

From: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
To: [Jesseka Rodriguez](#)
Subject: FW: Please Schedule Town Hall Meetings for Public Review of Santa Cruz County's Draft Evacuation Plan Appendix
Date: Friday, January 17, 2025 5:14:12 PM

From: Becky Steinbruner [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2025 11:06 PM
To: David Reid <David.Reid@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Cc: Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Elissa Benson <Elissa.Benson@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Amanda Gullings <Amanda.Gullings@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Deputy Michael Flores - CDFA <michael.flores@cdfa.ca.gov>; Francesconi <mike.francesconi@cdfa.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Please Schedule Town Hall Meetings for Public Review of Santa Cruz County's Draft Evacuation Plan Appendix

******CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Hi, David,
Thank you for your thoughtful response. I would appreciate any updates on the Draft Evacuation Planning process, and also a link to the County's *Operational Area (OA) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Base Plan*.

What is the status of the grant-funded address signs for County residents? With the devastating fires in Los Angeles, residents here are very aware and interested in improving response to our rural areas with visible address signage.

I am glad OR3 is working with the 14th DAA to review the MOU for disaster planning and shelter at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. I hope that you have already contacted CDFA Deputy Michael Flores and Mr. Michael Francesconi regarding what the County needs for successful and reliable emergency use of the Fairgrounds.

I have copied them on this message and hope that you will contact them if you have not already done so.

Finally, because the Watsonville Airport is truly a lifeline for the entire County in disasters, I feel it should be financially supported by the entire County. Could we meet to discuss this?

Thank you very much for your work.

Sincerely,
Becky

On Friday, December 27, 2024 at 03:48:08 PM PST, David Reid <david.reid@santacruzcountyca.gov> wrote:

Dear Becky,

Thank you for reaching out and for your dedication to keeping our community safe. I truly appreciate the time and effort you've put into reviewing the Draft Evacuation Planning Appendix. Your input is invaluable.

To address your initial concern, the link to the document was closed following the public review period. However, I want to emphasize that this is just the beginning of an ongoing process. The plan you've reviewed is not a finalized product but a *living framework*—as are all our Emergency Operations Plan annexes and appendices. Regular reviews, updates, and the ability to adapt based on lessons learned as quickly as possible is the goal with our functional and hazard specific annexes.

As you know Santa Cruz County faces a wide range of increasing threats—nearly all of which are no- or little-notice—from wildfires to tsunamis and flooding, as well as human-caused threats. The complexity of our geography and the diverse risks make community-driven input, planning and action essential. This document was developed with the understanding that no single plan can cover every detail or scenario. Therefore, this appendix serves as a **planning tool**—a foundation to guide collaboration, training, and readiness efforts.

It was also designed to be as concise as possible while outlining key considerations that give responders, emergency managers, and communities food for thought and steps to take to build a more resilient Santa Cruz. Plans that are hundreds of pages long, cross-referenced to other hundred+ page plans, are not functional or practical anymore. While we cannot mitigate every risk or foresee every scenario—especially in this beautiful place we choose to live—by preparing together, we can strengthen our collective ability to respond.

Regarding your observations about Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, ARES, and the Watsonville Airport:

- **Fairgrounds:** The Fairgrounds is a frequently referenced site for evacuations, but there is no guarantee it is safe or available in all emergencies. We are working with them and other locations to secure updated Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). The need for additional work for this site and others, was underscored during the back-to-back atmospheric river events in winter 2023— the needs of the site were vastly different in comparison to summer/fall wildfires – representing

agreement refinement opportunities.

- **ARES Reference:** Based on feedback from you and others, ARES is listed in the planning appendix.
- **Watsonville Airport:** While the airport plays a role in overall emergency response, it falls under city jurisdiction. Cities also have, or are working towards, their own evacuation plans. Further, since it is a general aviation airport it would not be suitable for mass evacuations, or supply operations – but it may be able to play a supporting role if it is not impacted. We will look to see where we can mention it. The airport is mentioned as well as part of the broader emergency response framework, and it is included in the SCC Operational Area (OA) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Base Plan. *Note: If you do not have a copy, please let us know and I will provide you a link.*

I also want to highlight **CruzAware** as our primary emergency alert system (EAS). However, our county's communication and power challenges remain major concerns. We know that some (many) residents will not receive alerts in every situation. This is why neighbor-to-neighbor networks and grassroots communication are vital. Any help spreading awareness about CruzAware—and encouraging local planning and connections—will greatly enhance overall readiness.

Evacuation routes, Temporary Evacuation Points (TEPs), and other tools in the appendix serve as *planning guides*. They are not guarantees or real-time directives. The conditions at the time of an emergency will ultimately shape the decisions and directions provided. Based on feedback, we are adding stronger language and visual indicators to make it clear that TEPs and other sites listed are not exhaustive and are for **planning purposes only**. Real-time evacuation sites and routes will be communicated from the appropriate authorities during incidents. This is absolutely essential for safety.

We can explore town hall meetings or other outreach tools to promote preparedness and gather input to strengthen the plan. Continuous improvement and real-time integration of lessons learned are key now and in the future. Firewise groups like Southbay provide invaluable insight, and your leadership can help refine and expand awareness. Your input, along with others from Firewise and communities facing non-fire threats, will be critical in finding the best ways to spread the word and drive readiness efforts.

This is truly a whole community effort, and your outreach has already helped strengthen our collective response. I appreciate your engagement, and look forward to continuing this dialogue to further evolve and enhance our planning and readiness efforts.

Thank you again for your commitment, and I look forward to working together to make our community more resilient.

Take care,

Dave

Dave Reid | Director (he/him)



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OFFICE OF
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From: Becky Steinbruner [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 23, 2024 9:16 AM
To: David Reid <David.Reid@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Cc: Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>
Subject: Please Schedule Town Hall Meetings for Public Review of Santa Cruz County's Draft Evacuation Plan Appendix

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Dear Mr. Reid,

I recently became aware of the Draft Santa Cruz County Emergency Operational Plan Evacuation Appendix via the Southbay FireWise group. The document was not available at the link provided with the request by the County Emergency Management Council to have FireWise Community leaders review it, but I was able to obtain a copy directly from Mozaik Consultants.

In my opinion, there are significant gaps in local knowledge that have caused deficiencies in the Draft Evacuation Appendix that could be remedied by holding multiple well-noticed public town hall meetings in each Supervisorial District.

I am concerned that none of the Temporary Evacuation Area plans include mention of the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. Does the County still have a valid MOU with the 14th DAA for emergency human and livestock shelter in disasters?

I also did not see the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) included in any areas to help with evacuation communications. Is ARES included in other portions of the Draft Plan?

Finally, I did not see the Watsonville Airport included in the planning. Is it included in another section of the document?

What is the timeline for public review of this document before adoption?

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Becky Steinbruner