Chapter 13: Public Services and Facilities Element

III. Introduction

As Los Angeles County continues to grow, the demand for public facilities and infrastructure will increase. This Element provides a summary of some of the major public services and facilities that serve the unincorporated areas, and establishes policies that guide the provision of public services and facilities.

The Public Services and Facilities Element promotes the orderly and efficient planning of public facilities and infrastructure in conjunction with land use development and growth. This Element focuses on services and facilities that are affected the most by growth and development: Drinking Water; Sanitary Sewers; Solid Waste; Utilities; Early Care and Education; and Libraries. The Element also discusses the key role of collaboration among County agencies in efficient and effective service provision and facilities planning.

This Element works in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) Strategic Plan, which outlines service delivery goals for sanitary sewer, water supply, flood protection, water quality, garbage disposal, and traffic lighting; Integrated Waste Management Plan; Sewer System Management Plan; Library Strategic Plan; and other plans to address the provision of public services and facilities to the unincorporated areas.

II. Effective Service and Facilities Planning and Maintenance

Background

There are special development fees and legal requirements in place to address the provision of services or facilities and infrastructure, including school facilities fees, sewer connection mitigation fees, fire protection facilities fees, library facilities mitigation fees, and water supply assessments for large projects.

Issues

1. Development Fees

Many existing public facilities are operating at full capacity or are overburdened. In addition, many development fees and legal requirements that are intended to pay for infrastructure and services only apply to certain developments, such as subdivisions and projects that exceed a certain size threshold.

2. The Need to Effectively Track Development

In addition to fees, a comprehensive system is necessary to effectively track planned development and corresponding infrastructure and service needs. Furthermore, without adequate investment from the public sector to maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure, the costs of infrastructure improvements could make a project financially infeasible. Coordination among various County departments ensures that infrastructure is upgraded, as well as expanded in areas where the General Plan encourages development.

Goals and Policies for Effective Service and Facilities Planning and Maintenance

Goal PS/F 1: A coordinated, reliable, and equitable network of public facilities that preserves resources, ensures public health and safety, and keeps pace with planned development.	
Topic	**Policy**
Sufficient Infrastructure	Policy PS/F 1.1: Discourage development in areas without adequate public services and facilities.
	Policy PS/F 1.2: Ensure that adequate services and facilities are provided in conjunction with development through phasing or other mechanisms.
	Policy PS/F 1.3: Ensure coordinated service provision through collaboration between County departments and service providers.
	Policy PS/F 1.4: Ensure the adequate maintenance of infrastructure.
	Policy PS/F 1.5: Focus infrastructure investment, maintenance and expansion efforts where the General Plan encourages development.
	Policy PS/F 1.6: Support multi-faceted public facility expansion efforts, such as substations, mobile units, and satellite offices.
	Policy PS/F 1.7: Consider resource preservation in the planning of public facilities.

III. Drinking Water

Background

The County provides a continuous supply of clean water for everyday uses through a complex water management system, which consists of numerous water providers, water control boards and other agencies. A combination of local and imported water supplies is delivered through an intricate system of aqueducts, reservoirs, and groundwater basins.

Water Sources

Approximately 33 percent of the water supply comes from local sources, including surface water from mountain runoff, groundwater and recycled water. While local water supplies are the least costly, surface water and groundwater supplies fluctuate in response to variations in annual rainfall, contamination and effectiveness of conservation measures.

Water is imported into Los Angeles County from three sources: the Colorado River, the Bay Delta in Northern California via the State Water Project, and the Owens Valley via the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The Los Angeles Aqueduct primarily serves the residents and businesses of the City of Los Angeles.

For a description of local water sources and a discussion of water quality, please refer to the Conservation and Natural Resources Element. For description of the imported water sources, please refer to Appendix I.

Water Suppliers

Water services are provided by a complex network of water districts, water wholesalers and private companies that specialize in developing and improving water service for their customers. Most of the imported water utilized in the unincorporated areas is provided by the Metropolitan Water District, Castaic Lake Water Agency, Antelope Valley/East Kern Water Agency, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District and the Palmdale Water District. For a description of water suppliers, please refer to Appendix I.

Water Management Plans

In accordance with the California Urban Water Management Planning Act of 1983, every urban water supplier that annually serves 3,000 or more customers, or provides more than 3,000 acre-feet of water, must prepare and adopt an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). These plans contain a description and evaluation of water supplies, reclamation programs, and conservation activities. Based upon land use plans provided by local governments, population projections or other inputs, the UWMP calculates the projected water demand for the district and compares this demand against current and anticipated water supplies. These UWMPs, which are updated every five years, are provided to local governments to help inform decisions on development proposals.

UWMPs serve as building blocks for Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMPs), which define a clear vision and strategy for the sustainable management of water resources within a specific region delineated by one or more watersheds. Local and County UWMPs can be found ontheSouthernCaliforniaAssociationofGovernment'swebsiteathttp://www.scag.ca.gov/rcp/uwmp.htm.

Issues

Drought, pollution, population growth and land use affect the quantity and quality of local and regional water supplies. The climate in Los Angeles County is characterized by extended periods of dry weather and varying levels of rainfall, which range from an average of 27.5 inches per year in the San Gabriel Mountains to 7.8 inches in the Antelope Valley. The overall demand for water is projected to increase dramatically to 2035, and the cost, quality and availability of water will affect future development patterns.

1. Water Conservation

Los Angeles County needs to use its various sources of water wisely. Voluntary conservation measures by industries and residents have been successful in the past, particularly with regard to outdoor water use. Two thirds of residential water use is attributed to landscape maintenance, which makes conservation measures such as planting drought-tolerant, indigenous plants an important component of a water conservation policy.

The conservation of the water supply is a primary goal of the County. To reduce the County's dependence on imported water, County agencies are establishing various water conservation programs. One example from DPW is the creation of water reclamation projects and groundwater recharge facilities to capture stormwater runoff. Another effort by DPW is participation in a Water Augmentation Study, which is striving to make parcel-level groundwater recharge feasible. Additional actions include the Board of Supervisor's 2008 Countywide Water Supply and Conservation Alert. This resolution urges residents, businesses, and water purveyors to intensify water conservation efforts and directs all County departments to implement measures to achieve a 15 to 20 percent reduction in overall water demand.

The General Plan supports water conservation efforts that focus on curbing demand by reducing consumption through technological advances, such as aerators and motion sensors on low flush toilets and stalls, onsite gray water reclamation and dual plumbing; promoting xeriscaping; and organizing educational campaigns to discourage wasteful water consumption.

2. Increasing the Water Supply

Recycled water is used primarily for recharging groundwater aquifers through regional groundwater recharge operations and injection at seawater barriers. Other uses of recycled water include irrigating landscaping and supplying industrial processes. Recycled water provides a reliable and consistently high quality supply of water, but also requires additional infrastructure and modifications to regulations that govern the use of recycled water, before it can reach its full supply potential.

Several water agencies throughout Southern California, such as the Metropolitan Water District, Castaic Lake Water Agency and City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power are taking steps to add desalinated water to their list of water supplies. Desalination, or removing salt from ocean water, has the potential to increase the local water supply, but is also energy-consumptive and costly.

Goals and Policies for Drinking Water

Goal PS/F 2: Increased water conservation efforts.	
Topic	**Policy**
Water Conservation	Policy PS/F 2.1: Support water conservation measures.
	Policy PS/F 2.2: Support educational outreach efforts that discourage wasteful water consumption.
Goal PS/F 3: Increased local water supplies through the use of new technologies.	
Topic	**Policy**
Water Supply	Policy PS/F 3.1: Increase the supply of water though the development of new sources, such as recycled water, gray water, and rainwater harvesting.
	Policy PS/F 3.2: Support the increased production, distribution and use of recycled water, gray water, and rainwater harvesting to provide for groundwater recharge, seawater intrusion barrier injection, irrigation, industrial processes and other beneficial uses.

IV. Sanitary Sewers

Background

Unlike combined sewer and stormwater drainage systems in many older cities throughout the country, the sanitary sewers and the stormwater/flood protection facilities in Los Angeles County are separate. The sanitary sewers convey sewage from lavatories and other plumbing fixtures in buildings and factories to a wastewater treatment facility where the effluent is treated before being discharged to the ocean or river. In the unincorporated areas, the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD), the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD), and municipal septic or wastewater systems all contribute to ensuring that the sanitary sewage system operates properly to protect public health.

Construction operations and the maintenance of facilities that collect, treat, recycle and dispose of sewage and industrial wastes is the responsibility of the LACSD. Local sewers connected to the LACSD's trunk sewer lines in the unincorporated areas are the responsibility of the CSMD. Sewer laterals connecting homes and businesses to local sewer lines are the responsibility of the homeowners for maintenance and repair.

The LACSD, which are a confederation of 24 independent districts, serve the wastewater and solid waste management needs of approximately 5.2 million people, cover over 800 square miles and service 78 cities and the unincorporated areas. As of 2005, the LACSD owned, operated and maintained 1,340 miles of sewers that conveyed 510 million gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater, 200 million gpd of which is recycled, to 11 wastewater treatment plants. The service areas for the County's sewer systems include the Joint Outfall System, which is a partnership of 17 of the 24 independent sanitation districts, the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley.

DPW, on behalf of the CSMD, maintains 4,600 miles of main line sewers, 155 pumping stations, and four sewage treatment plants. The DPW Environmental Programs Division also permits and inspects industrial waste discharge into local sewers. The County Code requires that every business that disposes industrial wastewater obtain a permit. The Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) controls and mitigates sewer sanitary overflows. For more information on the SSMP, please visit DPW's web site at http://dpw.lacounty.gov.

Issues

Sewer systems throughout the unincorporated areas are aging and require upgrades. The County does not plan for sewer infrastructure needs through long-range capital improvement planning, and instead addresses sewer infrastructure through their ongoing Condition Assessment Program utilizing their Accumulative Capital Outlay Program Funds.

In limited cases, primarily near the coast, the LACSD has accepted dry weather urban runoff into the sanitary sewer system to be treated along with sewage. To protect inland water bodies, the Los Angeles Flood Control District is evaluating the potential to construct more dry weather diversions, provided the sanitary sewers have the ability to accept the dry weather flows.

Goals and Policies for Sanitary Sewers

Goal PS/F 4: Reliable sewer and urban runoff conveyance treatment systems.	
Topic	**Policy**
Sanitary Sewers	Policy PS/F 4.1: Encourage the planning and continued development of efficient countywide sewer conveyance treatment systems.
	Policy PS/F 4.2: Support capital improvement plans to improve aging and deficient wastewater systems, particularly in areas where the General Plan encourages development, such as TODs.
	Policy PS/F 4.3: Ensure the proper design of sewage treatment and disposal facilities, especially in landslide, hillside, and other hazard areas.
	Policy PS/F 4.4: Evaluate the potential for treating stormwater runoff in wastewater management systems or through other similar systems and methods.

V. Solid Waste

Background

The County has the largest solid waste management system in the country. There are seven major solid waste landfills, four minor solid waste landfills and two waste-to-energy facilities, as shown in Figure 13.1. In 2012, the County's service area generated, on average, 58,987 tons per day (tbd) of solid waste. As available space for landfills becomes scarce and more distant, and as local landfills reach their holding capacity, cities and counties have been mandated to more effectively manage waste and reduce their solid waste volume.

Figure 13.1: Landfills Map

Annual Report for the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP)

Assembly Bill 939, also known as the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, mandates local jurisdictions to meet a diversion goal of 50 percent by 2000, and thereafter. In addition, each county is required to prepare and administer a countywide IWMP. This plan is comprised of the County's and the cities' solid waste reduction planning documents, plus an Integrated Waste Management Summary Plan (Summary Plan) and a Countywide Siting Element (CSE). In order to assess a local jurisdiction's compliance with AB 939, the Disposal Reporting System was established to measure the amount of disposal from each local jurisdiction and determine if it has met the goals.

For Los Angeles County, the County's Department of Public Works is responsible for preparing and administering the Summary Plan and the CSE. These documents were approved by the County, a majority of the cities containing a majority of the cities' population, the Board of Supervisors, and the Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery (CalRecycle).

The existing Summary Plan, approved by CalRecycle on June 23, 1999, describes the steps to be taken by local agencies, acting independently and in concert, to achieve the mandated state diversion rate by integrating strategies aimed toward reducing, reusing, recycling, diverting, and marketing solid waste generated.

The existing CSE, approved by CalRecycle on June 24, 1998, identifies how, for a 15-year planning period, the County and the cities would meet their long-term disposal capacity needs to safely handle solid waste generated that cannot be reduced, recycled, or composted. As this 15-year planning cycle has come to an end, DPW, in consultation with the Integrated Waste Management Task Force, completed the preparation of the draft CSE update in November 2012.The draft revised CSE and its environmental document will undergo a review and approval process in compliance with numerous statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes CEQA review, and review and approval by jurisdictions in Los Angeles County, the Board of Supervisors, and CalRecycle. The goal is to complete the entire revision process, disseminate the document for public comments, and submit the final draft CSE and the environmental document to CalRecycle by 2016.

In addition, DPW prepares an annual report to summarize the changes that have taken place since the approval of the existing Summary Plan and the existing CSE by the jurisdictions and CalRecycle. The Annual Report consists of Section D: Summary Plan Assessment and Section E: Siting Element Assessment. The other sections pertaining to individual jurisdictions, namely, Sections A, B, C, and H, are included in a separate annual report from each jurisdiction.

The 2012 Annual Report includes in-depth assessments of the County's disposal capacity needs, detailed updates on the remaining permitted in-County disposal capacity, and the County's strategy for maintaining adequate disposal capacity through 2027.

Provided certain assumptions are met, the 2012 Annual Report demonstrates that the County would meet the disposal capacity requirements of AB 939 through a multi-pronged approach, which includes successfully permitting and developing proposed in-County landfill expansions, utilizing available or planned out-of-County disposal capacity, developing necessary infrastructure to facilitate exportation of waste to out-of-County landfills, and developing conversion and other alternative technologies. Additionally, by continuing to enhance diversion programs and increasing the countywide diversion rate, local jurisdictions in Los Angeles County may further ensure adequate disposal capacity is available to serve the needs of the residents and businesses through the planning period.

Solid Waste Information Management System (SWIMS)

SWIMS, a one-stop Internet portal for the public and solid waste industry, allows the County to collect and manage information regarding the collection, disposal, and recycling of approximately 58,987 tons of trash generated each day in one of the largest jurisdictions in the nation, the County of Los Angeles. Data collected through SWIMS allows the County to evaluate the waste stream, and thus design appropriate waste reduction programs and strategies. Even broader in scope, SWIMS is also a tool by which information about solid waste management activities is made readily available to the public, empowering people to make environmentally sustainable choices in managing waste. The SWIMS web site is located at http://www.LACountySWIMS.org.

Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future

The County unincorporated areas have already achieved and surpassed California's 50 percent waste diversion mandate. However, with available landfill space in Los Angeles County decreasing, the County must be proactive and develop innovative policies and procedures for waste management that further reduce the County's reliance on landfills.

On October 21, 2014, the Board approved the Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future Interdepartmental Sustainable Waste Management Future, which involves rethinking the approach to waste management, and rethinking the characterization of waste and which materials might be suitable for reuse and recycling. A traditional waste hierarchy seeks to implement waste reduction measures, reuse practices, recycling and composting techniques, and waste-to-energy processing to handle a large portion of the typical waste stream. Even when this is done effectively, a large volume of waste is still disposed at landfills. The Roadmap creates a new vision to significantly reduce, and someday eliminate, waste. As a result, an increasing amount of materials previously characterized as waste will be reduced, reused, or recycled, and a decreasing volume of material will remain for disposal.

The Roadmap focuses on the unincorporated areas, as well as regional/countywide and County operations (ie., County-owned and/or operated facilities and offices, and County-sponsored events), and the following four strategies: 1) Programs and Services; 2) Measuring Results; 3) Facilities and Infrastructure; and 4) Outreach and Education. These four strategies establish a framework for the implementation of specific initiatives.

Through the implementation of the Roadmap, the County's goal is to maximize the recovery of products, materials, and energy from waste that would otherwise be disposed of at landfills, and achieve the following:

- 80% diversion from landfills by 2025
- 90% diversion from landfills by 2035
- 95+% diversion from landfills by 2045

Issues

1. Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity

The major issues regarding waste management include the growing amounts of waste being generated and disposed of; a shortage of solid waste processing facilities; and strong public opposition for new solid waste management facilities. Table 13.1 lists the remaining permitted capacity for landfills as of December 31, 2012 in accordance with the County IWMP, 2012 Annual Report, which was released in August 2013.However, since the release of the 2012 Annual Report, the Puente Hills Landfill, which is the largest landfill in Los Angeles County, closed on October 31, 2013. As a result, a significant percentage of the County's solid waste may have to be exported to facilities out of Los Angeles County, which may result in increased costs and environmental impacts. This concern is exacerbated by the projected increase in waste generation to approximately 84,839 tpd by 2027.

Table 13.1: Remaining Permitted Disposal Capacity for Los Angeles County Existing Landfills (As of December 31, 2012)

Landfill	Maximum Daily Capacity (Tons)	Estimated Remaining Permitted Capacity (Million Tons)*	Remaining Life (Years)**
Antelope Valley	1,800	16.91	30
Burbank	240	2.95	41
Calabasas	3,500	5.51	16
Chiquita Canyon	6,000	3.97	2
Lancaster	3,000	12.27	13
Pebbly Beach	49	0.09	16
Puente Hills	13,200	6.10	1***
San Clemente	10	0.04	20
Scholl Canyon	3,400	3.41	16
Sunshine Canyon (City/County)	12,100	74.37	20
Whittier (Savage Canyon)	350	3.56	13
Total	**43,649**	**129.20**	**188**

Source: Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan, 2012 Annual Report, August 2013.

*Estimated remaining permitted capacity based on landfill owner/operator responses in a written survey conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works in May 2013, as well as a review of site specific permit criteria established by local land use agencies, local enforcement agencies, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

**Landfill remaining life is based on 1) the 2012 average daily disposal tonnage, 2) maximum permitted capacity as of December 31, 2012, or 3) the facility's permit restrictions as of December 31, 2012.

***The Puente Hills Landfill closed on October 31, 2013.

As detailed in the 2012 Annual Report for the County IWMP, a shortfall of permitted solid waste disposal capacity in Los Angeles County is anticipated under current conditions. The use of out-of-County facilities therefore plays a critical role in meeting the County's disposal needs. For instance, the LACSD acquired the Mesquite Regional Landfill in Imperial County in 2002 and completed construction of all infrastructures on December 24, 2008. The Mesquite Regional Landfill has a permitted capacity of 20,000 tpd and a 100-year lifespan. The Mesquite Regional Landfill, together with other existing out-of-County landfills, could potentially handle up to approximately 21,350 tpd of waste from Los Angeles County.

To facilitate the use of out-of-County facilities, it is also important to expand transfer and processing infrastructure and develop a waste-by-rail system. Specifically, nearly all solid waste is currently transported to disposal sites in the metropolitan area by truck. However, as public opposition to siting new or expanding existing disposal facilities near urban areas has grown, sites farther from the Los Angeles Basin have become more desirable, despite the costs associated with longer transport distances. For some sites, such as the Mesquite Regional Landfill, which is 210 miles from Downtown Los Angeles, rail transport is an efficient means to transport solid waste to remote disposal sites. Transitioning to remote disposal of solid waste that involves rail transport requires new infrastructure and is currently being developed by LACSD. The Waste-by-Rail system will provide long-term disposal capacity to replace local landfills as they reach capacity and close. The starting point of the Waste-by-Rail System is the Puente Hills Intermodal Facility (PHIMF), located near the Puente Hills Materials Recovery Facility. Residual waste from materials recovery facilities and transfer stations located throughout Los Angeles County will be loaded onto rail carts at the PHIMF, and transported via rail to the Mesquite Regional Landfill for disposal.

2. Promoting Alternative Technologies

Faced with a dwindling landfill capacity, as well as the impacts of climate change, the County must evaluate sustainable options for solid waste management, such as conversion technologies and landfill gas to energy facilities. LACSD currently has three landfill gas to energy facilities in Puente Hills, Scholl Canyon, and Calabasas that generate electrical power from landfill gas. Landfill gas is created through the natural decomposition of refuse and has about half the energy content of natural gas. Conversion technologies refer to a wide variety of biological, mechanical, chemical, and thermal (excluding incineration) processes that convert residual post recycled municipal solid waste and other organic feedstock into useful products, alternative fuels and clean and renewable energy. Additionally, utilizing conversion technologies locally could effectively enhance recycling, reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, extend the life of existing landfills and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Conversion technologies are currently being explored by the County in conjunction with the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee, which is comprised of a diverse group of representatives from public agencies, industry, community, and other experts in the field of conversion technologies. As a part of the Southern California Conversion Technology Demonstration Project, on April 20, 2010, the Board of Supervisors approved agreements to develop three conversion technology demonstration projects, and instructed DPW to begin evaluating options for the development of commercial-scale projects. For more information, please visit the Southern

California Conversion Technology Demonstration Project web site at http://www.socalconversion.org.

3. Trash Hauling

For many years, residential and commercial solid waste collection services within the unincorporated areas were provided through an open-market system, whereby each resident/business directly arranged for trash collection services with no County involvement. However, the open market system was unable to adapt to changes in federal and state laws regarding waste reduction, changing public attitudes toward protecting the environment and increasing consumer demands for better service. In response, DPW gradually implemented the Garbage Disposal District and Residential Franchise System to replace the open-market system.

These systems provide many benefits such as quality customer services, enhanced recycling programs, environmental workshops, free bulky item pick-ups, and annual clean-up events. These systems are designed to provide uniform service standards by haulers operating in each area. The system provides each community with the flexibility needed to create services that will most benefit area residents. These features are modified to reflect feedback received through survey cards, community meetings, and telephone calls. This interactive process allows the County to tailor each contract or agreement to meet the needs voiced by each community. The system also benefits the community by limiting the wear and tear on County streets, assists the County in meeting the State's waste reduction mandate, and reduces the need for new landfills.

Garbage Disposal Districts

Garbage Disposal Districts (GDDs) are designated areas within the unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County where trash collection and recycling services are provided to both residents and businesses by a private waste hauler who contracts with DPW. Service fees are collected from each property owner through the property tax bill. To date, the County has established seven GDDs in the central Los Angeles and Malibu communities.

Residential Franchise System

In a residential franchise system, an agreement is awarded to an exclusive waste hauler to provide trash and recycling services through automated cart collection to all single family residences and duplexes within specific unincorporated communities. Currently, there are 21 residential franchise areas. DPW may replace the remaining residential open-market system areas, including the Antelope Valley in the near future.

Commercial Franchise System

As of July 2012, all unincorporated area residents, businesses and multifamily residents that utilize dumpster and/or roll-off trash collection service are served by a non-exclusive franchise system. In the non-exclusive franchise system, the County allows solid waste collection services to be provided by private waste haulers, but requires haulers to enter into a non-exclusive commercial franchise agreement with the County. Under this non-exclusive franchise system, waste haulers must provide a higher level of service standards and customers have a choice of more than one waste hauler because the system is open to competition to all haulers that enter into the agreement. The waste haulers deal directly with the public and businesses in competing for customers.

Goals and Policies for Solid Waste

Goal PS/F 5: Adequate disposal capacity and minimal waste and pollution.	
Topic	**Policy**
Waste Management	Policy PS/F 5.1: Maintain an efficient, safe and responsive waste management system that reduces waste while protecting the health and safety of the public.
	Policy PS/F 5.2: Ensure adequate disposal capacity by providing for environmentally sound and technically feasible development of solid waste management facilities, such as landfills and transfer/processing facilities.
	Policy PS/F 5.3: Discourage incompatible land uses near or adjacent to solid waste disposal facilities identified in the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan.
Waste Diversion	Policy PS/F 5.4: Encourage solid waste management facilities that utilize conversion and other alternative technologies and waste to energy facilities.
	Policy PS/F 5.5: Reduce the County's waste stream by minimizing waste generation and enhancing diversion.
	Policy PS/F 5.6: Encourage the use and procurement of recyclable and biodegradable materials.
	Policy PS/F 5.7: Encourage the recycling of construction and demolition debris generated by public and private projects.
	Policy PS/F 5.8: Ensure adequate and regular waste and recycling collection services.
	Policy PS/F 5.9: Encourage the availability of trash and recyclables containers in new developments, public streets, and large venues.

VI. Utilities

Background

The County's utility infrastructure, information and communication networks are layered with utility rights of way and properties that contain tower structures, substations, generating plants, pipelines, storage fields, valve stations, wells, radio and television studios and other equipment facilities. In the unincorporated areas, most electric, natural gas, or telecommunication services are delivered by private service providers. However, the County recognizes the need to define and ensure adequate levels of service in these areas as Los Angeles County continues to grow.

Issues

1. Energy Conservation

The unincorporated areas are faced with considerable strain on existing electricity and power delivery systems. As a result of increased electricity usage and prolonged hot weather conditions due to climate change, brown outs, or losses of power and forced reductions in electricity delivery, occur periodically throughout the State. There is a need to upgrade the County's power grid and service capabilities, and to educate the public on energy conservation. Upgrades and enhancements of local services and strong energy conservation programs can add to the reliability and efficiency of the overall utility network, and contribute to the long-term quality of life for residents and businesses.

Similarly, the region's substantial population growth is outpacing the development of new natural gas supplies, much of which is imported from out of state. In addition to heating and cooking, natural gas currently provides 73 percent to 90 percent of the energy used to generate electricity, especially during peak times. As the population continues to grow, the County must focus on the development of new natural gas supplies, including locally produced natural gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG); upgrading and enhancing the region's natural gas infrastructure system to improve reliability and efficiency; strong energy conservation programs; and renewable energy alternatives.

A major contributor to the long-term energy independence of Los Angeles County will be the increased production of energy from renewable sources. The production of energy from renewable sources onsite can also ensure the ongoing operations of primary health, safety and civic infrastructure during times of disruption. The County is a participant in the Statewide Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI), which identifies sites that are suitable for various types of renewable energy sources, including geothermal, solar, wind and biomass. This issue is discussed in greater detail in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element.

2. Siting Facilities

It is important for the County to address land use compatibility in siting infrastructure facilities that are necessary for the delivery of energy and information resources. Siting utility infrastructure and facilities is difficult, as many parts of the unincorporated areas are built out with little room for facility expansion. In certain areas, there is public opposition to the expansion or placement of utility infrastructure. In the case of new natural gas storage facilities, there is added difficulty in finding locations with specific geologic conditions to ensure efficiency and reliability.

Goals and Policies for Utilities

Goal PS/F 6: A County with adequate public utilities.	
Topic	**Policy**
Utility Infrastructure	Policy PS/F 6.1: Ensure efficient and cost-effective utilities that serve existing and future needs.
	Policy PS/F 6.2: Improve existing wired and wireless telecommunications infrastructure.
	Policy PS/F 6.3: Expand access to wireless technology networks, while minimizing visual impacts through co-location and design.
	Policy PS/F 6.4: Protect and enhance utility facilities to maintain the safety, reliability, integrity and security of utility services.
	Policy PS/F 6.5: Encourage the use of renewable energy sources in utility and telecommunications networks.
	Policy PS/F 6.6: Encourage the construction of utilities underground, where feasible.
	Policy PS/F 6.7: Discourage above-ground electrical distribution and transmission lines in hazard areas.
	Policy PS/F 6.8: Encourage projects that incorporate onsite renewable energy systems.
	Policy PS/F 6.9: Support the prohibition of public access within, and the limitation of access in areas adjacent to natural gas storage facilities and oil and gas production and processing facilities to minimize trespass and ensure security.
	Policy PS/F 6.10: Encourage utility siting to be localized and decentralized to reduce impacts; reduce transmission losses; promote local conservation by connecting users to their systems more directly; and reduce system malfunctions.

VII. Early Care and Education Facilities

Background

The County's role in developing and managing educational facilities and programs is limited. However, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (COE), which is the country's largest regional education agency, serves as an intermediary between the local school districts and the California Department of Education. The COE is guided by a seven member County Board of Education, which is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The COE provides a vision statement and strategic opportunities for educational facility development to coordinate the assessment of facility needs and the construction of schools that fall to individual school districts. For more information, please visit the COE web site at http://www.lacoe.edu.

Another role that the County plays in coordinating in public school facilities is through the County subdivision approval process, in which developers are required to assess the need for, and in some cases provide, land for the construction of public schools within their development. Development impact fees, based on the size of a development, are distributed to the appropriate school district for the construction of school facilities before the County issues any building permits.

Issues

Land Use Coordination

At a minimum, the California Education Code requires public school districts to notify the local planning agency when siting new public schools to determine if the proposed site conforms to the General Plan. In addition, school districts consult with the County through the CEQA process.

As educational facilities are major components of, and significantly impact neighborhoods, it is essential for the County to work proactively with school districts and other educational providers to ensure the coordination between land use planning and school facilities planning. Joint-use school facilities, as opposed to stand-alone institutions, can benefit communities and create operational and economic efficiencies. School facilities should be accessible and open to multiple users, including students and the greater community.

As discussed in the Land Use Element and the Economic Development Element, there is a shortage of early care and education facilities in Los Angeles County. According to the 2011 Los Angeles County Child Care and Development Needs Assessment, the availability of licensed care facilities—both centers and family child care homes—varies by age. For infant/toddlers, there are sufficient facilities to accommodate only one out of every seven children in working families; for preschool-age children, there are three spaces for every four children; for school-age children requiring after school care while parents work, there is one licensed space for every three children. Half-day preschool options are available for seven out of every ten eligible children of three and four years who are able to use a half-day program. For more information on 2011 Child Care Needs Assessment, please visit the CEO Office of Child Care web site athttp://childcare.lacounty.gov.

Goals and Policies for Early Care and Education Facilities

Goal PS/F 7: A County with adequate educational facilities.	
Topic	**Policy**
Early Care and Educational Facilities	Policy PS/F 7.1: Encourage the joint-use of school sites for community activities and other appropriate uses.
	Policy PS/F 7.2: Proactively work with school facilities and education providers to coordinate land use and facilities planning.
	Policy PS/F 7.3: Encourage adequate facilities for early care and education.

VIII. Libraries

Background

The County of Los Angeles Public Library is one of the largest public library systems in the country. In fiscal year 2011-2012, the Library staff circulated 16.5 million items to 3.1 million cardholders; answered over 8 million reference questions; provided 18,000 programs to 500,000 children, teens, and adults; and assisted the public with three million internet sessions on the Library's public access computers. The Library system is a special fund County department operating under the direction of the Board of Supervisors. Figure 13.2 identifies the County libraries and service planning areas.

Figure 13.2: Libraries Map

Supplementing the 7.5 million volume book collection, the Library also offers magazines, newspapers, microfilm, government publications, specialized reference materials, magazines, audio-visual media, adult, teen and children programs, downloadable audio and e-books, and internet access, including WiFi.

For more information on the Library system, please refer to the County of Los Angeles Library Strategic Plan, which can be viewedathttp://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/strategic.html.

Library Facilities Mitigation Fees

The County applies a library facilities mitigation fee to new residential developments in the unincorporated areas. This fee is intended to mitigate the significant adverse impacts of increased residential development on the Library system. The library facilities mitigation fee is based on the estimated cost of providing the projected library facility needs in each library planning area. Please refer to Section 22.72.030 of the County's Zoning Code for the library facilities mitigation fee in each of the seven library planning areas.

The mitigation fee in each planning area is reviewed annually by the County Librarian, in consultation with the County Auditor Controller, and is adjusted every July 1. According to the Zoning Code, no adjustment shall increase or decrease the fee to an amount more or less than the amount necessary to recover the cost of providing applicable library facilities and services.

The provisions of the Library Facilities Mitigation Fee Ordinance are applicable to residential projects only. All library facilities mitigation fees received by the County are deposited into a special library capital facilities fund (one for each library planning area), and expended solely for the purposes for which the fees were collected.

Issues

Library Facility Needs

The majority of the County's 86 libraries are undersized and under-stocked to meet the service needs of current and projected populations served by the Library system. A study conducted by the Library in April 2001 determined that many of the County's libraries do not meet basic facility and service planning guidelines. The current guideline for library facility space is a minimum of 0.5 gross square foot per capita. The 2001 study determined that 89 percent of existing libraries will not meet that standard in the year 2020. In addition, the study determined that by 2020, 77 percent of existing libraries will not meet the Library's current service level planning guideline of 2.75 items (books and other library materials) per capita.

Many existing County libraries are located in areas with little or no new residential development, and therefore, there are no mitigation fees or other reliable sources of capital funding available to replace or expand them. A permanent source of funding to replace or expand existing facilities is needed to meet the projected population growth in the Library's service areas over the next two decades.

Goals and Policies for Libraries

Goal PS/F 8: A comprehensive public library system.	
Topic	**Policy**
Library System	Policy PS/F 8.1: Ensure a desired level of library service through coordinated land use and facilities planning.
	Policy PS/F 8.2: Support library mitigation fees that adequately address the impacts of new development.

IX. Public Services and Facilities Element Implementation Program

- Planning Area Capital Improvement Plans
- Water Conservation Ordinance
- Agricultural Water Conservation Program

For descriptions of these programs, please refer to Chapter 16: General Plan Implementation Programs.

[Text Box]

Constituent Service Centers and Environmental Service Centers

Due to geographic spread and demographic characteristics, there is a need to establish a number of local centers that can address specific constituent needs and requests, in close proximity to homes and places of work. Constituent Service Centers provide high quality, public services at conveniently located facilities. Specific County department presence will be tailored to each community's needs, including but not limited to community meeting rooms, libraries, senior community centers, and field offices for various County departments such as Consumer Affairs, Sheriff, Planning, and Building and Safety. Additional services could include Adult Protective Services, and space for community-based organizations. Constituent Service Centers include the East Los Angeles Civic Center, and two in Florence-Firestone and Lennox.

Environmental Service Centers are Constituent Service Centers that provide assistance to the community on environmental initiatives, such as the County's Green Building Program, AB 811 and the PACE program. County staff is available to answer questions about retrofits, water conservation, and the County's Green Building policies. An Environmental Service Center is located in West Athens-Westmont.