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LAND USE ELEMENT

El Centro General Plan

Introduction

The Land Use Element is a guide to land use planning within the City of El Centro and directly relates to many issues addressed in other General Plan elements. The Land Use Element identifies the type and location of future land uses within the City. The specific land uses and their location within the community in turn affect the remaining General Plan elements. For example, the location and type of land uses outlined in the Land Use Element affect the circulation system that is identified in the Circulation Element, and the open space facilities identified in the Land Use Element affect the Conservation/Open Space Element policies. The land uses identified in the Land Use Element also reflect the community's goals for its future form and character.

Purpose of the Land Use Element

As a city, State law requires that El Centro prepare and adopt a General Plan as a tool to manage growth and development. The Land Use Element is a mandatory element or chapter of the General Plan.

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to describe present and planned land use activity which has been designed to achieve the community's long-range goals for the future. The Land Use Element identifies the proposed general distribution, location, and extent of land uses such as open space and recreation, residential, commercial, industrial, and public/institutional. The Element consists of text, maps, and diagrams that outline the future land uses within the City and how these uses are integrated with the other General Plan elements and policies. The Land Use Policy Map is a particularly important feature of the Element since it shows the location and types of development within the City. The Element also describes the intensity or density of development planned for the community. The Land Use Element also addresses the relationship between development and environmental quality, potential hazards, and social and economic objectives.

The Land Use Element of the El Centro General Plan represents the City's desire for long-range changes and enhancements of land uses. The current Element and its policies form a continuation with policies and goals to create a future in which the traditional character of the City is preserved and enhanced by new development.

Finally, the goals and policies contained in this Element establish the constitutional framework for future land use planning and decision making in El Centro.

Scope and Content of the Land Use Element

The Land Use Element complies with the requirements of the General Plan Land Use Element mandated in Government Code Section 65302 (a). The Element is comprised of three sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Issues, Goals, and Policies, and (3) the Land Use Plan. In the Issues, Goals, and Policies section, major land use issues are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues.

The goals, which are overall statements of the community's desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for reviewing development proposals, planning facilities to accommodate anticipated growth, and accomplishing community development strategies. To achieve the goals and policies, a logical, organized land use pattern is established in the Plan with standards for future community development. The Plan contains the Land Use Policy Map that graphically identifies the planned land uses within El Centro. The land use designations are described, including the type and density of allowed uses and a statistical summary of the future land use composition is provided. Neighborhood areas which may involve more focused planning efforts are also identified. Specific implementation programs for the Element are located in the General Plan Implementation Program (Appendix A).

Related Plans and Programs

There are a number of related plans and programs that are considered in the formulation, adoption and implementation of local land use policy. Related plans and programs are both local and regional in nature. Regional planning agencies, such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) recognize that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. Efforts to address regional planning issues such as air quality, transportation, affordable housing and habitat conservation have resulted in the adoption of regional plans. The form and distribution of development in El Centro are affected by regional plans. Relevant local and regional plans related to the Land Use Element are discussed briefly in the following sections.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the State legislature in response to a public mandate for thorough environmental analysis of projects that might affect the environment. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedure are described in the CEQA Statutes and the CEQA Guidelines.

Implementation of CEQA ensures that during the decision making stage of development, City officials and the general public will be able to assess the

environmental impacts associated with private and public development projects to the environment.

City of El Centro Zoning Ordinance

El Centro adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1962 and adopted the current Zoning Ordinance in 1989. The ordinance has since been updated to incorporate changes within the community and to the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element. Together, the Zoning Ordinance and associated Zoning Map identify specific types of land use, intensity of use, and development and performance standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City. The Zoning Ordinance is required by law to be consistent with the General Plan and is one of the major implementation tools for the General Plan.

SCAG Regional Plan

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is responsible for much of the regional planning in this area of Southern California. SCAG has been preparing long range growth and development plans for the Southern California region since the early 1970s as part of the ongoing Development Guide Program.

This program provides a framework for coordinating local and regional decisions regarding future growth and development. An important component of this process is the preparation of growth forecast policies at intervals ranging from three to five years. The adopted growth forecast policies become the basis for SCAG's functional plans (transportation, housing, air and water) for the region. The population totals and growth distribution are used in planning the future capacity of highways and transit systems, quantity and location of housing, water supply, and siting and sizing of sewage treatment systems.

SCAG Growth Management Plan

The SCAG Growth Management Plan recommends methods to direct regional growth to minimize traffic congestion and better protect environmental quality. The goals of the Growth Management Plan include balancing jobs and housing. While SCAG has no authority to mandate implementation of its Growth Management Plan, principal goals have implications for the land use composition of El Centro.

Redevelopment Implementation Plan

El Centro has adopted a Redevelopment Project Area that encompasses a majority of the City to the south of Interstate 8, along Imperial Avenue north of State Street, the downtown area, and the non-residential area to the east of the railroad tracks. With the adoption of Assembly Bill 1290, which came into law in 1994, the El Centro Redevelopment Agency prepared a five year implementation

plan for the Redevelopment Project Area. The Redevelopment Implementation Plan is one of the tools that the City uses to implement policies included in the Land Use Element.

El Centro Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

In 2008, the City adopted a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan to further develop the projects, programs and investments necessary to implement General Plan goals. The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan focuses primarily on park and recreation facilities and joint use with the schools. The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan recommended increasing the park acreage per 1,000 people in El Centro and provides specific recommendations around the Civic Center and other Cultural Facilities.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

In accordance with State planning law, the Land Use Element must be consistent with the other General Plan Elements. While each element is independent, all the elements together comprise the General Plan. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other elements. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the General Plan elements provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs, and achievement of community goals.

All elements of the General Plan relate closely with the Land Use Element. This Element establishes the planned land use pattern for El Centro based on the historic formation of the City and the community's vision for the future. Alternatively, the other General Plan elements ensure that infrastructure and public facilities are available to accommodate planned land uses, and that the unique qualities of El Centro are safeguarded and enhanced.

For example, the Housing Element of the General Plan provides the basis for establishing housing stock that meets the affordability requirements and other special needs of the community. The Circulation Element provides a Circulation Plan to accommodate increased traffic from planned development. The use of alternative transportation modes and reduction of automobile trips are addressed in the Circulation Element to meet the transportation demands from new development and to mitigate the impact of development on regional air quality and traffic conditions.

The Economic Development Element establishes a plan that includes a balance of land uses facilitating economic and fiscal growth.

The Safety and Noise Elements ensure that planned land uses identified in the Land Use Element are compatible and will not result in public safety hazards or exposure of people to excessive noise.

A number of the areas are designated for parks and open space on the Land Use Policy Map for recreational and aesthetic purposes. The Public Facilities and Conservation/Open Space Elements provide for policy and plans that maintain and enhance existing parks and recreational facilities and to develop new facilities to meet new demand from population growth. The Conservation/Open Space policies are also designed to protect natural resources.

Additionally, the Public Facilities Element addresses the availability of utilities and services for planned development including law enforcement, fire protection, public schools, community and cultural centers, libraries, water, and sewer. This Element assures that adequate utilities and services are available for planned development identified in the Land Use Element.

Issues, Goals, and Policies

Balance of Land Uses

El Centro contains a fairly balanced mixture of land uses. While the City requires revenue generated by commercial and industrial uses to support the needs of the existing community, these non-residential land uses must be compatible with the existing community. Land uses such as open space areas can be used to buffer residential areas from non-residential uses. Land use designations can also limit the types of industrial and commercial activities to those which are most compatible with residential areas.

Land Use Goal 1: Provide planning and strategies for physical land use to create a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment that balances the social and economic needs of the community.

General

Policy 1.1: Ensure that new development is consistent and compatible with the existing character of the community and meets City development standards.

Policy 1.2: Prevent the intrusion of incompatible land uses into existing developments, such as incompatible non-residential development in residential areas.

Residential

Policy 1.3: Ensure that new residential development is compatible with surrounding existing residential development.

Commercial

Policy 1.4: Achieve a balance of commercial uses that provides for the retail, business, professional, and other service needs of City residents and which will attract customers from the greater Imperial Valley and other areas.

Policy 1.5: Balance new commercial development elsewhere in the City with the need to maintain a financially viable downtown.

Policy 1.6: Allow for commercial uses on the first floor and residential uses on the second floor in the downtown district on a project-by-project basis if the project will:

- Be compatible with the surrounding area;
- Provide appropriately designed entrances for the commercial and residential uses; and
- Comply with other requirements set forth by the City's conditional use permit.

Policy 1.7: Encourage the development of neighborhood convenience shopping centers to serve the needs of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Policy 1.8: Improve the relationship between commercial areas and adjacent noncommercial uses through the use of landscape buffers and masonry walls for separation.

Industrial

Policy 1.9: Prevent the intrusion of all incompatible uses that would negatively affect industrial areas and opportunities for industrial growth.

Policy 1.10: Use lower intensity industrial uses as a transition between heavier industrial use and non-industrial use.

Policy 1.11: Require new industrial development to provide adequate circulation and access that does not negatively impact adjacent residential areas. Where needed, industries should have access to railroad lines.

Community Facilities

Policy 1.12: Ensure that facilities and services of public agencies are coordinated with City growth in their timing, location, and levels of service.

Policy 1.13: Develop and expand public facilities in a manner that is compatible with existing and planned development.

Policy 1.14: Continue to use the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan as a guide for improvement of existing facilities and for the development of new facilities.

Policy 1.15: Require new development adjacent to open drains and canals to underground these facilities to ensure the public safety. The undergrounding of facilities shall be done in concordance and coordination with the Imperial Irrigation District.

Direct and Control Growth

El Centro, as well as the surrounding region, has experienced considerable growth over the past 25 years. New development brings change, and a changing community character. While recognizing that change is inevitable, the community is still able to plan and guide future development so that it complements the existing community, and enhances the existing character and found in El Centro.

Land Use Goal 2: Control and direct growth so that new development is compatible with existing development and occurs in appropriate locations when adequate public services and facilities are available.

Policy 2.1: Continue to direct and control growth in the City and sphere of influence through the application of the City's Urban Development Program.

Policy 2.2: Ensure that development corresponds with the provision of public facilities and services.

Policy 2.3: Coordinate with the County and LAFCO during review and development of projects within the City's sphere of influence to ensure that compatible development occurs and adequate public facilities are provided.

Policy 2.4: Ensure that future development in areas impacted by aircraft operation is consistent with the airport land use plan to allow for the continued operation of local airports.

Policy 2.5: Encourage infill development to occur within the urbanized community before expanding new development onto agricultural lands surrounding El Centro.

Community Design

In an effort to enhance the City's beauty and assure the quality and appearance of future development, adherence to urban design principles is necessary. El Centro's buildings and structures are primarily in good physical condition; however, a number of residential and commercial structures are in need of rehabilitation or replacement.

Land Use Goal 3: Improve the visual appearance of the community by targeting areas in need for rehabilitation and beautification.

Policy 3.1: Develop and implement a city-wide enhancement plan that identifies target areas for beautification, enhancement, maintenance, and redevelopment.

Policy 3.2: Encourage the improvement and maintenance of older residential areas in order to prevent decay, blight, and decline in property values.

Policy 3.3: Promote and encourage an overall improvement in visual appearance for all commercial and industrial areas.

Related Goals and Policies

The goals and policies found in the Land Use Element are related to and support subjects included in other General Plan elements. Likewise, many goals and policies from other elements are supportive of the subjects included in the Land Use Element. These supporting goals and policies are identified in Table LU-1.

Table LU-1 Related Goals and Policies by Element

General Plan Elements	Land Use Issue Area		
	Balance of Land Uses	Direct and Control Growth	Community Design
Land Use			
Economic Development	1.5, 1.8 ,2.1, 2.2	1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.1, 2.2	1.7
Housing			
Circulation	1.1, 1.8, 4.2	1.2, 4.2	1.7, 1.8, 1.9
Public Facilities	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 5.2, 9.1, 10.1	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 4.1, 9.1, 9.2, 10.1	
Conservation/Open Space	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.4, 6.3	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.4, 7.2	
Safety	1.2, 1.3	1.2, 1.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.3	1.1, 1.4
Noise	1.1, 2.1, 3.1	1.1, 3.1	1.3, 2.3, 3.2

LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

El Centro General Plan

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques, and includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Land Use Element.

Balance of Land Uses

LU-1: Annual Review of General Plan and Land Use Policy Map

Implementation: Review implementation of the General Plan on an annual basis.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing on an annual basis

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.9, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 2.1, 2.2

LU-2: Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances Update: Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure consistency with the General Plan and to help implement the General Plan policies. Potential changes may include simplifying the zoning categories; adding additional flexibility where appropriate; including incentives to promote infill development; creating more specific enforcement guidelines for development requirements; and clarifying what improvements will be required for subdivision projects.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works, Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Plan

Time Frame: 2003-2004

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Direct and Control Growth

LU-3: Urban Development Program: Continue to implement the Urban Development Program and require applicable development in Development Tiers II and III to complete Community Facilities Studies to ensure adequate provision of public facilities and services, including the identification of future sites for public facilities such as parks and schools.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works, Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund, project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.12, 1.13, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3

LU-4: Airport Land Use Compatibility: Continue to review projects in areas subject to impacts from airport operations to ensure that new development will not be negatively impacted by noise and safety factors associated with public and private airports.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Imperial County Airport

Land Use Commission

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 2.4

Community Design

LU-5: Visual Enhancement Areas: Continue to implement the conceptual plan of visual enhancements shown in Figure LU-6 to improve the visual and economic environment of the community. Public funds can be used for projects such as landscape improvements and creating visual gateways to the community. New developments in the target areas can also be encouraged to design the projects to incorporate features to promote the Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.1, 3.1, 3.3

LU-6: Façade Improvement Plan: Continue to implement the Façade Improvement Plan to enhance the visual appearance of the downtown business district.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Redevelopment

Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1, 3.3

LU-7: Rehabilitation of Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Properties and Buildings: Provide incentives such as deferred fees, streamlined permitting, rehabilitation funding and formal recognition of contribution to overall City development quality.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Redevelopment
Funding Source: General Fund, Redevelopment funds, state and federal funds
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1, 3.2, 3.2

LU-8: Downtown Revitalization Plan: Implement the Downtown Revitalization Plan to enhance the visual and economic environment of the area. Programs such as promoting the creation of business improvement and lighting and maintenance districts will be used to improve the downtown area.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Finance, Redevelopment
Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1, 3.3

LU-9: Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan: Implement the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master to improve the quality and accessibility of park, recreation and cultural facilities and programs for the community.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation
Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds, mitigation fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 1.14

LU-10: El Dorado Colonia: Create a circulation plan for the El Dorado Colonia area. The plan will permit the subdivision of lots to allow for the installation of additional local serving roads to improve the internal circulation of the area and allow for better usage of property.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Redevelopment
Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds, Redevelopment Funds
Time Frame: 2003-2004
Related Policies: 3.1, 3.3

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Conservation/Open Space Element

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CONSERVATION/ OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

El Centro General Plan

Introduction

Some of El Centro's most valuable assets include its agricultural land, open space, parks, and community and historical resources. The Conservation/Open Space Element focuses on the protection and enhancement of open space and natural and historic resources to ensure a high quality living environment in El Centro.

Purpose of the Conservation/Open Space Element

The El Centro Conservation/Open Space Element meets the State requirements for Conservation and Open Space Elements as defined in Sections 65302(d) and 65301(e) of the Government Code. According to these requirements, the Conservation Element must contain goals and policies to protect and maintain natural resources such as water, soils, wildlife, and minerals, and prevent wasteful resource exploitation, degradation, and destruction. The Open Space Element must contain goals and policies to manage open space areas, including undeveloped lands and outdoor recreation areas. Specifically, the Open Space Element must address several open space categories such as those used for the preservation of natural resources and managed production of resources, as well as open space maintained for public health and safety reasons. This last category of open space is addressed in the Safety Element. Additionally, while air quality is not a state-mandated element, air quality is included in the Conservation/Open Space Element to address reducing pollutant levels through stationary source, mobile source, transportation and land use control, and energy conservation measures. Because the subjects required to be addressed under the Conservation Element and Open Space Element overlap substantially, the two elements have been combined for this Plan.

Scope and Content of the Conservation/Open Space Element

The Conservation/Open Space Element expresses community goals to protect environmental and historic resources and open space. Resources addressed in this element include: a) agricultural and soils conservation; b) water conservation; c) open space and natural resources; d) community and historic

resources; e) air quality; f) health and safety; g) geothermal resources; and h) energy conservation.

The Conservation/Open Space Element is comprised of four sections: 1) this Introduction; 2) Issues, Goals, and Policies; and 3) the Conservation/Open Space Plan. In the Issues, Goals, and Policies section, community open space needs and resource management issues are identified and corresponding goals and policies are established. The goals, which are overall statements of the City desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guidelines for planning and maintaining recreational facilities, enhancing the natural amenities of El Centro and minimizing the environmental effects of planned development. The Plan explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented, while the Implementation Program, included in Appendix A, identifies the specific implementation programs for this Element.

Related Plans and Programs

There are a number of existing plans and programs that directly relate to the Conservation/Open Space Element. These plans and programs have been enacted through federal, State and local action, and are administered by agencies and special districts. Federal laws pertaining to the protection of significant resources include the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the National Environmental Policy Act. Other related plans and programs are described below.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for thorough environmental analysis of projects impacting the environment. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedures are described in the CEQA statutes and CEQA Guidelines. CEQA will continue to be instrumental in ensuring that the environmental impacts associated with local development projects are appropriately assessed and mitigated.

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & Game Code §§2050, et. seq.) generally parallels the main provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act and is administered by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). CESA prohibits the "taking" of listed species except as otherwise provided in State law. Any future development or redevelopment in El Centro that has the potential to affect wildlife will be subject to the restrictions contained in the CESA.

Federal Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, applies to federally listed species and habitat occupied by federally listed species. Federally listed species are most likely to occur within riparian habitat areas in the City's floodplains. ESA Section 9 forbids specified acts that directly or indirectly harm listed species. Section 9 also prohibits "taking" any species of wildlife or fish listed as endangered. These restrictions apply to all federal agencies and all persons subject to United States jurisdiction.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game

Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game have regulations to protect wildlife resources. Special permits are required for the alteration, dredging, or any activity in a lake or stream, as well as other activities that may affect fish and game habitat. Both agencies also regulate impacts to sensitive plant and animal species as described above. Future development in El Centro that has the potential to affect wildlife habitat will be subject to the regulations of both of these federal and State agencies.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

Under the NPDES storm water permit issued to the City of El Centro, all development and significant redevelopment must be implemented with runoff pollution control measures known as Best Management Practices (BMPs). Proposed development projects (both public and private) within El Centro must incorporate structural and non-structural BMPs to preclude significant water quality impact from non-point source pollutants.

Regional Transportation Plan and Improvement Program

The Southern California Association of Governments has adopted a Regional Transportation Plan and a Regional Transportation Improvement Program to implement the projects and programs listed in the Regional Transportation Plan. These plans work together to help improve vehicular traffic within the region and thereby reduce air pollution.

El Centro Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

In 2008, the City adopted a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan to further develop the projects, programs and investments necessary to implement General Plan goals. While the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan focuses primarily on public facilities, its recommendations also help implement goals for Water Conservation, Open Space and Natural Resources, Community and Historic Resources, Geothermal Resources and Energy Conservation.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The Conservation/Open Space Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements and all elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of one element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other elements. Table COS-1 located in the following section identifies related goals and policies by General Plan element. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the General Plan elements provides a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Conservation/Open Space Element most closely relates to the Land Use and Safety Elements.

The Land Use Element provides a planned land use pattern with the following general land use designation categories: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Community Facilities. The more specific Public - Parks and Other Governmental designations are applied to public and private land that is intended for conservation, open space, and recreational uses. These designations apply to areas that have recreational value and/or public safety concerns, such as flood control basins.

The Safety Element relates to the Conservation/Open Space Element in that it identifies hazard-prone areas such as floodplains and seismic hazard areas that should be conserved as open space.

Issues, Goals, and Policies

El Centro possesses valuable assets in the form of its agricultural land, historic resources, water supply, and geothermal resources. Conservation and enhancement of these assets can be accomplished by addressing certain issues affecting the City. Eight major issues are addressed by the goals, policies, and plan in the Conservation/Open Space Element. These major issues include: 1) agricultural and soils conservation; 2) water conservation; 3) open space and natural resources; 4) community and historic resources; 5) air quality; 6) health and safety; 7) geothermal resources; and 8) energy conservation. Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Agricultural and Soils Conservation

Imperial Valley contains some of the most productive agricultural soils in the world. The economic base of El Centro and of the entire Valley has been, and continues to be, tied to that productivity. Therefore, it is important that the vitality of these agricultural resources be protected.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 1: Conserve and maintain farmland and prime soil areas surrounding El Centro so that agriculture remains a viable and dominant part of the community's character and local economy.

Policy 1.1: Direct future development away from prime soils areas to allow their continued use for agricultural uses.

Policy 1.2: Continue to implement the City's Urban Development Program to encourage compact and contiguous development within El Centro, minimizing the amount of agricultural land converted to urban uses.

Policy 1.3: Promote infill and compact development to minimize the amount of agricultural land necessary for future growth.

Policy 1.4: Maintain agricultural facilities and services including irrigation channels, commercial fertilization and pest control, and transportation of supplies, equipment, and harvested crops.

Policy 1.5: Continue to work with County and State agencies to ensure the effective conservation of agricultural lands within the region and to minimize the impacts of geothermal development on agricultural activities.

Water Conservation

El Centro's water supply comes from the Colorado River and is of fairly good quality, despite a relatively high salt content. In consideration of California's

current overdraft of the Colorado River and the unpredictability of future climatic and population factors affecting water, conservation should be encouraged.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 2: Maintain and improve the quality of water used by the City and surrounding agricultural areas.

Policy 2.1: Coordinate water quality and supply programs with responsible water agencies.

Policy 2.2: Develop and implement standards for site design, storm water management, planting, irrigation and maintenance.

Policy 2.3: Promote water conservation by El Centro residents, businesses, agriculture, and government to reduce overall demand for water.

Policy 2.4: Use recycled water for irrigation.

Policy 2.5: Utilize drought tolerant materials in the design of parks, recreation facilities detention basins.

Open Space and Natural Resources

Surrounded by agricultural uses, there are limited natural resources remaining in the El Centro Planning Area. The most prevalent open space and habitat areas are associated with agricultural operations, such as the channel system and the open space, rural character of the surrounding agricultural lands.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 3: Direct future urban growth and expansion of the City to promote the conservation of important natural habitats, ecosystems, and open space areas of unique natural quality and community significance.

Policy 3.1: Protect unique or high quality natural habitats through open space designation or parkland dedication.

Policy 3.2: Utilize the environmental review process to evaluate and mitigate impacts to natural resources and plant and animal habitats that may be affected by proposed development.

Policy 3.3: Develop pedestrian and bicycle trails to connect existing and new parks, consistent with the City of El Centro Bicycle Master Plan. Examine new street rights-of-way, utility easements, river banks, and the canal rights-of-way system to create the trail system.

Policy 3.4: Require new development to provide connectivity to the existing community and access to new park and open space features.

Policy 3.5: Develop a greenbelt system that provides buffer zones between potentially incompatible land uses, such as between industries and homes, and that upgrades the visual quality of the community.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 4: “Embrace the Desert” by investing in City programs and facilities that highlight the unique value of the landscape and appropriate use of materials.

Policy 4.1: Create an Environmental Education Program to help residents of El Centro understand the unique value of desert habitat.

Policy 4.2: Create a Desert Demonstration Garden to highlight desert plant material and adapted drought tolerant plant material.

Community and Historic Resources

El Centro's rich historic past has grown out of the agricultural development of Imperial Valley and has been incorporated into the fabric of the City, providing a link to the community's heritage and history. The many sites and structures of architectural and/or historic significance create focal points within the community and provide a sense of place. Areas within the City having historic resources and buildings should be protected and enhanced.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 5: Maintain local historic structures and places that provide a sense of continuity and unique character to El Centro.

Policy 5.1: Encourage the preservation of structures and places with historic or community value, including the post office, library, County Courthouse, arcades in the downtown, and the railroad buildings.

Policy 5.2: Protect and enhance the downtown area as the City's center of activity and community life.

Air Quality

Air quality in El Centro, which is within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), is generally very good, though particulate matter is generated by wind blowing dry soils, particularly during the late fall and during the dust storms of winter and early spring. Air pollutants from vehicles are found in very low concentrations within the SSAB. Cooperation among all agencies in the basin is necessary to achieve desired improvements to air quality. El Centro can participate and contribute its share in those efforts by proper planning for land use, transportation, and energy use.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 6: Protect and maintain good air quality in the Imperial Valley region.

Policy 6.1: Cooperate with the Imperial Valley Air Pollution Control District and Southern California Association of Governments in their efforts to implement the regional Air Quality Management Plan.

Policy 6.2: Cooperate and participate in regional air quality management planning, programs, and enforcement measures.

Policy 6.3: Integrate air quality planning with land use and transportation planning.

Health and Safety

El Centro's geographic location and the composition of local soils expose the City to various environmental hazards. Risk from these hazards can be reduced by planning future development with these concerns in mind.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 7: Direct future urban growth and expansion of the City to minimize hazards from areas requiring special management and/or separation from other land uses, such as seismic fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, and areas required for protection of water quality.

Policy 7.1: Reduce the risk of impacts from natural hazards by applying proper development engineering, building construction, and retrofitting requirements.

Policy 7.2: Develop controls to restrict access to the irrigation canal system, especially adjacent to residential areas.

Policy 7.3: Monitor and control agricultural activities within the City, such as pesticide and crop dusting adjacent to residential areas.

Geothermal Resources

Direct use of the hot geothermal brines for energy needs within El Centro is possible due to the City's close proximity to the Heber Resource Area. Geothermal heat energy could potentially be used for air conditioning, refrigeration, space and water heating, food processing plants, aquaculture fish farms, and specialized green houses. Furthermore, geothermal development may be an important factor in the economic growth of El Centro.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 8: Encourage utilization of geothermal resources and develop the resources in a planned and efficiently managed manner by discouraging wasteful use, minimizing environmental impacts, and prolonging the economic production life of this resource.

Policy 8.1: Coordinate with County and State regulatory agencies to plan for the environmentally safe extraction of geothermal resources.

Policy 8.2: Support, generally, implementation of the Imperial County Geothermal Element policies, including:

- Geothermal plants shall be sited so as to have minimal impact upon agriculture; $\frac{3}{4}$ Slant drilling techniques shall be utilized in the irrigated areas of Imperial County where appropriate;
- The County shall seek the resources to prepare and publish anomaly-wide Environmental Impact Reports for each economic anomaly, to be used as a guide for development of each resource area;

Conservation/Open Space Element

- The County shall encourage the development of the direct use of geothermal energy; and
- The County shall initiate a study to determine the location of services required by the increased population, and any other effects engendered by geothermal development.

Policy 8.3: Regulate any geothermal activity within the City and ensure that local goals and concerns are taken into account in the formation of geothermal production policies.

Policy 8.4: Promote the use of geothermal energy by local residents and businesses.

Policy 8.5: Continue to identify funding sources for experimental demonstration projects adapting geothermal direct energy to residential and non-residential uses.

Energy Conservation

Urban development and agricultural activities depend on adequate supplies and distribution of energy. The City must promote the conservation of energy in order to sustain existing and future economic and population growth.

Conservation/Open Space Goal 9: Utilize all energy resources in an efficient, conserving manner, taking in to account local climatic factors, to reduce the consumption of valuable fossil resources such as oil and natural gas.

Policy 9.1: Promote energy conservation by the public and private sectors.

Policy 9.2: Provide incentives for subdivision plans that incorporate energy conserving design.

Policy 9.3: Encourage the use of passive solar design concepts and the retrofitting of older buildings with energy-conserving features as a way to reduce energy consumed.

Policy 9.4: Encourage the recycling of waste heat and the application of direct geothermal energy.

Related Goals and Policies

The goals and policies described in the Conservation/Open Space Element are related to and support subjects included within other General Plan elements. In turn, many goals and policies from other elements directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Conservation/Open Space Element. These supporting goals and policies are identified in Table COS-1.

Conservation/Open Space Element

**Table COS-1
Related Goals and Policies by Element**

General Plan Elements	Conservation/Open Space Issue Area							
	Agricultural and Soils Conversion	Water Conservation	Open Space and Natural Resources	Community and Historic Resources	Air Quality	Health and Safety	Geothermal Resources	Energy Conservation
Land Use	1.1, 2.1		1.1, 2.1	1.1, 1.14, 2.1	1.1, 2.1	1.1, 2.1		
Economic Development							1.10	1.10
Housing								
Circulation					2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 4.5	3.4		
Public Facilities		10.1	1.1, 1.4, 1.6	8.1		5.1, 6.2		
Conservation / Open Space								
Safety						1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.2		
Noise								

Conservation/ Open Space Plan

The multi-cultural community of El Centro has a history rich in the agricultural industry. The City's array of historic downtown and surrounding agricultural uses create a distinct identity for the City. The Conservation/Open Space Plan establishes an approach for the balanced use, management, and conservation of the City's unique resources. The seven conservation and open space issue areas identified in the Issues, Goals and Policies section are the focus of this Plan. The related goals and policies are the basis of the Plan and are supported by approaches to protect and enhance natural resources. The Conservation/Open Space Implementation Program contained in Appendix A of this General Plan is an extension of this Plan and contains specific programs to achieve the City's goals related to conservation and open space.

Agricultural and Soils Conservation

Imperial Valley contains some of the most productive agricultural soils in the world. The deep, rich, silty soils found surrounding El Centro in its sphere of influence and throughout much of the Imperial Valley were created as a result of historic flooding of the Colorado River and were deposited over thousands of years. These soils provide a basis for the agricultural operations located throughout the area.

Soils

The General Plan area lies within the Salton Trough, the dominant landform within the County. The Salton Trough encompasses the Coachella, Imperial, and Mexicali Valleys and extends north from the Gulf of California. Ancient lakebed sediments, alluvial channels, and dune sands occur in the Salton Trough. Clay and silt deposits of the lakebed cover the central portion of the basin with shoreline deposits predominantly of unconsolidated sand and gravel, changing into the clays and silts around the prehistoric lake edge. Lakebeds are generally less than 100 feet thick. East and west of the central portion of the Trough there is dissected, flat-lying alluvium. These poorly consolidated silts, sands, and gravels form thin veneers of desert pavement between washes. Sand dunes up to 200 feet thick occur on mesa areas to the east and west sides of Imperial Valley.

Soils in the El Centro area are underlain by Late Pleistocene to Holocene lacustrine deposits associated with ancient Lake Cahuilla. These sediments are typically unconsolidated to poorly consolidated and porous, consisting generally of clay, silt, and sand. Clay and silt soils are expected to exhibit a medium to high expansion potential. Near surface soils are generally soft and/or loose due to recent agricultural processing. Some of the soils in the Imperial Valley area

have a high expansion or shrink-swell potential. These are generally found where fine-grained clayey sediments occur.

Agriculture

El Centro is the largest urban center in Imperial County. Urban growth in the region has traditionally been concentrated around the County's regional agricultural centers and shipping stations. Highly productive soils, climate, and a reliable water source have combined to make agriculture the single most important economic activity of Imperial County. According to the County Agricultural Commissioner, agricultural production currently contributes close to one and a half billion dollars annually to the region's economy. More than 120 types of crops are grown in Imperial County, including field crops (such as alfalfa and sudan grass) and row crops (such as lettuce, carrots, and melons).

A critical factor in determining whether a particular property is suitable for agriculture is its soil composition. The agricultural soils found in Imperial County are considered to be among the finest in the world. Figure COS-1 depicts the Important Farmlands in the El Centro Planning Area as identified by the Department of Conservation. As shown, a substantial amount of land in the Planning Area is identified as Important Farmland. More specifically, as of 2000 there are approximately 270 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, 170 acres of Prime Farmland, and 850 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance within El Centro. The sphere of influence has an additional 150 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, 4,000 acres of Prime Farmland, and 5,415 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance.

These agricultural uses provide revenue for the City while preserving rural character and maintaining open space and scenic views. While many of the agricultural uses will continue to operate in the future, increasing pressures from surrounding urban development and changes in the economy will likely result in the development of many of these areas for urban uses. Planning for the eventual conversion of these areas into urban uses, while allowing agricultural areas to remain as an interim use, provides short- and long-term benefits to the City.

Under the Williamson Act, owners of prime farmlands are only taxed for the agricultural use-value of their land, in return for guaranteeing that the land will be kept in agricultural use for the term of the contract. The City will encourage voluntary enrollment by owners of local prime farmlands into agricultural preserve contracts to protect the continued use of these lands for agricultural use.

Water Conservation

El Centro's water supply comes from the Colorado River via the canals and facilities of the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). According to the IID, Imperial Valley's agricultural industry is estimated to use 98 percent of the region's water supply. The City owns and operates a water treatment plant that provides clarification, filtration, and disinfection of water from the Colorado River.

Colorado River water is of fairly good quality; however, the amount of total dissolved solids (primarily salt) is very high. The City has little control over the quality of the water supplied to it, since the quality is primarily determined by land uses located along the Colorado River outside the State of California. Water for residential and commercial use is treated at the City's water purification plant, which has a 12 million gallon per day (mgd) capacity. According to the City of El Centro Water Quality Report for Year 2001, the City's drinking water meets or exceeds all federal and State requirements. The City's goal is to maintain and improve the quality of water used by the City and surrounding agricultural areas.

California has consistently exceeded its yearly allocation of 4.4 million acre feet from the Colorado River by 20 percent over the past several years. Although the long-term supply of water to El Centro is fairly well protected by various laws and agreements over rights to the Colorado River, the State's overdraft potentially jeopardizes this long-term supply. As a result of California consistently exceeding this allotment, the IID has initiated many water conservation programs in Imperial County and participated in various programs in cooperation with governmental agencies.

In 1988, a Water Conservation Agreement was forged between the IID and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). The agreement provides for the implementation of water conservation projects, which are funded by the MWD. In return, MWD is eligible to divert additional water that is equivalent to the amount of water conserved. The water conservation projects implemented through the agreement primarily focus on increasing the efficiency of the IID's water conveyance system and conserving water in agricultural operations.

More recently, the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) has negotiated an agreement with the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) for the transfer of conserved water from the Imperial Valley to the San Diego region. Under the agreement, IID and its agricultural customers will conserve water and sell it to the SDCWA for at least 45 years. In addition, the SDCWA will pay the costs of conserving water incurred to Imperial Valley farmers plus an incentive to encourage participation. Prior to the implementation of the program, numerous negative impacts on the Salton Sea related to the transfer and concerns about the potential impact to the local economy must be mitigated.

Sustaining a reliable supply of water to El Centro in the long run may be very difficult. Although California has a guaranteed priority use of the Colorado River water, there will not be enough water to serve the needs of the projected population growth and development within California and the adjoining states in the future. While it appears that law protects the long-term supply, and that water resources are presently abundant, the future climatic and population growth factors affecting water use are unpredictable.

In order for the City of El Centro to sustain a reliable supply of water for the City residents, the City will promote water conservation by the residents, businesses, agriculture, and government to reduce overall demand for water in accordance with California's "4.4 Plan"; an ongoing effort to reduce the State's use of Colorado River water to 4.4 million acre-feet per year, California's entitled amount. Additionally, the City coordinates water quality and supply programs with responsible water agencies.

In addition to maintaining an adequate supply of water, the City of El Centro will reduce pollutants in urban runoff to improve water quality through participation in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. According to the City's NPDES permit, all new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects are required to incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs). Implementation of BMPs will enhance surface and ground water quality in the planning area.

Open Space and Natural Resources

El Centro is primarily surrounded by agricultural lands which are considered to be open space for the production of food and fiber. Most of the natural flora has been replaced by cultivation in the El Centro area. The remaining "natural areas" exist mostly along irrigation canal rights-of-way and other lowland areas created by agriculture and irrigation.

Currently, there are approximately 130 acres of public park land within the City. To increase the acreage for parks and open space areas, the City continues to examine utility easements, river banks, and the canal right-of-way system for recreational opportunities, such as bicycle and pedestrian corridors and linear parks. The City will continue to require new development to provide recreational opportunities as allowed by law. In addition, the City will continue to promote the Planned Unit Development (PUD) provision in the zoning ordinance that encourages the incorporation of more useable open space than provided under traditional development standards.

Local drainage patterns within the valley have been altered through agricultural activities. The IID maintains about 1,600 miles of irrigation drainage structures, which collect surface water runoff and subsurface drainage from some 32,200 miles of agricultural drains (tile) and channel the flow into the New and Alamo Rivers, which ultimately drain to the Salton Sea. The canals and laterals are often

open and unprotected. The City will require developers of land adjacent to these open drainage facilities to underground the facilities to protect public safety.

The irrigation and drainage canals network is within the City's area of influence and some portions of the City. Canal right-of-way will remain as open space, to provide access for maintenance, to protect water flow capacities as urban development expands into the immediately adjacent farmlands, and to provide linear pedestrian and bicycle pathways and park areas. The canal system provides habitat for saline adapted plant species. Populations of a number of fish species live in the canals. The mosquito fish has been introduced by the Imperial County Health Department for mosquito control, and species of Tilapia have been introduced to control aquatic weeds. The canal system has created an aquatic habitat within a naturally arid environment and provides opportunities for people to fish and observe wild species in a unique manmade "natural" environment. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and associated federal regulations, the City will continue to assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant natural resources and habitat.

Community and Historic Resources

El Centro has grown out of the agricultural development of the Imperial Valley and is the core of the Imperial Valleys' retail district. Agricultural processing and packing have dominated the City's industrial sector. The City preserves structures and places with historic or community value including the post office, County Courthouse, downtown arcades, library, and the railroad buildings. The City continues to maintain local historic structures and places that provide a sense of continuity and unique character to El Centro. The City will also enhance and protect the downtown area as the City's center of activity and community life through the continued implementation of recommendations made by the Downtown Business District Study. In addition, as shown in Figure LU-3 in the Land Use Element, the City has identified some of the older residential single family neighborhoods for protection to maintain their existing historical character.

Presently the City supports an archaeological museum, a Community Center, a variety of informal theatre and recreation groups, and a number of community groups. A state of the art Southwest High School auditorium provides facilities for theatrical plays, master coral performances, and concerts.

El Centro may contain some archaeological resources; however, most of the Planning Area has been disturbed by urban development and agriculture. In the event that archaeological resources are located within the Planning Area, new development that has the potential to impact these resources will be required to mitigate its impact pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

The City will foster local awareness of El Centro's rich heritage through a variety of programs including the placement of plaques or markers to highlight the

significance of buildings or places and the designation of historic landmarks by the City Council.

Air Quality

As shown in Figure COS-2, El Centro lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB). The SSAB includes Imperial County and the central part of Riverside County, including the Coachella Valley. The City's goal is to protect and maintain good air quality in the Imperial Valley Region.

Particulate matter (PM10) is a major air pollutant consisting of tiny solid or liquid particles of soot, dust, smoke, fumes, or mists. The size of the particles (10 microns or smaller) allows them to enter the air sacs deep in the lungs where they may be deposited, resulting in adverse health effects. PM10 also causes visibility reduction. Particulate matter is generated by wind blowing dry soils, particularly during the late fall, and during dust storms of winter and early spring. Agricultural burning and cultivation practices contribute most of the airborne dust in the El Centro area. Some agricultural practices that generate dust are regulated, including: leaving cultivated fields vacant and open to blowing winds, burning of crop residues to clear fields for new cultivation, and crop dusting for fertilization and pest control. Since agriculture contributes to the air quality issues in the region, the majority of the Imperial Valley Air Pollution Control District regulations relate to control of agricultural operations to reduce air pollution. In an effort to reduce dust and particulate matter levels, the City will support the Imperial County Air Pollution District in the implementation of its regulations to control agricultural operations.

Air pollutants from vehicles are found in low concentration within El Centro area. Because the population and average density of development are very low, there is comparatively little air pollution from vehicular activity. In order to keep the low levels of air pollutants generated from vehicles in the future, the City will integrate air quality planning with land use and transportation planning.

Future geothermal energy production in Imperial County may generate a significant amount of air pollutants. The non-condensable gases that could be emitted from cooling towers would be primarily carbon dioxide, but could include hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen, ammonia, methane, and hydrogen. Dissolved in precipitation, these products are highly corrosive to living tissue and to exposed metals and common surface coatings such as paints and plastics.

In order to protect the air quality in the Imperial Valley, the City will continue to cooperate with the Imperial Valley Air Pollution Control District and Southern California Association of Governments in their efforts to implement the regional Air Quality Management Plan.

Health and Safety

Agricultural Activities

The City is surrounded by thousands of acres of prime farmland that have transformed the desert into one of the most productive farming regions in California. The extensive irrigation canal system is responsible for much of this transformation. Recently, much of the most productive farmlands lie on the fringe of developing areas. Residential land uses adjacent to farmlands are potentially subject to health and safety conflicts. For example, unsupervised children often have easy access to the irrigation canals, and airborne drift of chemicals from pesticide and crop dusting may adversely affect the residential population. The City will develop controls to restrict access to the irrigation canal system from residential uses and continue to monitor and control agricultural activities, including pesticide and crop dusting, as allowed by law. This can be done by designating land buffers between the two different land uses, and pesticide spraying can be conducted from the ground in agricultural areas in proximity to residences. Additionally, the use, storage, and transport of pesticides are strictly regulated by the State.

Geologic Hazards

As discussed in the Safety Element, the Imperial Valley is one of the most tectonically active regions in the United States. Since the Imperial Valley area is subject to frequent seismic events, there are concerns relating to ground shaking and liquefaction. The composition of geologic strata (bedrock and soil) determines what can be expected from an area as a result of ground shaking. It is therefore important to know the soil makeup in order to determine the design of structures proposed for an area. The City reduces the risks of impacts from geologic hazards by applying proper development engineering, building construction, and retrofitting requirements.

Flooding

The City of El Centro includes a small area on the eastern portion of the City within the 100-year flood hazard area. As depicted in Figure S-2 of the Safety Element, the flood hazard area is located in the vicinity of the intersection of Earls Road and East Gillette Street. Additionally, there is a small 100-year flood hazard area on the eastern portion of the City's sphere of influence, between Evan Hewes Highway and Interstate 8. As discussed in the Safety Element, the City will continue to fund needed infrastructure improvements, identifying new funding sources as necessary. The City will also promote programs and actions that educate the public about flood hazards and reduce the risk of flood losses.

Geothermal Resources

Thermal water of sufficient temperature for direct heat application underlies the Salton Trough at shallow depths. Distributed throughout the Trough are areas of hotter fluids suitable for electrical generation. Figure COS-3 shows the known distribution geothermal resource areas in the region. The City plans to educate the public and encourage utilization of geothermal resources, as well as develop the resources in a planned and efficiently managed manner.

Subsidence, a phenomenon associated with groundwater withdrawal and can occur as a result of geothermal energy generation; however, the potential is considered low to moderate on the valley floor under the current hydrological conditions. Due to the poor groundwater quality, little use is made of the existing groundwater resource. Poor groundwater quality and irrigation practices employing imported water in the Imperial Valley result in groundwater basin recharge exceeding extraction; therefore; creating rising groundwater levels. In addition, as discussed above, future geothermal energy production in Imperial County may generate a significant amount of air pollutants.

The City will coordinate with the Imperial County and State regulatory agencies to plan for the environmentally safe extraction of geothermal resources. Additionally, the City plans to develop the resources in a planned and efficiently managed manner by discouraging wasteful use, minimizing environmental impacts, and prolonging the economic production life of this resource.

Energy Conservation

A tight energy market and sometimes insufficient power supply highlights the continued need for both private and public energy conservation. Additionally, pollutants are generated by the combustion of fossil fuels to produce electricity and by the combustion of natural gas. Reducing energy usage decreases the amount of pollutants generated. The City supports reducing energy demand by encouraging the use of passive solar design concepts and the retrofitting of older buildings with energy-conserving features. The City will also provide incentives for subdivision plans that incorporate energy conserving design. Recycling of waste resources including aluminum, glass, and newspaper, waste heat and the application of direct geothermal energy is also supported by the City.

The City promotes energy conservation by implementing energy conservation measures in public buildings, and implementing State Title 24 energy performance requirements through building codes. In addition, the relationship between project design and future energy requirements is considered when reviewing proposals for new development.

CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

El Centro General Plan

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Conservation/Open Space Element. The Conservation/Open Space Element Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques that includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Agricultural and Soils Conservation

COS-1: Agricultural Preservation: Use development incentives such as priority project processing, density bonuses, and infrastructure improvements to encourage redevelopment and infill projects that reduce development pressure on agricultural lands.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning and Zoning, County of Imperial

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.5

COS-2: Agricultural Buffers: Encourage the provision and maintenance of buffers, such as roadways, topographic features, and open space, to prevent incompatibilities between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses. During the development review process, a number of factors shall be used to determine the appropriate buffer, including the type of agricultural use, topography, and pesticide and machinery use.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning and Zoning, County of Imperial

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.5

Water Conservation

COS-3: Promote Water Conservation: Work with the Imperial Irrigation District to encourage water conservation throughout El Centro in the following ways:

- Require the use of drought resistant plant species in landscaping for private and public areas, including parks;
- Utilize xeriscape principles in all new parks, recreation facilities, public buildings and private developments
- Work with the City and the El Centro Unified School District to establish water conservation educational programs; and
- Require the incorporation of water conservation devices (including low-flush toilets, flow restriction devices and water conservation appliances) in new development, public projects and rehabilitation projects.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Imperial Irrigation District, El Centro Elementary School District, Central Union High School District, McCabe Union Elementary School District

Funding Source: General Fund, project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5

COS-4: 4.4 Plan: Support California's "4.4 Plan"; an ongoing effort to reduce California's use of Colorado River water to 4.4 million acre-feet per year, California's entitled amount.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.1, 2.2

COS-5: Water Recycling: Implement water recycling in El Centro in the following ways:

- Apply for funding for a Recycled Water Feasibility Study from the State Water Resources Control Board;
- Conduct Feasibility Study;
- Implement recommendations through the CIP process, a new recycled water use ordinance (if appropriate) and requirements for new development

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works

Funding Source: Water/Wastewater Enterprise Fund, SWRCB Grants

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.4

Open Space and Natural Resources

COS-6: Subdivision Ordinance: Continue to implement and enforce the subdivision ordinance that contains provisions for the dedication of land for park and recreational purposes. The ordinance requires a land dedication calculated on a basis of a ratio of five acres of park for each 1,000 residents generated by the project. A fee can be paid in lieu of land dedication and the collection of these and fees and other funds can be used to set up a revolving fund to be used for the acquisition of park and open space lands.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services, Community Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation, Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 3.1

COS-7: Zoning Ordinance: Continue to promote the Planned Unit Development (PUD) provision in the Zoning Ordinance. PUDs are a way to encourage the development of residential environments containing more usable open space than provided under traditional development standards.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services, Community Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 3.1, 3.3, 3.4

COS-8: Protect Natural Resources: Assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant natural and aesthetic resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and associated federal regulations. Require appropriate mitigation for all significant impacts if impact avoidance is not possible.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation

Funding Source: General Fund, development fees

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 3.2

COS-9: "Embrace the Desert": Invest in City programs and facilities that highlight the unique value of the landscape and appropriate use of materials. City investments should include an Environmental Education Program and a Desert Demonstration Garden.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, Finance.

Funding Source: General Fund, Development Impact Fees, Water Enterprise Fund.

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 4.1, 4.2

Community and Historic Resources

COS-10: California Environmental Quality Act: Continue to assess development proposals for potential impacts to sensitive historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Require appropriate mitigation for all significant impacts if impact avoidance is not possible.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund, development fees

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 5.1

COS-11: Downtown Business District: Continue to implement and update as necessary the recommendations of the Downtown Business District Study as one method of maintaining and enhancing the downtown area to retain the character of the central area, with its arcades and store fronts, and to create a more lively and vibrant city center.

Responsible Agency/Department: Redevelopment, ~~Development Services,~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: Redevelopment funds, General Fund, private business investment

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 5.2

COS-12: Local Awareness of Community Heritage: Foster local awareness of El Centro's heritage by:

- Implementing a program of recognition, for example, the placement of plaques or markers to highlight the significance of a building or place;

Conservation/OS Implementation Program

- Investigating the eligibility of local buildings for listing in the national, State, or local register of historic places;
- Designating historic landmarks, recognizing a building, structure, site or collection of buildings or sites which are found by the City Council to have historic, cultural, or architectural significance;
- Purchasing development rights to important buildings or property so as to provide protection from alteration or destruction; and
- Purchasing and re-selling important buildings or property with a covenant and reverter clause in the deed, restricting changes in the structure of the place.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works,
Redevelopment, Finance

Funding Source: General Fund, redevelopment funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 5.1

Air Quality

COS-13: Participation in Regional Air Quality Programs: Work with the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to implement the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMD) and meet federal and State air quality standards for all pollutants. Participate in future amendments and updates of the AQMP to ensure that new measures can be practically enforced in the region.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning,
Public Works, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District, SCAG

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 6.1, 62

COS-14: Minimize Impacts of New Development: Review development proposals for potential air quality impacts pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Reduce impacts using available land use and transportation planning techniques such as:

- Incorporation of public transit stops;
- Pedestrian and bicycle linkage to commercial centers, employment centers, schools and parks;
- Preferential parking for car pools;
- Traffic flow improvements; and $\frac{3}{4}$ Employer trip reduction programs.

Conservation/OS Implementation Program

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District, SCAG

Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, project proponent, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 6.3

COS-15: Control Dust and Particulate Matter: To reduce dust and particulate matter levels, support the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District in the implementation of its regulations, including ICAPCD Rule 800 to control agricultural operations.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 6.1, 6.2

Health and Safety

COS-16: Irrigation Canal System: Develop controls to restrict access to the existing irrigation canal system from residential areas where unsupervised children currently have easy access. Require developers to underground the canals and laterals as new development occurs adjacent to existing open drainage facilities, as allowed by the Imperial Irrigation District.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Imperial Irrigation District

Funding Source: General Fund, water usage fees, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 7.1, 7.2

COS-17: Pesticides and Crop Dusting: To the extent allowed by law, restrict the type and method of spraying activities related to agricultural use of pesticides and crop dusting within the City's area of influence to reduce the adverse effect from airborne drift of chemicals into adjacent residential areas.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, County Agriculture Commission

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 7.3

Geothermal Resources

COS-18: Regulate Geothermal Activity: Regulate any geothermal activity within the City with the goal of:

- Ensuring that the loss of productive agricultural lands due to geothermal development is minimized;
- Preventing geothermally-induced subsidence or seismicity; and
- Ensuring that local goals and concerns are taken into account in the formation of geothermal production policies and that the public is well informed about the effects of resource extraction and use.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 8.1, 8.2, 8.3

COS-19: Promote Benefits of Geothermal Resources: In an effort to educate the public and promote the use of geothermal resources, the City shall:

- Promote the varied and experimental application of direct geothermal energy to activities within the City area;
- Support the development of a skills center for training local residents specific geothermal related skills required in local resource production;
- Encourage local business and industry to consider how direct geothermal energy could be applied to their energy needs;
- Continue to search out funding sources for experimental and demonstration projects adapting geothermal direct energy to industrial processing and to space heating and cooling; and
- Encourage factories and businesses that utilize geothermal energy to maintain an "open shop," allowing visitors to tour the facilities, in order to gain an understanding of the resource and its use.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 8.4, 8.5, 94

Energy Conservation

COS-20: Implement State Energy Performance Requirements: Continue to implement building code requirements for energy performance according to Title 24 Energy Regulations to meet State energy conservation requirements. Encourage project proponents to incorporate energy conservation techniques in proposed projects. Provide brochures with information on energy efficient building and site design at the public counter.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund, project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1, 9.2, 9.3

COS-21: Energy Efficient Public Buildings: Implement energy conservation measures in public buildings through the following actions:

- Promote energy efficient building and site design for all new public buildings during the site development permit process; and $\frac{3}{4}$ Install energy saving devices in new public buildings and retrofit existing public buildings.
- Utilize light colored asphalt and light colored resin pavements which minimize the "heat island" effect caused by darker pavements.
- Utilize passive solar techniques; trees, architectural shading devices, etc.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1, 9.2, 9.3

COS-22: Promote Energy Retrofit Programs: Promote retrofit programs by the City to reduce energy usage and consequently reduce emissions from energy consumption. Provide informational literature about available retrofit programs at City offices. Inform property owners of retrofit programs when plans for remodeling and rehabilitation projects are submitted.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1

Conservation/OS Implementation Program

COS-23: Coordination with Suppliers: Require project proponents to coordinate with IID and the Southern California Gas Company early in the development of development plans.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund, developer fees, user fees

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9

COS-24: Local Resource Recycling: Remain compliant with AB 939 and increase recycling activities to maintain the mandated 50 percent waste diversion goal. Specifically, encourage the recycling of waste resources including aluminum, glass, and newspaper.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~ Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1

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PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT

El Centro General Plan

Introduction

The Public Facilities Element addresses the community need for public services and utilities. The majority of the City of El Centro is developed and sufficiently served by existing public services and utilities. Future development of remaining vacant land within the Planning Area will require expansion of public services and utilities to meet the increase in demand for service. Planning for this future increase in demand will ensure that the needs of future residents for public services and infrastructure are met, while avoiding adverse impacts to existing community.

Purpose of the Public Facilities Element

The purpose of the Public Facilities Element is to ensure that sufficient levels of public services are provided as El Centro develops. Working in conjunction with the Land Use Element, the Public Facilities Element plans for the necessary expansion of public services and infrastructure to coincide with new development. To ensure a sufficient level of public services, the City will work with service providing agencies to ensure that service to existing residents does not diminish with any future development and the resulting increase in population.

Scope and Content of the Public Facilities Element

The Public Facilities Element is not a State-mandated element; however, included in this element are topics mandated by the State to be included in the General Plan. The issues addressed within the Public Facilities Element closely relate to the Land Use Element. The Element is comprised of three sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Issues, Goals and Policies, and (3) the Public Facilities Plan. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues related to the provision of public services and utilities are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of the community's desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for working with local and regional agencies for planning infrastructure and facility improvements to provide sufficient levels of service. The Plan explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented, while the General Plan Implementation Program, contained in Appendix A, identifies specific implementation programs for this Element.

Related Plans and Programs

A number of existing plans and programs exist that directly relate to the goals of the Public Facilities Element. Enacted through State and local action, these plans and programs are administered by agencies with responsibility for their enforcement.

Quimby Act

Section 66477 of the Government Code provides local jurisdictions with the authority to acquire park land in association with new land divisions. Commonly referred to as the Quimby Act, this provision of State law allows a city, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land, payment of an in-lieu fee, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition on approving a subdivision map. El Centro has adopted such an ordinance to require the dedication of land and/or the payment of in-lieu fees for the purpose of providing park and recreational facilities.

Southern California Association of Governments Plans and Programs (SCAG)

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is responsible for regional planning in Southern California. SCAG has prepared long range growth and development plans for the Southern California region since the early 1970's as part of the ongoing Development Guide Program. This program provides a framework for coordinating local and regional decisions regarding future development and growth. An important component of this process is the preparation of growth forecast policies at intervals ranging from three to five years. The adopted growth forecast policies become the basis for SCAG's functional plans (transportation, housing, air and water) for the region. The population totals and growth distribution are used in planning the future capacity of highways and transit systems.

Imperial Irrigation District Water Conservation/Transfer Programs

In 1988, a Water Conservation Agreement was forged between the IID and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). The agreement provides for the implementation of water conservation projects, which are funded by the MWD. In return, MWD is eligible to divert additional water that is equivalent to the amount of water conserved. The water conservation projects implemented through the agreement primarily focus on increasing the efficiency of the IID's water conveyance system and conserving water in agricultural operations.

More recently, the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) has approved an agreement with the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) for the transfer of conserved water from the Imperial Valley to the San Diego region. Once

approved by the other affected agencies, IID and its agricultural customers would conserve water and sell it to the SDCWA for at least 45 years. In addition, the SDCWA would pay the costs of conserving water incurred to Imperial Valley farmers plus an incentive to encourage participation. The water transfer could benefit California as a whole and stimulate the Imperial Valley economy.

Water Element of the Imperial County General Plan

The purpose of the Water Element of the County General Plan is to identify the types of water resources within Imperial County and to establish goals and policies to preserve and enhance water availability and quality. Implementation of the policies of the Water Element will assure that water resources are conserved and utilized to enhance long-term availability, while providing for current supplies and demands. In addition, the Water Element facilitates the improved use and distribution of water in Imperial County, including the extension of current water conservation programs.

Water and Sewer Master Plans

The Water and Sewer Master Plans are used to evaluate a development project's water and sewer needs and the impact of those needs on the City's water and sewer systems. The City of El Centro last updated its Water and Sewer Master Plans in 1994 which identified capital improvements necessary to meet the City's water and sewer system service requirements of existing and future development.

El Centro Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

In 2008, the City adopted a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan to further develop the projects, programs and investments necessary to implement General Plan goals. The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan focuses primarily on park and recreation facilities and joint use with the schools. The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan recommended increasing the park acreage per 1,000 people in El Centro and provides specific recommendations around the Civic Center and other Cultural Facilities.

School District Master Plans

Three different school districts serve El Centro: (1) El Centro Elementary School District; (2) Central Union High School District; and outside the City limits, (3) McCabe Union Elementary School District. El Centro Elementary School District is experiencing declining enrollment and currently has no Master Planning document, however the District has identified the need for several improvements to existing facilities. The Central Union High School District developed a Needs Assessment and Master Plan in 1997. Recently, the District commissioned a Yield Study that has identified the need for a new high school in El Centro and will

serve as the basis of an application for a School Facility Program New Construction Grant made possible by SB 50. Additionally, the McCabe Elementary School District is in the process of creating a Master Plan which identifies efforts made by the District to acquire funds for additions to McCabe Elementary and identify sites for a proposed new school.

Joint Use Agreements with the School District

The City and the School District have entered into Joint Use Agreements to allow for mutually beneficial use of playgrounds, sports fields and other amenities that serve the El Centro Community. These agreements to share facilities maximize the value of the public facilities that serve El Centro.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

In accordance with State planning law, the Public Facilities Element is consistent with the other General Plan elements. While all of the elements are interdependent, they are also interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Public Facilities Element is most directly related to the Land Use, Safety, and Circulation Elements of the General Plan.

Land use policies contained in the Land Use Element determine the pattern and intensity of future population growth and this in turn determines the type, size and location of certain public facilities. The Safety Element contains policies related to the location of public facilities that provide services such as police and fire to ensure the safety of El Centro residents. Additionally, the Element relates to the Safety Element in that it directs location and development of public facilities such as schools, libraries, and civic centers away from natural hazards such as floodplains and seismic faults. Transportation policies contained in the Circulation Element direct development in a way that provides efficient access to public facilities throughout El Centro.

Issues, Goals, and Policies

Public facilities are necessary to support urban development. The following nine issues are addressed by the goals and policies of the Public Safety Element: availability of and access to adequate (1) parks and recreation; (2) educational facilities; (3) library facilities; (4) police facilities; (5) fire stations; (6) civic centers; (7) cultural facilities; (8) sewer system; and (9) water system. Each issue and the related goals, policies and implementation actions are identified and discussed in the following section.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreational facilities serve a valuable purpose in the City of El Centro as they enhance quality of life and define community character. Maintenance of City parks is vital to the health and safety of El Centro residents. The City of El Centro's park and recreation system exists within the context of the City's overall development pattern. As the City grows, the inventory of park lands will have to be increased significantly.

Public Facilities Goal 1: Provide for adequate year round recreational activities and facilities that serve all segments of the community.

Policy 1.1: Provide accessible parks and recreational facilities within a suitable 1/2-mile walking distance of all residential areas in El Centro as illustrated in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

Policy 1.2: Require new development to provide for recreational facilities to the extent allowed by law.

Policy 1.3: Plan for the appropriate expansion of existing parks and recreational facilities to meet Statewide and City parks standards.

Policy 1.4: Provide an attractive low water-use design solution which addresses dust mitigation in retention basins.

Policy 1.5: Develop cultural and recreational facilities oriented toward the special needs of the various ethnic and age groups within the City.

Policy 1.6: Continue to maintain parks and recreational facilities in an efficient manner.

Educational Facilities

El Centro residents are primarily served by the El Centro Elementary School District and Central Union High School District. Additionally, a small portion of the Planning Area is served by the McCabe Union Elementary School District. Future school enrollment will be affected by current and future birth rates and the extent of migration (both in and out) of families with school aged children. While

the El Centro Elementary School District is experiencing declining enrollment and does not anticipate the need to site a new elementary school facility, current facilities are in need of rehabilitation. The Central Union High School District includes two high schools in El Centro and the District has identified the need for a new high school in the City.

Public Facilities Goal 2: Support the local school districts by working with them to determine the most appropriate location and distribution for school facilities to serve the educational needs of the community.

Policy 2.1: Work with the local school districts in investigating potential locations and funding sources for new schools.

Policy 2.2: Encourage the joint use of school facilities to provide a range of recreational and educational opportunities for all segments of the community.

Public Facilities Goal 3: Improve and increase Joint Use Agreements with the local school districts.

Policy 3.1: Work with the local school districts to analyze existing joint-use agreements and plan and implement mutually beneficial use agreements.

Library Facilities

The City of El Centro has a main library located on State Street, and a branch library located in the Community Center on South First Street. The main library was constructed in 1910 and is in need of rehabilitation. Increased population implies increased use; therefore the City's library facilities will need to be rehabilitated and expanded. As El Centro grows in population and size, the City will need to identify locations for future branch libraries to serve the needs of the community.

Public Facilities Goal 4: Ensure adequate, well located library facilities that are equipped with books, reference materials, and educational devices to serve all El Centro residents.

Policy 4.1: Identify appropriate locations for future branch libraries, evaluating accessibility and location near to major activity centers, such as retail areas.

Policy 4.2: Identify additional funding sources to allow for the expansion of the City's library system and services.

Police Facilities

The El Centro Police Department provides law enforcement services to the City. This service is essential to the safety of the population of El Centro. The primary determinant for police manpower is growth in the residential population; however the City's large seasonal migrant worker and visitor populations complicate the matter. The Police Department prides itself on being a

community-based, service-oriented, law enforcement agency that reflects and reinforces the values of the community.

Public Facilities Goal 5: Ensure the highest standards of law enforcement by providing the Police Department with personnel, equipment, and facilities that assist them in protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Policy 5.1: Periodically evaluate the level of law enforcement service provided to identify any necessary improvements or changes, as well as additional funding sources.

Policy 5.2: Utilize service areas when planning and designing new and expanded police facilities.

Fire Stations

Fire protection services are an essential function of local government. As El Centro expands, planning for new fire stations needs to be compatible with the City's growth plan. Included in planning for the expansion of fire services are fire stations, equipment, and essential and supportive personnel.

Public Facilities Goal 6: Ensure adequate standards of fire protection are met by providing the Fire Department with personnel, equipment, and facilities that assist them in protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Policy 6.1: Establish and maintain the optimum fire insurance rating for the community.

Policy 6.2: Periodically evaluate the level of fire protection service provided to identify any necessary improvements or changes, as well as additional funding sources.

Policy 6.3: Utilize service areas when planning and designing new and expanded fire protection facilities.

Civic Center

City Hall, the Police Station, County Government Complex, County Courthouse, and the Imperial Irrigation District Headquarters comprise a central civic complex in the City of El Centro. Grouping of governmental agencies in a civic center facilitates efficient service to the public.

Public Facilities Goal 7: Provide for and maintain a variety of buildings in the Civic Center to satisfy the requirements of the many diverse governmental agencies within the City and allow the agencies to adequately serve the public.

Policy 7.1: Develop and adopt a precise plan to direct future development and improvements within the Civic Center area.

Cultural Facilities

It is important that available cultural facilities continue to reflect El Centro's diverse community. By encouraging a range of facilities to be provided in El Centro, the quality of life for residents is improved since they will have a wider range of recreational opportunities within the community.

Public Facilities Goal 8: Provide for a range of cultural facilities that serve the community's diverse cultural groups and activities.

Policy 8.1: Coordinate with residents and community groups to identify needed facilities and improvements to existing facilities and explore funding sources to meet these needs.

Policy 8.2: Identify a site for a Cultural Arts Center, ideally located close to or within the downtown commercial area due to its central location and revitalization benefit.

Sewer System

The City of El Centro presently has full sewage treatment capabilities. New facilities will need to be planned, however, as future growth causes existing facilities to reach capacity. Additional collection infrastructure will also need to be extended to serve areas as they develop.

Public Facilities Goal 9: Provide for a sewer system that continues to serve existing development as well as future City growth.

Policy 9.1: Plan and design new sewer facilities to provide adequate capacity to serve new growth, while continuing to provide a high level of service to existing development.

Policy 9.2: Allow new development to occur outside the existing service area only if new sewer services will be provided by the developer or City.

Policy 9.3: Continue to monitor the existing sewer system to identify any needed improvements to ensure adequate levels of service.

Policy 9.4: Ensure that waste water treated at the El Centro treatment center fulfills the minimum secondary treatment standards.

Water System

A well maintained water system is a prerequisite for future development to occur. The system will need to be expanded to increase the available water supply and distribution system to meet the needs of the future population.

Public Facilities Goal 10: Provide for a well maintained water system that continues to serve existing development as well as provides for future City growth.

Public Facilities Element

Policy 10.1: Plan and design new water facilities to provide adequate capacity to serve new growth, while continuing to provide a high level of service to existing development.

Policy 10.2: Continue to correct low water pressure in older portions of the City and use “looping” of water lines to maintain pressure and adequate water delivery when expanding or upgrading the water delivery system.

Related Goals and Policies

The goals and policies described in the Public Facilities Element are related to and support subjects included within other General Plan elements. In turn, many goals and policies from other elements directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Public Facilities Element. These supporting goals and policies are identified in Table PF 1.

Table PF-1 Related Goals and Policies by Element

General Plan Elements	Public Facilities Issue Area								
	Parks and Recreation	Educational Facilities	Library Facilities	Police Facilities	Fire Stations	Civic Center	Cultural Facilities	Sewer System	Water System
Land Use	1.12, 1.13, 1.14 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, <u>1.14</u> , 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, <u>1.14</u> 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3	1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3
Economic Development								1.1, 1.3	1.1, 1.3
Housing									
Circulation	3.1, 3.2	2.3, 3.1, 3.2	2.3, 3.1, 3.2	3.2	3.2	2.3, 3.1, 3.2	2.3, 3.1, 3.2		
Public Facilities									
Conservation/ Open Space	<u>2.5</u> , 3.1, 3.3, <u>4.1</u> , <u>4.2</u>							<u>2.4</u> , 3.3	<u>2.2</u> , <u>2.3</u> , <u>2.4</u> , <u>2.5</u> , <u>3.3</u>
Safety		1.3, 1.4	1.3, 1.4	1.3, 1.4, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1, 6.2	1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 6.1, 6.2	1.3, 1.4		1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7	1.3, 1.4, 2.5, 2.7
Noise									

Public Facilities Plan

The provision of sufficient public facilities to its residents is a primary function of a City. The City of El Centro currently provides basic services and facilities, contracts with appropriate agencies to serve the City, or is served by special districts. Community services and facilities provided to the community include: parks and recreation, educational facilities, library facilities, police facilities, fire stations, civic center, cultural facilities, sewer system, and water system. Figure PF-1 shows the location of public facilities within El Centro.

Parks and Recreation

The City of El Centro Community Services provides a wide range of recreational activities and facilities for the City residents. There are currently 14 parks and ~~three~~ several retention basins within the community. Table PF-2 depicts the acreage, location, and amenities of the existing parks. Table PF-3 depicts the school district facilities subject to Joint Use Agreements with the City. Table PF-4 depicts the size, location and amenities associated with other public facilities.

The parks are utilized for structured and unstructured activities and ~~weekend~~ special events such as: Children's Fair at Bucklin Park, POA Circus at Big Stark, and Cesar Chavez Festivities at Stark Field. Other recreational facilities include a Community Center located at 375 South First Street, Conrad Harrison Youth Center at 750 Park Avenue, and City Plunge at 401 N. Eight Street. The Community Center offers a variety of summer recreation programs, senior programs, day camps, and many specialized classes including dance, art, and crafts. Conrad Harrison Youth Center offers sports programs for the youth as well as for the adults. City Plunge Aquatics Program offers public swim hours, swim lessons, lifeguarding, and other classes.

The City's goal is to provide for adequate year round recreational activities and facilities that serve all segments of the community, including the various ethnic and age groups within the community. Accessible parks and recreational facilities should be located within a ~~suitable~~ 1/2-mile distance of all residential areas in El Centro. ~~Where appropriate, flood basins~~ While retention basins may not be substituted for useable parks to meet the Quimby Act requirements, retention basins may be utilized to a limited extent, for recreational uses. The City will work with developers to ensure developed and usable recreational facilities are provided as allowed under the Quimby Act. Additionally, new developments are required to provide for recreational facilities to the extent allowed by law. The City will plan the expansion of existing parks and recreational facilities to meet statewide parks standards.

Public Facilities Element

Table PF-2 El Centro Public Parks Summary

<u>Park</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Amenities</u>
<u>Adams Park</u>	<u>9.33</u>	<u>4th and 8th Streets</u>	<u>Open space, restrooms, shelter/picnic areas, children's playground, gymnasium, swimming pool, ramada, and roller hockey area.</u>
<u>Bucklin Park</u>	<u>20.00</u>	<u>8th and Aurora/Ross</u>	<u>Open space, restrooms, shelter/picnic areas, children's playground, lake, pavilion area, horseshoe pit, and walking path.</u>
<u>Buena Vista (retention basin)</u>			<u>Open space/non-structured (7.96 acres not included in total developed park acreage).</u>
<u>Carlos Aguilar Park</u>	<u>4.75</u>	<u>W. Pico Ave and Imperial Avenue</u>	<u>Open space, restrooms, shelter/picnic area, children's playground, soccer fields, and basketball courts. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Countryside North Park</u>	<u>7.90</u>	<u>Countryside North Subdivision</u>	<u>Open space/non-structured.</u>
<u>Debbie Pittman Park</u>	<u>4.73</u>	<u>La Brucherie and Orange Avenue</u>	<u>Girls youth softball fields, BBQ areas, restrooms and off-street parking. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Farmers Park</u>	<u>1.29</u>		<u>Shaded picnic area and picnic area.</u>
<u>Frazier Field</u>	<u>5.41</u>	<u>North 6th Street</u>	<u>Little league baseball fields and restrooms. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Gomez Park</u>	<u>5.09</u> -	<u>South Hope Street</u>	<u>Open space, 2 ramadas with BBQ and restrooms. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Legacy Park</u>	<u>1.50</u>	<u>New Park in Countryside North Subdivision</u>	<u>Play structure, shade structure and walking path.</u>
<u>Leeper Park (retention basin)</u>	-	<u>W. Main and Lotus</u>	<u>Open space/non-structured (3.71 acres not included in total developed park acreage).</u>
<u>Lotus Park (retention basin)</u>	-	<u>South Lotus</u>	<u>Open space/non-structured (3.85 acres not included in total developed park acreage).</u>
<u>McGee Park</u>	<u>5.31</u>	<u>Brighton and Fairfield Drive</u>	<u>Community Center, children's playground, soccer field, shelter/picnic area, and basketball courts. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Stark Field</u>	<u>11.44</u>	<u>4th and Lenrey Avenue</u>	<u>Baseball complex (bleachers, lights), practice fields, restrooms, shelter/picnic areas, and children's playground. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Sunflower Park</u>	<u>11.60</u>	<u>Lotus and Evan Hewes Highway</u>	<u>Baseball field, two soccer fields, drinking fountain and off street parking. 1.4-acre retention basin at lower end of field and not included in developed park acreage. Owned by the school district but used 100% by the community at this time.</u>
<u>Swarthout Field</u>	<u>15.49</u>	<u>4th and Euclid Avenue</u>	<u>Adult softball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, restrooms, shelter/picnic areas, children's playground, and volleyball area. Lighted facility.</u>
<u>Town Square</u>	<u>0.50</u>	<u>Main Street</u>	<u>Stage, Marquee, Water Feature and lawn.</u>
<u>Wildflower Park (retention basin)</u>	-	<u>East Aten Road</u>	<u>Open space/non-structured (3.96 acres not included in developed park acreage).</u>
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>104.34</u>		
<u>Parks owned by school district but used 100% by City</u>	<u><16.65></u>		
<u>Total City Owned Developed Parks</u>	<u>87.69</u>		

Source: The City of El Centro, Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2008.

Public Facilities Element

Table PF-3 School District Joint Use Facilities

<u>School</u>	<u>Acres Jointly Used</u>	<u>Total Acreage at Site</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Amenities</u>
<u>Central Union High School</u>	<u>17.50</u>	<u>17.50</u>	<u>1001 Brighton Ave.</u>	<u>Pool access, baseball, football, softball, soccer fields, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, track, gym</u>
<u>De Anza Elementary School</u>	<u>8.40</u>	<u>14.73</u>	<u>1530 S. Waterman</u>	<u>Baseball field, joint use during baseball season</u>
<u>Desert Garden Elementary School</u>	<u>6.50</u>	<u>13.32</u>	<u>1900 6th Street</u>	<u>Track, two backstops</u>
<u>Harding School</u>	<u>5.00</u>	<u>8.13</u>	<u>950 S. 7th Street</u>	<u>Baseball, soccer fields, two backstops</u>
<u>Hendrick Elementary School</u>	<u>6.50</u>	<u>10.93</u>	<u>550 S. Waterman</u>	<u>Play structure, softball field, two backstops</u>
<u>Kennedy Elementary-Middle School</u>	<u>2.90</u>	<u>16.65</u>	<u>900 N. 6th Street</u>	<u>Gym, basketball court, back fields are available for City use</u>
<u>King Elementary School</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>12.00</u>	<u>1950 Villa Avenue</u>	<u>No recent joint use provided at this location</u>
<u>Lincoln School</u>	<u>2.75</u>	<u>7.67</u>	<u>200 N. 12th Street</u>	<u>Baseball field, play structure, two backstops</u>
<u>McKinley School</u>	<u>2.50</u>	<u>10.38</u>	<u>1177 N. 8th Street</u>	<u>Two backstops, two soccer goals</u>
<u>Southwest High School</u>	<u>16.50</u>	<u>16.50</u>	<u>2001 Ocotillo Dr.</u>	<u>Baseball, football and soccer fields, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, lighted facilities, all-weather track</u>
<u>Sunflower Elementary School*</u>		<u>10.00</u>	<u>2450 Main Street</u>	<u>Lighted facility, play structure</u>
<u>Washington Elementary School</u>	<u>4.50</u>	<u>9.37</u>	<u>223 East 1st St.</u>	
<u>Wilson Junior High School</u>	<u>4.50</u>	<u>14.40</u>	<u>600 S. Wilson Ave.</u>	<u>Gym and basketball courts</u>
<u>Total Joint Use Acreage</u>	<u>77.55</u>			
<u>Subtotal for City's Calculations (25% of total)</u>	<u>19.39</u>			

Source: The City of El Centro, Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2008.

* Park acreage for Sunflower is listed in Table PF-2.

Public Facilities Element

Table PF-4 Public Facilities

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Square Footage</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Amenities</u>
<u>Conrad Harrison Youth Center</u>	<u>26,000 (approx)</u>	<u>750 Park Avenue</u>	<u>Gymnasium with one full basketball/volleyball court, lobby, office, lounge, storage, conference room, restrooms, outdoor showers and off street parking.</u>
<u>El Centro Community Center</u>	<u>8,450 (approx)</u>	<u>375 S. First Street</u>	<u>Community Center with adaptable meeting spaces for various size groups, classrooms, recreation program offices and restrooms.</u>
<u>El Centro Library</u>	<u>14,000 (approx)</u>	<u>539 W. State Street</u>	<u>Library, offices and restrooms.</u>
<u>El Centro Storage Building</u>	<u>1,400 (approx)</u>	<u>336 S. First Street</u>	<u>Classrooms, full-size kitchen, restrooms and parking lot.</u>
<u>Old Post Office Pavillion</u>	<u>1,000 (approx)</u>	<u>230 S. Fifth Street</u>	<u>Three-story historic building, constructed in 1934, with a small performance space, ticket booth, waiting room and bathrooms on the first floor. The second floor and basement have several small potential offices or classroom spaces that could be useful if upgraded to current building codes.</u>
<u>Ryerson Center</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>1100 North 4th Street</u>	<u>Banquet Hall, restrooms and off street parking.</u>
<u>The Plunge</u>		<u>750 Park Avenue</u>	<u>Swimming pool and slide. 2008 summer renovations to include: swimming pool with 8 lanes, lazy river, flow rider, disability lift and bathroom upgrades.</u>
<u>Posado del Sol Apartment Complex</u>			<u>Private facility. Pool used for recreation activities.</u>

Source: The City of El Centro, Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2008. Public Facilities include 6 acres of developed park land.

Parkland Standard and Future Park Needs (based upon build-out to full capacity)

To ensure sufficient parks and recreational opportunities to meet the community's needs, the City's goal is to provide ~~three~~ five acres of developed public parkland per 1,000 residents. This standard is useful in determining existing parkland deficiencies and predicting the demand from future population growth.

Using the adopted park standard, future demand for parkland facilities at buildout has been estimated as part of this General Plan update. Table PF-3 summarizes the parkland requirements for the existing population and the anticipated population from development of planned land uses as established by the Land Use Policy Map, based on the parkland standard of ~~three~~ five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The City currently exceeds the 3 acre per 1,000 resident standard but an additional 80 acres of park land should be developed to meet the 5 acre per 1,000 resident standard. Additionally, some of the existing facilities require improvement and maintenance to provide adequate and safe facilities for the population.

As indicated in Table PF-5, the City will need to provide an additional ~~276~~ 500 acres of parkland to meet the needs of the population at buildout. New development shall be conditioned to provide all the land and improvements required to achieve the parkland standard of ~~three~~ five acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents generated by the proposed project in order to meet park acreage needs (See Table PF-5). ~~While the City encourages developers to design required flood control basins to also provide additional open space, developers will typically be required to provide useable and improved parkland that provides active recreational opportunities for the community of pay in lieu fees, as allowed under the Quimby Act and City regulations. In the event that flood control basins are used to meet parkland requirements, the development will be required to ensure that the design of the basin and condition of soils will allow recreation use of the site. Each development proposal will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the City to determine the appropriate manner as to which a specific project should comply with City regulations.~~

Table PF-5
Existing and Future Park Acreage Needs (based upon buildout to full capacity)

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Park Acreage Required (3-acs/1,000)</u>	<u>Park Acreage Required (5-acs/1,000)</u>	<u>Available Acreage from Existing Parkland</u>	<u>Additional Parkland Required for 5-acs/1,000 Standard (Surplus)</u>
Existing	42,071 (a)	126.20	210.35	129.40	80.60
Future	134,238 (b)	402.70	671.20	129.40	514.46

Notes:

a Existing population based on Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, page 33 (Golden Associates 2008).

b Based on future land use plan and 3.23 persons per household.

Trails Network

The City is continuing to promote an extensive pedestrian and bicycle trails network to link major activity centers, parks and recreational facilities, and transit nodes within the City (Figure C-3 in the Circulation Element). This network encourages the use of bicycles and walking for commute, recreational, and other trips. The City seeks to maintain and improve the biking and walking environment by providing safe and attractive sidewalks, walkways, and bike lanes and paths for both recreational and commuting purposes. The pedestrian and bicycle classification system and requirements are discussed in more detail in the Circulation Element.

Educational Facilities

Three school districts serve the community of El Centro: the El Centro Elementary School District and the Central Union High School District serve school age residents living within City limits. McCabe Union Elementary School District provides K-8 education to students residing outside the City limits, but within the Planning Area. The El Centro Elementary School District serves approximately 6,350 students in nine elementary schools, one middle school and one junior high school. The Central Union High School District comprises three high schools, including one alternative education school (Desert Oasis Continuation School), El Centro High School, and Southwest High School. The Central Union High School District serves approximately 3,600 students.

El Centro Elementary School District is experiencing declining enrollment and currently has no Master Planning document, however the District has identified the need for several improvements to existing facilities. The Central Union High School District developed a Needs Assessment and Master Plan in 1997. Recently, the District commissioned a Yield Study that has identified the need for a new high school in El Centro and will serve as the basis of an application for a School Facility Program New Construction Grant made possible by SB 50. Additionally, the McCabe Elementary School District is in the process of creating a Master Plan which identifies efforts made by the District to acquire funds for additions to McCabe Elementary and identify sites for a proposed new school.

New residential development in the City will create additional demand for schools. To meet this demand, additional school facilities will be required. Future school enrollments will also be affected by current and future birth rates and the extent of migration of families with school aged children. The City continues to work with the El Centro Elementary School District, the Central Union High School District, and the McCabe Union Elementary School District to determine the most appropriate locations and funding sources for new school facilities and will coordinate with them in updating relevant Master Plans. Additionally, the City encourages the joint use of school facilities to provide a range of recreational and educational opportunities for all segments of the community.

Library Facilities

Public libraries serve several community purposes including, education, recreation, and dissemination of public information. The City of El Centro is served by two public libraries. The main El Centro Public Library is located at 539 State Street and the Community Center Branch Library is located at 375 South First Street. The main library has more than 14,000 square feet of space and owns more than 111,000 books, magazines, and audiovisual materials. Additionally, the library owns a total of 11 public access computers to connect to the internet or for general word-processing functions.

The City will continue to work through the Library Administrative Board to ensure the public participates in the identification of service deficiencies and funding sources for library system and service expansion. As development occurs, the City will ensure that adequate library facilities are provided and equipped with books, reference materials, and educational devices to serve all El Centro residents.

Police Facilities

Sufficient law enforcement is necessary to ensure the public health and safety. The City provides its own law enforcement. The El Centro Police Department was formed in 1908. The department is located at 150 North 11th Street and is made up of 47 officers, including: Chief of Police, one Captain, three Lieutenants, six Sergeants, and 36 Police Officers. The department also has an active Reserve Officer program, a Police Auxiliary Team (PAX) program, and an Explorer program. Currently there are 23 civilian employees assigned to Records, Communication, Evidence, Animal Control, Crime Prevention, Community Service Officer, Crime Analysis Unit, Computer Information Services, and Parking Enforcement.

In August 1996, the El Centro Police Department expanded and started using space provided by the El Centro Community Center, at 375 South First Street. Due to the expansion, the department now has a Community Oriented Police Office, Crime Prevention Specialist, Training Office, and Volunteer Services office located at the Community Center sub station.

In addition to the Community Center substation, the department has a substation at Posada del Sol, 1400 North Imperial Avenue. The station is primarily used for report writing. The department's active Police Athletic League is located at 1100 North 4th Street. In addition to the auxiliary sites, the department has two School Resource Officers. One officer is permanently assigned to the high schools (Central and Southwest) and the second officer is assigned to the junior high schools.

In 1999, the department re-constituted their Traffic Unit, which consist of one Sergeant, one Motor Officer, and a Community Service Officer. The Community Service Officer is also in charge of the PAX Team. Additionally, an Active

Emergency Response Team and a Special Enforcement Unit has been assigned for gangs.

The Police Department's goal is to have 1.75 police officers per 1,000 population. Response to calls for service is prioritized based on urgency and need. Average response time for routine calls is currently 5 to 10 minutes, while for emergency calls the response time is about three to five minutes. An average of 4,070 calls is made per month to the City of El Centro Police Department, as of July 2001.

For law enforcement, ensuring public safety requires maintaining adequate staffing, equipment, and facilities. The City periodically evaluates the level of law enforcement service provided in order to identify any necessary improvements or changes, as well as additional funding sources. The City will continue to ensure the highest standards of law enforcement by providing the Police Department with personnel, equipment, and facilities that assist them in protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Fire Stations

As with law enforcement, fire protection is necessary to ensure the public health and safety. The City of El Centro Fire Department provides service within the City limits, as well as some unincorporated areas adjacent to the City limits. The El Centro Fire Department was established in May 1908, as a Volunteer Fire Department. The volunteer program ended in the early seventies and El Centro became a full service department. The City currently operates two fire stations: Fire Station No. 1, located at 775 State Street and Fire Station No. 2, located at 900 Dogwood. The Department consists of 33 safety members and three administrative assistants. The Department is led by a Chief and four Battalion Chiefs.

The Fire Department provides a full range of services, including: 1) fire prevention, 2) company inspections, 3) plan review, 4) nuisance abatement, 5) public education, 6) school inspections, 7) public relations, 8) flammable liquid storage tank program, 9) fire investigations, 10) juvenile firesetter program, 11) fire suppression operations, 12) emergency medical services (paramedic level), 13) hazardous materials, 14) technical rescue, 15) public assistance, 16) disaster preparedness, 17) bomb unit, 18) information management citywide, 30) 9-1-1 data base, and 30) CPR and first aid training.

The Department currently responds to an average of 10.5 emergency calls per 24-hour shift. The standard response time is approximately 7 to 10 minutes for emergencies and 10 to 15 minutes for non-emergencies.

The provision of adequate fire protection staffing, equipment and facilities is necessary to ensure the public's safety. As growth continues, the City will need to construct two new fire stations: one along the eastern side of La Brucherie Road, south of Wake Avenue; and one at Cruickshank Drive, east of Imperial Avenue and west of 8th Street. The City will periodically evaluate the level of fire

protection service provided to identify any necessary improvements or changes, as well as additional funding sources.

Civic Center

The City's Civic Center, centered on and around Main Street, has a City Hall, County Government Complex, County Court House, Imperial Irrigation District Headquarters, and a Police Station. This area's structures constitute an important feature of the City's basic structure. There is an intimate relationship between the public buildings, schools, commercial, and residential blocks in this area. In order to maintain a high level of visual quality of the Civic Center area, the City plans to develop and adopt a precise plan to plan for new structures and improvements within the area. The City's goal is to provide for and maintain a variety of buildings in the Civic Center to satisfy the requirements of the many diverse governmental agencies within the City and allow the agencies to adequately serve the public.

Cultural Facilities

Presently the City supports an archaeological museum, a Community Center, a variety of informal theatre and recreation groups, and a number of community groups. A state of the art Southwest High School auditorium provides the facility for theatrical plays, master coral performances, and concerts.

In order to provide for a range of cultural facilities that serve the community's diverse cultural groups and activities, the City plans to coordinate with residents and community groups to identify needed facilities and improvements to existing facilities and explore funding sources to meet these needs.

Sewer System

The City of El Centro provides wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal services within the City limits and to some unincorporated areas of Imperial County. The City owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of eight million gallons per day (mgd) that provides secondary level treatment of wastewater generated within the service area. Treated water is discharged to the Alamo River. The City also owns and operates a wastewater collection and transmission system comprising collector sewers, trunk sewers, lift stations, and force mains. The City will continue to ensure that waste water treated at the El Centro treatment center fulfills the minimum secondary treatment standards.

The City will continue to monitor the existing sewer system to identify any needed improvements to ensure adequate levels of service. Additionally, the City will plan and design new sewer facilities to provide adequate capacity to serve new growth, while continuing to provide a high level of service to existing development. New development is allowed to occur outside the existing sewer

service system only if new sewer services will be provided by the developer or City. The City will also implement and update the 1994 Sewer Master Plan as needed.

Water System

The City of El Centro provides water treatment and distribution services within the City limits and to some unincorporated areas of Imperial County. The City owns and operates a water treatment plant that provides clarification, filtration, and disinfection of water from the Colorado River. Untreated water is delivered to the plant via the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) All American Canal and Date Canal. Treated water is then pumped from storage tanks to users via a grid of distribution pipelines and water mains.

According to the City's Water Master Plan Update, completed in 1994, the existing raw water storage and treatment facilities have adequate capacity to meet the demands of the existing service area as well as several years of future development. The Water Master Plan estimated that the treated water storage facilities would reach capacity when the City's population grows to 42,600, while the existing distribution system would reach capacity when the population grows to 49,700. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) projects that the population of El Centro will reach ~~42,774~~ 52,362 by the year 2020. Therefore, the water storage and piping capacity are adequate to meet the projected population through 2020. However, water system improvements identified in the Water Master Plan will be needed in order to provide potable water service for all Tier I and Tier II Growth Areas.

The City of El Centro will continue to plan and design new water facilities to provide adequate capacity to serve new growth through the Master Planning process, while continuing to provide a high level of service to existing development. Additionally, the City will continue to correct low water pressure in older portions of the City and use "looping" of water lines to maintain pressure and ensure adequate delivery when expanding or upgrading the water delivery system.

PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

El Centro General Plan

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Public Facilities Element. The Public Facilities Element Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques that includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Public Facilities Element.

Parks and Recreation

PF-1: Improve Existing Parks: Work through all City Departments to share resources and activities to improve existing parks by:

- Providing funds to improve infrastructure of the existing fields in accordance with the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan;
- Providing funds to upgrade and improve restrooms, concession stands, shade structures, drinking fountains, ADA access and parking;
- Providing funds to increase staff maintenance levels and security;
- Providing funds to increase recreational programming staff.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation, Finance

Funding Source: General Fund, Development Impact Fees

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.6

PF -2: Maximize the Value Provided by Future Parks and Recreation

Facilities: Require new development to provide usable parkland or pay in-lieu fees to provide ~~three~~ five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. ~~Pursue funding to develop and maintain these facilities.~~ Leverage future planning efforts to:

- Purchase additional land adjacent to existing parks to enable the expansion of programs;

Public Facilities Implementation Program

- Secure 40 to 60 acres (through purchase or agreements with developers) to accommodate a Sports Athletic Complex to provide tournament quality fields and practice fields;
- Provide additional baseball, softball, soccer and football fields;
- Provide additional play structures and a swimming pool.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services, Community Services~~
Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, Public Works

Funding Source: Project proponents, Development Impact Fees

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4

PF-3 Create Standards for Parks: Work through the appropriate City Departments to establish standards for parks and recreation. The standards should provide the following:

- A comprehensive list of park features and standards that take into account the special needs of the desert climate including shaded play structures, water fountains at all parks, night lighting to maximize use and indoor facilities;
- A standard set of operating schedules;
- A recommended list of materials.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Planning and Zoning

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.3, 1.6

PF-4 Maximize Funding Dollars: Work with developers, the school district, community organizations and local business owners to maximize the funding available to the program. Encourage the business community to support leagues and encourage private entertainment investment. Maximize the use of volunteers to develop, build and maintain new parks. Seek grants.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.6

PF-5 Undertake Regular Updates to the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan: Review the effectiveness of programs and safety and appropriateness of existing parks by undertaking regular review of the Parks and

Recreation Facilities Master Plan. Evaluate the quality of the parks and confirm that community needs are being met.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Every five years

Related Policies: 1.1, 1.3, 1.6

PF-6 Keep Program Estimates and Development Impact Fees Current:

Assure adequate funding for the program by updating cost estimates at each phase of the project design and by updating the Development Impact Fees to reflect current cost estimates.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Finance

Funding Source: Development Impact Fees, General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 1.2, 1.3

Educational Facilities

PF-7: Schools to Serve the Community: Review development proposals for consistency with school facility requirements, work with the district to collect student impact fees and require the dedication of necessary school sites when appropriate.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Public Works, El Centro Elementary School District, Central Union High School District, McCabe Union Elementary School District

Funding Source: Project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.1

PF-8: School Districts' Master Plans: Work with the school districts serving El Centro in future updates of their Master Plans. Provide information about existing and planned land use to the districts. Coordinate with the districts in establishing new school facility sites, student generation formulas and facility improvement plans.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Planning and Zoning, El Centro Elementary School District, Central Union High School District, McCabe Union Elementary School District

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.1

PF-9 Joint Use Agreements with Schools: Work with School Districts to improve joint-use agreements in order to resolve specific issues including:

- Security;
- Availability of Facilities;
- Shared parking and restrooms that can be accessed from outside of the buildings;
- Clear definition of responsibilities in terms of maintenance, repairs, scheduling and insurance liability.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Finance, El Centro Elementary School District, Central Union High School District, McCabe Union Elementary School District

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 3.1

Library Facilities

PF-10: Library Administrative Board: Continue to work with the El Centro Public Library Administrative Board to ensure that community needs for library services are being met.

Responsible Agency/Department: Library, Public Library Administrative Board

Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 3.1, 3.2

Police Facilities

PF-11: Law Enforcement: Review the level of services and funding levels at budget time, adjusting when necessary to ensure that adequate levels of service are provided and facilities are maintained.

Responsible Agency/Department: Police Department

Funding Source: General Fund

Time Frame: Annual basis at budget time

Related Policies: 4.1

Fire Stations

PF-12: Fire Protection: Review the level of services and funding levels at budget time, adjusting when necessary to ensure that adequate levels of service are provided and facilities are maintained.

Responsible Agency/Department: Fire Department

Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Annual basis at budget time
Related Policies: 5.2

Civic Center

PF-13: Civic Center Precise Plan: Create and implement a Precise Plan for the City's Civic Center that maximizes the efficiency of public agencies.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Planning and Zoning
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: 2003-2004
Related Policies: 6.1

Cultural Facilities

PF-14: Community Based Organizations: Continue to coordinate with community organizations to provide facilities that serve the diverse cultural groups and activities in El Centro.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Parks and Recreation, local community groups
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 7.1

Sewer System

PF-15: Sewer Master Plan: Update, as necessary, and implement the Sewer Master Plan. As part of the Master Plan update, the City will evaluate the need for additional pump station and piping capacity.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 8.1, 8.3, 8.4

Water System

PF-16: Water Master Plan: Update, as necessary, and implement the Water Master Plan. As part of the Master Plan update, the City will evaluate the need for additional piping capacity.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1

PF-17: Water and Sewer Service: Review development proposals and require necessary studies, as appropriate, and water conservation and mitigation measures to ensure adequate water and sewer service is provided and maintained.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services,~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund, project proponent, development fees

Time Frame: Ongoing *Related Policies: 9.1*

PF-18: Improve Surface Water Quality: Reduce pollutants in urban runoff, by requiring new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects to incorporate Best Management Practices pursuant to the National Pollutant System Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) to ensure that the City complies with applicable State and federal regulations.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services,~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds, project proponent

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 2.1

PF-19: Watershed Management Initiative: Cooperate with regional agencies to implement the Watershed Management Initiative.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services,~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Imperial Irrigation District, County of Imperial

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1, 9.2

PF-20: Water Quality Education: Coordinate in the development and implementation of a public education program to inform the public of the harm caused by pollutants and litter that can be carried on the surface of land to the drainage systems, creeks, rivers, groundwater, and Salton Sea.

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services,~~ Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Imperial Irrigation District, County of Imperial

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1, 9.2

PF-21: IID Rules and Regulations: Continue to implement the Imperial Irrigation District IID Rules and Regulations Governing the Distribution and Use of Water.

Public Facilities Implementation Program

Responsible Agency/Department: ~~Development Services~~, Planning and Zoning,
Public Works, Imperial Irrigation District

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal funds

Time Frame: Ongoing

Related Policies: 9.1, 9.2