

A photograph of a dirt road in a forest. The road is blocked by a large pile of logs and branches. The surrounding area is covered in dense green trees and vegetation. The sky is visible in the background, showing some clouds.

IMPLEMENTATION:

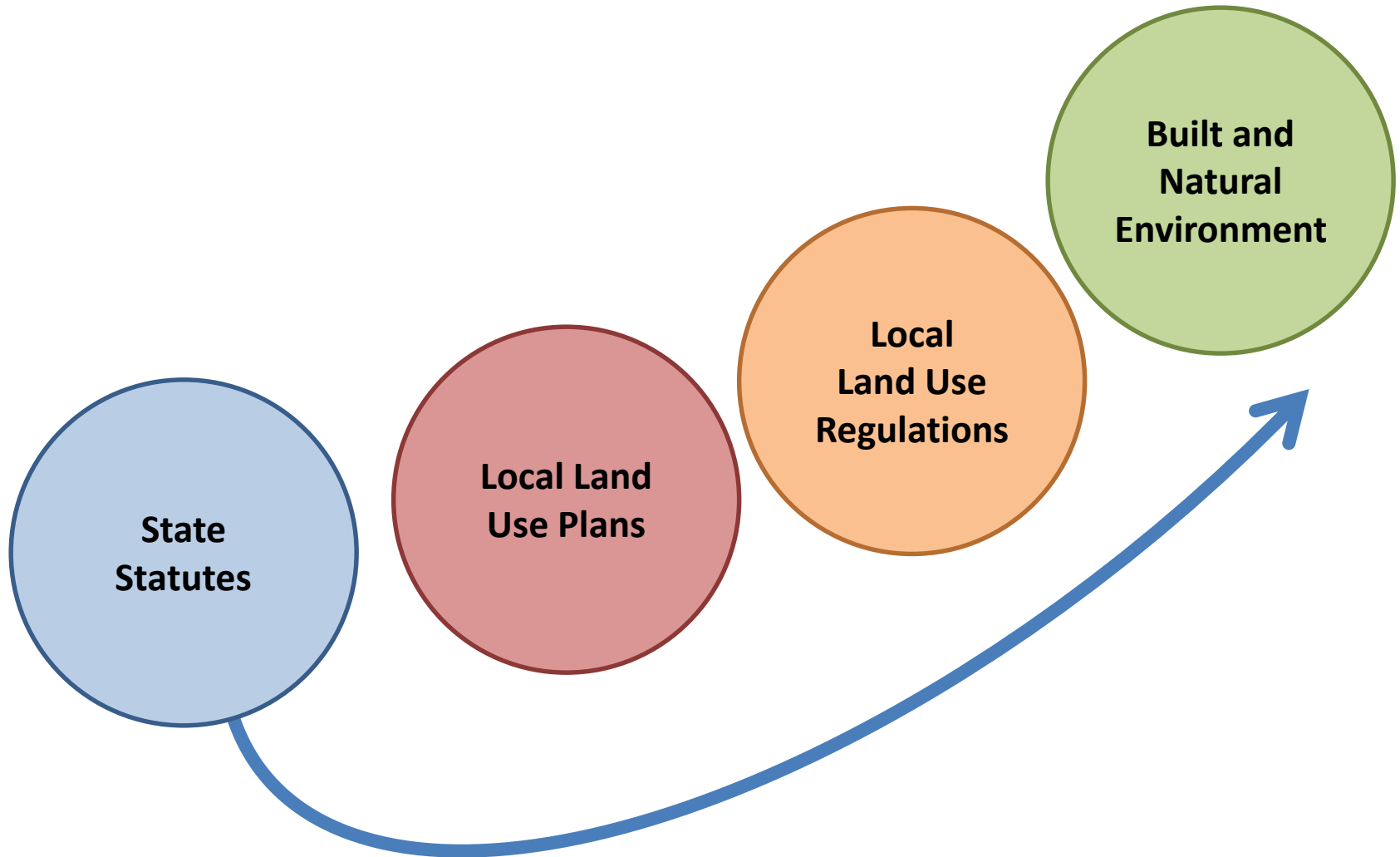
*How Planners are Addressing
Hazard Mitigation*

RMLUI - 2015

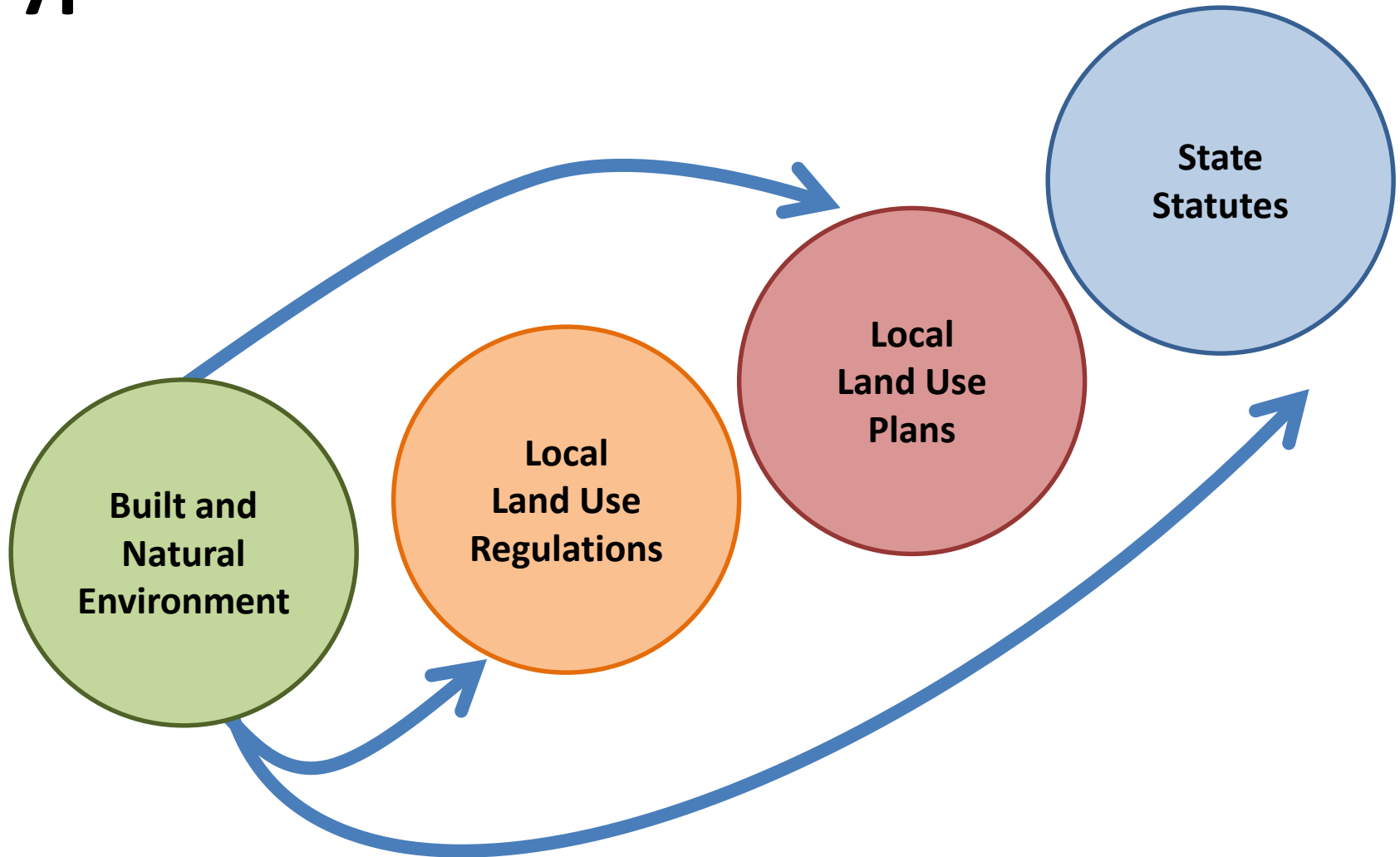
Tareq Wafaie, AICP

C L A R I O N

Planning Framework - Ideal



Planning Framework - Typical Version



What Elected Officials RARELY Tell Their Planners...

- “Come up with some additional regulations related to hazard mitigation.”
- “Find a way to keep development out of areas prone to natural hazards.”
- “Let’s keep economic development on the back burner and focus on mitigating hazards.”



What Elected Officials OFTEN Tell Their Planners...

- “We must protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community.”
- “We need to protect the character of our community.”
- “Describe the potential negative impacts of this project?”



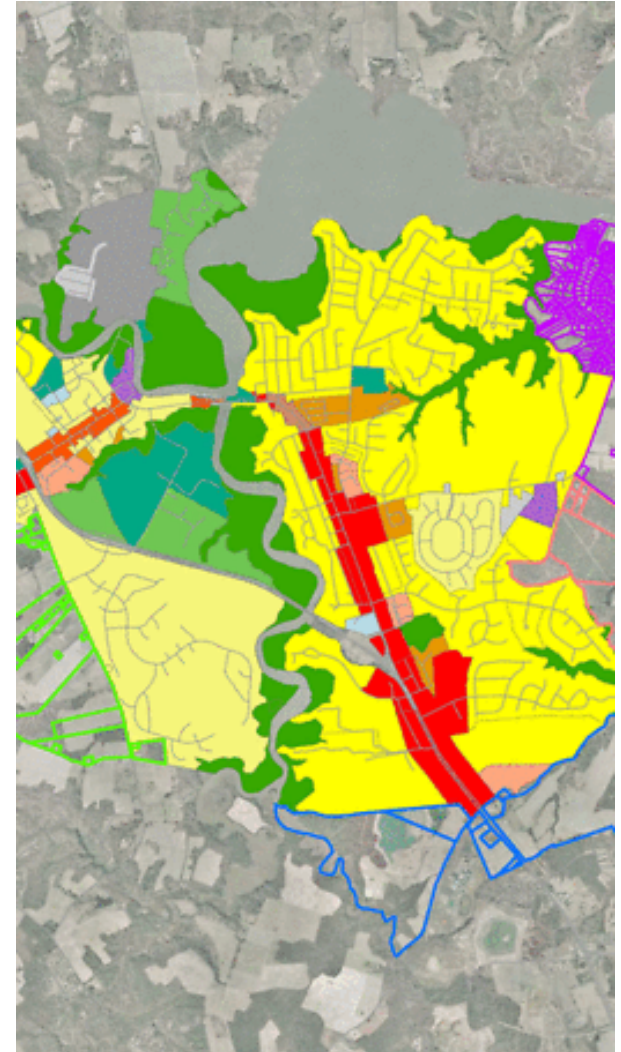
The Planner's Quiver

- Plan Policies (as a foundation)
- Subdivision
- Zoning
- Capital Improvements Plan
- Overlay Zoning
- Development & Design Standards
- Incentives
- Development Review Procedures
- Growth Management
- Transfers of Development Rights/Credits
- Maintenance and Operating Standards
- Development Agreements
- Enforcement



Local Policy Mechanisms

- Comprehensive Plan
 - **Future Land Use Plan**
- Small Area Plans
- Hazard Mitigation Plans
- CWPPs
- Climate Action Plans
- Growth Management Plans
- Sustainability Plans



CASE STUDY: Summit County, CO

- Countywide Master Plan
- Basin Master Plans
- Sub-Basin Master Plans
- Land Development Regulations



CASE STUDY: Summit County, CO

SUBDIVISION

Generally:

- Map high-risk areas
- Protect building envelopes
- Water supply and roads
- Clustering
- Buffers
- Density reduction

Summit County:

Codified linkage to CWPP in approval criteria for new subdivisions.



CASE STUDY: Summit County, CO

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRS)

Generally:

- “Sending” areas where you want less development; “receiving” areas where you could accommodate more.
- Establish high-risk areas as “sending” areas.

CASE STUDY: Summit County, CO

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRS)

Summit County:

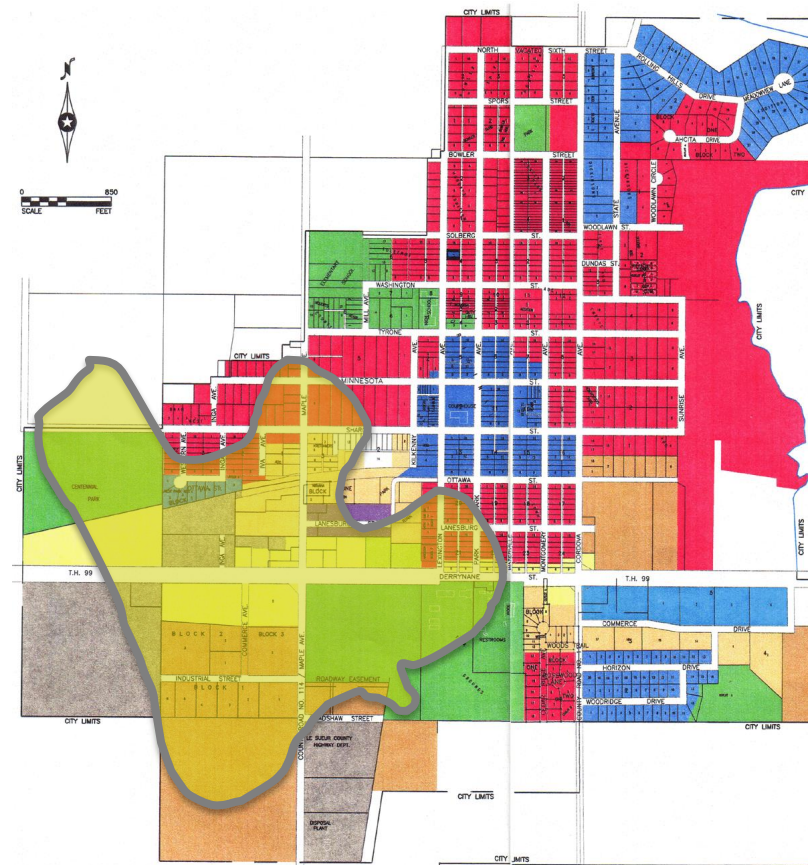
- TDR Sending or Neutral properties determined to have medium to extreme wildfire hazard are not eligible for a TDR Map Amendment.
- Recommended to include language in applicability and intent statement for TDR use.

Other Land Use Code Tools...

Overlay Zoning

- Pick your hazard(s)
- Map overlay based on risk
- Determine applicable standards above and beyond base zoning districts

E.g., hillside overlay, extreme wildfire hazard overlay, flood hazard overlay, etc.



CASE STUDY: SR 530 Slide - Oso, WA

- Extensive land use regulations related to geologic and landslide hazards
- Updated in 2007 for “best available science” compliance (state mandate)



CASE STUDY: SR 530 Slide - Oso, WA

- Known hazard area
- Required independent review of critical areas
- One report suggested buyout program (although this is often the most expensive mitigation)



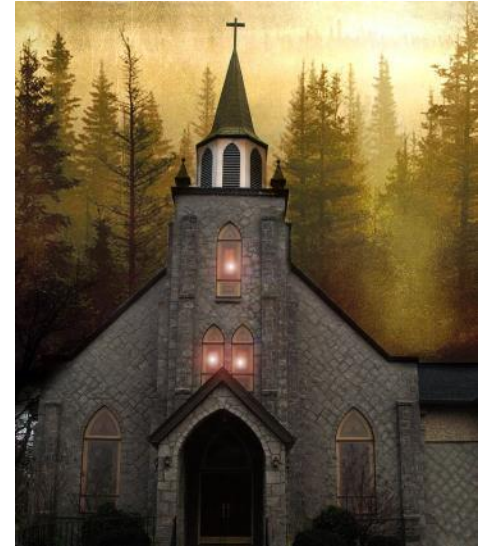
Okay, but what about **EXISTING** development?

- **Enforcement**
- **Maintenance**
- **Applicability thresholds**
 - When do new standards apply to old development?
 - Site-specific assessments?
- **Incentives** (not always planning – but planners should be part of the conversation)
 - Education
 - Mitigation programs
 - Development agreements



Permitted Uses & Use-Specific Standards

- Dense populations
- Congregations
- Vulnerable populations
- Hazardous uses



Could a golf course ever be considered highest and best use?



Procedures

- **Pre-application meetings**
 - It ~~never~~ rarely hurts to ask!
- **Approval procedures** (have them – **and follow them**)
- Criteria for administrative adjustments (have them)
- Training for staff and decision-makers



Summit County:

In rezoning procedures, entire section on Wildfire Hazard Areas, including option to require forest management plan, fuels reduction plan, defensible space plan – with a financial guarantee. (**Recommended requirement, rather than optional**)

Challenges: Planning for Hazards

- Mapping
- Culture – we like to live near water, mountains, and trees
- The “Agenders”
- Identifying champions
- Limited resources



Some helpful tips...

- Get **elected** and **appointed officials** talking about hazards
- **Non-regulatory programs** that aid homeowners are very effective (e.g., chipper days, free consultations) and build good public relations
- Consider using **incentives** to provide flexibility for landowners if mandatory requirements are not feasible
- Only adopt standards you are **able and willing to enforce**
- **Incremental steps** are sometimes necessary before more extensive standards can be adopted
- Resolve potential **inconsistencies** with other code requirements
- Identify **synergies** between current policies and planning for hazard mitigation
- **Collaborate** with other agencies/departments

Keys to Collaboration

- Become multi-lingual – learn to speak (or at least understand) “fire,” “engineer,” “developer,” and “plannerese”
- Clearly express priorities
- Meet regularly
- Host tours led by different stakeholders
- **LISTEN!**



Thank You

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C L A R I O N

