

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-03**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA, DESIGNATING LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREA FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES IN THE CITY OF COSTA MESA AS IDENTIFIED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51178.**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY FINDS AND DECLARES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 51178 requires that the State Fire Marshal identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 51179 (a) requires that a local agency shall designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Section 51178; and

WHEREAS, The Local Fire Hazard Severity Zone map was transmitted to the City of Costa Mesa on March 24, 2025, and is now located electronically on the City's website at: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-and-divisions/fire-hazard-severity-zone-map>; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 51179 (b) clarifies that:

(1) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as very high fire hazard severity zones following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.

(2) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones by the State Fire Marshal, as moderate and high fire hazard severity zones, respectively.

(3) A local agency shall not decrease the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency, and, in exercising its discretion pursuant to paragraph (2), may only increase the level of fire hazard severity zone as identified by the State Fire Marshal for any area within the jurisdiction of the local agency; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) and State CEQA guidelines (Sections 15000 et seq.) the City Council has determined that the ordinance is not a "project" and further, that it is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (because it can be seen with certainty that the adoption of this Ordinance will not

have an effect on the environment) such that no environmental review under CEQA is required; and

WHEREAS, all legal prerequisites prior to the adoption of this Ordinance have occurred.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

**Section 1.** The Fire Hazard Severity Zones as recommended by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Government Code Section 51178 are hereby designated as depicted on the Costa Mesa Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map, attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and incorporated herein by this reference.

**Section 2.** Environmental Compliance. Pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) and CEQA Guidelines (Sections 15000 et seq.) this Ordinance is not a “project” and further, that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the Ordinance may have a significant effect on the environment, either directly or indirectly, and that therefore no environmental review is required, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

**Section 3.** Inconsistencies. Any provision of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code or appendices thereto inconsistent with the provisions of the Ordinance, to the extent of such inconsistencies and no further, are repealed or modified to that extent necessary to affect the provisions of this Ordinance.

**Section 4.** Severability. If any chapter, article, section, subsection, subdivision, sentence, clause, phrase, word, or portion of this Ordinance, or the application thereof to any person, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this Ordinance or its application to other persons. The City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and each chapter, article, section, subsection, subdivision, sentence, clause, phrase, word, or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more subsections, subdivisions, sentences, clauses, phrases, or portions of the application thereof to any person, be declared invalid or unconstitutional. No portion of this Ordinance shall supersede any local, State, or Federal law, regulation, or codes dealing with life safety factors.

**Section 4.** Codification. This Ordinance shall not be codified in the Costa Mesa Municipal Code unless and until the City Council so ordains.

**Section 5.** Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days from its adoption.

**Section 6.** Certification. The City Clerk shall certify the passage and adoption of this Ordinance and shall cause the same to be posted or published in the manner as required by law.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Stephens, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Green, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly Hall Barlow, City Attorney

STATE OF CALIFORNIA     )  
COUNTY OF ORANGE     )     ss  
CITY OF COSTA MESA     )

I, BRENDA GREEN, City Clerk of the City of Costa Mesa, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and foregoing Ordinance No. 2025-03 duly adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2025, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:     COUNCIL MEMBERS:

NOES:     COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereby set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Costa Mesa this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
BRENDA GREEN, CITY CLERK

(SEAL)