
MT2030
CLIMATE
SUMMIT
SUN VALLEY 26
PRESENTED BY TORUS



City of Sun Valley and Blaine County Living with Fire

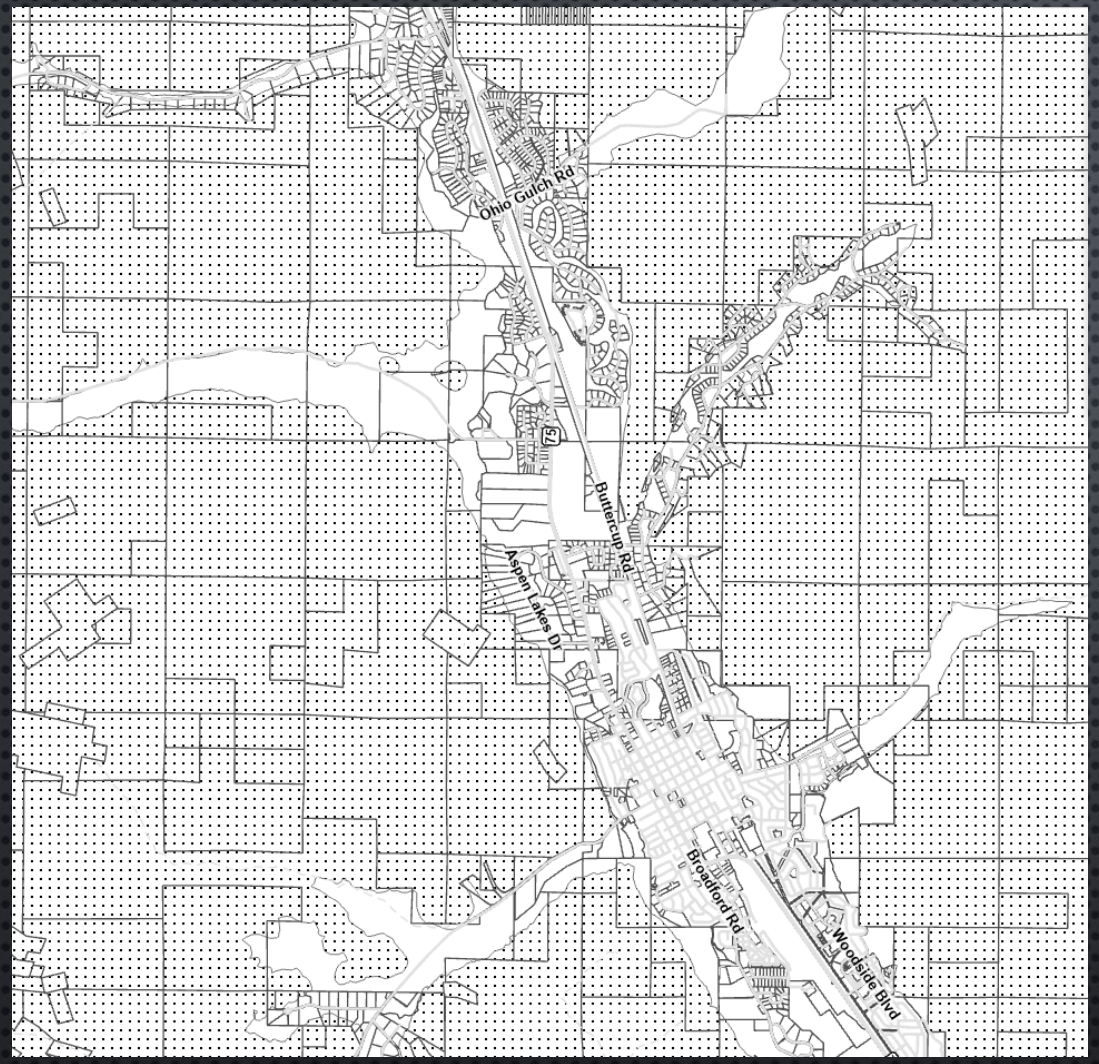
MT2030 Summit- Sun Valley October 14, 2026

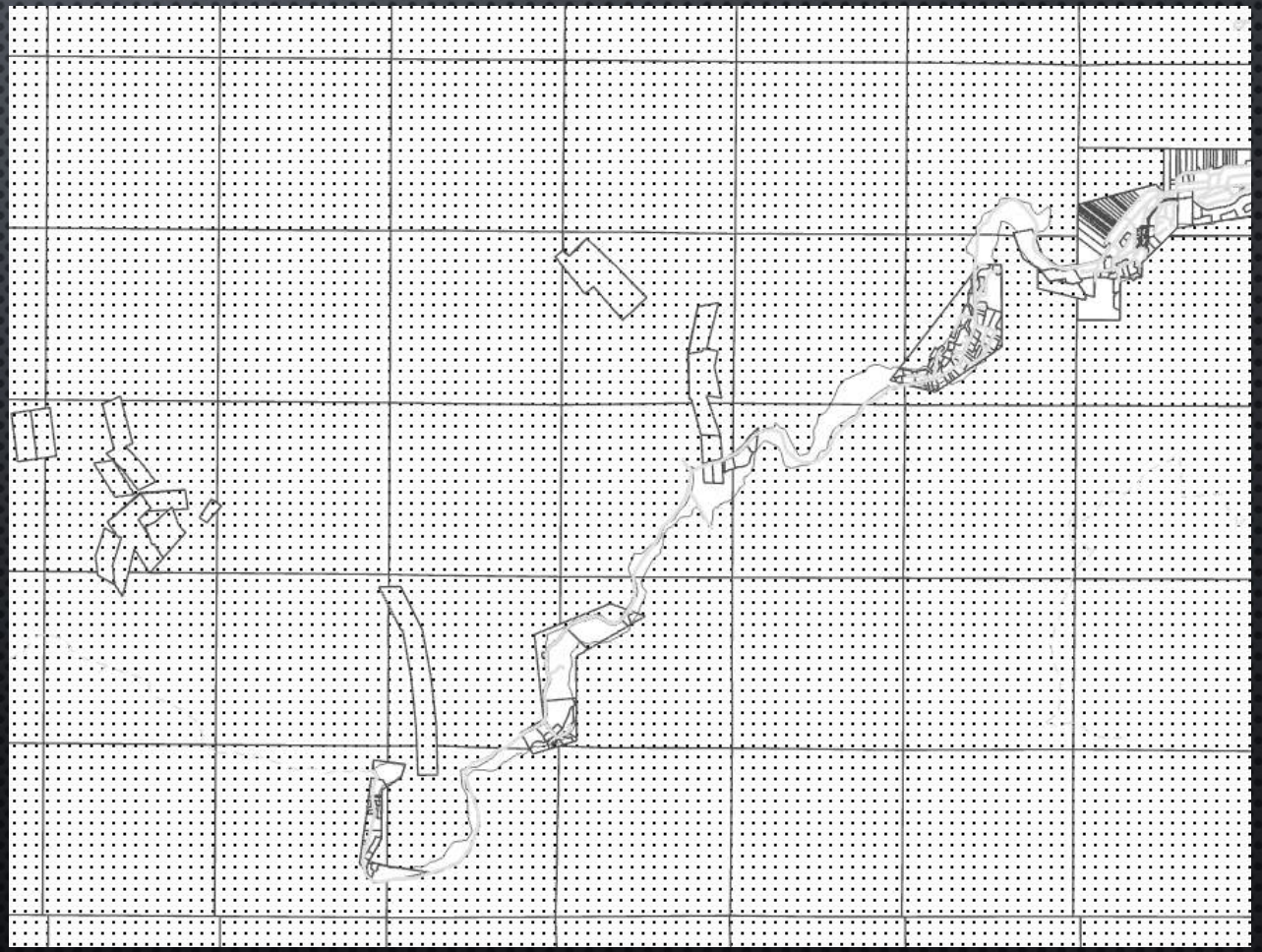
Reid Black- Division Chief of Community Risk Reduction

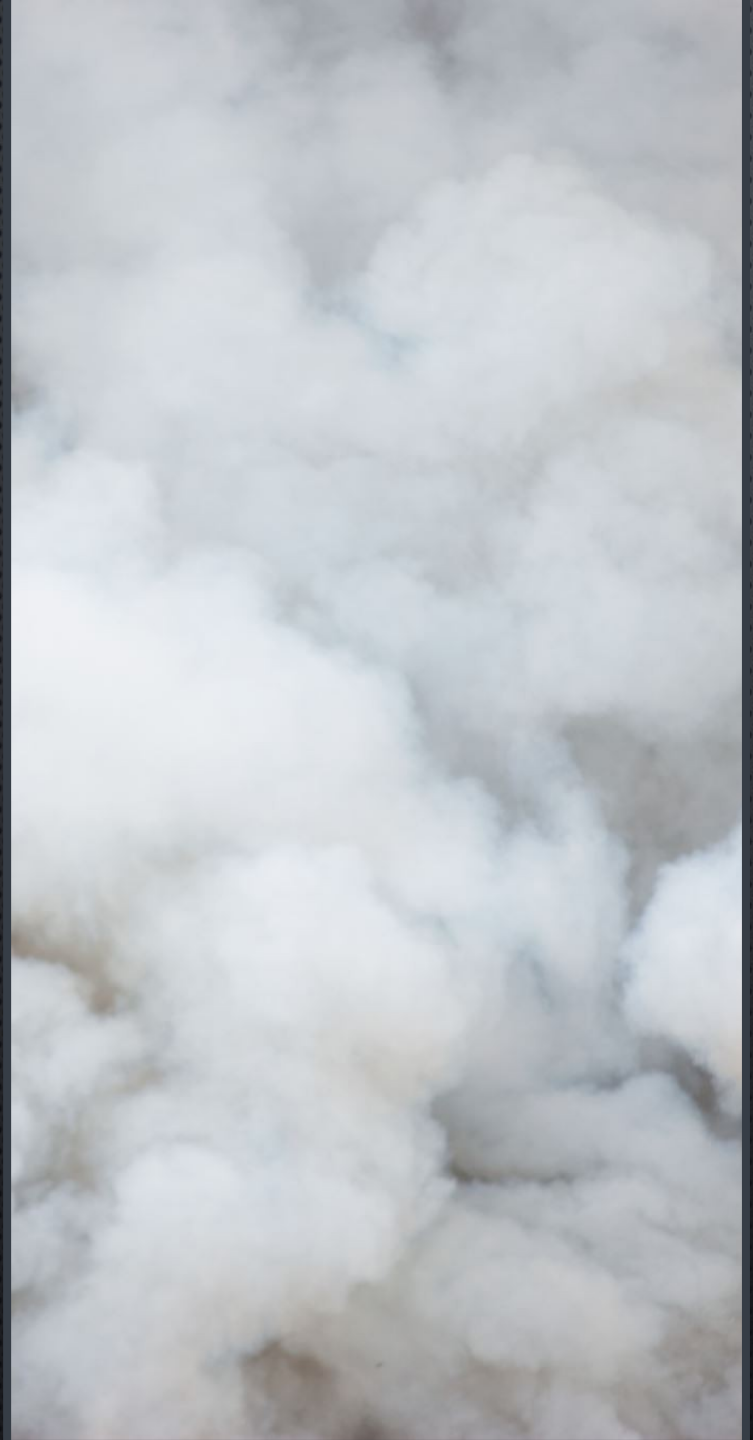
Chris Corwin – Blaine County Emergency Manager

BLAINE COUNTY'S MOUNTAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT

- Originally adopted in 1974 as a Hillside Ordinance.
  - Tom Blanchard – "We didn't want to become Aspen."
  - No Building on Hillsides that had a slope of 25%
- Refined in 1987
  - Created a "Scenic Corridor" that further limited development on the Hillsides
- 2012 – The Mountain Overlay District was established and mapped.
- This goal created a Wildfire Mitigation tool, way ahead of its time.


Ohio Gulch Rd
57
Buttercup Rd
Aspen Lakes Dr
Broadford Rd
Woodside Blvd





BLAINE COUNTY FIRE CODE

- Most Recently Adopted in 2021 – Adopting the 2018 Fire Code
  - Does Require that all roofs, new and remodeled must be Non Wood Class A material
  - Also states, Homes "Shall provide a minimum defensible space of thirty (30) feet surrounding any occupancy."
    - This is defined as "Vegetation that reduces a means of transmitting fire from vegetation to structures or from transmitting fire from structures to vegetation"

COLLABORATION

- 5B Restoration Coalition
  - Started in 2013 after Beaver Creek Fire
  - has worked collaboratively to develop priorities, build stronger private-public partnerships, and encourage community stewardship for sustainable outcomes.
  - Deer Creek Restoration
  - Bald Mountain Stewardship
  - Upper Big Wood Project



GRANTS

- Hazardous Fuels Reduction Grant
  - Starweather and Heatherlands
- Landscape Scale Restoration Grant
  - Collaborative Forest Enhancement
    - More Collaboration, Urban Forestry, Riparian and Floodplain Forest Health

LIVING WITH FIRE PHILOSOPHY EFFORTS

- Paradise, Lahaina, and Palisades/Eaton Urban Conflagration Fires
  - No homes in the hills but embers come off the hills.
- Home Hardening Efforts
  - WUUII for assessments
  - Mini-grants to encourage work to be completed





BUILDING MORE HIGH-TECH CAPABILITIES

- Getting Hi-Res Data to complete a better understanding of Wildfire Fuel Risk
  - Astro Max Drone
  - LiDAR
  - Multi-Spectral Camera

Living With Wildfire: Removing Barriers to Defensible Space

- Sun Valley recognized the need to reduce permitting barriers and uncertainty around tree removal and landscaping and encourage noncombustible, ember-resistant building design so residents can better protect their homes from wildfire.



Sun Valley made wildfire mitigation easier—without removing oversight

Before

Landscape standards prioritized appearance

- Vegetation screening was required around structures and utilities.
- Tree removal required permits and design review.

Code update

Wildfire risk is now explicit

- Standards recognize defensible-space needs while balancing neighborhood character.

After

A clearer path for residents

- Qualifying vegetation can be removed through a streamlined process.
- Oversight remains for sensitive conditions.

City of Sun Valley Landscape 578 May 1st, 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 578
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SUN VALLEY, IDAHO, AMENDING TITLE 9, DEVELOPMENT CODE, CHAPTER 3, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, ARTICLE A. DESIGN REVIEW REGULATIONS AND ARTICLE J. RIPARIAN ZONES OF THE SUN VALLEY MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley has regulations regarding the planting and maintenance of trees, vegetation, and other plants in its Design Review and Riparian codes; and

WHEREAS, wildfire events have increased locally and within the region since the time the Design Review and Riparian regulations were last substantially updated, which was 2006 via Ordinance 382; and

WHEREAS, major wildfire events that have occurred locally and regionally including Castle Rock (2007, 48,000 acres burned), Beaver Creek (2013, 114,000 acres burned), Sharps Fire (2018, 65,000 acres burned), Glendale (lighting ignited 9/2/2024, 7,000+ acres) and the Wapiti Fire (110,000+ acres); and

WHEREAS, the proximity of trees and other vegetation to structures has an impact on a structure's ability to withstand a wildfire event;

WHEREAS, facilitating a property owner's ability to remove trees and provide survivable space around their reduces the demand for fire fighting services during a wildfire event; and

WHEREAS, vegetation species selected, and the density and spacing of landscaping materials impacts the spread of wildfires and the ability of a structure to withstand a wildfire event; and

WHEREAS, the property insurance industry has been cancelling property insurance policies, increasing rate premiums, and declining to issue new policies, making it difficult for Sun Valley property owners to insure and protect their properties;

WHEREAS, the ability to obtain and retain property insurance policies has a direct economic impact on the Sun Valley economy; and

WHEREAS, facilitating a property owner's ability to expeditiously take actions that could result in obtaining or retaining a property insurance policy positively impacts the local Sun Valley economy, including property values; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley deems it necessary to enact regulations that facilitate the removal of trees; and

City of Sun Valley Ordinance 582 October 2nd, 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 582
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SUN VALLEY, IDAHO, AMENDING TITLE 9, DEVELOPMENT CODE, CHAPTER 3, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, ARTICLE A. DESIGN REVIEW REGULATIONS OF THE SUN VALLEY MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley municipal code contains Design Review standards that ensure development is designed and built in a manner that is context sensitive, protects the natural landscape, is of high quality design and is compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, wildfire events have increased locally and within the region since the time the Design Review regulations were last substantially updated in 2006, via Ordinance 382, which led to recent amendments in May 2025, via Ordinance 578, that encourage landscaping practices intended to mitigate wildfire event; and

WHEREAS, major wildfire events that have occurred locally and regionally including Castle Rock (2007, 48,000 acres burned), Beaver Creek (2013, 114,000 acres burned), Sharps Fire (2018, 65,000 acres burned), Glendale (lighting ignited 9/2/2024, 7,000+ acres) and the Wapiti Fire (110,000+ acres); and

WHEREAS, the exterior materials used to construct buildings, and the types of materials and vegetation present within five feet of a structure (the Zero-to-Five-Foot or Immediate Zone), have significant bearing on a structure's ability to survive a wildfire event; and

WHEREAS, due to increased wildfire risks regionally and locally the property insurance industry has been issuing non-renewal statements, increasing rate premiums, and declining to issue new policies, making it difficult for Sun Valley property owners to insure and protect their properties;

WHEREAS, the ability to obtain and retain property insurance policies has a direct economic impact on the Sun Valley economy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley deems it necessary to enact Design Review standards that encourage the use of non-combustible exterior materials and firewise construction methods; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley held public hearings with the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding Ordinance 582 on May 22nd, June 26th, and July 14th, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sun Valley held public hearings with the City Council for Ordinance 582 on August 7th, September 4th, and October 2nd 2025; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sun Valley, Idaho, as follows:

SECTION 1: Title 9, Chapter 3, Article A. Design Review Regulations shall be amended as indicated in Exhibit A.

HURDLES

- 78% of Lands are Public Lands
- Idaho State Tax Laws
  - Counties can only raise their property tax budget by 3% a year, without a public vote to increase levy rate, requires 60% or 2/3 approval depending on the amount.
- Citizens value privacy over wildfire mitigation (for now)
  - Insurance is becoming more of an issue
- Haves' vs Have Nots – Cost of Doing Home Hardening
  - Citizen who moved in the 70s-80s, retired, house worth millions, but not a millionaire.
- Navigating the Fine Line between the Environment, the Climate, and Wildfire Risk

Who will end up driving the bus?

- Government?
- Insurance Companies?
- Individuals?