of fire protection agencies in the County. Solicit comments from the agencies responsible for providing life, property, and wildland fire protection on the impact proposed development would have on the existing fire protection services, and recommendations for measures to maintain the established level of service.

GOAL 9F: **Establish a system for the orderly expansion of fire protection services within Tuolumne County consistent with the needs dictated by County growth and development.**

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.F.1: Support and implement the *Tuolumne County Fire Department Service Level Stabilization Plan*.



Implementation Program

9.F.a - Consult with the Tuolumne County Fire Department to establish funding mechanisms, including impact fees, to offset fire protection costs for new development in areas of high wildfire risk.

Policy 9.F.2: Construct new fire protection facilities as needed within the jurisdiction of the Tuolumne County Fire Department/CAL FIRE in order to maintain the desired Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings.

Implementation Programs

9.F.b - Identify appropriate areas for construction of new fire protection facilities within the service area of the Tuolumne County Fire Department/CAL FIRE necessary to provide structural fire protection to the residents of Tuolumne County. Consult with all fire agencies in the County on fire protection facilities planning.

9.F.c - Construct new fire protection facilities and equip and staff new and existing facilities in areas of the County under the jurisdiction of the Tuolumne County Fire Department where deemed necessary.

Policy 9.F.3: Support the recruitment and training efforts of the Tuolumne County Fire Department and local fire agencies within the County.

Implementation Programs

9.F.d - Support the Tuolumne County Fire Department and local fire agencies within the County in their efforts to recruit capable volunteers and train them in structural firefighting consistent with State standards.

9.F.e - Support the Columbia College fire science programs by continuing to house a Tuolumne County Fire Department engine at the Columbia College fire station.

9.F.f - Support the Tuolumne County Fire Department Explorer Program offered at County High Schools, the Sonora High School Wildland Fire and Emergency First Responder Programs and similar programs offered at other High Schools in the County.

GOAL 9G:

Establish and maintain a codified fire protection risk management strategy which requires new development within Tuolumne County to incorporate or supply fire protection infrastructure and improvements necessary so that such development does not exceed the capabilities of the County's fire protection resources.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.G.1: Maintain County fire protection regulations that are consistent with Section 4290 or the equivalent of the California Public Resources Code and other applicable fire protection regulations.

Implementation Programs

9.G.a - Utilize the following documents as reference in formulating County standards and ordinances for fire protection measures:



- Tuolumne County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
- California Public Resources Code, Section 4290
- Tuolumne County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- CAL FIRE Strategic Fire Plan for the Tuolumne/Calaveras Unit
- California Fire Code Current Edition
- California Building Code Current Edition
- "Insurance Services Office Publication "Guide for the Determination of Fire Flow"
- Insurance Services Office Standards
- Strategic Fire and Resource Protection Planning
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) fire and building safety standards adopted by the County
- CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map
- Highway 108 Strategic Plan

9.G.b - Consult with the Tuolumne County Fire Department (TCFD) and CAL FIRE in revising Titles 11, 15, and 16 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code in order to determine if the proposed revisions are consistent with Section 4290 of the California Public Resources Code and other applicable fire protection regulations. Such revisions shall be consistent with fire protection regulations in effect at the time of consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

Policy 9.G.2: Require new residential development to have adequate fire protection, which may include design and maintenance features that contribute to the protection of the County from the losses associated with wildland fire. Periodically update the County's fire protection standards to reflect new information and technology concerning fire prevention in wildland areas.

Implementation Program

9.G.c - Revise the County's development standards as necessary to reflect contemporary fire prevention and protection practices and measures and to determine that needed fire protection infrastructure, including road networks and water systems, are installed and maintained.

Policy 9.G.3: Determine the impact proposed development will have on the provision of fire protection services and maintain the established level of service as outlined in the current *Tuolumne County Fire Department Service Level Stabilization Plan*.

Implementation Program

9.G.d - Require that a public water system, having adequate fire flow, is available prior to development of land for which a zone change to an urban zoning district is approved. Public water need not be available on-site at the time of zoning, however, financial and other assurances must be provided to the County which will allow such improvements to be installed in a timely manner.

Policy 9.G.4: Require that residential development provide for defensible space around structures.

Implementation Programs

9.G.e - Revise and enforce County fire protection regulations that require residential development to provide defensible space for structural fire protection consistent with Section 4290 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15.20.060 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code.



9.G.f - Investigate incentive programs between insurance providers, fire protection agencies, and property owners, whereby financial incentives can be obtained by property owners who implement fire prevention and protection measures through homeowner's insurance reductions or other programs. Such research can be accomplished through contact with legislative offices and the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and review of grant availability lists and fire service technical journals.

9.G.g - Encourage insurance companies to determine fire insurance rates based upon evaluation of individual parcels rather than using the CAL FIRE Forest and Resource Assessment Program "Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map", which was not developed for this use.

Policy 9.G.5: Require that street and structural identification are provided to assist in emergency response.

Implementation Program

9.G.h - Revise and enforce County fire protection regulations to require new development to provide street signing and structural identification necessary to allow prompt response during emergency situations pursuant to Sections 15.20.045 and 12.12.080 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Strive to maintain street signs on County-maintained roads. Assist residents and communities to replace street signs where necessary on roads that are not County-maintained.

GOAL 9H: Establish reliable sources of funding for fire protection services in Tuolumne County in order to maintain the services at an acceptable level.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.H.1: Establish or redirect existing revenue sources to provide a stable, adequate level of funding for the Tuolumne County Fire Department.

Implementation Programs

9.H.a - Review the County Services Impact Mitigation Fees on a regular basis to evaluate the adequacy of the fire protection component.

9.H.b - Investigate and pursue all available and appropriate options for funding of fire protection facilities, equipment and services.

Policy 9.H.2: Enforce the provisions found in Title 15 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code and the California Fire Code for built-in fire suppression equipment in all new development in order to improve fire safety and offset the need for increased fire department staffing and equipment.



GOAL 9I:

Minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, illness, property damage and alteration of established land use patterns resulting from the use, transport, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 9.I.1: Ensure that the use, storage, transport, treatment and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes within Tuolumne County complies with Federal, State, and local regulations and safety standards.

Implementation Programs

9.I.a - Implement the *Tuolumne County Comprehensive Hazardous Waste Management Plan* to protect life, safety, and property by reducing the potential for future damages and economic losses that result from hazardous materials and hazardous waste.

9.I.b - Require that industrial plants, mining operations and other facilities which handle or use hazardous materials or hazardous waste be constructed and operated in compliance with current standards for safety and environmental protection.

9.I.c - Review development applications for projects that would manufacture, process, or dispose of hazardous materials or hazardous waste for compliance with the Tuolumne County Comprehensive Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

9.I.d - Provide for the review of applications for discretionary entitlements for projects which would utilize hazardous materials or generate hazardous wastes by the Tuolumne County Environmental Health Division and the Tuolumne County Fire Department for compliance with the latest adopted regulations for safety and environmental protection.

Policy 9.I.2: Protect schools from the risks associated with facilities involved in the handling of hazardous materials or disposal of hazardous waste.

Policy 9.I.3: Segregate household hazardous waste generated within Tuolumne County from the municipal waste stream for proper disposal.

Implementation Programs

9.J.e - Continue to operate recyclable household hazardous waste collection facilities at County transfer stations to facilitate removal of these substances from the municipal waste stream. Continue to operate a household hazardous waste collection facility and collection events organized by the Solid Waste Division to remove these items from the waste stream.

9.J.f - Continue to implement the programs adopted in the *Tuolumne County Comprehensive Hazardous Waste Management Plan* designed to reduce the amount of household hazardous waste (HHW) generated within Tuolumne County, including: periodic drop-off days for all HHW, on-going drop-off program for recyclable HHW, public education regarding HHW reduction, and monitoring the success of these selected programs.

Policy 9.I.4: Seek funding for various waste collection activities throughout Tuolumne County.



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