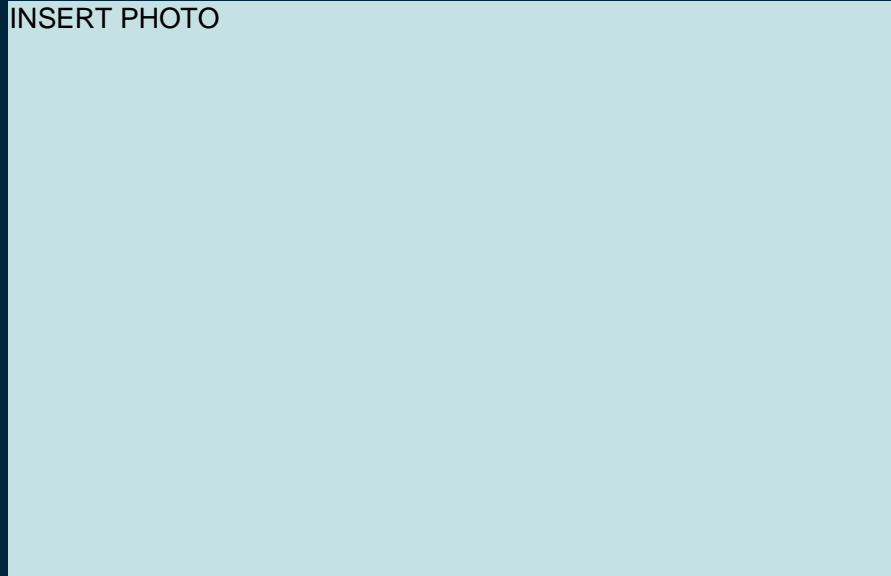


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CHAPTER 5 Public Services & Facilities Element

5.1 Introduction

The Public Services and Facilities element establishes goals and policies to address topics that are publicly managed and have a direct influence on the location of land uses, including early care and education facilities, libraries, sewer and stormwater facilities, solid waste, utilities and water (supply and conservation).

ORGANIZATION

Below is a summary of the types of public services and facilities considered in this Element. Following a summary of each facility or service type is a description of the primary issues and opportunities for public services and facilities across the Area Plan Communities (see Section 5.2, *Issues and Opportunities*), followed by the goals and policies, which will guide topics that are publicly managed for the WSGV Planning Area.

A. COUNTY FIELD OFFICES

Unincorporated areas in the WSGV rely on County field offices for essential public services, typically provided by a municipality. County field offices provide support and are important resource hubs for residents in the Planning Area. Enhancing access, awareness and utilization of County field offices is essential to improve service delivery and community engagement.

The fifth district's field office is based in Pasadena and is a resource hub for the communities of Altadena, La Crescenta Montrose, Kinneloa Mesa, East Pasadena-East San Gabriel, South Monrovia Islands, and San Pasqual. The First District has a district field office in South El Monte that serves the communities of South San Gabriel, South El Monte Island, and Whittier Narrows.

B. HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Distribution of and access to healthcare facilities varies across the Plan Area communities and healthcare services are offered by a combination of private and public providers. The County-operated Department of Health Services (DHS) operates a comprehensive network of 28 health centers and four hospitals. The closest County hospital to the Planning Area is the Los Angeles General Medical Center located just east of Downtown Los Angeles and about seven miles west of the Planning Area. The closest County-operated health center to the Planning Area is the El Monte Comprehensive Health Center in the City of El Monte, just one mile north of the South El Monte Island community. DHS primarily caters to those who lack health insurance and provides a range of services including primary care, substance abuse, urgent and emergency medical services, diagnostic services, and specialty services including mental healthcare.

C. PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Parks in the WSGV represent integral parts of the County's commitment to enhancing the well-being of residents and promoting environmental stewardship. Within the WSGV, the County manages 3,540 acres of parkland, organized into two categories: local and regional parks, each catering to distinct needs within the WSGV communities. Within the 3,540 acres of County-managed parkland in WSGV, 1,627 acres have been identified as conservation priority areas,

highlighting the County’s effort to preserve and protect natural habitats. Local parks, comprising 56 acres in the WSGV, serve as neighborhood hubs, offering various recreational opportunities for daily use, such as play equipment, sports fields, picnic areas, and restrooms. Yet, with a current deficit of 435 acres in local parkland, there is an ongoing commitment to meet the established goal of 4 acres per 1,000 people outlined in the County General Plan. The regional park system, covering 3,484 acres in the WSGV, strives to meet broader recreational needs. Regional parks like Eaton Canyon Natural Area and Nature Center offer diverse features, including hiking and equestrian trails, nature centers, and wildlife habitats. The County General Plan also sets goals of 6 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 people. However, a current regional park shortage of 2,007 acres indicates continuous effort is needed to meet the park standards. Despite these challenges, the County remains dedicated to providing accessible and well-maintained green spaces for the WSGV community, ensuring that parks continue to enrich the lives of residents.

D. LIBRARIES

In the WSGV, the LA County Library Department operates most libraries. These libraries offer a wide range of services through numerous branches. and extend beyond traditional book lending resources with a comprehensive online platform. Broader services include eBook and audiobook lending, household tool borrowing, laptop and hotspot loans, employment preparation programs, and health-related programs like vaccine clinics. Enhancing the promotion of these diverse services is key to increasing community utilization and awareness.

The community of Altadena is unique among the Planning Area communities in that it operates an independent library district with two branches located within the community—the Altadena Library and District Office at the heart of the community and the Bob Lucas Memorial Library and Literacy Center on the west side of the community.

E. SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

In the WSGV, education is supported by a variety of school districts, each offering a range of schools and services. This diversity reflects the unique educational needs throughout the Planning Area. All of the

communities in the Planning Area except for Whittier Narrows have at least one day care or childcare facility within their boundaries.

Whereas, just over half of the WSGV communities, including Altadena, East Pasadena-East San Gabriel, La Crescenta Montrose, South Monrovia Islands, and South San Gabriel have access to a variety of grade schools within or just outside their community boundary. Smaller unincorporated communities of San Pasqual and South El Monte Island, have schools located within a few miles of their community boundary. Kinneloa Mesa includes just one private elementary school within the community's boundary.

F. SANITARY SEWER & STORMWATER FACILITIES

In the WSGV, stormwater and sewage systems are managed separately by the Los Angeles County Flood Control Districts and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, respectively. All of the communities in the Planning Area are within the urban regions of the LA River watershed. Collaboration between agencies is necessary for effective water management and environmental protection.

Stormwater Infrastructure

Stormwater is collected by a network of storm drains and channels, directed to specialized facilities for filtration and retention. In addition to water from rain, stormwater collected in the network of systems includes any pollutants carried by the rainwater into the drain as well as dry weather runoff such as water from residential gardening and commercial business uses. Beyond water conservation, stormwater infrastructure support increased groundwater recharge, flood risk management, improved local water quality, protection of local habitats for wildlife, and improved climate resilience such as mitigation of urban heat island effects.

Sewer Infrastructure

In the Planning Area, most residential and business properties are connected to small sewers maintained by the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District of Los Angeles, (CSMD) a division of the County's Public Works Department. Larger sewers and lines that carry sewage to wastewater facilities in these areas are operated by the LA County Sanitation Districts.

The agency operates two wastewater treatment facilities in the Tributary Area of the communities which make up the Planning Area. The first is the Whittier Narrows Reclamation Plant which treats the sewage from about 150,000 people in the area. The wastewater treated at the plant is either reused at the plant, sent to the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, or allocated for groundwater recharge into the nearby Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Coastal Spreading Grounds. The second plant servicing communities in the Planning Area is the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant, located near Whittier Narrows and services the sewage of approximately 1 million people.

G. SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

The County of LA has the largest solid waste management system in the country. LA County Public Works manages waste management contracts, ensuring efficient collection and recycling services for residents and businesses. In the unincorporated communities throughout the County, including WSGV, LA County Public Works manages two types of waste management contracts, residential and commercial franchise systems. Residents in single family and duplex properties within the Planning Area fall under the County's Residential Franchise System where private waste haulers sign exclusive contracts with the County to provide services in particular unincorporated communities.

In South San Gabriel, Whittier Narrows, Altadena, and Kinneloa Mesa, trash, recycling and organic waste collection services for single family and duplex customers are provided by Universal Waste Systems, Inc. Residents in La Crescenta Montrose, South Monrovia Islands, San Pasqual, East Pasadena-East San Gabriel are provided with waste management services including trash, green waste, and recyclables from Burrtec Waste Industries, Inc. S El Monte Island is serviced by Ware Disposal for solid waste management and recycling services.

For businesses, multi-family properties (5+ units), and other customers needing dumpster services in the Planning Area, the County utilizes an Exclusive Commercial Franchise system. The Planning Area is divided into two Commercial Service Areas (CSA) for commercial solid waste collection. Customers that fall under the Exclusive Commercial Franchises system in Altadena and La Crescenta Montrose are covered in the Foothills CSA and are serviced by American Reclamation Inc, while commercial customers in the remaining six

communities fall under the San Gabriel Valley West CSA and are serviced by Valley Vista Services.

H. UTILITIES

Natural gas and electricity utilities provide energy resources necessary to power homes and businesses. These utilities support a wide range of activities, from residential heating and cooling to powering businesses and public infrastructure.

Electricity in the Planning Area is provided by Southern California Edison (SCE), and natural gas services are provided by SoCal Gas. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) provides regulatory oversight to both utility providers in an effort to support renewable energy initiatives and promote safety and conservation awareness.

I. WATER: SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION

WSGV is provided a continuous supply of clean water for everyday uses through a comprehensive water management system, which consists of numerous water providers, water control boards and other agencies. Water is imported into the 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. Water services are provided by a network of water districts, water wholesalers and private companies that specialize in developing and improving water service for their customers.

5.2 Issues and Opportunities

The issues and opportunities are summarized below by resource topic area and are broadly applicable across communities unless otherwise noted.

A. COUNTY FIELD OFFICES

Access to Public Services

Expanding County capacity and visibility of County field offices is crucial for enhancing access to public services information and resources. Enhancing the presence and involvement of County district offices in these areas plays a pivotal role in ensuring that residents can

effectively engage with their elected representatives, voice their concerns, and advocate for their needs at the Countywide and community level.

Community Councils

Community groups or councils, such as the Altadena, Crescenta Valley, Monrovia-Arcadia-Duarte town councils or similar bodies, facilitate more direct communication and advocacy with the County. Drawing from strengths of community-based organizations, community groups can help facilitate communication, public service delivery, and community representation.

B. ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Inconsistent distribution of healthcare facilities poses challenges for some WSGV communities. The placement of new healthcare facilities in areas without existing resources can help bridge the gap in access for communities located further from those facilities.

For households without a personal vehicle, transportation can pose a barrier to accessing healthcare services. The County provides a public transportation shuttle for individuals with disabilities seeking healthcare. Addressing transportation barriers and strategically placing new healthcare facilities can improve accessibility for residents, especially those without personal vehicles.

C. PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Limited space and conflicting needs challenge park development and expansion in the WSGV. Innovative land-use solutions and multi-functional spaces can optimize existing resources. Ensuring safe and inclusive facilities and climate resilience strategies are essential for enhancing community well-being.

D. ACCESS TO LIBRARY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Improving physical resources and exploring alternative library services can increase accessibility for communities without direct library access. Co-locating facilities with other public resources and expanding outreach programs enhance community engagement and address the digital divide.

E. SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Uneven distribution of early childhood care centers in the WSGV calls for improved transportation services, technology or outreach services to improve access to education centers. Joint use of school facilities offers benefits to communities by allowing community members access to school amenities such as playgrounds, sports fields, and gymnasiums during non-school hours. School facilities can also serve as a venue for community engagement events, after-school and adult educational programs, multilingual educational programs and voting centers.

F. SANITARY SEWER & STORMWATER FACILITIES

Impervious surfaces and aging infrastructure can pose challenges for stormwater management. However, the unique geographic features of many WSGV communities, especially those located near the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente Hills, present opportunities for the efficient capture of stormwater runoff. Implementing rain capture gardening techniques and bioswales for stormwater capture can absorb runoff and help recharge groundwater. Increasing awareness of sewer management responsibilities and investing in infrastructure modernization are essential for improving climate conditions and urban livability in the Planning Area.

G. SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

The complexity of LA County's sanitation system, with separate waste management contracts for different types of residences and businesses, may be confusing for the community to navigate. This is compounded by the fact that each Planning Area is serviced by a variety of different companies, leading to potential inconsistencies in service quality and access to information. Developing a unified online platform or information hub that consolidates all waste management

information relevant to the Planning Area could simplify this for residents.

H. UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Investing in the both new and existing infrastructure and resources in the Planning Area is necessary to maintain service levels, accommodate growth, and improve resilience against storms and other climate-related hazardous events. County oversight and community engagement are crucial for balancing utility needs with community concerns. Developing a centralized information portal can streamline access to utility-related resources and support.

I. WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION

The diversified nature of water service delivery in the Planning Area results in a variety of conservation approaches and pricing structures. This diversity can make it challenging for residents to understand their service providers and responsibilities as neighboring residents may be serviced by completely different water providers. This stratification may complicate the process of accessing support for water related questions or concerns and make it difficult for residents to understand where they can access conservation resources and support.

Developing a centralized information portal could help residents navigate these complexities.

Xeriscaping is a landscaping method developed especially for arid and semi-arid climates that utilizes water-conserving techniques. It involves the use of drought-tolerant plants, efficient irrigation systems, and various soil amendments to reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation. This approach not only conserves water but also typically requires less maintenance than traditional landscaping.

SOURCE: U.S. EPA

Xeriscaping

5.3 Goals and Policies

The General Plan 2035 sets the policy direction for all the unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County. In addition to General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs, the following goals and policies are applicable to the public services and facilities in the area. Where this Area Plan is silent on policy matters, the General Plan policies still apply. In some cases, for policies that are of high concern for the Planning Area, the General Plan policies have been reiterated in Appendix X.

A. COUNTY FIELD OFFICES

Goal PSF-1: An informed and engaged community with accessible County representatives.

Policy PSF-1.1: Access to county services and field offices.

Improve the accessibility and visibility of County services and representatives in underserved areas of the Planning Area to facilitate easier access to County services and representatives.

B. HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Goal PSF-2: Public and private healthcare services and facilities are easily accessible and effectively meet the diverse needs of individual communities that make up the WSGV.

Policy PSF-2.1: Healthcare facilities near public transportation. Support the siting of new healthcare facilities near major transit stops to minimize transportation barriers and improve access to health care for community members.

C. PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Goal PSF-3: Accessible, safe, inclusive community parks and community facilities

Policy PSF-3.1: Multi-use infrastructure. Support multipurpose infrastructure such as pavilions and stages that can accommodate a wide range of cultural and community events like concerts, theatrical performances, and outdoor movie nights.

Policy PSF-3.2: Community gardens. Support community gardens in park facilities with maintenance, waste management, water resources, and regular upkeep of interior features.

Policy PSF-3.4: Green spaces and tree canopy cover in underserved communities. Increase green spaces through tree canopy, rooftop greenspaces, community gardens, and/or vertical farming structures.

Policy PSF-3.6: Pedestrian facilities. Establish buffer zones between pedestrian pathways and roadways using landscaping, street furniture, or parking lanes to enhance pedestrian safety and experience.

Goal PSF-6: Educational facilities enhance community cohesion, recreational opportunities, and public services through joint-use agreements and conversion where appropriate.

Policy PSF-6.1: Educational facilities. Optimize the use of underutilized school sites and other educational facilities through joint use of recreational space.

Goal PSF-8: Effective stormwater management practices that minimize flood hazards, protect water quality, and promote environmental sustainability.

Policy PSF-8.1 Green stormwater infrastructure. Integrate green infrastructure into parks and open space designs for effective stormwater management, such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavements and the other groundwater retention features.

- *Action:* Conduct a comprehensive assessment of park facilities to determine suitable locations for rain barrels or cisterns. Based on the comprehensive assessment, install water harvesting systems, such as rain barrels or cisterns, to collect rainwater for irrigation.

D. UTILITIES

Goal PSF-10: Public utility services are provided to all in the WSGV communities in a cost-effective, sustainable and resilient manner.

Policy PSF-10.1: Equitable distribution of utility services. Site new utility infrastructure with consideration of optimal service delivery and minimal disruption to existing communities. Prioritize locations that offer the greatest benefit in terms of resilience, sustainability and efficiency while ensuring equitable distribution of utility services across the Planning Area.

E. WATER: SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION

Goal PSF-13: Local government operations serve as a model in adopting and promoting water-efficient practices.

Policy PSF-13.1: Water efficiency in public facilities. Implement and showcase water-efficient practices, such as drought resistant planting, in all County-owned and -managed facilities within the WSGV by regularly auditing municipal buildings and public spaces to identify and address water efficiencies.

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