



# City of Escondido Community Health and Services Element

July 2025

Community Development Department

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Escondido, CA 92025

# Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction.....4
  - A. Purpose..... 4
  - B. Relationship to Other Elements in the General Plan..... 6
  - C. Community Context..... 6
  - D. Community Outreach and Engagement..... 6
- 2. Community Health, and Services ..... 7
  - A. What is Health (and Wellness)?..... 7
  - B. What are Community Services? ..... 9
- 3. Environmental Justice ..... 20
  - A. Introduction.....20
  - B. Legal Requirements.....21
  - C. Scope/Content.....22
  - D. Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)/Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs) .....22
  - E. Methodology .....23
  - F. Priority Investment Neighborhoods (PINs) & the Escondido Climate Action Plan (E-CAP) ....24
  - G. Relationships to other General Plan Elements .....28
- 4. Goals, Policies, and Actions..... 28
  - A. Community Health and Services Goals and Policies .....28
    - Library Services Policies..... 34
  - B. Environmental Justice Goals and Policies.....41

## List of Figures

- Figure V-1 Components of a Health Community ..... 8
- Figure V-2 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #6..... 10
- Figure V-3 Parks and Recreational Facilities ..... 11
- Figure V-4 Urban Park Examples ..... 13
- Figure V-5 Park Features..... 14
- Figure V-6 City Park, Open Space, and Facility Roster ..... 14
- Figure V-7 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #7..... 16
- Figure V-8 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #2..... 17
- Figure V-9 School Service Boundaries ..... 18
- Figure V-10 Community Gardens..... 19

Figure V-11: Environmental Justice Communities .....26  
Figure V-12: Priority Investment Neighborhoods.....27  
Figure V-13: Certified Farmers’ Markets .....30  
Figure V-14: Library Definitions .....35  
Figure V-15: Family Day Care Definitions\* .....39  
Figure V-16: Adult Residential Care Definitions .....41

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# 1. Introduction

A healthy community provides opportunities for ~~citizens~~ community members to make sound choices and work together to improve their environment for themselves and others. Healthy communities are built from sound and equitable policies and practices that benefit all community members. The way communities are developed directly impacts public health and environmental justice. To achieve a healthy community, City policies must consider a number of public health factors, such as opportunities for physical activity, safe and sanitary housing, and access to public facilities, civic engagement, and healthy foods, as well as pollution burden in communities. Identifying where in the City these public health factors may be present or may be needed, is essential when crafting and implementing local policies to create healthy communities. In an era of streamlining government operations and enhancing efficiencies, a healthy community promotes individual responsibility and shared values to forge stronger private-sector partnerships that assess and respond to residents' needs. This serves to promote leadership opportunities, embrace diversity, and fosters a "sense of place" to ensure sustainability and a more livable community.

A healthy community provides opportunities for people of all ages, ~~and abilities, and backgrounds~~ to engage in routine and safe daily physical activity, to access basic needs such as housing and healthy foods, and to promote self improvement and intellectual development for personal and economic growth. This serves to promote leadership opportunities, embrace diversity, and fosters a "sense of place" to ensure sustainability and a more livable community. Through strategic planning, community collaboration, and individual accountability, a healthy community connects people and resources resulting in an improved quality of life.

## A. Purpose

It is widely understood that the quality, conditions, and design of the built environment directly affect and influence public health. Quality, conditions, and design of the built environment are the product of local, regional, and broader policies and programs. In certain instances, such policy and programming has negatively impacted certain communities, resulting in an adverse built environment and detrimental impacts to those living in that built environment. For example, those living adjacent to freeways suffer from worse air quality conditions than those farther removed from a high concentration of vehicles. Policy that allows for residential uses adjacent freeways may have negative public health impacts on those residing in such housing. The purpose of the Community Health, ~~and Services, and Environmental Justice~~ -Element is to establish policies that influence good land use planning in order to enhance community health and welfare, while seeking to remedy historic land use planning

### What is Environmental Justice?

The State of California defines environmental justice as,

"the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

Source: Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines, 2020

that has historically caused public health and environmental justice issues within Escondido. Policies supporting access to healthy foods, safe and sanitary housing, availability of parks, recreational opportunities, libraries, and cultural services, and other public facilities, as well as promoting educational advancement and civic engagement all aim to improve economic, physical, and social conditions for those that live, work, and play within Escondido.

## **Senate Bill (SB) 1000**

In 2016, the California Legislature passed SB 1000 (Government Code section 65302(h)), which integrates environmental justice principles into the planning process and seeks to improve public participation. Specifically, SB 1000 requires jurisdictions to include environmental justice related goals, policies, and objectives into their general plans. Jurisdictions must address environmental justice topics, including but not limited to reduction in pollution exposure, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and civic engagement. Senate Bill 1000 also requires jurisdictions to identify “disadvantaged communities” within their borders that such goals, policies, and objectives specifically target. For the purposes of the Community Health, Services, and Environmental Justice Element, which fulfils the requirements of SB 1000 for the City, “Environmental Justice Communities” are the term applied to what the State defines as “disadvantaged communities.”

### [What is a “disadvantaged community”?](#)

*The State of California defines “disadvantaged communities” as*

*“an area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.”*

Source: Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines, 2020

Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code states,

“[DACs] shall be identified based on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria, and may include, but are not limited to, either of the following:

1. Areas disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative public health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.
2. Areas with concentrations of people that are of low income, high unemployment, low levels of homeownership, high rent burden, sensitive populations, or low levels of educational attainment.”

The Community Health, Services, and Environmental Justice Element promotes a community-based and private sector approach for establishing a sustainable and healthy community. The Element supports partnerships with neighborhood groups, private enterprise, and philanthropic and service agencies

relying on government involvement to identify, assist, and enhance the health and wellbeing for all residents.

## **Element Organization**

### **B. Relationship to Other Elements in the General Plan**

The Community Health and Services Element is closely related to the Land Use and Urban Form, Community Protection, Mobility and Circulation, and Economic Prosperity Elements. How Escondido plans and develops land uses that accommodate facilities and services to promote public health and welfare will have a significant impact on residents. Community health is related to the Mobility Element because a developing a multi-modal transportation system will expand opportunities for access, lower dependence on automobile-oriented trips and reduce greenhouse gasses to enhance air quality. The Community Protection Element is related to Community Health and Services by ensuring a safe environment for community members thus allowing opportunities to socialize, volunteer, and participate in activities, which will strengthen a sense of community. The Economic Prosperity Element is related to Community Health by promoting educational and career-enhancement policies to raise median income which improves the general welfare.

### **C. Community Context**

The City of Escondido is a vibrant and diverse community located in northern San Diego County. Escondido is one of San Diego County's oldest cities, and celebrates a rich history, lively arts and cultural presences, scenic open spaces, and trails. Escondido provides both rural and suburban living opportunities for residents and connects to other portions of the county by the SR-15 and I-78. The City's land use patterns reflect a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space uses, with pockets of older urban development in the central core and newer growth at the periphery. Several neighborhoods within Escondido meet the State definition of a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), experiencing disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards and limited access to health-promoting resources. Community needs vary by neighborhood, and these neighborhoods are identified in Figures V-11 and V-12 as those most in need of targeted resource and equity efforts. The Community Health and Services Element supports goals and policies that strive to promote equitable access to community facilities and services to help ensure that all residents can thrive in a healthy and livable environment.

### **D. Community Outreach and Engagement**

Preparation of the Community Health and Services Element, specifically for Chapter 3. Environmental Justice, included a focused and inclusive outreach effort. The City prepared an outreach and engagement plan in 2022, hosting a series of workshops and events attracting interested parties, local businesses, and community members between 2022-2025. In an effort to promote inclusive participation, outreach materials were distributed in English and Spanish, with online feedback options available for community members unable to attend events in person.

Outreach efforts were intentionally focused in communities with higher CalEnviroScreen scores and areas identified as disadvantaged per SB 1000 requirements. Feedback gathered from these engagement activities informed the Element's goals, policies, and implementation strategies, especially those that prioritize equitable access to community services, healthy food, and clean environments. The City remains committed to continuing community engagement throughout the implementation of this Element to ensure policies remain responsive to evolving community needs.

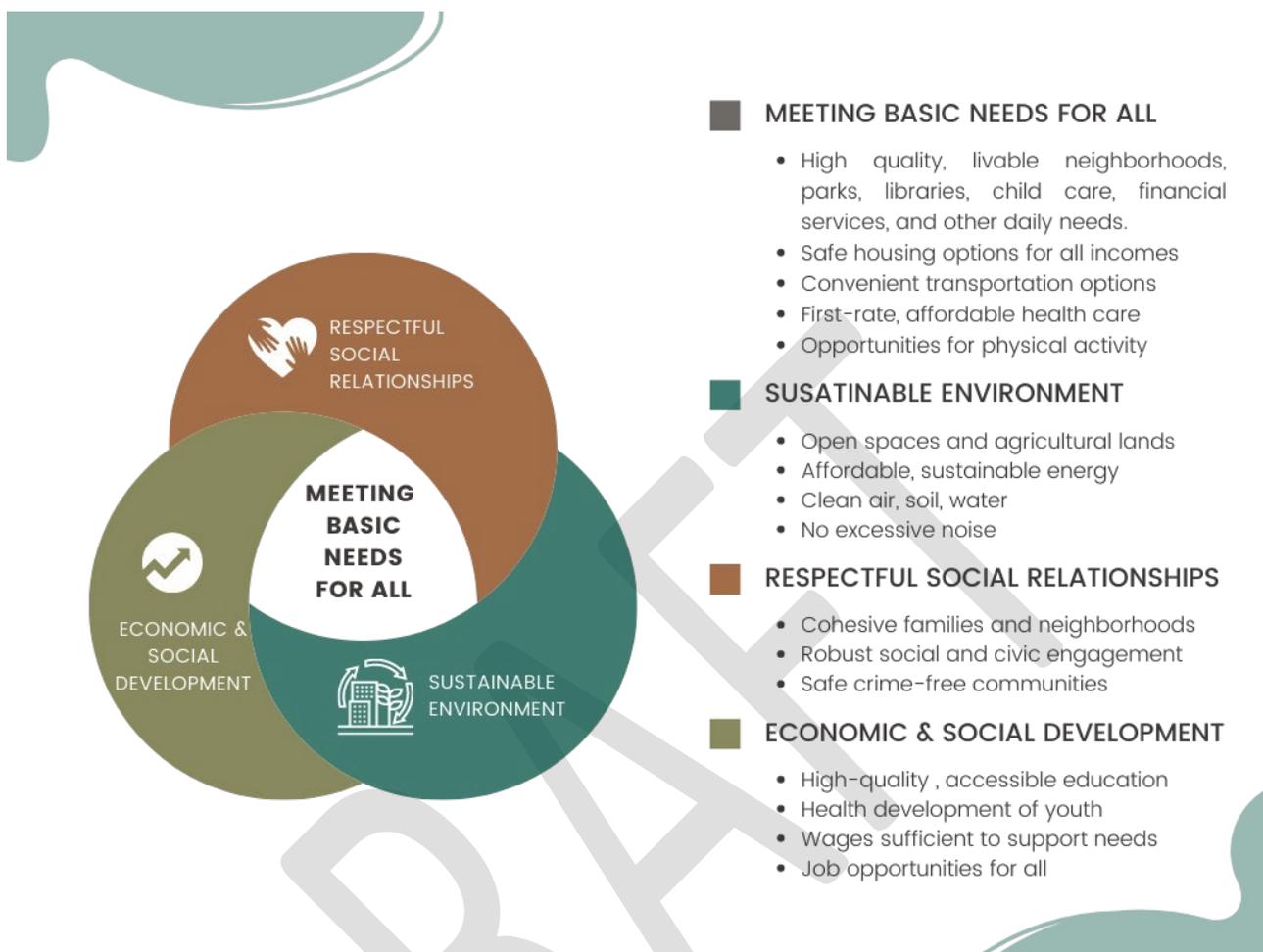
## 2. Community Health, and Services

### A. What is Health (and Wellness)?

Successful and appropriate land use development, distinctive amenities, convenient transportation, robust economic development, preserved natural resources, efficient governmental services, and an involved community will have a long-lasting beneficial effect on the community. Escondido's General Plan policies aim to improve livability, enhance access to public amenities, promote physical activity, boost economic opportunities, and engage community involvement to improve public health and wellness. Because there are a variety of components that establish a healthy community a comprehensive approach must be considered in order to ensure its success (Figure V-1).

Ensuring an adequate number and placement of recreational facilities and programs for the community will enhance opportunities involving healthy physical activities. Encouraging community gardens, farmers markets and grocery stores with wholesome grocery choices enhances access to healthy foods. Promoting venues for intellectual growth including libraries, cultural facilities, educational institutions, technical schools and career development centers enhances the community's overall desirability as a place to establish and grow businesses that are seeking a more educated and informed workforce. Collaborating with health care providers and agencies involved in identifying health and wellness issues will solidify a community-based comprehensive approach that promotes a healthy lifestyle for all and aids residents most at risk, including the elderly and disabled while minimizing government intervention.

**Figure V-1 Components of a Health Community**



## Residents' Health and Wellbeing

Community participation in the planning and sustaining of a healthy environment for residents builds trust and confidence in government. Engaging residents, agencies and organizations in identifying and prioritizing healthy development opportunities and constraints will contribute to a more robust and sustainable plan. Collaborating with health agencies and service organizations in assessing community needs will allow the city opportunity to quickly respond, if needed, thereby maintaining order and stability.

## Civic Engagement

Civic engagement and volunteerism allow residents to take an active role in addressing local challenges which are important facets of a healthy community. Community members involved in local decision making are more likely to understand and appreciate the needs of all members of the community. Civic engagement includes volunteering in the community, and participating on committees, boards, or commissions. Without volunteers the city would not be able to provide the

level of service required to reach all its community members who are in need. The General Plan promotes civic engagement and encourages residents to actively participate in Escondido's future.

## **Childcare Services**

Quality child care services are an important facet of a healthy community that also drives economic growth and establishes a foundation for success in school, life and work. Having available child care supports work/life balance, increases job loyalty and satisfaction and reduces absenteeism in the workplace. Strategically locating childcare facilities near transit increases transit ridership, reduces the number of vehicle trips in the community, and attracts other quality land uses. Privately owned and operated child care facilities also generate revenue and employment opportunities. Figure V-13 provides a summary description of child care facilities.

## **Older Adults, Disabled and Disadvantaged Services**

The city acknowledges that the older adult population of ages 50 and over is increasing faster than other age groups. Disabled and disadvantaged residents face challenges that require unique solutions. In recognition of the number and diversity of needs, the General Plan includes policies addressing the need for accommodating adequate services and programs to ensure the health and wellness, safety and protection of older adults, as well as disabled and disadvantaged residents. Figure V-14 provides a summary description of facilities that serve older adults, disabled and disadvantaged residents.

# **B. What are Community Services?**

## **Parks and Recreation**

Historically, parks have been focal points for community activities and will continue to provide residents with abundant recreational options. The General Plan includes Quality of Life thresholds (FigureV-2) and policies to guide Escondido's commitment to provide parks and recreation opportunities by establishing standards and the overall character of these facilities.

A Master Plan for Parks, Trails and Open Space was adopted in response to the previous General Plan's directive to prepare a long- range planning tool to serve as the basis for decisions regarding future parks, trails, and open space implementation efforts. Figure V-3 identifies the location of public parks that provide recreational opportunities within Escondido's Planning area. The Resource Conservation Element contains information regarding Escondido's open space and trails facilities.

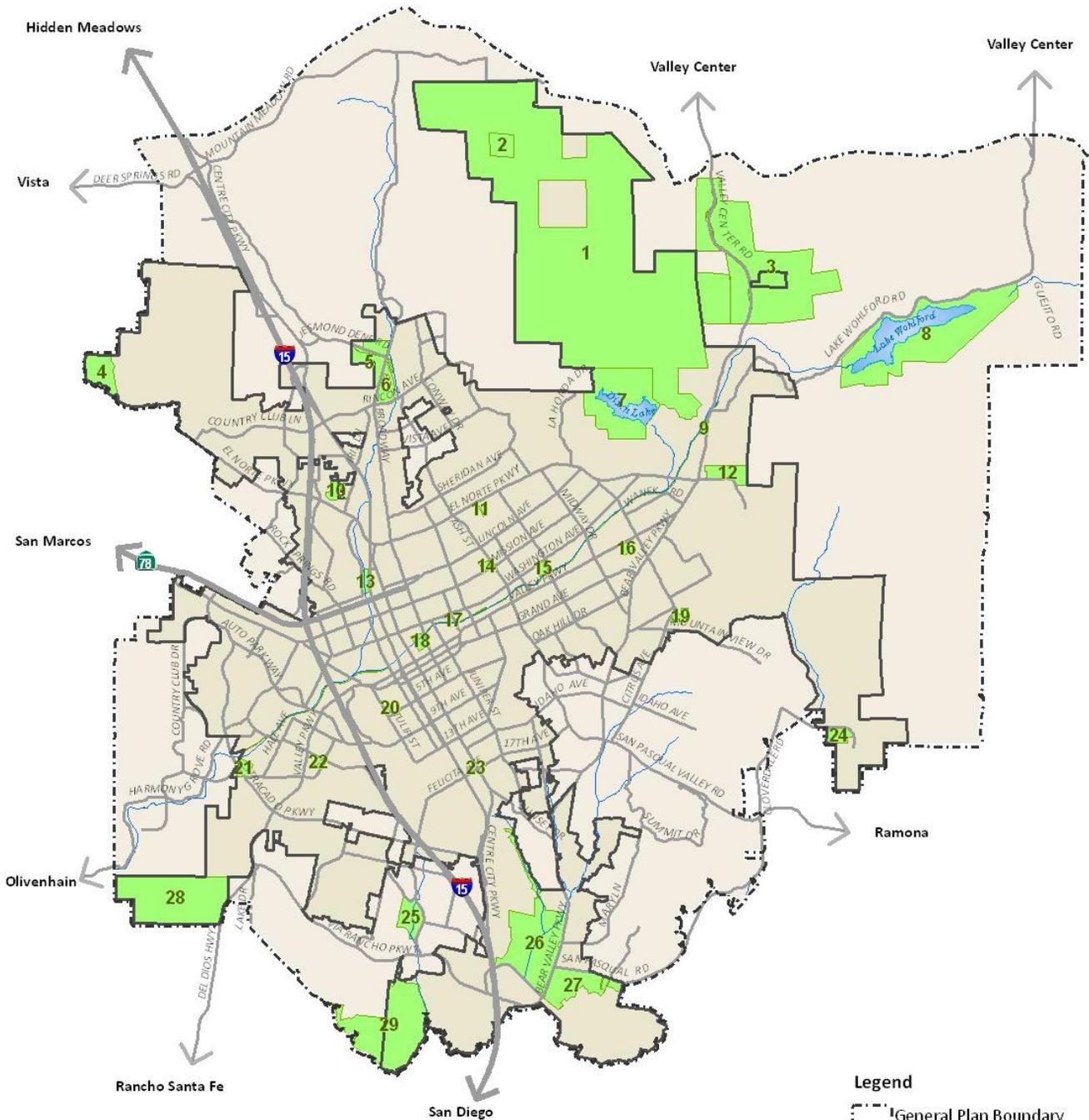
## Figure V-2 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #6

### Park System

The city shall provide a minimum of 11.8 acres of active and passive parkland per 1,000 dwelling units. This parkland acreage shall involve a minimum of 5.9 acres of developed active neighborhood and community parks in addition to 5.9 acres of passive park land and/or open space for habitat preservation per 1,000 dwelling units. Urban recreational amenities such as exercise courses, urban trails, tree-lined shaded walkways and plazas, etc. shall be focused in high intensity downtown and urban areas. Priority shall be given to acquiring land to expand Grape Day Park north of Woodward Avenue and developing neighborhood parks in urban areas with the greatest need. School playground areas may be included as park acreage, provided that neighborhood park amenities and facilities are accessible, approval is granted by the school district(s), and the facility is open to the public as determined by the City Council. Prior to buildout, the city shall provide a minimum of two (2) community centers. Other specialized recreation facilities shall be incorporated into the city's Master Plan for Parks, Trails and Open Space.

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**Figure V-3 Parks and Recreational Facilities**



**Park Names**

- |                                |                                 |                              |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1: Daley Ranch                 | 11: El Norte Park               | 21: Avenida Del Diablo Park  |
| 2: BLM Open Space              | 12: Francis Ryan Park           | 22: 11th Avenue Park         |
| 3: Valley Center Rd Open Space | 13: Reidy Creek Comm. Garden    | 23: Escondido Blvd Mini Park |
| 4: Palos Vista Open Space      | 14: Grove Park                  | 24: Eagle Crest Park         |
| 5: Jesmond Dene Park           | 15: Washington Park             | 25: Felicita County Park     |
| 6: Reidy Creek Golf Course     | 16: E. Valley Community Center  | 26: Kit Carson Park          |
| 7: Lake Dixon Park             | 17: Escondido Creek Linear Park | 27: Vineyard Golf course     |
| 8: Lake Wohlford Park          | 18: Grape Day Park              | 28: SD County Open Space     |
| 9: Mayflower Dog Park          | 19: Mountain View Park          | 29: Bernardo Mtn. Open Space |
| 10: Rod McLeod Park            | 20: Westside Park               |                              |

Source: City Of Escondido

**Legend**

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Streams
- Lakes
- 0 0.5 1 Miles



**Escondido General Plan**

**Parks and Recreational Facilities**

## *Parks Facilities*

The following park classifications and facilities are intended to guide decision makers in the placement and development of parks in the community as well as inform residents of the types of activities and services provided at city parks. Figure V-5 provides a list of features appropriate for the various park classifications in the General Plan Area. Prior to park development the city will conduct workshops to solicit community input regarding specific improvements for each site.

### *Regional Parks*

Regional Parks (75+ acres) are distinguished by their expansive size and comprise the largest recreational facilities in the city's inventory of parks with ample vehicle parking. Regional Parks are designed with the widest variety of activities incorporating unique and distinctive facilities large enough to serve areas beyond the planning boundaries. These may include large sports complexes, multiple lighted ball fields and sports courts to accommodate league competitions, as well as an array of passive uses including walking trails, playgrounds, picnic areas and open turf.

### *Community Parks*

Community Parks (10-75 acres) are designed with features that serve all or portions of the community including lighted sports fields to accommodate evening play with sufficient parking to serve the intended on-site activities. Community Parks include ball fields and sports courts in fewer numbers than Regional Parks and smaller-scale Neighborhood Parks.

### *Neighborhood Parks*

Neighborhood Parks (2-10 acres) are designed to accommodate the daily recreation needs of residents in the immediate area. Typical facilities may include landscaped open turf areas, tot lots, sports fields, multipurpose ball fields with no lighting, and limited parking to facilitate access by pedestrians and bicyclists.

### *Urban Parks*

Urban Parks (<2 acres and Linear Parks) respond to their surrounding urban environment by incorporating features that provide a sense of open space in a compact setting (Figure V-4). Urban Parks include a high percentage of solid surface areas to compensate for a higher frequency of use. Features include a mix of active and passive features for all ages such as raised landscaping, water features, seating, picnic areas, tot lots, exercise courses, and areas for small-scale sports activities (e.g. horseshoes, volley ball, shuffleboard, etc.).

### *Community Centers*

The General Plan Quality of Life standard calls for two Community Centers to be established prior to build out. Community Centers are intended to provide enclosed spaces for a variety of activities, (meeting rooms, indoor sports, etc.) and are recommended for clustering with other civic uses such as libraries, museums, and/or cultural facilities.

## *Parks Acquisition and Development*

Escondido’s status as an established, primarily built out community leaves limited opportunity for acquiring significant properties in the urban core for large-scale parkland development. In recognition of this constraint, the General Plan focuses on developing recreational amenities in urban and smart growth areas that are more responsive to their established settings. These include Urban Parks, plazas, exercise courses, shaded urban trails and other places that provide recreational opportunities in more densely established areas.

During the General Plan workshops residents expressed a desire to focus the development of parkland in the urban core area and to expand Grape Day Park north of Woodward Avenue. The General Plan also proposes enhancing Escondido Creek as a linear park with features that promote passive and active recreation. Schools and their recreational facilities can serve as a focal point of neighborhood identity and activity. The General Plan supports joint use agreements between the city and school districts to cooperatively share athletic and playground improvements to enhance recreational opportunities. Figure V-6 contains a roster of the city’s park and open space areas.

## *Recreational Programming*

Ensuring a healthy community requires that appropriate activities be available for residents of all ages to satisfy their physical activity requirements. Polling residents on recreational preferences provides information that will match programs with interests. Coordinating recreational programming between city and private/non-profit sector entities ensures the efficient use of both public parkland and private commercial space to fulfill community needs while offering potential economic opportunities for private sector programs.

## *Open Space, Trail and Bicycle Facilities*

Refer to the Resource Conservation Element information for the city’s open space and trails facilities. The Mobility and Infrastructure Element contains information on Escondido’s bicycle facilities.

**Figure V-4 Urban Park Examples**

		
<p><b>Purpose and Intent</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Creates a “sense of place” with interesting and aesthetic design</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Enhances residents’ mental, physical and spiritual health</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Improves social connections</b></li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides safe / accessible opportunities for community interaction</li> <li>▪ Responds to the needs of users in the immediate area</li> </ul>
<b>Development Guidelines</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduced turf area, high percentage of trees / shrubs / hardscape</li> <li>▪ Small and compact, no off street parking; strong pedestrian access</li> <li>▪ Plenty of shade and seating</li> <li>▪ Decorative water / art features</li> <li>▪ Opportunities for exercise, play and interpretive displays</li> </ul>

**Figure V-5 Park Features**

**Typical features associated with various parks. Individual Park Master Plans will determine specific facilities.**

	Urban (<2 acres, or linear)	Neighborhood (2 - 10 acres)	Community (10 - 75 acres)	Regional (75 + acres)
● = Appropriate Use ○ = Provisional Use				
Adjacent to Public Schools	●	●	●	●
Access Point on Collector Street	○	●	●	
Off-Street Parking	○	●	●	●
Lighted Sports Fields / Facilities		●	●	●
Bike Paths	○	●	●	●
Jogging Paths, Exercise Courses	●	●	●	●
Hiking Trails			○	●
Passive Recreation	●	●	●	●
Child-Friendly Play Equipment	●	●	●	●
Multi-Purpose Turf Areas	○	●	●	●
Multi-Use Court & Athletic Areas	○	○	●	●
Restrooms, Drinking Fountains	○	●	●	●
Off-Leash Dog Facilities		○	●	
Wildlife Sanctuaries, Interpretive Centers				●
Equestrian Centers, Riding Trails				●
Camping Areas, Youth Camps				●
Multi-Use Recreation Buildings, Pools			●	●
Retreat Centers				●
Community Garden	○	●	●	

**Figure V-6 City Park, Open Space, and Facility Roster**

CITY PARK, OPEN SPACE, AND FACILITY ROSTER		Developed Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage	Total Acreage
<b>A</b>	<b>URBAN PARKS</b>			
1	Escondido Blvd. Mini Park	0.2	-	0.2
2	Escondido Creek Linear Park	10.0	10.0	20.0
	<b>Urban Park Total</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>20.2</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS</b>			
1	El Norte Park	2.5	-	2.5
2	Grove Park	4.5	-	4.5
3	Avenida del Diablo Park	-	2.5	2.5
4	Westside Park	2.3	-	2.3
5	11th Avenue Park	-	2.0	2.0

6	Lake Wohlford Picnic Area Park	2.5	-	2.5
<b>Neighborhood Park Total</b>		<b>11.8</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>COMMUNITY PARKS</b>			
1	Jesmond Dene Park	10.0	31.8	41.8
2	Rod McLeod Park	18.0	-	18.0
3	Washington Park	11.0	-	11.0
4	Mountain View Park	11.0	12.0	23.0
5	Grape Day Park	23.5	-	23.5
6	Francis Ryan Park	28.0	29.0	57.0
7	Dixon Lake Picnic / Play Area	10.0	-	10.0
8	Kit Carson Active Rec Area	100.0	10.0	110.0
9	Eagle Crest Park	32.0	-	32.0
10	Reidy Creek Community Garden	20.0	-	20.0
11	Mayflower Dog Park	6.4	-	6.4
12	Felicita County Park	52.0	-	52.0
<b>Community Park Total</b>		<b>321.9</b>	<b>82.8</b>	<b>404.7</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>SCHOOL PLAYGROUND</b>			
1	Elementary Schools (12)	60.0	-	60.0
2	Middle Schools (3)	30.0	-	30.0
3	High Schools (3)	30.0	-	30.0
<b>School Playground Total</b>		<b>120.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>120.0</b>
<b>PARK/SCHOOL PLAYGROUND TOTAL</b>		<b>463.9</b>	<b>97.3</b>	<b>561.2</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>REGIONAL OPEN SPACE AREAS</b>			
1	Daley Ranch (wilderness)	3,201.0	-	3,201.0
2	Lake Wohlford (wilderness)	912.0	-	912.0
3	Dixon Lake (wilderness)	328.5	-	328.5
4	Kit Carson (wilderness)	190.0	-	190.0
5	Bernardo Mt. (SDRVP wilderness)	330.6	-	330.6
6	SD County (wilderness)	344.5	-	344.5
<b>Regional Open Space Total</b>		<b>5,306.6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,306.6</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>OTHER CITY OWNED OPEN SPACE</b>			
1	Palos Vista	63.5	-	63.5
2	Valley Center Rd Watershed	560.0	-	560.0
3	Various Misc. / Utility Areas	45.0	-	45.0
<b>City Owned Open Space Total</b>		<b>688.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>688.5</b>
<b>TOTAL PARK &amp; OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>6,459.0</b>	<b>97.3</b>	<b>6,556.3</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>COMMUNITY CENTERS AND GOLF COURSES*</b>			
1	California Center for the Arts			
2	Mathes Community Center			
3	East Valley Community Center			
4	Joslyn Senior Center			
5	Oak Hill Activity Center			
6	West Side Community Center			
7	Reidy Creek Municipal Executive Golf Course			
8	Vineyard Municipal Championship Golf Course			
*Community Center Master Plans identify specific recreation features for each facility				

## Library Services

Library facilities promote an informed, engaged, connected, literate and employable community, and have enhanced information, cultural, and education services that foster healthy life-styles for the community. The city's library facilities have served as a community focal point and gathering place for over a century. Escondido maintains a centrally located downtown main library. A General Plan Quality of Life standard (Figure V-7) and policies guide Escondido's commitment to provide library services.

The library offers a wide variety of print, media and online resources as well as public computers, community programs, and meeting space. Proposed improvements are geared towards expanding collection stock and staffing; providing additional space for computers; group study and parking; and continuing to expand the role of technology in providing library services and resources. To accommodate anticipated growth, the General Plan recommends expanding the city's existing library facilities to meet the needs of Escondido's expanding population.

**Figure V-7 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #7**

Library Service
<p>The public library system shall maintain a stock and staffing of two (2) collection items per capita and three (3) public library staff per 8,000 residents of the city of Escondido. The city shall provide appropriate library facilities with a minimum of 1.6 square feet of library facility floor area per dwelling unit of the city prior to build out of the General Plan where feasible. The city shall continue to expand the role of technology in providing library services and resources to Escondido residents.</p>

## School and Education

Although the city is not responsible for providing public and private education, residents recognize that successful schools are important for ensuring that Escondido remains a desirable place to live. A core focus of every school is to establish and maintain a safe learning environment with academic standards that provide options for students in their pursuit of higher education or a chosen profession. This is echoed in the General Plan Quality of Life Standard (Figure V-8). Our increasingly competitive world requires a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment with adequate space that allows students to focus on their future endeavors.

Public school districts serving the community include the Escondido Union Elementary (K-8); Escondido Union High School (9-12); San Pasqual Union (K-8); and portions of Valley Center-Pauma Unified (K-12) and San Marcos Unified (K-12) school districts (Figure V-9). In addition, several charter and private schools serve the community. Palomar Community College maintains a local campus on East Valley Parkway, and California State University, San Marcos is located five miles east of Escondido.

By virtue of their size and facility improvements, school sites also provide an opportunity for enhancing the community's health and wellness. Through joint use agreements the city and school districts can mutually share their combined active recreational infrastructure in a manner that benefits the entire community. Strong partnerships between the city, school districts, and businesses create trust and accountability. These agreements work to stabilize the community by providing recreational benefits, opportunities for increasing job skills, and raising residents' earning potential.

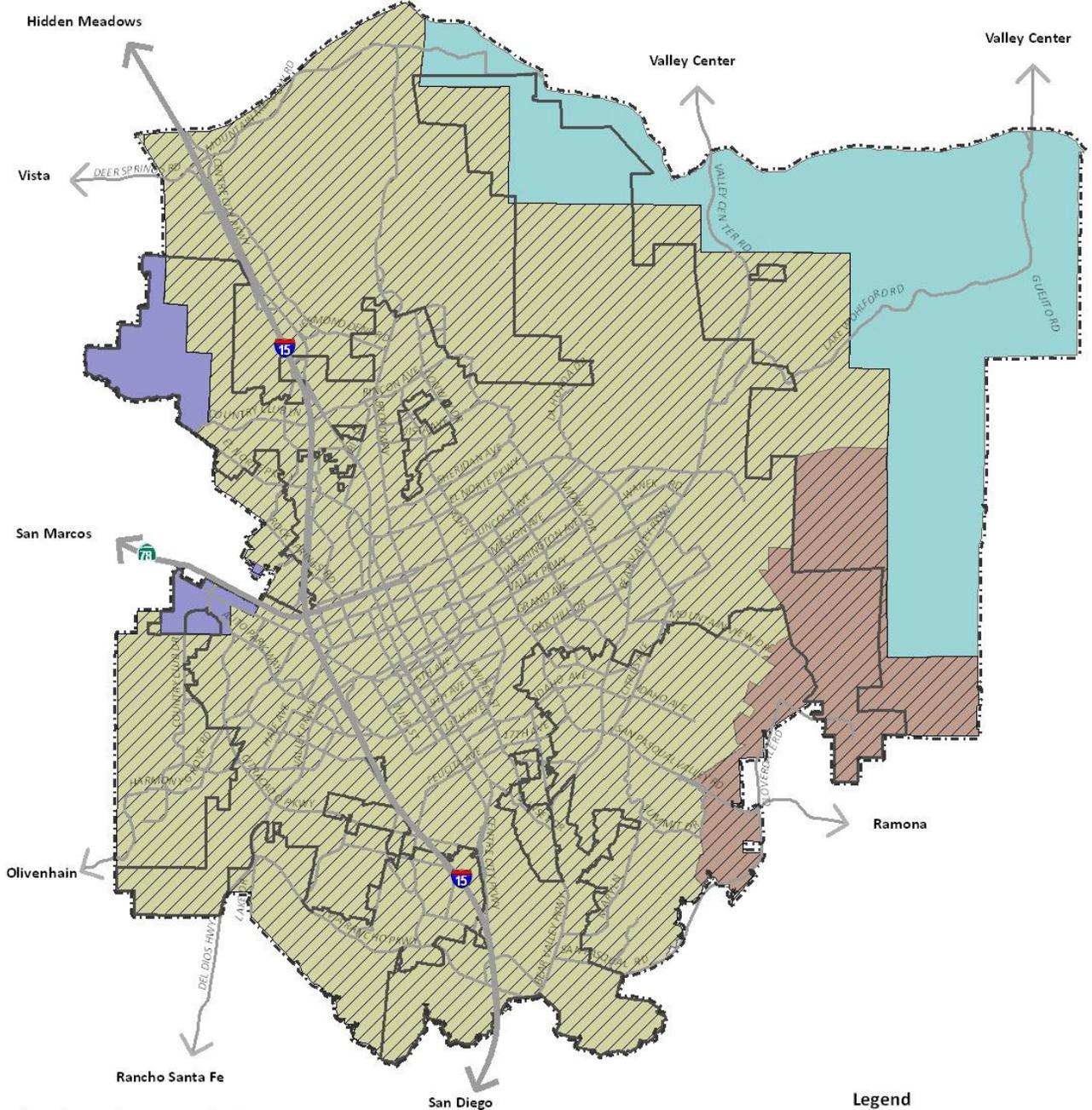
## Figure V-8 General Plan Quality of Life Standard #2

### Public Schools

The community shall have sufficient classroom space to meet state- mandated space requirements and teacher/student ratios, with student attendance calculated on prescribed state and/or local school board standards. Implementation of this standard shall be the responsibility of the school districts and other appropriate agencies.

DRAFT

**Figure V-9 School Service Boundaries**



**School Service Boundaries**

- Escondido Union Elementary (K-8)
- San Marcos Unified (K-12)
- San Pasqual Union (K-8)
- Valley Center/ Pauma Unified (K-12)
- Escondido Union High (9-12)

**Legend**

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Lakes
- ▲  
0 0.5 1 Miles

Note: The information provided on this map is subject to change. Contact the appropriate school district to confirm district boundaries and attendance areas.

Source: City of Escondido, Davis Demographics

## Cultural Enrichment

Cultural enrichment plays an important role in fostering a healthy community by offering forms of expression that embody a community's spirit through public art displays and the performing arts. Cultural enrichment helps shape the community's quality of life by promoting a sense of pride and bringing people together. Public art enhances and complements the built environment; performing art offers social and educational opportunities.

Cultural enrichment's role in enhancing community health provides additional financial benefits by promoting tourism and economic revitalization. Escondido recognizes the benefits of public art and is home to the California Center for the Arts, Escondido, as well as several world-renowned sculptures and public art displays. General Plan policies support cultural enrichment in the community and the opportunity for artists to contribute their theatrical, conceptual and practical skills.

## Healthy Lifestyles

Key to establishing and maintaining a healthy community is the proper arrangement of land uses, facilities, and programs that promote sound decisions for residents to live healthy lifestyles. The General Plan supports the health and well-being of its residents with policies that foster an active, inclusive community with responsive city leadership where healthy habits are encouraged by the built environment. By incorporating health considerations into Escondido's policies, such as promoting community gardens (Figure 10) and Certified Farmers' Markets (Figure 11) that enhance access to healthy foods, and implementing a more balanced transportation system that reduces reliance on the automobile, the General Plan promotes healthy lifestyles. These policies will enhance residents' quality of life, reduce costs, and promote personal responsibility.

**Figure V-10 Community Gardens**

Definition
<b>A Community Garden can be urban, suburban, or rural. It can grow flowers and / or, vegetables. It can be one community plot, or many individual plots. It can be at a school, hospital, or in a neighborhood. It can also be a series of plots dedicated to "urban agriculture" where the produce is grown for a market.</b>
Community Garden Benefits

- Improves the quality of life for people in the garden
- Provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development
- Stimulates social interaction
- Encourages self-reliance
- Beautifies neighborhoods
- Produces nutritious food
- Reduces family food budgets
- Conserves resources
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Reduces crime
- Preserves green space
- Creates income opportunities and economic development
- Reduces city heat from streets and parking lots
- Provides opportunities for inter-generational and cross-cultural connections

*Source: American Community Garden Association*

## Healthcare Services

Local employers understand the economic benefit of hiring and retaining healthy employees in order to ensure worker productivity. Schools recognize the connection between healthy lifestyles and absentee rates, which impact the learning process as well as operating budgets that rely on attendance for revenue. Although the city is not responsible for providing healthcare, encouraging the efforts of local health care providers, employers and schools to promote wellness programs will convey support for a healthy community.

Many private and non-profit healthcare providers serve local residents. Palomar Pomerado Health district serves the North San Diego and South Riverside County areas with its primary hospital and trauma facility located in Escondido. In addition, Kaiser Permanente maintains a branch medical facility in the community. Ensuring that healthcare facilities can be accessed in an expedient manner is important for maintaining a healthy community.

Fire stations throughout the community have trained staff to perform basic EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) services when responding to fire or injury response calls. Private ambulance companies have contracts to provide transportation services to local medical facilities. In cases of major emergencies, the Mercy Air Emergency Helicopter life flight program provides service to Palomar Hospital.

## 3. Environmental Justice

### A. Introduction

Environmental Justice (EJ) is a movement aimed to address and improve wellness and equitable treatment across communities that have disproportionately experienced greater environmental burdens and health hazards that affect their daily lives. The California Government Code (Section 65040.12) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful participation of

people of all races, culture and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Examples of such policies that reflect EJ include enforcing pollutant discharge limitations geographically, so pollution is not being concentrated within communities of disadvantaged socioeconomic status. Environmental justice and social equity are the foundational priorities of the Community Health and Services Element. Environmental justice means every citizen has the same degree of treatment and protection from environmental risks regardless of age, race, color, national origin, income, or other potential discriminatory factors. Social equity means ensuring that all communities are treated fairly and given an equal opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process.

## **B. Legal Requirements**

In 2016, Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000) amended Government Code Section 65302 to focus on improving environmental health and justice throughout the state by requiring that cities and counties with Disadvantaged Communities (as defined below) incorporate an Environmental Justice Element into their General Plan, or integrate EJ related goals, policies and objectives throughout the other Elements. The purpose of the legislation is to address the “unique or compounded health risks” that have aggregated over time, and in concentrated areas that correspond to the location of long established racial and ethnic communities, by decreasing pollution exposure, increasing community assets, and improving overall health. Various other tools and regulatory measures have also been set forth to address environmental disparities, such as the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen), a tool developed by CalEPA’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to identify communities disproportionately impacted by, or vulnerable to, environmental pollution and contaminants. Senate Bill 535 and Assembly Bill 1550 also work together to establish requirements for identifying and allocating funds to “Disadvantaged Communities” (DACs). These tools help agencies identify DACs and enact regulatory measures to facilitate a collaborative effort to remedy the social and economic inequalities that have aggregated over time and are concentrated geographically and categorically into DACs.

The City is responsible for adopting an Environmental Justice Element – either as a stand-alone Element or as goals and policies addressed within one or more other Elements - upon the adoption or next revision of two or more Elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018 (GC § 65302(h)(2)). In this case, updates to the City of Escondido’s (City) Housing Element and Safety (Community Protection) Element triggered the need to incorporate environmental justice into the General Plan. Although the Housing Element was completed in 2023, the effort to update the Community Protection Element and incorporate EJ goals and policies was interrupted by a lack of resources. However, project funding that was initially approved in 2021 through a Smart Growth Incentive Program from the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) was re-validated for use and the project was officially reinitiated in October 2024.

In 2025, the City updated both this Community Health & Services Element as well as the Community Protection Element to integrate a discussion, goals, and policies dedicated to EJ concepts, goals, policies and recommendations for implementation.

## **C. Scope/Content**

The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) guidelines for SB 1000 outline 6 key elements that must be addressed when addressing the needs of DACs: (1) Pollution Exposure and Air Quality; (2) Public Facilities; (3) Food Access; (4) Safe and Sanitary Homes; (5) Physical Activity; and (6) Community Civic Engagement. Additionally, the Element should include and prioritize improvement plans for DACs throughout the City. The 2025 adoption of this updated Community Health and Services Element reflects the regulatory requirements above and addresses them by using OPR recommended methods to identify areas of the city that meet the definition of a Disadvantaged Community (discussed below) and develop goals and policies, both new and existing, that prioritize these communities and build on the existing vision for the City. The City’s existing Community Health and Services Element serves as a foundation for additional EJ related goals and policies because the Community Health and Services Element addresses certain topics related to Environmental Justice, such as food access, promotion of physical activity, and civic engagement.

## **D. Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)/Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs)**

SB 1000 requires government entities to identify DACs in their General Plan and provide appropriate measures to promote improvements within these communities. Under SB 1000, a DAC is defined as “an area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.”

Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code states,

*“[DACs] shall be identified based on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria, and may include, but are not limited to, either of the following:*

- 1. Areas disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative public health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.*
- 2. Areas with concentrations of people that are of low income, high unemployment, low levels of homeownership, high rent burden, sensitive populations, or low levels of educational attainment.”*

Low-income thresholds outlined in SB 1000 are household incomes at or below 80% of the state's median income, or household incomes at or below the Department of Housing and Community Development's list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 500093.

It is important to note why a DAC is considered "disadvantaged". A key component of EJ is the context surrounding how certain communities ended up more burdened by environmental degradation and hazards than others. Policy (that is, the course of action adopted and implemented by an entity, such as local, state, and federal governments) established by various agencies throughout history have had direct and indirect impacts on communities. In many instances, such policy has directly disadvantaged certain communities over others. As communities were built in accordance with such policy, those policies may have directly or indirectly caused those environmental burdens. For example, the policy decision to allow certain land uses adjacent to a neighborhood, such as industrial uses, may directly negatively impact that residential neighborhood. Environmental justice within the General Plan seeks to understand where the environmental burdens and hazards are and remedy any negative impacts through new goals and policies but most importantly quantifiable measures and actions, many of which are included in the City's Climate Action Plan (E-CAP), that have specific measures particularly addressing DACs. Although academic indicators would suggest that certain communities are experiencing disproportionate environmental degradation, the people living in those communities may not view their neighborhoods as "disadvantaged." Therefore, the City utilizes the term "Environmental Justice Community" (EJCs) as the name for those areas within the City that qualify under the State's DAC definition.

## **E. Methodology**

Many sources of information and input informed the preparation of the Environmental Justice section of the Community Health and Services Element.

### **Community Outreach**

One of the most important pieces of environmental justice is the acknowledgment and effort to rectify the disproportionately high and adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of low-income communities and communities of color that transpired over the development of modern society, which is historically upheld by governments and corporations. To combat this, a Community Outreach and Engagement Plan was followed to identify the marginalization of EJCs perpetuated by the current systems in place, define a clear vision for rebuilding community strength and ownership, and establish engagement processes that are meaningful and equitable for these communities. This outreach was specifically focused on the EJCs, involving stakeholder roundtables, focus groups, open houses, and community workshops, with a variety of in-person and online notification tactics. These methods, along with general best practice methods, were used to serve as the foundation guiding this Element's goals and policies.

## **CalEnviroScreen**

CalEnviroScreen is the standard mapping tool put forth by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to identify communities most vulnerable to pollution effects. It uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic information to produce scores for every census tract in California. CalEnviroScreen has a cumulative score for which factor indicators from two different groups: pollution burden and population characteristics. Escondido EJCs were identified using CalEnviroScreen, social equity, and income indicators, which provide the basis for identifying and establishing policies in areas most impacted by injustices. Consultation with the E-CAP was also utilized to ensure regulatory consistency and inform climate resiliency and adaptation goals and policies towards DACs.

To identify DACs, a four-step approach is followed:

1. Use CalEnviroScreen to examine whether the planning area for the General Plan contains census tracts that have a combined score of 50% or higher.
2. Map the household median incomes by census tract in the planning area at or below statewide median income and examine for disproportionate pollution burden.
3. Map the household median incomes by census tract in the planning area at or below the Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) state income limits and examine for disproportionate pollution burden.
4. These three methods are then overlapped to create a base for qualifying areas within a jurisdiction, as shown in Figure V-11. Once the base is established, a jurisdiction can then incorporate and analyze community-specific data and examine for additional pollution burden and health risk factors.

It is worth noting that one tract, tract 202.13, has a pollution burden score of 49, a point below the 50-point threshold used for qualifying as a Priority Investment Neighborhood (defined below) under the E-CAP. However, it does meet both low-income thresholds. As shown in Figure V-11, it is also fully surrounded by qualifying tracts. Environmental justice issues are not defined by rigid boundaries and are not contained neatly within census tract borders. It is reasonable that if surrounding areas qualified as EJCs, there is a possibility that tract 202.13 may be experiencing similar issues. For these reasons, tract 202.13 is included as an EJC.

## **F. Priority Investment Neighborhoods (PINs) & the Escondido Climate Action Plan (E-CAP)**

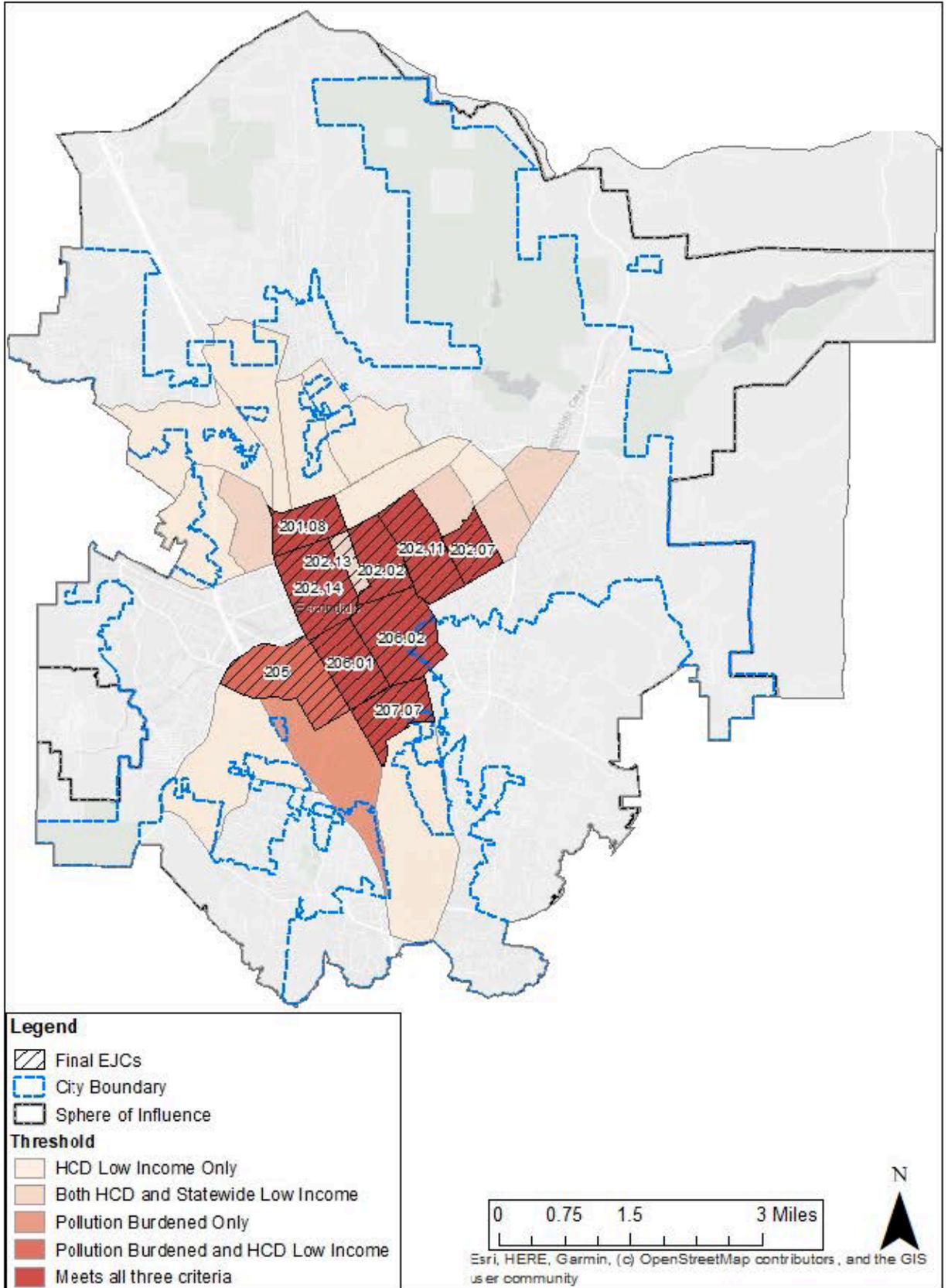
The City of Escondido has existing policy documents that include social equity frameworks. The *Escondido Climate Action Plan* (E-CAP), updated in 2021, provides a robust examination of social equity and environmental justice through the climate adaptation planning lens and is limited to such. Policies that are related to housing, economic opportunity, and access to public transportation are addressed in the goal and policies below. The E-CAP includes measures to improve the City's

resilience to potential environmental risks and hazards that will be exacerbated by climate change, while seeking equitable climate change adaptation solutions for all residents, businesses, and other community members. The goals and policies within this Element address the need to reduce exposure to environmental risks, as well as the need for economic opportunity, access to public transit, and the reduction of many non-climate associated inequalities that exist in EICs as well.

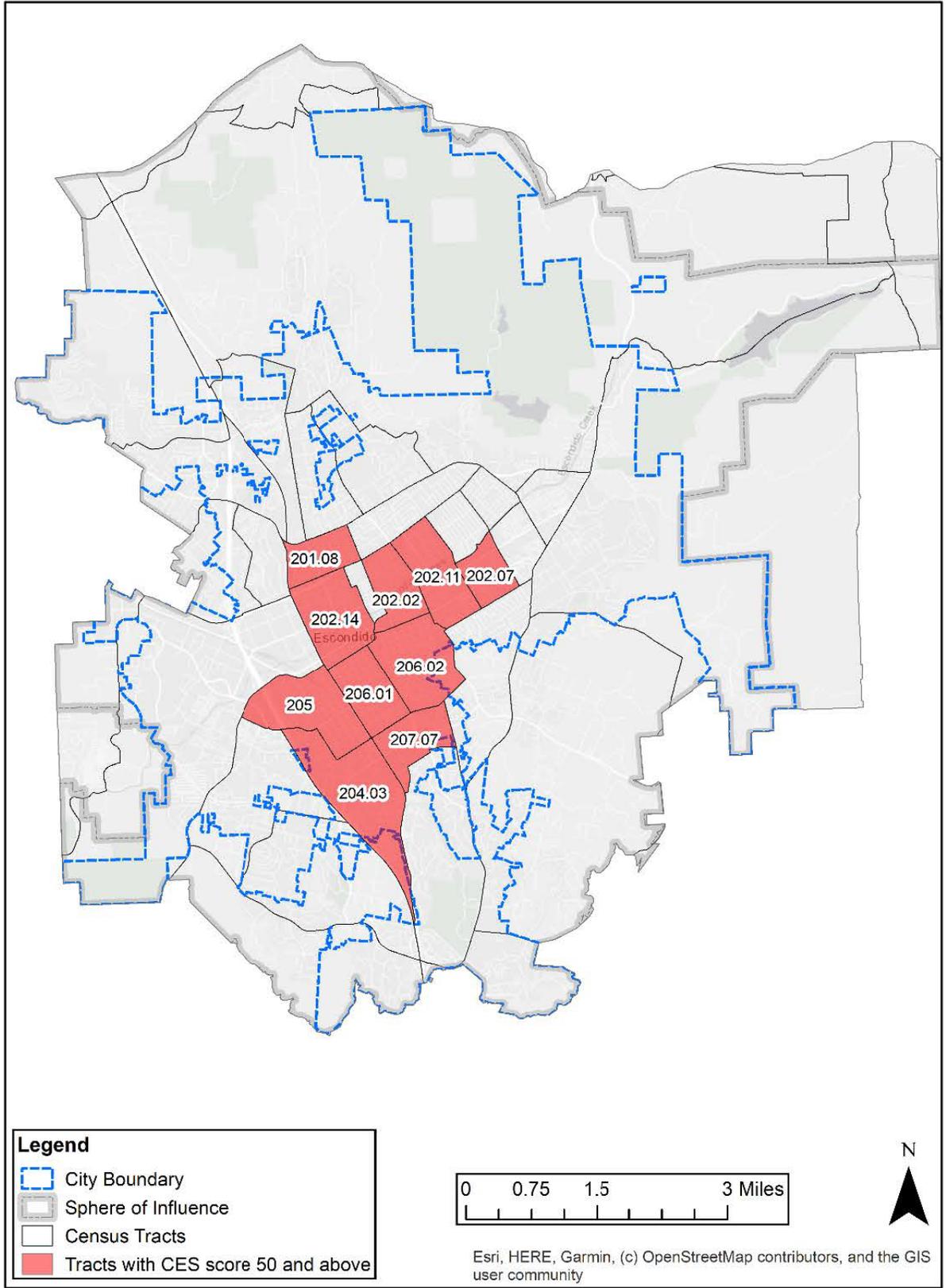
The E-CAP's Climate Adaptation Measure A-1.3 identifies the need to "hardwire social equity and environmental justice into new programs and projects." To support this adaptation measure, the E-CAP utilized the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 data to create a Social Equity and Health Index Map intended to identify vulnerable neighborhoods needing additional focus and priority. These identified tracts are labeled "Priority Investment Neighborhoods" (PINs) within the E-CAP (Figure V-12). Using the Social Equity and Health Index Map (i.e., CalEnviroScreen 3.0 scores), the City prioritized neighborhoods with a CalEnviroScreen 50 percent (50%) ranking for priority investments and early implementation of focused measures to support social equity and environmental justice. By focusing efforts on vulnerable neighborhoods and populations, the City seeks to provide equitable protection from environmental hazards and burdens.

The limitation of the Social Equity and Health Index Map is that it utilizes CalEnviroScreen data from a snapshot in time, but the data is continuously evolving so the City's PINs are apt to change. Therefore, to best facilitate equitable investment by the City, the E-CAP's PINs will be reassessed based on the identified 50 percent ranking of the most recent available CalEnviroScreen data published by the OEHHA.

**Figure V-11: Environmental Justice Communities**



**Figure V-12: Priority Investment Neighborhoods**



## **G. Relationships to other General Plan Elements**

The EJ section of the Community Health and Services Element is closely related to several other General Plan Elements, in particular the Land Use, Safety, Circulation, and Housing Element. Planning decisions related to types of land uses; location, density and intensity of land uses; safety from environmental and man-made hazards; transportation systems; and street design have a profound impact on both public health and environmental justice. Consequently, the Environmental Justice Element is inextricably connected to the aforementioned Elements and other important Elements of the General Plan and thus should be read and considered in the context of other General Plan Elements. It should also be noted that there are topical areas (e.g., reduce pollution exposure, promote public facilities, and safe and sanitary homes) that are addressed in multiple Elements. However, unlike other General Plan Elements, the EJ section of the Community Health and Services Element will cover these topical areas from the vantage point of public health, the Environmental Justice Communities, and addressing such areas with a remedy in mind. Policies and implementation measures require coordination with other City departments, each with their own needs. The goal is to identify the needs of Environmental Justice Communities. Coordinating the installation of additional street canopy in areas with deficient levels requires coordination with both the Public Works Department and Development Services Department and is just one instance when EJ goals and policies relate with other General Plan goals and policies and require cross departmental collaboration.

## **4. Goals, Policies, and Actions**

### **A. Community Health and Services Goals and Policies**

A complete list of the General Plan Goals is located in the Vision and Purpose. Specific goals and policies related to community health and services policies provided below are intended to guide development to meet present and future needs, and enhance the health and welfare of residents in Escondido.

#### **Health and Wellness Policies**

**Goal 1: A healthy and livable Escondido complete with adequate and convenient access to community services and fresh food for all residents.**

##### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.1*

Ensure adequate and convenient physical access to healthcare, parks, libraries, cultural arts, schools, childcare facilities, and services for all residents.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.2*

Encourage and promote public and private sector education, training and wellness programs designed to improve health and wellness for all residents.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.3*

Pursue sources of federal, state, regional, and/or private resources that provide funding for education, training, preventative treatment, and other programs for enhancing community health and wellness.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.4*

Ensure that health and human services facilities are easily accessible, distributed equitably throughout the city and are compatible with adjoining uses.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.5*

Collaborate with health care providers and other community partners in identifying health and wellness issues and developing and implementing a community-based private sector approach for improving and maintaining healthy lifestyles.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.6*

Encourage school districts to create opportunities for children to be active to promote health and wellness, as well as to curb obesity.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.7*

Continue to provide city parks and recreation programs and support private recreational programs that provide opportunities for residents of all age groups to participate in activities as a means to promote a healthy lifestyle.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.8*

Allow the creation and operation of community gardens, urban farms, and farmers' markets that enhance the community's access to healthy foods.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.9*

Encourage private sector efforts that prioritize new sources of healthy and fresh food in underserved areas.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.10*

Encourage school districts to establish and maintain nutritional standards for school lunches and to serve healthy foods.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.11*

Encourage the revitalization of existing urban areas to achieve improvements in overall public health by promoting a healthier living environment that includes walkable neighborhoods and access to recreation and open space, healthy foods, medical services, and transit.

### *Health and Wellness Policy 1.12*

Coordinate with appropriate agencies to support pest/vector management strategies (e.g., mosquito control) and public education.

## **Figure V-13: Certified Farmers' Markets**

**Definition:** Certified Farmers Markets are licensed by the County Agricultural Commissioner, ensuring that the produce is being sold by the grower, is grown in California and meets all California quality standards. These criteria ensure that all consumers receive the freshest produce for the right price. Farmers' Markets provide venues for farmers to sell directly to consumers and supports small farming operations.

**Farmers' Markets Benefits:**

- Local produce is fresher, healthier
- Supports local farmers and locally grown produce
- Conserves resources by reducing transportation and storage impacts
- Preserves food diversity by providing heirloom and "niche" products not widely grown
- Creates income opportunities and economic development
- Fosters community interaction
- Reduces family food budgets

## **Parks and Recreation Policies**

### **Goal 2: A complete system of park and recreational facilities and programs to serve all users.**

#### PARK STANDARDS POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.1*

Regularly review and update park standards, facility plans and improvements, recreation services, funding programs, and other pertinent components of the Parks Master Plan.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.2*

Provide an adequate system of neighborhood, community, urban, and regional parks and related recreational facilities/services for incorporation into the open space system.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.3*

Provide a minimum of 5.9 acres of developed active Neighborhood, Community, and Urban parks in addition to 5.9 acres of passive park land/open space for habitat preservation and additional recreational opportunities totaling 11.8 active and passive acres per 1,000 dwelling units. School

playground areas can be included as park acreage if these facilities are approved by the school district(s) and open to the public as determined by the City Council.

#### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.4*

Require new residential development to contribute fees to finance acquisition and development of park and recreational facilities in compliance with the standards stipulated by Parks and Recreation Policy 2.3. Allow credit for the on-site dedication of land or facilities to be used for public park purposes, consistent with city standards.

#### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.5*

Design and construct Urban, Neighborhood, Community, and Regional Parks consistent with the standards and guidelines in Figures V-4 and V-5.

#### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.6*

Maintain a minimum of two (2) community centers and consider opportunities for additional centers commensurate with population growth to accommodate specialized recreational functions, the recreational needs of special populations, and/or indoor recreational activities that include, but are not limited to:

- a) Swimming pools;
- b) Lighted or unlighted athletic facilities;
- c) Classrooms, meeting rooms, etc.;
- d) Facilities for child care, teens, and seniors;
- e) Branch libraries;
- h) Golf courses;
- i) Community gardens; and
- j) Equestrian centers.

#### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.7*

Consider the provision of development incentives for private commercial, office, and other non-residential developments to provide onsite usable open space that is accessible to the public such as green rooftop parks, public plazas, and pedestrian trails.

### ACQUISITION AND FUNDING POLICIES

#### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.8*

Require no net loss of total park acreage or facilities for property purchased for use as a public park that is subsequently redeveloped for another use. Require that all revenues generated from the sale of the park land be used for park development.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.9*

Consider the development of vacant and underutilized city lands as potential sites for parks and recreational facilities.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.10*

Prioritize park acquisition in areas with the greatest need, including the northern expansion of Grape Day Park, and in urban areas within a reasonable walking distance from transit.

## PARKS AND RECREATION IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.11*

Undertake a parks acquisition and improvement program to accommodate future growth needs.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.12*

Maintain existing and pursue additional agreements with Escondido school districts that enable city residents to jointly use school facilities for recreational purposes.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.13*

Periodically review and revise park development fees to assure that they adequately cover acquisition and development costs.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.14*

Consider requiring new non-residential uses to contribute park development fees, as permitted and consistent with State nexus legislation.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.15*

Periodically review and modify funding sources to assure their adequacy to cover the maintenance of parks.

## REGIONAL FACILITIES POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.16*

Assist in the coordinated planning, development, and maintenance of unique regional amenities within and adjacent to the community, including Kit Carson Park, Daley Ranch, Lake Wohlford Regional Park, Lake Dixon Regional Park, San Dieguito River Valley Park and Felicita County Park.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.17*

Improve Escondido Creek Trail as a linear park with amenities including but not limited to: shade and turf areas, community gardens, seating areas, exercise courses, and access to adjacent park and recreation facilities.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.18*

Provide opportunities in Regional Parks for active and passive recreation offered in smaller Urban, Neighborhood and Community Parks as appropriate.

#### RECREATIONAL PROGRAMING POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.19*

Consult with residents to obtain input on park and recreational facility and program needs.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.20*

Provide public and support private recreational programs that serve residents of all ages, backgrounds, and interests.

#### NEW PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.21*

Evaluate all development proposals larger than 5 acres for appropriateness of public park land dedication.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.22*

Consider private dedication of land for use as a public park as part of a planned development, if the proposed site meets city criteria.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.23*

Permit the redistribution and clustering of development that would otherwise have been built on a proposed park site within a planned development contingent on city standards.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.24*

Consolidate new development onsite to accommodate parkland that is accessible to the public.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.25*

Require park or recreation facilities constructed as part of a private development and intended solely for use by its residents to be considered a private park.

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.26*

Consider alternate uses of public and private golf courses.

#### SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES

### *Parks and Recreation Policy 2.27*

Incorporate energy and water efficient land development and maintenance practices, including the use of drought tolerant landscaping and reclaimed irrigation, in the design, development and operation of public parks and open space areas as appropriate.

## **Library Services Policies**

### **GOAL 3: An educated and informed community through life- long learning opportunities and dissemination of information.**

#### *Library Services Policy 3.1*

Regularly review and update, as necessary, a library master plan and implement the plan to the extent economically feasible.

#### *Library Services Policy 3.2*

Provide and maintain the following library facilities and services standards, where feasible:

- a) A floor area of 1.6 square feet of library facilities per dwelling unit or 0.6 square feet per capita of the City of Escondido;
- b) A ratio of three (3) public library staff per 8,000 residents or 2,300 dwelling units of the City of Escondido, including one librarian plus two paraprofessional staff within this staffing ratio;
- c) A ratio of total items in the Escondido library inventory of 2.0 items per capita of Escondido; and
- d) A ratio of one public access computer per 1,500 residents, or sufficient public access computers to meet an average wait time of no more than 15 minutes, whichever is less.

#### *Library Services Policy 3.3*

Concentrate resources on improving and maintaining adequate staffing; inventory of print; media and computer resources; and community library services and programs for all residents. Review periodically to ensure adequacy.

#### *Library Services Policy 3.4*

Strive to keep libraries open at least 60 unduplicated hours per week, supplemented by virtual accessibility to library collections and resources at all times where technically feasible (Figure V-12).

#### *Library Services Policy 3.5*

Maintain libraries to be conveniently accessible to pedestrians, public transit, and other modes of transportation.

#### *Library Services Policy 3.6*

Provide library facilities and programs appropriate for all members of the community and include services for those who cannot conveniently physically access a library.

### *Library Services Policy 3.7*

Consider incorporating other uses such as parks, schools, business districts, and coffee shops with library facilities.

### **Figure V-14: Library Definitions**

**Unduplicated Hours:** Facility hours open to the public that do not overlap, whether in one or more locations.  
**Virtual Accessibility:** Information resources accessed via the library web site available on-line 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

## **Cultural Enrichment Policies**

### **GOAL 4: Enhanced quality of life for all residents through the cultural arts.**

#### *Cultural Arts Policy 4.1*

Promote a wide range of styles, materials, and types of public art in municipal locations accessible to the public, as well as at key entrances to the city and downtown area to serve as suitable landmarks and entry features, and to reinforce municipal locations as focal points of social interaction and visual interest.

#### *Cultural Arts Policy 4.2*

Encourage the use of publicly owned facilities and spaces for the display of local art and for other artistic and cultural events.

#### *Cultural Arts Policy 4.3*

Maintain guidelines for the placement of art works that considers public visibility, public safety, and community enjoyment.

#### *Cultural Arts Policy 4.4*

Require developers to provide art pieces or pay fees that can embellish/maintain an individual project as well as contribute to the appearance and vitality of the community.

## **Schools and Education Policies**

### **GOAL 5: An educated and informed community through quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.**

#### *Schools and Education Policy 5.1*

Encourage school districts' efforts to accommodate sufficient teacher to student ratios with student attendance calculated on traditional school schedules.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.2*

Include school districts in review of residential development applications to determine if there will be changes in enrollment, and if these changes are consistent with districts' long-range master plans.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.3*

Include school districts in the review of development proposals larger than 10 acres to determine the potential suitability of school sites. Work with school districts in their efforts to acquire potential sites for school development.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.4*

Work with school districts to locate facilities based on each school district's criteria, school siting guidelines of the State, and the city's following location guidelines:

- a) Centrally located within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- b) Located an appropriate distance from potential natural and man-made hazards such as in floodplains and electric facilities.
- c) Conveniently and safely accessible by pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.
- d) Located away from heavy traffic, excessive noise, and incompatible uses.
- e) School drop off locations that are compatible with existing residential neighborhoods.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.5*

Work with school districts to explore the use of existing smaller sites in urban areas to accommodate lower enrollments and/or higher intensity facilities (multi-story buildings, underground parking, and playgrounds on roofs, etc.).

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.6*

Promote joint use of playgrounds, ball fields, and other recreational facilities at school sites, and provide open space and trail linkages between schools and residential neighborhoods to promote joint use.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.7*

Inform school districts of growth plans and capital improvement projects when feasible to enable districts to accordingly plan for future growth.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.8*

Periodically provide city demographic data to school districts to assist in their master planning efforts.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.9*

Work with school districts and participate in programs that promote student safety.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.10*

Promote energy and water efficient land development practices, including the use of drought tolerant landscaping and reclaimed irrigation, in the design, development, and operation of school facilities as appropriate.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.11*

Promote East Valley Parkway as an area to locate higher education, career development, and vocational training facilities that provide additional opportunities for residents to enhance their job skills.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.12*

Promote partnerships and programs between the city, school districts and business community aimed at enhancing students' options for seeking a college/university education or vocational training.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.13*

Encourage higher education institutions to strengthen their links with local K–12 school districts to facilitate the transfer of students into these institutions.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.14*

Cooperate with systems of higher education to explore the future possibility of a multi-university campus.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.15*

Encourage and support the development, expansion, and upgrade of higher education facilities such as the Palomar Colleges, California State University San Marcos, and private universities.

### *Schools and Education Policy 5.16*

Support the growth of research and development businesses and organizations associated with universities that enhance the education and diversity of Escondido.

## **Civic Engagement Policies**

### **GOAL 6: An engaged and informed community with influence on policies and decisions at the local, state, and federal levels.**

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.1*

Provide for the full inclusion of people of diverse cultures, backgrounds, age, gender, interests, languages, lifestyles, abilities, and socioeconomic status in programs at city facilities.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.2*

Promote recreation and library programming, special events and venues, and educational opportunities which honor, interpret, and celebrate the diversity, history, cultural heritage, and traditions of Escondido.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.3*

Encourage community volunteerism and participation in city events, commissions, boards and committees.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.4*

Support developers' efforts to initiate early and frequent communication with the community regarding project proposals.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.5*

Collaborate with neighborhood associations and other similar organizations to address issues of concern in neighborhoods.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.6*

Promote efforts that increase rates of participation in community events such as voting, youth activities, adult education, senior activities and family-oriented programs.

#### *Civic Engagement Policy 6.7*

Distribute information about community events to a wide range of community organizations such as churches, senior facilities, and schools using existing city-sponsored platforms (e.g., city website and public access television).

## **Childcare Policies**

### **GOAL 7: Convenient and accessible childcare facilities for all residents.**

#### *Childcare Policy 7.1*

Allow small family day care facilities in all residential zones as a permitted use consistent with state law and local provisions.

### *Childcare Policy 7.2*

Allow large family day care facilities in all residential, commercial and professional zoning districts as a conditional use except where permitted by right pursuant to state law.

### *Childcare Policy 7.3*

Prohibit family day care facilities in industrial zones due to potentially hazardous conditions.

### *Childcare Policy 7.4*

Allow conveniently accessible childcare facilities near transit stops, schools, and parks, and within master-planned developments.

### *Childcare Policy 7.5*

Support the use of public facilities, schools, churches, and space within other organizations to accommodate childcare facilities.

### *Childcare Policy 7.6*

Encourage large employers to include childcare facilities on-site as appropriate.

## **Figure V-15: Family Day Care Definitions\***

**Family Day Care:** Regularly provides care, protection and supervision of fourteen (14) or fewer children in the provider's home, for periods of less than twenty-four (24) hours per day, while the parents or guardians are away.

**Small Family Day Care:** A home that provides family day care for eight (8) or fewer children, including children who reside at the home

**Large Family Day Care:** A home that provides family day care for nine (9) to fourteen (14) children, inclusive, including children who reside at the home

*\*Note: All family day care facilities require a state license to operate. Definitions are based on state law and are subject to change.*

## **Older Adult, Disabled and Disadvantaged Services Policies**

### **GOAL 8: Adequate facilities and accessible services to meet the needs of older adults, disabled, and disadvantaged persons.**

#### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.1*

Allow adult care facilities in all residential zones as a permitted use consistent with state law and local provisions.

#### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.2*

Prohibit adult care facilities in industrial zones due to potentially hazardous conditions.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.3*

Support the use of public facilities, schools, churches, and space within other organizations to accommodate services for older, disabled and/or disadvantaged residents.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.4*

Encourage owners and operators of public, non-profit, and private facilities, particularly those related to health and human services, to develop or incorporate facilities and services for older adults, disabled, and disadvantaged residents.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.5*

Work with the County Health and Human Services Department to site facilities that meet basic needs of the city's senior, disabled, and disadvantaged resident population such as access to healthcare, transit, housing, and also supportive services such as volunteer opportunities, mentorship, outreach, legal advice, advocacy, and case management.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.6*

Work with appropriate agencies to address the community safety and personal protection of older adults, disabled and disadvantaged residents.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.7*

Encourage the use of older adults as volunteer resources and partner with other agencies to provide mutually beneficial educational and volunteer opportunities.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.8*

Encourage the coordination and monitoring of the community's progress in identifying and meeting the needs of older, disabled, and disadvantaged residents based on possible risk factors such as, but not limited to: living status, income level, health status, ethnicity, and level of mobility.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.9*

Cooperate with appropriate institutions and agencies who provide job opportunities for the economically, physically, and socially disadvantaged.

### *Older Adult, Disabled, Disadvantaged Services Policy 8.10*

Support institutions and agencies that assist and provide necessary services for older adults who desire to "age in place."

## Figure V-16: Adult Residential Care Definitions

**Adult Residential Facility:** Facilities that provide 24-hour non-medical care for physically handicap-ped, developmentally disabled, and / or mentally disabled adults ages 18 through 59, who are unable to pro-vide for their own daily needs.

**Community Care Facility:** Provides 24-hour non-medical resi-dential care to children and adults with developmental disabilities in need of personal services, super-vision, and/or assistance essential for self-protection or sustaining the activities of daily living.

**Elderly Residential Care Facility:** Provides services to persons 60 years of age and over (and persons under 60 with compatible needs). May also be known as “assisted living facilities,” “retirement homes,” and “board and care homes.”

**Small Care Facility:** A home that provides care for six (6) or fewer adults.

**Large Care Facility:** A home that provides care for seven (7) or more adults.

*\*Note: There are several types of residential care facilities, all of which are not defined above. Definitions are based on state law and subject to change. All residential care facilities require a state license to operate.*

### **B. Environmental Justice Goals and Policies**

#### **GOAL 1: Reduce disproportionate health and environmental impacts within Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs) and Priority Investment Neighborhoods (PINs) by augmenting the quality of the built and natural environment.**

##### Pollution Policies

##### **Environmental Justice Policy 1.1**

Lower localized air pollution exposure near major roads by implementing the following actions:

- 1.1.1 Update the zoning ordinance to require the installation of Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) filters in the ventilation systems of new residential developments that are located within 500-feet of interstate 15 (I-15) or state route 78 (SR-78). Filters shall be MERV XX or better. Include standards to ensure long-term maintenance and replacement of the MERV XX filters in the individual units.
- 1.1.2 At a minimum, as part of the seventh cycle Housing Element update, exclude parcels that are within 500-feet of an I-15 or SR-78 freeway lane and remove their eligibility as suitable inventory sites. Further, assess the feasibility of excluding sites within 500-feet of super prime arterials and super major roadways and consider expanding ineligibility of parcels to 1,000-feet around the I-15 and SR-78 freeways. Future determination of inventory and suitable sites shall prioritize sites outside these distances when determining suitability.

- 1.1.3 Work with the California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans) to evaluate and designate heavy truck routes throughout the City that avoid residential areas and other sensitive land uses, especially in EJs, where feasible.
- 1.1.4 In accordance with the California Air Resource Board's recommended buffer distances, new residential development shall site all outdoor active-use recreational areas associated with development projects that are 500-feet from the nearest lane of traffic on the I-15/SR-78 to the best extent feasible.
- 1.1.5 Encourage and collaborate with NCTD in siting bus stops in an effort to reduce riders' exposures to traffic pollution<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.1.6 Consider updating the zoning ordinance to limit the development of sensitive uses within 1,000-feet of the I-15/SR-78. Ensure analysis on how such restriction could inhibit development of such uses (e.g., child care centers, schools, etc.) occurs.
- 1.1.7 Continue to prioritize the development of the City's Urban Forestry Management Program so that trees in public places receive the maintenance and care needed to encourage vegetation maturity and avoid early replacement. Prioritize native and drought-tolerant trees while accounting for the right-tree in the right-place mindset to ensure long-term viability of the planted tree. Avoid planting non-native trees in proximity to a native tree in public spaces, where feasible.
- 1.1.8 Opportunities to create or augment existing tree canopy in the EJs and PINs shall be prioritized to reduce the effects of Heat Vulnerability as described in the Climate Action Plan.

### **Environmental Justice Policy 1.2**

Create healthy communities and remedy existing pollution inequities in EJs through the following implementation actions:

- 1.2.1 In alignment with the Escondido Climate Action Plan (E-CAP), utilize EJ Communities (EJs) and Priority Investment Neighborhoods (PINs) as a criterion for prioritizing capital improvements and program investment. Prioritize overlapping EJs and PINs first, stand-alone EJs second, and standalone PINs last.
- 1.2.2 City policies, programs, and ordinances shall be inclusive. Prior to City staff providing a recommendation to decision makers, an evaluation of how the proposed policy, program, and/or ordinance would impact EJs/PINs shall be considered and included in staff's recommendation to decision makers through the staff report, technical memorandum, or oral presentation process. To ensure staff understand equity concepts, provide equity and unconscious bias trainings as part of the City's regularly scheduled staff trainings.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/research-synthesis-17-03-reducing-near-roadway-exposure-air-pollution>

- 1.2.3 Encourage multifamily residential property owners to become smoke-free through education programs and outreach campaigns with community organizations to reduce second-hand and third-hand smoke death and disability.
- 1.2.4 Continue to enforce the City's Tobacco Retailer License program. Consider a future ordinance to require multifamily residential properties to be comprehensively smoke-free through incentivization without a criminal enforcement/penalization approach.
- 1.2.5 Develop a standard for siting stationary sources of localized air pollution within EJCs, such as through higher standards for findings of fact, setting intensity limitations, and/or separation requirements. Stationary sources of localized air pollution include, but are not limited to, gas service stations, auto body shops, manufacturing facilities, and other industrial air pollution sources.
- 1.2.6 Conduct a vegetation naturalization feasibility study of Escondido Creek as part of the City's next comprehensive General Plan update. Subsequently, develop a workplan to naturalize the Escondido Creek in accordance with the findings of the feasibility study and to the extent feasible under State and Federal regulations.
- 1.2.7 Develop and conduct an educational outreach program on solid waste and litter reduction, with concerted engagement efforts in EJCs and PINs. Continue to support existing programs, such as the Adopt-a-Creek Trail Program. Continue to enforce State requirements on organics and recycling, with outreach prioritized in multifamily and small businesses throughout the EJCs and PINs.
- 1.2.8 Prioritize adequate services that address solid waste, and human health of vulnerable communities such as unsheltered community members. This could include providing additional public trash and recycling receptacles, longer hours of operation for public restrooms, more public restrooms, and public handwashing stations, to provide more opportunities for people to conveniently dispose of waste in public areas such as parks and sidewalks and increase overall public health for all community members.
- 1.2.9 Coordinate with water service providers to ensure that sources of potable water are protected from contamination.
- 1.2.10 Implement the Comprehensive Active Transportation Strategy (CATS) throughout the City, with priority implementation within the EJCs, and PINs, to ensure these communities have access to alternative modes of transit outside of cars.
- 1.2.11 Create a comprehensive sidewalk inventory within the City so that areas in need of sidewalk infill can be adequately identified. Ensure a coordinated and systematic process is used for sidewalk infill, based on priorities outlined within this Element, the E-CAP, and CATS.
- 1.2.12 Continue to ensure compatibility of industrial uses in proximity to sensitive land uses. Require zoning regulations provide adequate distance separation and buffering for sensitive uses from industrial zones. The findings for such uses shall include specific

references to proximity to or environmental impacts to EJC's and PINs and specific means of mitigating said impacts.

## Public Facilities Policies

### ***Environmental Justice Policy 1.3***

Commit to equitably located and distributed public facilities and services to ensure easy and convenient access for residents by implementing the following actions:

- 1.3.1 Ensure City plans and programming allocate resources for public facilities (e.g., public childcare programs, parks and trails, etc.) and their maintenance in an equitable manner, with prioritization for phasing and implementation of EJC's and PINs, if feasible.
- 1.3.2 During annual budget formulation, utilize the specific environmental justice policies and actions from this Element, the Adaptation Measures and Actions in the Climate Action Plan, and the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to prioritize available general funds, capital improvement budget, and grant funding.
- 1.3.3 Develop and implement training for City staff on how to integrate equity into decision making when evaluating and planning City programming and projects.
- 1.3.4 Work toward converting City streets to complete streets, where feasible, through updates to long-range infrastructure plans. Incorporate elements of complete streets into upcoming infrastructure projects, to the extent feasible, such as inclusion of active transportation and green storm water infrastructure elements, prioritization of improvements that promote safety and comfort, and/or coordinate transit for the benefit of users.
- 1.3.5 Prioritize connections between EJC's and PINs and public facilities, especially City buildings, health care facilities, and parks with playgrounds for any City-initiated micro transit.
- 1.3.6 Prioritize the installation and access to public art within EJC's and PINs. Prioritize that art installations are created by artists from EJC's or PINs.
- 1.3.7 Evaluate existing City park amenities to determine whether all parks contain the same safety amenities, including adequate lighting, and access to drinking water. In the event park spaces are lacking a common amenity, install such amenity, where feasible.
- 1.3.8 In the EJC's and PINs, evaluate multi-modal access to park space within one quarter mile of existing parks. Prioritize infill active transportation projects to improve multi-modal access to parks for EJC residents.
- 1.3.9 Consider creating a park overlay zone within the EJC's and PINs to facilitate park creation at any scale within the areas where community members do not have any accessible park space within a quarter mile of their residence. Prioritize the evaluation to begin with

open space in the EICs and PINs and prioritize addressing lacking amenities to address the deficiency.

### ***Environmental Justice Policy 1.4***

Provide equitable opportunities across all community aspects, including safety and resilience, in the EICs by implementing the following actions:

- 1.4.1 Explore clean air centers, cooling centers, and resiliency hubs as part of future plans related to climate adaptation and resiliency. Ensure siting and ADA access to such centers account for multilingual outreach campaigns to inform residents on their presence, purpose, and locations.
- 1.4.2 Ensure emergency response methods robustly account for vulnerable communities, such as outdoor workers, elderly, and unsheltered individuals by incorporating specific and detailed actions/implementation measures that address these vulnerable communities into applicable emergency response plans and documents.
- 1.4.3 Prioritize and develop green storm water infrastructure in public and private development throughout the City, giving priority within EICs and PINs, to support a sustainable approach to storm water, drainage, groundwater recharge, and landscaping.
- 1.4.4 Support and provide on-going, year-round access (as applicable) to public facilities located within EICs and PINs that aid in extreme weather resiliency, such as public pools, and recreation centers. Ensure access is provided to those most in need, including seniors, the disabled, and unhoused populations by utilizing methods of outreach that directly connect with such communities.
- 1.4.5 Prioritize holistic design when developing public facilities (e.g., parks, senior centers, libraries, recreation centers) within EICs and PINs, specifically by assessing usability of the facility while considering surrounding demographics of such public facility.
- 1.4.6 Increase positive activity, such as increasing park users through varied and culturally appropriate amenities, to deter drinking and drug use in parks and public open spaces. By increasing users through varied amenities, more eyes are on the park space to deter such activity.
- 1.4.7 Continue to prioritize the reduction in extreme heat through various actions, including but not limited to increasing the City's urban forest, utilizing green stormwater infrastructure, and support of green roofs and green space.

### **Food Access Policies**

### ***Environmental Justice Policy 1.5***

Evaluate and improve the location and distribution of access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for those with limited access and high needs.

- 1.5.1 Work with NCTD to ensure transportation systems link customers to grocery stores and other sources of healthy foods by aligning routes and prioritizing healthy food access. Examine any changes to existing transit routes for its potential to restrict or limit healthy food access to ridership and identify ways to offset potential impacts to riders who utilize such transit for health food access.
- 1.5.2 Focus business attraction efforts on grocery stores, food co-ops, and other healthy food retailers for underserved areas of the City.
- 1.5.3 Expand the “Food and Liquor” uses permitted in the commercial zones to better distinguish and analyze development of healthy food outlets, small neighborhood markets, farmers’ markets, and food cooperatives. Adopt flexible zoning standards to allow healthy food uses where appropriate.
- 1.5.4 Consider creation of a Healthy Food Zoning Overlay and allowing small-scale urban agriculture in specified areas of the City and as accessory uses, such as temporary on-site urban agriculture stands.
- 1.5.5 Identify and inventory potential community garden/urban farm sites on existing parks, utility easements and rights of way, and prioritize site use as community gardens in appropriate locations. Analyze City-owned properties to develop equitable food-oriented development, urban agriculture, or other community-driven development.
- 1.5.6 Establish restrictions for land uses that lead to public health concerns in high concentrations, such as fast-food establishments, and liquor stores. The established restrictions shall include mechanisms/policy design to ensure areas with existing high concentrations of such uses throughout the City are alleviated by ongoing implementation of such restrictions. Restrictions may include, but are not limited to placing intensity caps or utilize separation requirements on such uses within EICs and PINs
- 1.5.7 Provide accessible information about the CalFresh program (SNAP) targeted to individuals within EICs to increase food security. Identify local food retailers and farmers markets that do not currently accept EBT and motivate them to become SNAP-approved. Incentivize SNAP purchases of nutritious foods through benefits or education programs within EICs.

### ***Environmental Justice Policy 1.6***

Elevate healthy food education and access through community collaborations, partnerships, and City-initiated events and programs.

- 1.6.1 Prioritize providing healthy food and beverage options at City facilities and City-sponsored events, where feasible.
- 1.6.2 Encourage and support corner/convenience store conversion programs into markets/grocers in EICs and PINs through economic development initiatives.
- 1.6.3 Work with community partners to distribute the best available educational information on healthy foods and food access through City newsletters and outreach channels, as applicable. Tailor nutrition education to consider cultural food preferences and dietary restrictions.
- 1.6.4 Support community networks that promote, educate, and/or provide access to healthy foods, such as community fridge networks, community land trusts, pop-up farmers markets, Community-Supported Agriculture (“CSA”) programs, mobile health food markets, and farm stands through the adoption of a community garden ordinance, as outlined in the E-CAP Measure A-2.1.
- 1.6.5 Encourage the retention, establishment, and growth of healthy food options. Support neighborhood-oriented specific sources of healthful foods, such as “edible school yards” and local outlets. Support food banks, pantries, and other sources that help provide federal food assistance to low-income residents so that all families, seniors, schools, and community-based organizations can access, purchase, and increase intake of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods.
- 1.6.6 Explore ways to incentivize stocking of fresh and healthy foods in private development of convenience stores, specialty food markets, ethnic markets, food trucks, and liquor stores to increase healthy food access in underserved areas.

## Physical Activity Policies

### **Environmental Justice Policy 1.7**

Promote both public and private development patterns that lead to increased opportunities for physical activity such as walking, biking, and hiking to reduce rates of chronic health issues.

- 1.7.1 Identify areas within EICs and PINs as key opportunity nodes for retail services within one-quarter mile of predominantly residential-only areas to facilitate non-vehicular trips. Consider reduced parking requirements for such key opportunity nodes to further incentivize alternative modes of transit.
- 1.7.2 Update the City’s Zoning Ordinance to eliminate any barriers to creating increased opportunities for physical activity. Prioritize removing any identified barriers that impact community members within EICs and PINs first.
- 1.7.3 Prioritize public projects that facilitate passive and active physical activity, such as sidewalk connection projects, sport courts, and bike lanes.

- 1.7.4 Consider designating the Harding Street medians (between Washington Avenue and Kent Avenue) into a public park space. Evaluate how such medians could be connected to El Norte Park for a linear park spanning multiple blocks.
- 1.7.5 Explore with NCTD ways to connect transit riders from bus lines along El Norte Parkway to Daley Ranch and Dixon Lake to unlock recreational areas for passive and active physical activity.
- 1.7.6 Adding where feasible and maintaining existing workout equipment associated with public parks and recreation centers, including instructions where necessary.
- 1.7.7 Develop accessible group fitness classes put on by the City to members of EICs, elderly, and disabled people (i.e. community Zumba classes, yoga at the park, etc.). Ensure these classes are held during times of day when members of EICs can attend and that they are located at a variety of venues in the city, prioritizing PINs.

### Safe and Sanitary Homes Policies

#### **Environmental Justice Policy 1.8**

Housing and neighborhoods that enhance the safety, welfare, and lives of all people, regardless of age, income level, and cultural background.

- 1.8.1 Promote mixed-income development and inclusion of affordable housing units in all neighborhoods. Encourage the integration of market rate housing with affordable units at the project level, as well as at the neighborhood level. Affordable housing units should be located close to community and retail amenities such as parks, full-service grocery stores, local public transit stops, retail, and public services.
- 1.8.2 Support and encourage development of a range of housing types that meet the needs of all community members within the City, including seniors, large and small households, vulnerable populations, and people of all abilities.
- 1.8.3 In pursuit of safe and sanitary housing, support property owners of rental units in rehabilitating their properties, prioritizing those with deed-restricted affordable units, and housing within EICs/PINs, to meet current building standards.
- 1.8.4 Prioritize implementation of the City's current Housing Element. Allocate City resources and capacity to carrying out actions, establishing programs, and enforcing policies regarding Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.
- 1.8.5 Conduct periodic absentee owner outreach in EICs/PINs to inform owners of their legal requirements to maintain and upkeep their rental properties. Written outreach efforts should be translated into Spanish, or other appropriate language, and tenants informed of these efforts.
- 1.8.6 Support means for reducing displacement of vulnerable populations within the City, including support for aging in place. Consider the effects of providing amenities in the

- EJCs/PINs, as well as low-income only areas (i.e., not an EJC/PIN but considered low- or very low-income) for their potential for displacing residents.
- 1.8.7 Support community workshops on financial literacy, credit counseling, and first-time homeownership. Collaborate with local community organizations to increase participation of low-income and vulnerable communities, including residents within EJCs/PINs.
  - 1.8.8 Continue efforts to address those living unhoused within the community. Encourage non-congregate shelters within the City with an aim to support extremely vulnerable communities, such as those with disabilities, seniors, families, veterans and youth. Coordinate with the County of San Diego and other community organizations to facilitate services and programs to address homelessness based on others that have proven to be effective and best available research.
  - 1.8.9 Continue to provide support for programs and facilities that serve individuals without shelter and connect them to housing effectively and quickly.
  - 1.8.10 Establish programs that work to remedy unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions throughout the City, with priority in the EJCs and PINs. Such programs ideas include, but are not limited to lead education and remediation, outreach/education campaigns to tenants about risks associated with lead-based paint, mold, and other contaminants as well as on their rights for reporting unsafe conditions, and organized trust building events with code compliance staff.
  - 1.8.11 Conduct a City-specific impediments to fair housing assessment prior to the 7th cycle Housing Element to identify barriers to housing and incorporate recommendations into the 7th cycle housing programs, where feasible.
  - 1.8.12 Support more comfortable and resilient homes and buildings to proactively adapt to changing weather-related emergencies and climate hazard events, as outlined in Measure A-2.2 of CAP Appendix F.
  - 1.8.13 Ensure that City efforts surrounding Escondido's agricultural industry prioritize farm workers in addition to owners and operators.

**GOAL 2: Provide culturally competent and transparent City systems to promote involvement, collaboration, and deference in the decision-making process, especially for Environmental Justice Communities and Priority Investment Neighborhoods.**

Civic Engagement Policies

## ***Civic Engagement Policy 2.1***

Support equitable and inclusive improvements to City processes and operations that support community engagement through the following implementing actions:

- 2.1.1 Monitor the implementation of the environmental justice Element's actions annually as a part of the General Plan annual progress report. Conduct spatial analysis concurrent with Housing and Safety Element updates to determine whether any new EICs exist and update any necessary parts of this Element based on the results of the spatial analysis.
- 2.1.2 Where possible, the City shall prioritize spending of general funds for recreation, air quality and other environmental improvements, community programming, public infrastructure improvements in EICs/PINs and fiscal decisions should be based on this priority.
- 2.1.3 Create a Language Access Plan to establish a comprehensive process for the City outlining the level of readability and how the City will engage with individuals who are non-English speaking or have limited English proficiency. A Language Access Plan consists of strategies and practices that help cities navigate the public participation process where there are language barriers. The Language Access Plan shall address in detail the process for distributing City materials in languages other than English, as well as interpretation and translation at all public meetings.
- 2.1.4 Promote transparent governance by prioritizing clear and straightforward communication and information sharing as a criterion for internal decision making, especially when considering process changes. Support creation of an open data portal that includes city budgets, engagement demographics, and tracking of equity metrics.
- 2.1.5 Ensure all City leaders and staff are competently trained on issues related to leadership and governance, as well as cultural principles of public engagement, as part of the City's regularly scheduled training program.
- 2.1.6 Consider installing signage within EICs/PINs to promote and advertise City meetings, identify the council district/member the sign is located within, and other public announcements.
- 2.1.7 Support collaboration with the Escondido Union High School District in their ethnic studies curriculum creation, as well as relevant government or environmental related courses. Partner with the EUHSD on potential student projects as a direct result of the ethnic studies curriculum in an effort to increase youth education, engagement, and investment in local government and the City.
- 2.1.8 Ensure public meetings are available to community members with limited access to City Hall (or other public meeting location). Utilize accessible avenues for making all public meetings accessible to the community, such as hybrid meetings, and live streaming.

- 2.1.9 Schedule meetings targeting outreach and engagement during times and at locations convenient for community members to attend, especially those within the EJs/PINs, as well as populations that may be directly impacted by a particular decision. In the event outreach and engagement meetings do not yield high turnout, consider a coordinated campaign to reach out to residents in the EJs/PINs to identify what would incentivize their attendance.
- 2.1.10 Every five years, evaluate existing public meeting times and locations, such as council and commission meetings, to determine whether any changes to times/locations are needed to better serve marginalized community members.
- 2.1.11 Prior to large appointment cycles for City boards and commissions, conduct an outreach campaign (i.e. direct mailers, social media, door knockers, etc.) to specifically invite residents from EJs/PINs to apply. Encourage direct outreach to such residents to apply for boards and commissions as openings occur on a rolling basis.
- 2.1.12 Annually invite EJC/PIN residents and community members, such as business owners, employees, etc. to City facilities, including City Hall, for open houses and tours. Ensure adequate translation is available for such open houses and tours to reduce barriers for marginalized community members and build community trust.
- 2.1.13 Support creation of an EJC/PIN advisory group consisting of residents and community members who live, work, and/or play within these City areas. The advisory group would offer updates and reflection to City staff on actual and perceived changes to their neighborhoods as a result of the environmental justice and Climate Action Plan implementation.
- 2.1.14 Develop and build capacity for a transparent and inclusive education and outreach processes and design a decision-making framework to achieve equitable access and other climate health-related goals, prioritizing members of EJs, as outlined in Measure A-1.2 of the CAP Appendix F.
- 2.1.15 Elevate the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of Tribal Governments affiliated with the Escondido region to ensure the protection of tribal cultural resources. Provide training to staff on how to collaborate and consult with Tribal Governments on a regular schedule so that information provided by Tribes regarding sacred sites, cultural resources, and other traditional knowledge remains confidential. Listen and defer to Tribal Governments on Traditional Ecological Knowledge, including ways to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge into decision-making processes, when feasible.