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**RESOURCES ELEMENT**

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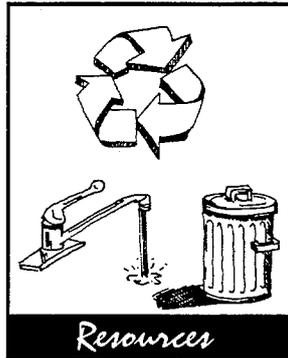
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## OVERVIEW OF THE ELEMENT

### Purpose

The Resources Element addresses resource conservation, with the term "resource" encompassing both natural resources such as air and water, as well as resources created by people to meet the recreational needs of City residents.



South El Monte is a completely built-out urban community where no forest, agricultural, soil, or mineral resources exist to be conserved or reclaimed. No rare or endangered species of plants, fish, or wildlife have been found in the City. None of the existing highways, streets, or roads in the City meet requirements for designation as a scenic highway. No historic or archaeologically significant sites have been located in the City. Therefore, this element addresses the following local recreation resources and issues relevant to South El Monte in a regional context: parks, groundwater management, air quality, and landfill capacity.

The Resources Element focuses on preserving and protecting these valuable resources. In a completely built environment such as South El Monte, resource management is important for ensuring the long-term health of the environment and preserving opportunities for future community residents.

### Important Terms and Concepts

The definitions below highlight key resource-related terms and concepts, as well as descriptions of agencies involved in resource conservation.

#### Groundwater Basin

Rain water and other precipitation that falls to the ground may accumulate in ponds, streams, rivers, or other surface water bodies. These water bodies allow the collected water to infiltrate into the ground. Where subsurface geologic features prevent the movement of the water to greater depths, the ground can become saturated, creating an underground reservoir called a *groundwater basin*.

#### Integrated Waste Management

Up through the 1970s, the primary method used to dispose of urban waste materials -- that is, trash -- involved dumping the materials into landfills. An integrated waste management system approaches trash disposal in alternative manner and involves the use of aggressive waste diversion programs. Primary components of integrated waste management include source reduction, recycling, and reuse. Source reduction may include separating "green" waste (grass cuttings, tree trimmings, etc.) from other trash, and composting the green waste.

### **South Coast Air Quality Management District**

The South Coast Air Quality Management District, or SCAQMD, is the regional agency responsible for implementing state and federal laws which mandate the improvement of air quality in the South Coast Air Basin within specific time periods.

### **Related Plans and Programs**

Several State and Federal plans and programs address the resource issues contained in this Element. Such plans are administered by agencies or special districts that have been delegated the power to enforce the legislation.

The primary Federal law concerned with the protection of natural resources is the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Follow-up legislation includes the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act. Relevant State regulations include the following:

#### **The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the State legislature in 1970 in response to a public mandate that called for thorough environmental analysis of projects that might adversely affect the environment. Under CEQA, most projects that require the discretionary approval of a public agency must first be reviewed to determine related environmental effects. Any identified significant adverse affects must in some manner be mitigated or avoided. South El Monte conducts such review of development projects per CEQA regulations.

### **Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)**

The Air Quality Management Plan is prepared for a region designated as a non-attainment area (a geographic area identified by the Environmental Protection Agency and/or California Air Resources Board as not meeting State or federal standards for a given pollutant) for the purpose of bringing the area into compliance with the requirements for the national and/or state standards. The AQMP, which is prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District and updated on a three-year cycle, contains policies and measures designed to achieve federal and State standards for healthier air quality in the South Coast Air Basin.

### **Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989**

As discussed above, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 shifted the focus of waste management in California from solid waste disposal into landfills to integrated waste management through source reduction, recycling, and composting. As a part of the act, countywide plans must be prepared and submitted to the State Waste Management Board.

### **Summary of Issues**

#### **Public Parks and Recreation**

At the time of incorporation in 1958, South El Monte had fewer than 5,000 residents and limited developed open spaces for public recreation. Subsequent annexations of urbanized areas did not include parks. Consequently, the City has had to create park space from limited open space resources. As

of 1998, the community included one City-owned park and three joint-use park and school playground facilities. In addition, the City maintains a community center, a senior citizens center, and a mini-community center. The park facilities provided a ratio of approximately 1.5 acres of park land per 1,000 City residents. The parks all experience heavy use.

Whittier Narrows Regional Park, located south of the City, is a 1,092-acre County-operated park and nature center that provides South El Monte residents with numerous opportunities for such activities as hiking, biking, swimming, baseball, soccer, and picnicking.

Despite nearby regional park resources, City residents have identified the following issues regarding parks:

- Local parks are not always conveniently located to serve residential neighborhoods.
- Park facilities should respond to community needs.

With regard to recreation services, important recreation considerations include the following:

- Offering opportunities for residents to participate in diverse recreational programs.
- City funding of a comprehensive recreation program.

### Groundwater Resources and Water Supply

Water resources are restricted to the groundwater basins which provide a portion of the City's domestic water supply. South El Monte overlies the San Gabriel groundwater basin, which extends from the base of the San Gabriel Mountains south to Whittier. In 1984, the Environmental Protection Agency designated a portion of the basin as a Federal Superfund site, meaning that substantial contaminants were identified within a plume that extended along the Rio Hondo Wash and San Gabriel River, affecting the communities of South El Monte, Baldwin Park, and El Monte, as well as portions of the Puente Valley and Whittier Narrows. Identified contaminants in the groundwater included trichloroethylene, perchloroethylene, and carbon tetrachloride. Under Superfund legislation, the Federal government is responsible for identifying parties which contributed to the pollution and for collecting funds from responsible parties to finance clean-up activities.

The City's water is supplied from the San Gabriel Valley Water Company. The water supplied to residents and businesses meets federal and state water quality standards. In recognition of the fact that water is a valuable resource to be conserved, a portion of water used in the City is reclaimed in the Whittier Narrows Reclamation Plant for uses approved by the State.

With these issues in mind, important considerations regarding groundwater include:

- Protecting the City's groundwater resources to ensure a reliable, safe domestic water source.
- Observing storm water runoff control requirements to prevent contaminants from entering groundwater.
- Practicing water conservation at the City level, and heightening community awareness of the importance of conservation.

### Air Quality

South El Monte is located within the South Coast Air Basin, which extends from the Pacific Ocean east to the San Jacinto Mountains, and from the San Gabriel Mountains south through Orange County. The Basin, due to its physical configuration and climatological influences, combined with daily pollutant emissions measured in the tons, experiences some of the worst air quality conditions in the nation. The Basin is a "non-attainment" area for ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, and fine particulate matter. Although continued reduction in pollutant concentrations are expected, the Basin is not expected to meet air quality standards, particularly for ozone, in the foreseeable future.

In South El Monte, air quality problems result from emissions from both local and regional sources. Primary air pollution sources in the City include industrial businesses and vehicle emissions from cars and trucks using City streets and the Pomona freeway. Responsibility for the control and oversight of emissions lies with the South Coast Air

Quality Management District. The City government has no direct ability to manage programs for emissions control. However, air quality problems affect the health of City residents, and the City should be concerned about:

- Improving traffic flow through and within South El Monte to reduce vehicle emissions.
- Supporting efforts of the South Coast Air Quality Management District to improve regional air quality.

### Integrated Waste Management

Solid waste -- also called refuse or trash--represents a concern for South El Monte residents and business and for the entire greater Los Angeles region. In this expansive urbanized area, landfill space is a diminishing resource. As new development occupies the urban fringe areas and new people generate additional trash, existing landfills will reach capacity and refuse will have to be hauled to more distant locations, resulting in increased costs to those people and businesses paying for trash service.

The California Waste Management Act of 1989 requires cities to reduce waste within their boundaries through source reduction, recycling, and composting. The Act recognizes that an integrated approach to waste management is required to prolong the life of existing landfills and to prevent the need to devote additional valuable land resources to trash disposal. South El Monte is required to comply with Act provisions and any related legislation that may be enacted.

With this in mind, important considerations regarding waste management include:

- Minimizing the amount of trash that enters the waste stream.
- Supporting the purchase and use of goods made from recyclable materials as a way to increase demand for such products.



*South El Monte residents participate in local recycling efforts.*

## PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION

The City recognizes that limited opportunities exist to increase local park resources within South El Monte. Therefore, emphasis will continue to be placed on enhancing existing parks and maintaining joint-use agreements with local schools. Whittier Narrows Regional Park also will continue to provide open space and recreational opportunities for the community. The City benefits from its proximity to this regional park resource.

The City will look for opportunities to provide a new neighborhood park to serve residents living in the north part of the City, where Potrero Elementary School in the City of El Monte represents the sole local recreation facility. Either industrial or residential properties might be purchased to construct a small “pocket” park.

### Goal 1.0

Provide local public park space at a ratio of 2 acres of park land per 1,000 City residents.

### Policy 1.1

Maintain joint-use agreements with local public school districts to allow school grounds to be used as public park land during non-school hours.

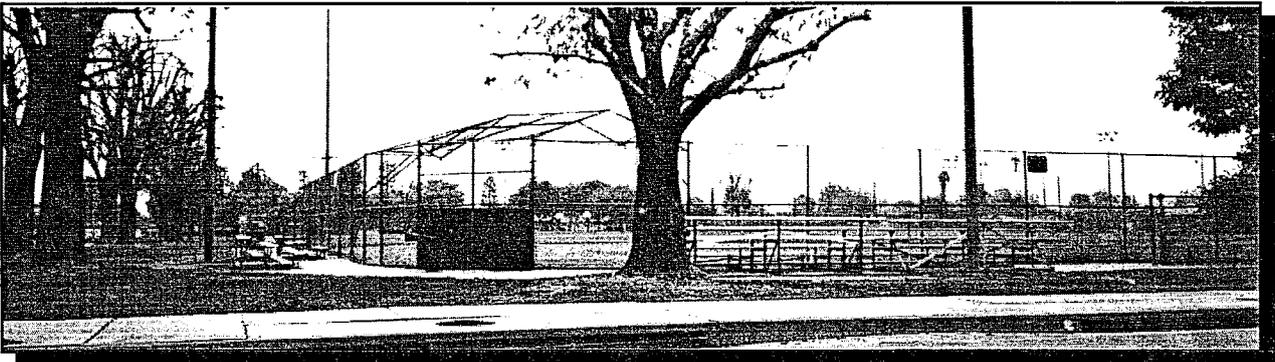
### Policy 1.2

Investigate opportunities to create small neighborhood or “pocket” parks in the north half of the City (Figure R-1).

### Policy 1.3

Continue to provide South El Monte residents with access to regional recreation resources.

Recreational facilities and programs are important resources to consider in providing for a high quality of life. The City’s Recreation Division offers recreation programs at New Temple Park, Mary Van Dyke Park, and the South El Monte Community Center. Diverse programs are available for all ages and are divided into appropriate age and skill levels.



*Parks provide residents with places to relax and enjoy recreational pursuits.*

**Goal 2.0**

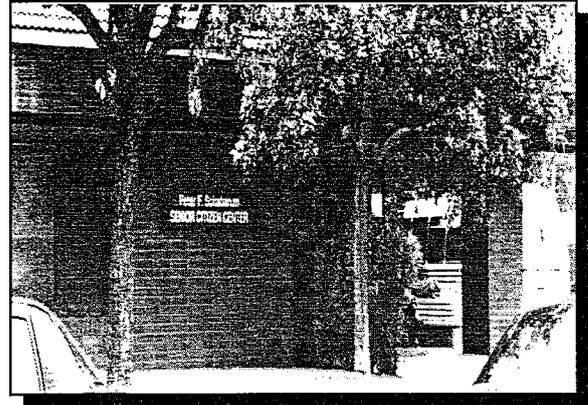
Provide a comprehensive recreation program, adequate facilities, and proper maintenance of the parks and recreational facilities in the City.

**Policy 2.1**

Review recreational programs on an annual basis, and revise programs as necessary to respond to changing community needs.

**Policy 2.2**

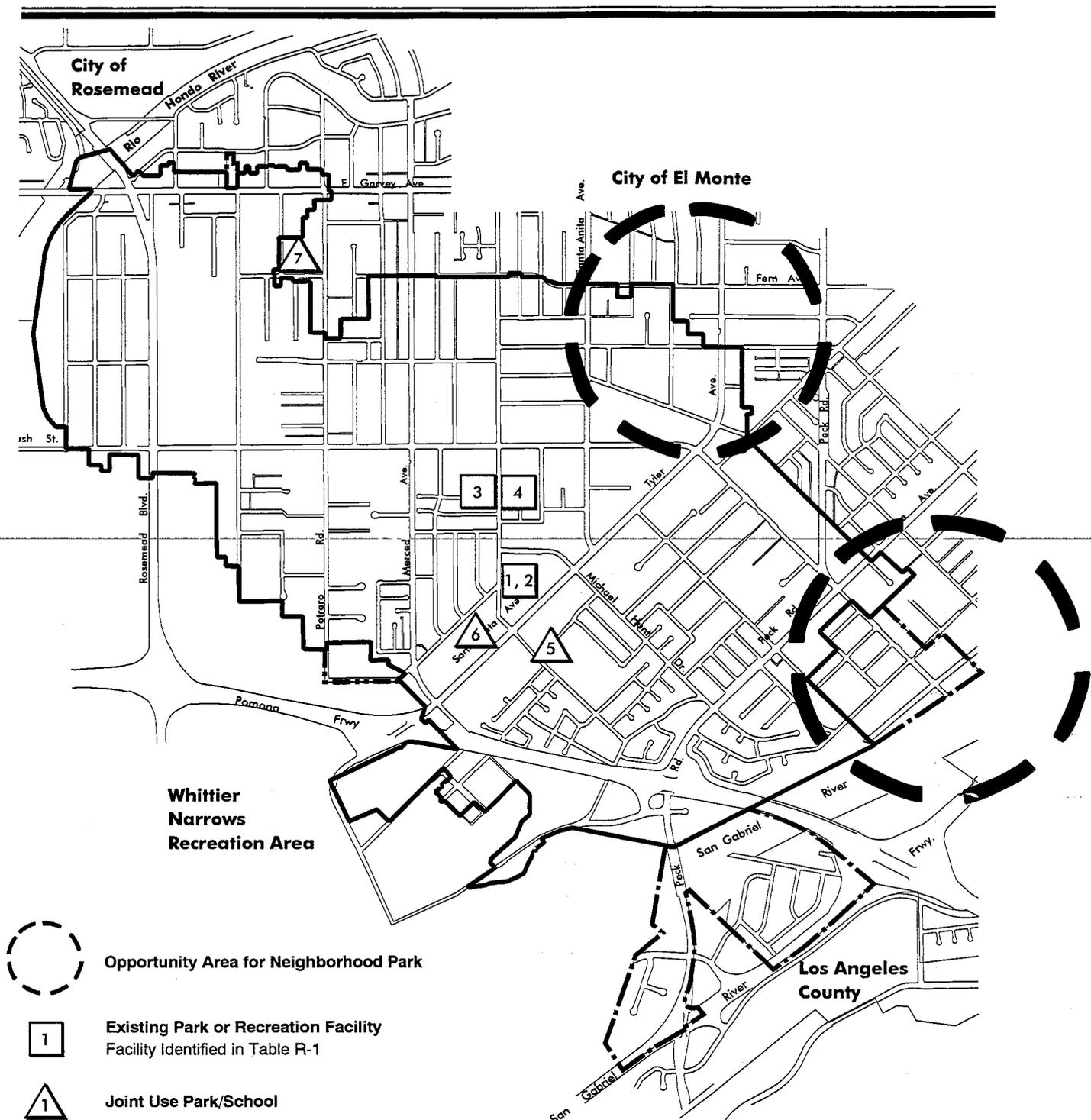
Explore opportunities to operate joint recreation programs with the City of El Monte.



*The community's senior residents enjoy access to a broad range of activities at the Senior Center.*

**Table R-1  
Park and Recreation Facilities**

<b>City Park/Facility</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
1. Community Center	2.0	Recreation building, pool, sports courts, playground, night lighting,
2. Senior Citizens Center	1.5	Recreation building
3. Mary Van Dyke	1.6	Recreation building, sports courts, playground equipment, tot lot
4. Mini-Community Center	2.5	Recreation building
<b>Joint Use Park/Facility</b>		
5. New Temple Park	13.4	Recreation building, picnic, field sports, playground equipment, tot lot, night lighting
6. Dean Shively Park/School	11.0	Recreation building, picnic, field sports, playground equipment, tot lot, night lighting
7. Potrero School	610.0	Grass and field sports areas
<b>Regional Park Facilities</b>		
Whittier Narrows Regional Park	772.0	Recreation building, lake, hiking, biking, pool, sports courts, field sports, playground, tot lot, night lighting,
Whittier Narrows Nature Center	320.0	Nature Center, lake, hiking, picnic
Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area	835.0	Nature Center, playground, lake



-  Opportunity Area for Neighborhood Park
-  Existing Park or Recreation Facility  
Facility Identified in Table R-1
-  Joint Use Park/School
-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  Area of Interest
-  N
-  1000' 0 1000' 2000'

**South El Monte**  
General Plan

**Figure R-1**  
**Parks and Recreation Plan**

## GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

Although regional agencies are responsible for ensuring the safety and adequacy of domestic water supplies, South El Monte has the ability to support regional agencies' programs through advocacy efforts and through local programs that encourage water resource protection and conservation.

In particular, because the City contains many diverse industrial businesses, care must be taken to avoid any further contamination of the San Gabriel groundwater basin associated with past industrial business practices throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

### **Goal 3.0**

Ensure that City residents and businesses are provided with a reliable, safe domestic water source.

### **Policy 3.1**

Continue to participate in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) program under the direction of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

### **Policy 3.2**

Support Federal government efforts to reduce contamination within the San Gabriel groundwater basin.

### **Goal 4.0**

Achieve broad-based participation in water conservation programs.

### **Policy 4.1**

Provide residents and businesses with information about landscaping and irrigation systems that reduce water use.

### **Policy 4.2**

Establish regulations that require new developments to incorporate water-saving plumbing fixtures.

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## AIR QUALITY

Air quality in South El Monte and the South Coast Air Basin as a whole must be improved to meet the regional, State, and Federal air quality standards. The South Coast Air Quality Management District, in conjunction with Southern California Association of Governments, will continue to implement plans and programs to reduce air pollution emissions. The following goal and policies demonstrate South El Monte's commitment to assist with regional efforts to improve air quality over the long term.

**Goal 5.0**

Improve air quality for future generations of South El Monte residents.

**Policy 5.1**

Continue to improve traffic flow through and within the City.

**Policy 5.2**

Review the zoning regulations annually to identify whether revisions are required to accommodate and encourage the use of alternative-fuel vehicles (e.g. electric cars).

## INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT

Managing the disposal of solid waste is an essential part of life in this community. As landfill capacities diminish in Southern California, South El Monte must continue to consider new ways of reducing waste production. The following goal points toward a future in which residents and business people incorporate waste reduction philosophies into their purchasing, production, and recycling decisions.

**Goal 6.0**

Control and reduce the amount of waste generated in the City.

**Policy 6.1**

Implement a public awareness and education program about the recycling, reduction, and reuse of materials.

**Policy 6.2**

Establish guidelines for City agencies to follow regarding a preference for purchasing products that utilize recycled materials.

**Policy 6.3**

Periodically review City contracts with waste haulers to ensure haulers have measures in place to facilitate recycling.