Chapter 5

PUBLIC SAFETY, SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

Chapter 5: Public Safety, Services and Facilities Element

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I. Background

Purpose

Public services and facilities, such as fire protection, law enforcement, libraries, schools, and parks are amenities provided by the government to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. These services and facilities help to protect the population as a whole and contribute to community maintenance.

This Public Safety, Services and Facilities Element contains Goals and Policies outlining strategies to fulfill the overall mission of the County of Los Angeles: "to enrich lives through effective and caring service." This Element identifies local hazards that include fire, geology, and floods, and then elaborates on community expectations for enhanced and efficient local services that include law enforcement, parks, schools, libraries, health facilities, and economic development.

Issues

Public services require long-range planning to account for anticipated population and environmental changes that necessitate modification of service levels. Fire and sheriff's services must anticipate the extent and location of future needs to determine what enhancements can be offered. The provision of trails, parks, and roads requires coordination among multiple government agencies to achieve service goals. Schools, libraries and health services need to be accessible to the local residents they serve. A strong economic base ensures that all these public services and facilities can continue to be offered.

The level of public services and facilities are often dependent upon population numbers. Higher population numbers equate to higher demand, and thus larger communities receive greater quantities of service. The Antelope Valley is comprised of dispersed towns with smaller populations that correspond to relatively limited service availability, which underscores the necessity of long-range planning to ensure an adequate supply of life and safety services to maintain and enhance the quality of life.

Local environmental features, such as buttes, floodplains, and forests, make the Antelope Valley a uniquely rural setting in Los Angeles County but also give rise to many of the natural hazards that can compromise the safety of residents. Remote areas pose challenges to safety personnel trying to protect residents when responding to earthquake, flood and fire disasters. While many of these hazards are pre-existing and unpreventable, there are many actions that can be taken to reduce risks.

Vision and Strategy

The Area Plan's Vision Statement requires this Element to provide quality social, education, and recreational services and facilities. To implement the Area Plan's Rural Preservation Strategy, this Element will improve the quality of life and increase residents' safety and well-being by guiding future development to rural town center areas, rural town areas, and economic opportunity areas where services are already provided or are being planned and which contain less hazardous portions of the

Antelope Valley. As changes occur in the future, Valley residents will continue to receive high-caliber public services that accommodate current and future needs.

II. Goals and Policies

Fire Hazards

Goal PS 1: Protection of the public through fire hazard planning and mitigation.

- Policy PS 1.1: Limit the amount of potential master-planned development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones through appropriate land use designations with very low residential densities, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.
- Policy PS 1.2: Require that all new developments provide sufficient access for emergency vehicles and sufficient evacuation routes for residents and animals.
- Policy PS 1.3: Promote fire prevention measures, such as brush clearance and the creation of defensible space, to reduce fire protection costs.
- Policy PS 1.4: Provide strict enforcement of the Fire Code and all Fire Department policies and regulations.

Geological Hazards

Goal PS 2: Protection of the public through geological hazard planning and mitigation.

- Policy PS 2.1: Limit the amount of potential development in Seismic Zones and along the San Andreas Fault and other fault traces, through appropriate land use designations with very low residential densities, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.
- Policy PS 2.2: Limit the amount of development on steep slopes (Hillside Management Areas) and within landslide and liquefaction areas, through appropriate land use designations with very low residential densities, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.
- Policy PS 2.3: Prohibit the construction of new structures on or across a fault trace.
- Policy PS 2.4: Ensure that new development does not cause or contribute to slope instability.

Flood Hazards

Goal PS 3: Protection of the public through flood hazard planning and mitigation.

- Policy PS 3.1: Limit the amount of potential development in Flood Zones designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through appropriate land use designations with very low residential densities, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.
- Policy PS 3.2: Require onsite stormwater filtration in all new developments through use of appropriate measures, such as permeable surface coverage, permeable paving of parking and pedestrian areas, catch basins, and other low impact development strategies.
- Policy PS 3.3: Review the potential local and regional drainage impacts of all development proposals to minimize the need for new drainage structures.

- Policy PS 3.4: Ensure that new drainage structures are compatible with the surrounding environment by requiring materials and colors that are consistent with the natural landscape. Discourage concrete drainage structures.

Law Enforcement

Goal PS 4: Protection of public safety through law enforcement and crime prevention strategies.

- Policy PS 4.1: Support an increased law enforcement presence in every Antelope Valley community and explore new funding mechanisms to expand law enforcement services.
- Policy PS 4.2: Support a strong law enforcement presence on highways and streets to strictly enforce speed limits and other vehicle safety laws.
- Policy PS 4.3: Promote and support neighborhood watches to create more eyes and ears in the community.
- Policy PS 4.4: Educate the public on crime prevention programs and resources offered by the Sheriff's Department.

Goal PS 5: Protection of public health, safety, and welfare through code enforcement.

- Policy PS 5.1: Support neighborhood preservation programs, such as graffiti abatement, removal of abandoned or inoperable vehicles, and removal of trash and debris.
- Policy PS 5.2: Strictly enforce laws against illegal dumping and support the Antelope Valley Illegal Dumping Task Force.
- Policy PS 5.3: Educate the public on existing codes and the value of maintaining their property, encouraging voluntary compliance.
- Policy PS 5.4: Administer code enforcement activities in a fair, equitable, respectful, and cooperative manner.
- Policy PS 5.5: Create proactive code enforcement programs where desired by community residents.

Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response

Goal PS 6: Government officials work with community members to promote community safety.

- Policy PS 6.1: Ensure safety information is available at local public areas.
- Policy PS 6.2: Encourage residents and business owners to create an evacuation plan and maintain emergency supplies.
- Policy PS 6.3: Promote the formation and coordination of Certified Emergency Response Teams.
- Policy PS 6.4: Provide assistance to local communities that wish to create a local emergency evacuation plan.
- Policy PS 6.5: Strengthen coordination and collaboration between citizens, public agencies, and non-profit groups to plan for disaster response.

- Policy PS 6.6: Develop an inclusive master emergency plan that designates evacuation routes, emergency relief centers, emergency animal keeping shelters, and information centers in every Antelope Valley community.

Goal PS 7: Emergency services that respond in a timely manner.

- Policy PS 7.1: Require visible addresses on buildings and at entrances to properties as required by the Fire Code.
- Policy PS 7.2: Ensure that Fire Stations are adequately staffed.
- Policy PS 7.3: Strive for a timely response to every call for service.

Parks and Recreation

Goal PS 8: Antelope Valley residents enjoy access to parks and recreational facilities.

- Policy PS 8.1: Maintain existing parks to ensure attractiveness and safety and make improvements as necessary. Ensure adequate funding on an ongoing basis.
- Policy PS 8.2: Provide recreational activities at parks that serve all segments of the population.
- Policy PS 8.3: Provide new parks as additional development occurs or as the population grows, with a goal of four acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.
- Policy PS 8.4: Prioritize new parks for existing park deficient communities.
- Policy PS 8.5: Encourage the use of school playgrounds and sporting fields for community recreation ("joint use") when school is not in session.
- Policy PS 8.6: Within rural town center areas, promote the inclusion of parks, recreational facilities, and other gathering places that allow neighbors to meet and socialize.
- Policy PS 8.7: Provide trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes for recreational purposes, as directed in the policies of the Mobility Element.
- Policy PS 8.8: Maintain existing facilities for public water recreation to ensure attractiveness and safety and make improvements as necessary. Ensure adequate funding on an ongoing basis.
- Policy PS 8.9: Provide new facilities for public water recreation in appropriate areas.

Goal PS 9: Safe spaces for the recreational use of off-road vehicles and other motorized sporting.

- Policy PS 9.1: Reduce illegal off-road vehicle use by providing off-road vehicle trails and parks in appropriate areas.
- Policy PS 9.2: Reduce illegal drag racing by providing appropriate locations for safe and properly monitored drag racing.
- Policy PS 9.3: Provide strict enforcement of illegal off-road vehicle use and illegal drag racing.

Schools

Goal PS 10: A wide range of educational opportunities for Antelope Valley residents.

- Policy PS 10.1: Coordinate with all Antelope Valley school districts to ensure that new schools are provided as additional development occurs or as the population grows.
- Policy PS 10.2: Encourage new schools to locate in rural town center areas, rural town areas, and economic opportunity areas, where they will be accessible by pedestrian walkways, trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes.
- Policy PS 10.3: Encourage new schools to locate near parks and recreational facilities.
- Policy PS 10.4: Encourage the use of school playgrounds and sporting fields for community recreation ("joint use") when school is not in session.
- Policy PS 10.5: Promote the creation of a four-year public university in the Antelope Valley to provide opportunities for continuing education and workforce development.

Libraries

Goal PS 11: Antelope Valley residents enjoy easy access to public library services.

- Policy PS 11.1: Maintain existing public libraries and make improvements as necessary. Ensure adequate funding on an ongoing basis.
- Policy PS 11.2: Expand public library collections and services to meet community needs.
- Policy PS 11.3: Provide new public libraries as additional development occurs or as the population grows.
- Policy PS 11.4: Encourage new public libraries to locate in rural town center areas, rural town areas, and economic opportunity areas, where they will be accessible by pedestrian walkways, trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes.
- Policy PS 11.5: Provide bookmobile services in areas that are not served by permanent public libraries.
- Policy PS 11.6: Encourage the use of technology in library operations to increase efficiency and accessibility.

Health Facilities

Goal PS 12: A range of facilities and service that maintain the health and well-being of Antelope Valley residents at all ages and income levels.

- Policy PS 12.1: Provide preventative health services to reduce the need for emergency medical care.
- Policy PS 12.2: Support the development of regional health care facilities in Lancaster and Palmdale.
- Policy PS 12.3: Support existing community health care clinics in rural areas by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses. Allow expansion when required to meet community needs.

- Policy PS 12.4: Encourage the development of new community health care clinics where required to meet community needs. Encourage these clinics to locate in rural town center areas and economic opportunity areas, where they will be accessible by pedestrian walkways, trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes.
- Policy PS 12.5: Pursue funding to support daily operations at community health care clinics.