City of South El Monte

PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

ADOPTED OCTOBER 12, 2021

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Introduction

Ensuring good health and a safe environment for all community members is a top priority for the City of South El Monte (City). The Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan guides the City toward being a safer and healthier place for everyone. This element combines two State-required elements: Safety and Environmental Justice. The Safety Element is a required element and must be addressed by every city and county in California. Environmental Justice is a required element for cities with disadvantaged communities (**DACs**), which includes South El Monte.

The Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element prioritizes actions that address the greatest health risks to the City over the next 20 years. It guides how the City is designed, regulated, and built to ensure that people can access healthy food and places to play, that the air is clean, and that hazards will not impact important buildings and services. The Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element also identifies and prioritizes the needs of DACs to address compounding health concerns.

The Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element is closely linked to two other elements of the General Plan: the Land Use Element and the Conservation Element. The Land Use Element regulates where homes, business, and industry can be in South El Monte and how large they can be. Related to this, the Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element recommends where parks, community gardens, and first responder facilities should be placed. The Conservation Element addresses how the City uses natural resources, such as water and the urban forest. Related to this, the Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element addresses how these resources could be affected by hazard events and climate change, and how natural resources can be used to make the community healthier and more resilient.

The Existing Conditions section of this element outlines the public health concerns facing the City, and the Goals, Policies, and Actions section outlines the City's public health, safety, and environmental justice roadmap to 2040.

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

DACs are areas throughout California that most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes, and high incidence of asthma and heart disease.

Gov. Code Section 65302(h)(4)(A)

Outreach

Defining Environmental Justice Communities

The California Governor's Office of Planning Research requires jurisdictions with census tracts scoring above 75% in **CalEnviroScreen** to address **environmental justice**. Using CalEnviroScreen, seven census tracts in South El Monte scored above 75% (see **PHS-1**).

Summary

Public outreach methods were designed to engage a wide range of community members and generate ideas and feedback representing the broad perspectives of local residents. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, hybrid in-person and virtual outreach was pursued to ensure barriers due to health and technology were not a burden on community members' ability to participate. To achieve this goal, the following outreach meetings and opportunities were employed: one virtual joint City of South El Monte (City) City Council/Planning Commission Meeting, one virtual public workshop, eight stakeholder interviews, one in-person community outreach event, and two online surveys. All public input was gathered in conformance with the COVID-19 physical distancing requirements in place at the time. Public engagement efforts were targeted in South El Monte; however, some stakeholders based outside of South El Monte also provided input.

Copies of the interviews, presentations, and survey results are included in [Appendix A, Community Engagement Results]. The discussion below briefly summarizes the main topics, issues, and concerns brought forth during these efforts.

CALENVIROSCREEN

A mapping tool that helps identify California communities that are most affected by many sources of pollution, and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution's effects. CalEnviroScreen ranks communities by census tract based on data that are available from State and Federal government sources. Those census tracts that are above the 75th percentile on CalEnviroScreen are considered disadvantaged and are most vulnerable to climate change. This General Plan uses CalEnviroScreen 3.0, which was updated in June 2018.

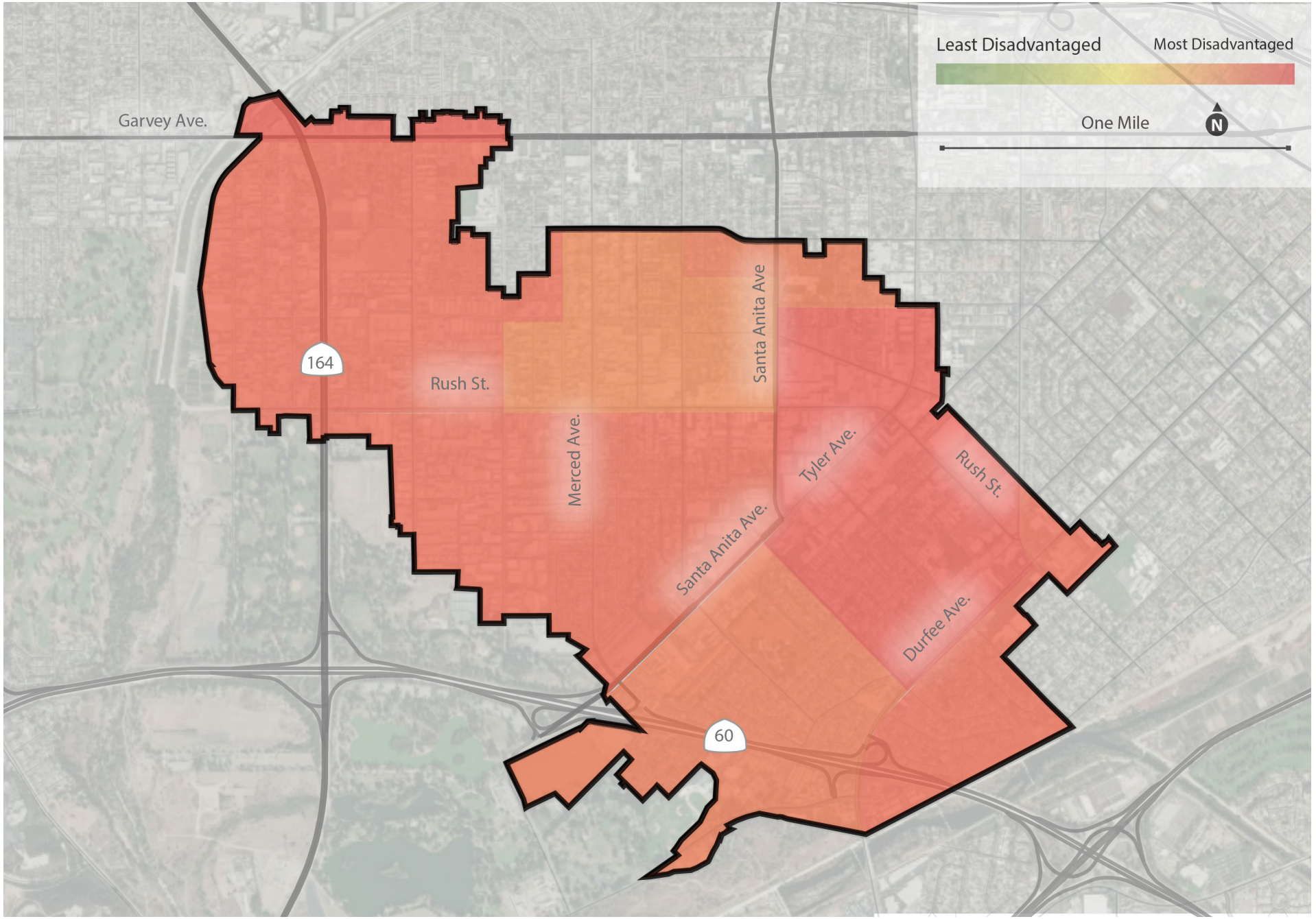
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice: Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Environmental justice will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

Planning Commission and City Council Joint Session Public Meeting

The City Council and Planning Commission Meeting was held virtually on April 20, 2021. The meeting included an overview of the Safety and Environmental Justice Element and provided opportunities

Figure PHS-1 Disadvantaged Communites



Source: Source: California Office of Environment Health Hazard Assessment, (2020). CalEnviroScreen. Retrieved July 09, 2020, from https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen.

for the City Council and Planning Commission to ask and respond to questions. Spanish translation was offered during the meeting.

The list below provides an overview of the feedback received from the City Council and Planning Commission collected during this meeting related to safety and equity issues they have heard about from the community:

- There are issues with housing affordability.
- There are concerns over extreme heat, air pollution, and energy efficiency, including with regard to insulation.
- There is concern over indoor air quality, including exposure to natural gas, and a concern with creating healthy homes.
- Traffic flow, particularly in areas that may be underutilized and the speed of traffic through communities, is a concern. There is an opportunity to explore ways to promote complete streets and active transit.

Online Surveys

The first survey was completed by 23 people. The survey was posted on the City's website and social media platforms, such as on the City's Facebook page; advertised in the City's newspaper; and emailed to the City's interested parties list. The survey was also advertised through a bilingual (Spanish and English) flyer, emailed directly to key stakeholders, and announced during the virtual community meeting held in June. The survey was available for community members who wished to participate during the months of June and July 2021. The survey was available in both English and Spanish. Below is a summary of survey results:

- Many of the survey participants have chosen to live in South El Monte because it is close to family and friends, they were born and raised here, and because of affordability.
- Nearly half of all survey participants indicated that the home they live in shows signs of minor deferred maintenance.
- Of those who wish to own a home in South El Monte, the three most common issues preventing participants from doing so at this time included not being able to find a home within their target price range, not currently having the financial resources for an appropriate down payment, and not currently having the financial resources for an adequate monthly mortgage payment.
- When asked about what they believe are the most urgent housing concerns in South El Monte, the three most common selections included housing affordability, overcrowding, and housing availability.
- Although responses varied across all possible answers, the most commonly selected displacement concern indicated was a sudden increase in rent.

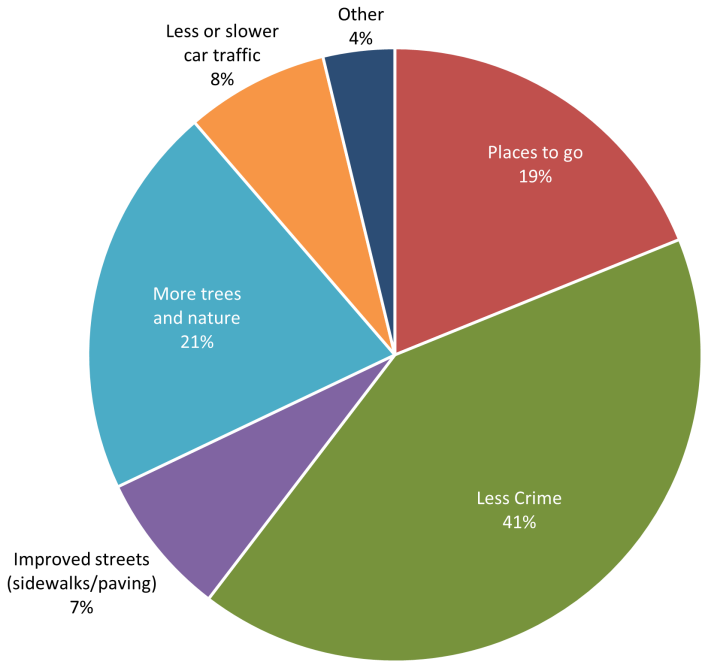
The second survey was completed by 54 people. The survey was available during the outdoor

concert community event on August 19, 2021. Responses addressed walking and biking around South El Monte, parks, and communicating with the City.

Walking and Biking around South El Monte

When deciding to walk or bike around town, survey respondents were most concerned about levels of crime (see **Figure PHS-2**). Respondents also felt that trees and increased in destinations would also improve walking and biking.

Figure PHS-2. How to Make Walking and Biking More Comfortable



Parks

Respondents had varied ideas on how to improve parks. People were equally split between access, safety, and amenity improvements. (see **PHS-3**)

Communicating with the City

Survey respondents usually contact the City when they have a problem (see **PHS-4**), and most often use the City's social media platforms to learn about local resources and events (see **PHS-5**).

Figure PHS-3 : Potential Park Improvements

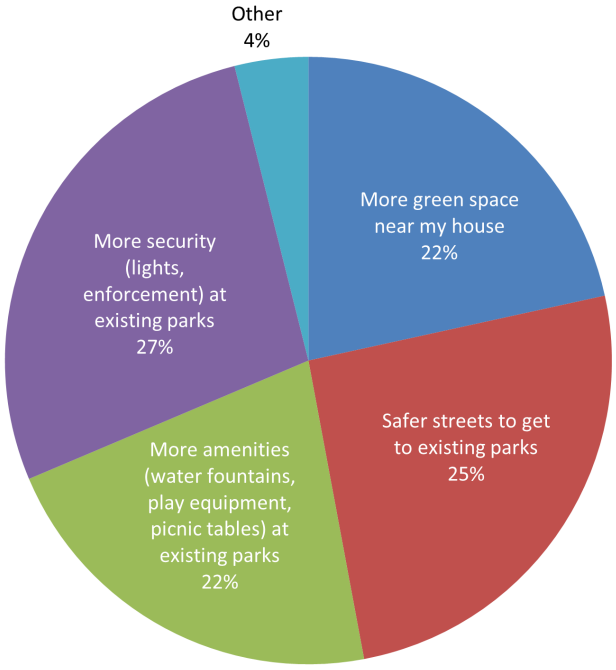


Figure PHS-4 : Contact with City to Solve Problems

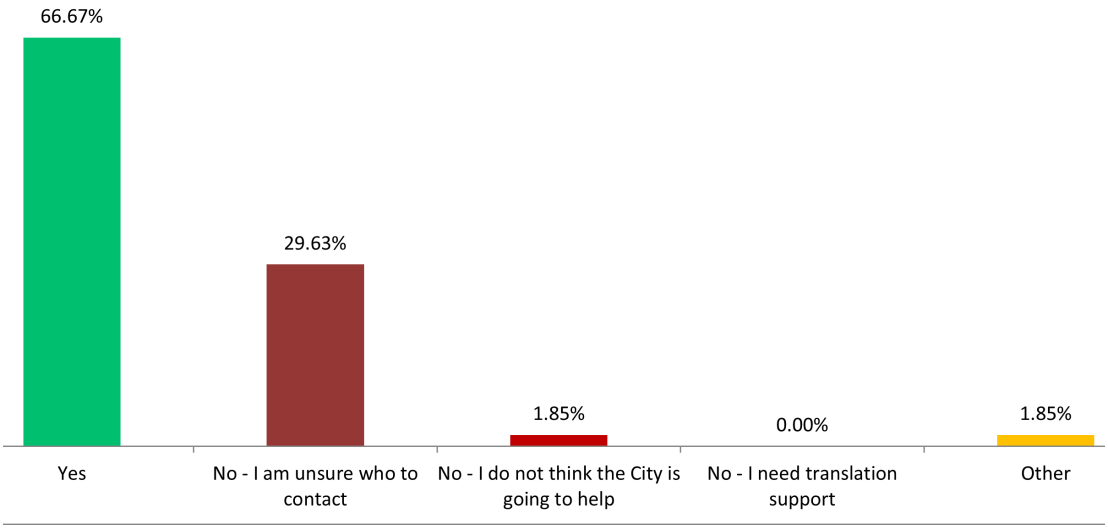
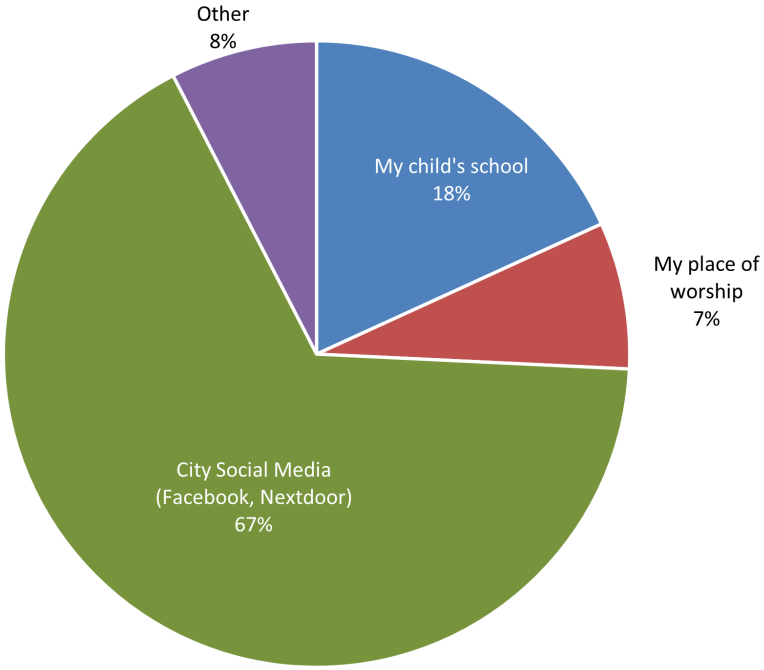


Figure PHS-5 : Preferred Forms of City Communication



Virtual Public Workshop

A virtual community meeting was held on June 29, 2021. Bilingual (English/Spanish) services were provided during the virtual public workshop to engage a broad spectrum of community members. The workshop was held during a weekday evening, outside of traditional working hours, and streamed live via Zoom to facilitate participation. This workshop was promoted on multiple channels, including the City's website and social media platforms. Some of the participants present included residents, property owners, and employees. The virtual community meeting focused on housing-related topics, and produced insights related to safety and environmental justice, as summarized below:When asked about what they believe are the most urgent housing concerns in South El Monte, the most commonly selected poll answers were housing affordability, homeownership, and housing quality.

- Poll results revealed that the most commonly selected displacement concern indicated was a sudden rent increase, followed by maintenance issues not being fixed. Other responses included sudden lease termination, eviction, and that long-term residents cannot stay in the community. These issues were evaluated as they relate to safe and sanitary housing.
- No comments were received regarding displacement due to hazards, such as fire and earthquakes.

Stakeholder Interviews

An extensive list of stakeholders, as identified by the City, and all interested parties were individually called to participate in one-on-one stakeholder interviews. Eight stakeholder interviews were completed and included feedback from a variety of organizations, such as food pantries, homeless and transitional living shelters, and those who provide social services and emergency resources. Feedback results indicated that there are not enough resources in South El Monte for older adults regarding home maintenance programs, social services, and food programs. A comment was made about traffic impacts as a result of increased housing development along commercial corridors.

Community Outreach Event

One in-person community outreach event was held to collect feedback specifically on the topics of environmental justice and safety. This outreach was aimed at meeting people where they already congregate. The event was a Summer Concerts series hosted by the City of South El Monte Community Services Department at the City Hall front lawn on Thursday, August 19, 2021. A booth was set up for the purpose of collecting feedback via a survey available via tablet and one-on-one discussions. Informational posterboards were set up to assess community perception of various community characteristics: access to physical activity, opportunity for civic engagement, threat of natural hazards, level of pollution and air quality, access to public facilities, and food access. Participants were asked to place stickers (sad face, neutral face, and happy face) next to each of these to represent how important each characteristic is to them. People felt that public facilities and community engagement were the most important to be addressed in this element. Spanish-language support was provided for a portion of this event.

Existing Conditions

This section outlines the current risk and equity concerns South El Monte faces from natural and public health hazards. For each hazard, this assessment explains **what** the hazard is and what causes it to occur in South El Monte. Next the assessment maps **where** in South El Monte is most affected by this hazard. From there, this assessment explains **who** is most vulnerable to each hazard. Then, this assessment explains **how** the City of South El Monte (City) is already addressing this hazard. Finally, for each natural hazard, this assessment addresses **when** the hazard occurs; this includes if the hazard is seasonal or is forecasted to get worse as a result of climate change.

This section addresses five public health hazards (access to healthy living, pollution exposure, physical activity, public facilities, and safe and sanitary homes) and four natural hazards (extreme heat, flooding, geologic hazards, and wildfires).

Public Health and Chronic Hazards

The places where people live can affect their health. In a healthy community, everyone has access to healthy food, parks, and safe streets. Low-income communities often have fewer of these healthy resources, and have higher rates of chronic diseases and lower lifespans as a result.[1] As shown in **Table PHS-1**, South El Monte often scores in the lowest 25% of the State for various health indicators, and is worse than Los Angeles County and the State when it comes to all health indicators assessed.

Table PHS-1. Health Indicators

Health Indicator	Location		
	South El Monte	**Los Angeles County**	**California**
Asthma[1]	53.78	52.21	51.95
Cardiovascular Disease[2]	8.68	8.43	8.4
Diabetes[3*]	12.97	10.93	9.94
Obesity[4*]	30.39	26.4	25.15
Low Birth Weight[5]	5.74	5.34	4.97

Source: Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Asthma emergency department visits per 10,000 people

2 Heart attack emergency department visits per 10,000 people

3 Percent of adults with diabetes

4 Percent of adults with a body mass index over 30 kg/m2

5 Percent of low-birth-weight infants

* Multiple census tracts did not have data collected for this statistic.

1 McCullough, M., D. Feskanich, M. Stampfer, E. Giovannucci, E. Rimm, F. Hu, D. Spiegelman, D. Hunter, G. Colditz, and W. Willett. 2002. "Diet Quality and Major Chronic Disease Risk in Men and Women: Moving Toward Improved Dietary Guidance." *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition 76 (6): 1*,261–1,271.

Healthy Food

What

Healthy food is essential for all people, but it can be difficult to access and afford for some community members. Having access to affordable healthy food can encourage a healthier diet, lower the risk of chronic disease, and reduce food insecurity.[2] Studies have shown that people who live near grocery stores have better health outcomes.[3] For community members without a car, being able to walk or bike to a grocery store or other source of healthy food is imperative.

Where

South El Monte is served by seven grocery stores that are well-distributed throughout South El Monte in commercial areas. Many residential areas are within walking or biking distance of a grocery store; however, households in the southern portion of South El Monte do not have a neighborhood grocery store (see **Figure PHS-6**). The local grocery stores are affordable and culturally appropriate.

In 2021, Earthworks Farm and Community Garden broke ground on 5 acres of land that abuts the southern border of South El Monte.[4] This local community group is in partnership with CultivaLA, the San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps, and others with the goal to promote urban agriculture. Earthworks Farm understands the importance of urban agriculture in health and food security, and offers direct sales, farm-to-table, farm-to-school, harvest tours, and educational community workshops.[5]

Who

Those most in need of nearby grocery stores include low-income residents and households without access to a car. Households with limited access to a car are concentrated in the northern portions of South El Monte near commercial areas and are well-served by grocery stores. More thanr 30% of South El Monte residents, including low-income residents, concentrated in the southern portion of South El Monte do not live within biking distance of a grocery store. This access is supplemented by the presence of the Earthworks Farm and Community Garden and monthly food bank at the San Gabriel Valley Service Center.

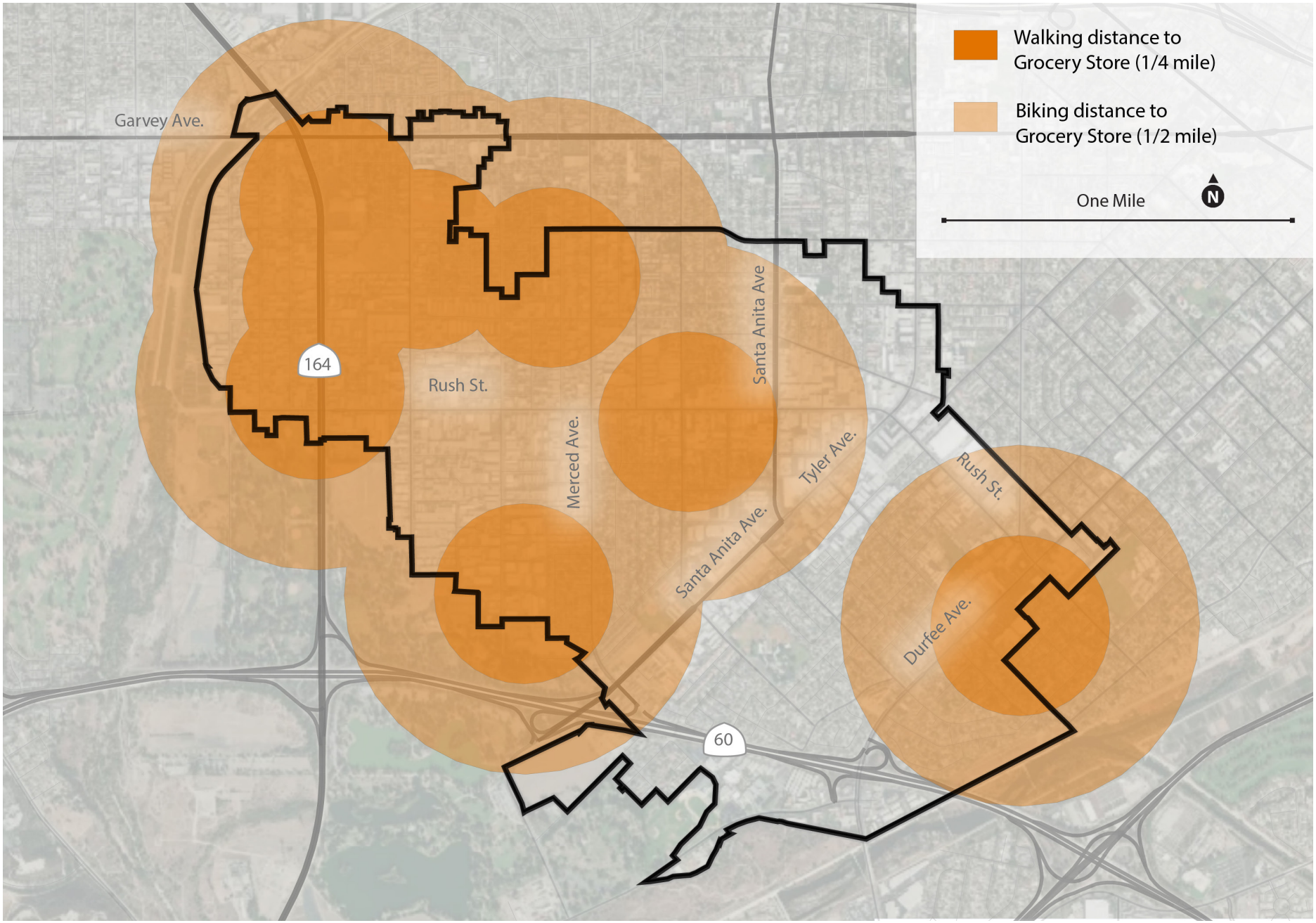
2 McCullough et al. 2002.

3 Teuhaft, S., and A. Karpyn. 2018. *The Grocery Gap: Who has Access to Healthy Food and Why it Matters.* https://healthyplacesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/policy_link_grocery_gap.pdf.

4 Richard, O. 2021. "New Farm In El Monte Breaks Ground Today With Goal Of Feeding Westlake Community." *LAIST. March 27, 2021. https://laist.com/latest/post/20210327/earthworks-farm-el-monte-westlake.*

5 Earthworks Farm Community Garden. n.d. "Earthworks Farm and Community Garden." Accessed April 13, 2021. https://www.soilmate.com/farms/earthworks-farm-community-garden.

Figure PHS-6 Food Access



Source: City of South El Monte

How

Two community-based organizations provide food to families in need in South El Monte, helping to close the gap on food insecurity. Earthworks Farm, located at 1210 Lerma Road, provides workshops in organic farming, farm-to-school education, and volunteer opportunities, and works alongside the San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps to provide for local disadvantaged youth through affordable local produce and work skills and job training in organic farming. The San Gabriel Valley Service Center, located at 1441 Santa Anita Avenue, supports a monthly program in conjunction with the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank to provide food to low-income older adults (60+) on every fourth Monday of the month between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Parks

What

Parks offer space for safe and healthy recreation, and access to parks has been found to prevent chronic disease.[6] Parks provide places for children to play and adults to walk. Parks, and the trees inside them, help to clean the air and cool down the surrounding area on hot days. These spaces also offer a gathering place that can allow for events and foster community. Ensuring that there are ample amounts of nearby park space improves quality of life for residents.

Where

South El Monte has one dedicated park: Mary Van Dyke Park. In addition to this park, the City has a joint-use agreement with Shiveley Middle School and the New Temple School to access Shiveley Park and New Temple Park. All three of the local parks are south of Rush Street and east of Merced Avenue. **Figure PHS-7** shows walking and biking distances to City parks and participating schools. Parks adjacent to South El Monte include Lashbrook Park and Whittier Narrows, a major regional recreational area that is managed by Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation.

The sheer amount of park acreage relative to the population is also important to consider when looking at park accessibility because the more people using a park, the less space there is for use. South El Monte has approximately 0.7 park acres per 1,000 residents, which is significantly less than the Los Angeles County average of 3.3 park acres per 1,000 residents.[7]

Who

As shown in **Table PHS-2**, nearly 70% of South El Monte's residents are within biking distance of a City of Regional Park. That number is almost cut in half when looking at walking distance to City and Regional Parks, at 38% of residents.

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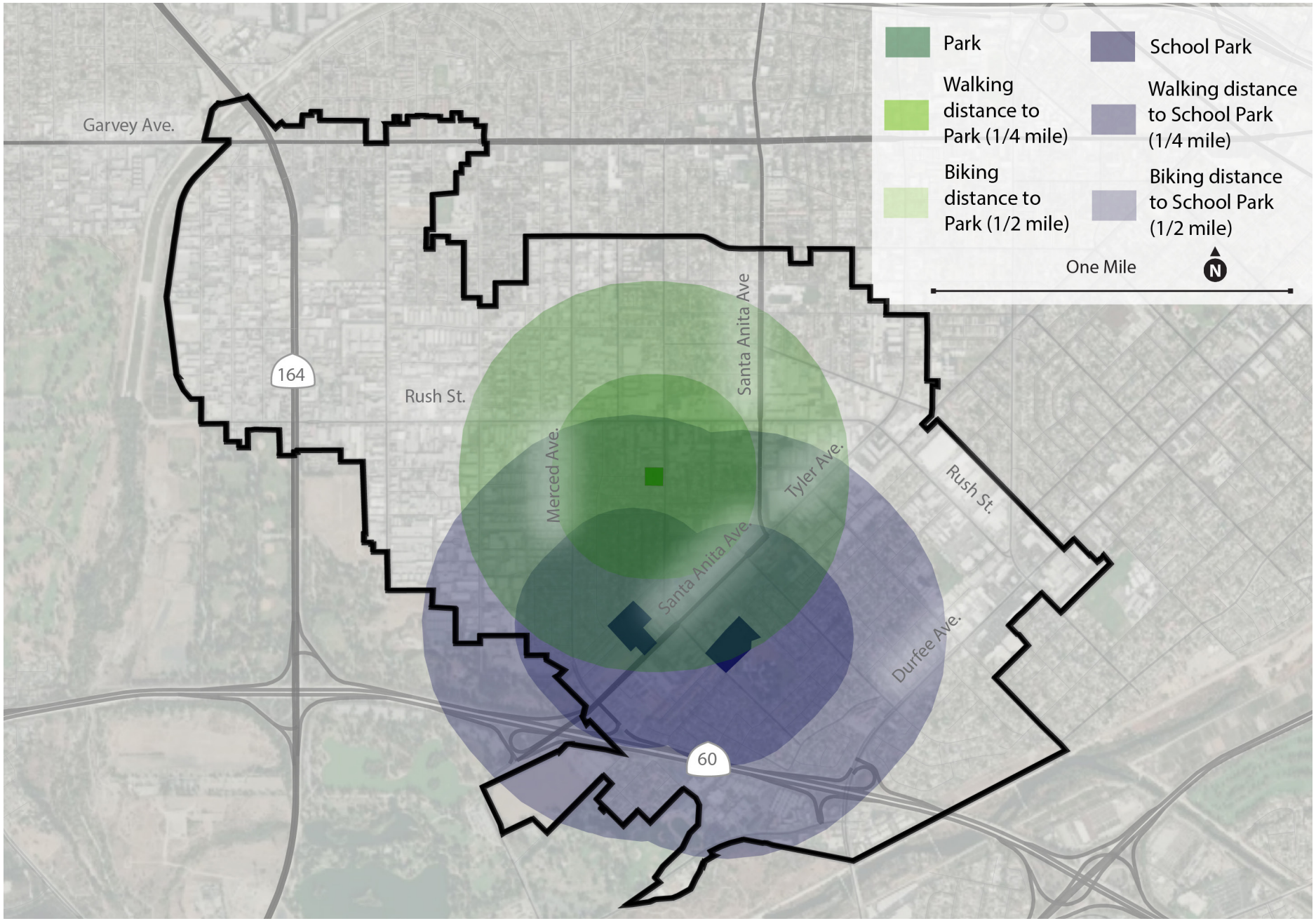
6 Sherer, P.M. 2006. *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space. Trust for Public Land.* http://www.tpl.org/content_documents/parks_for_people_Jul2005.pdf.

7 Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. 2016. *Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment. May 9, 2016.* https://lacountyparkneeds.org/FinalReportAppendixA/StudyArea_078.pdf.

Figure PHS-7 Park Access



Source: City of South El Monte

Table PHS-2. Park Access

Distance per Mode of Transportation	Percent of Households		
	South El Monte	**Los Angeles County**	**California**
Walking Distance to a Park[1]	37.76	—	—
Biking Distance to a Park[2]	68.80	71.81	74.16

Source: City of South El Monte; Southern California Public Health Alliance

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Percentage of the population living within one-quarter mile of a park, beach, or open space greater than 1 acre, including Whittier Narrows Recreational Area

2 Percentage of the population living within a half-mile of a park, beach, or open space greater than 1 acre, including Whittier Narrows Recreational Area

How

The City is working to provide parks and recreation facilities to serve its growing population. Recognizing that there is limited available vacant land for new parks, the City has focused its efforts toward enhancing existing parks, as well as maintaining and creating new joint-use agreements with local schools to maximize the amount of publicly accessible open space. Two areas identified as priority zones for receiving improved access to parks are the area north of California State Route 60 near Santa Anita Avenue and the area near San Gabriel River.[8,9]

In addition, the City will continue to provide safe and convenient access routes to vital regional recreation resources, including Whittier Narrows Regional Park, Whittier Narrows Nature Center, and Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, as well as provide South El Monte residents with sustained access to programmed recreational facilities like the South El Monte Community Center.

Public Transportation

What

Being able to get from home to work, a grocery store, or a laundry service is essential for day-to-day life. Without access to a car, active transportation and public transportation are the only options. This makes active transportation and public transportation major equity issues.

Where

Metro provides public transportation service for all of Los Angeles County, including South El Monte. Five bus routes run through South El Monte. Routes run east/west on Rush Street and Garvey Avenue, and north/south on Rosemead Boulevard, Santa Anita Avenue/Tyler Avenue, and Peck Road/Durfee

8 City of South El Monte. 2000. *Resources Element. https://www.cityofsouthelmonte.org/DocumentCenter/View/155/Resources-Element-PDF.*

9 County of Los Angeles. 2016. *Parks Needs Assessment. City of South El Monte/ Uninc. El Monte - Whittier Narrows Study Area Profile. https://lacountyparkneeds.org/FinalReportAppendixA/StudyArea_078.pdf.*

Avenue. The nearest major transit stop with buses arriving every 15 minutes is north of South El Monte at the intersection of Garvey Avenue and Santa Anita Avenue in El Monte.

Who

As shown in **Table PHS-3**, residents of South El Monte have slightly lower access to cars than Los Angeles County and the State as a whole. This is balanced by South El Monte being well-served by a number of bus stops near residential areas. All households in South El Monte are within biking distance of a bus stop, and 77% of households within walking distance of bus stops. Compared to the State, South El Monte is slightly above-average for bikeablity to transit; however, South El Monte lags far behind Los Angeles County in this statistic due to the limited number of nearby transit stops that are considered "major transit stops" where buses arrive every 15 minutes during rush hour, proving more regular and reliable service for commuters.

Table PHS-3. Public Transportation Access

Distance per Mode of Transportation	Percent of Households		
	South El Monte	**Los Angeles County**	**California**
Access to a Car[1]	90.70	90.47	92.56
Biking Distance to a Major Transit Stop[2]	37.8	53.16	35.35
Walking Distance to Nearest Bus Stop[3]	77.58	—	—
Biking Distance to Nearest Bus Stop[4]	100	—	—

Source: Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Percent of households with access to a car

2 Percent of households within a half-mile of a transit stop that has 15-minute headways

3 Percent of households within one-quarter mile of any bus stop

4 Percent of households within a half-mile of any bus stop

How

The City recognizes public transportation as a vital resource for travel without use of a private car, and strives to improve the safety and efficiency of pickup and drop-off locations, provide a range of schedules to best suit all residents, and provide routes that serve the destinations people need to go. The City also encourages use of public transportation through establishing bus stops that serve activity and employment centers in the City in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Foothill Transit Agency.

The City will continue to provide reservation-based transportation services to residents age 60 and over and residents with a disability through the Community Services Department. This program runs Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and can transport users anywhere within City limits and up to 15 miles outside South El Monte. Investing in these diverse transit systems and

infrastructure helps address local circulation by providing a greater degree of choice and opportunity for less-mobile populations.[10]

Libraries and Community Centers

What

Libraries and community centers provide important community amenities, which improve quality of life. Amenities such as community events, Wi-Fi, educational opportunities, air conditioning, technology, and recreation, are offered in these public spaces.

Where

There are two community facilities in South El Monte: the South El Monte Library and the South El Monte Community Center. These two facilities are located next to each other along Central Avenue near Shiveley Park.

Who

The two community facilities are strategically located in the center of South El Monte and next to each other to provide a "one-stop-shop" of community recreation, education, socialization, and services. They are located within the vicinity of City Hall and Dean L. Shiveley Middle School. The downside to locating both the library and community center centrally is that less than half of people living in South El Monte live within biking distance to the facilities, and people living on the edges of South El Monte, such as near Garvey Avenue, may have difficulty getting to these resources (see **Table PHS-4**). Bus Route 269 alleviates this pressure by providing a nearby bus stop, although the route may require one or two bus transfers for residents living in northeastern South El Monte.

Table PHS-4. Community Facility Access

Distance per Mode of Transportation	Percent of Households
	South El Monte
Walking Distance to Community Facility	12.29%
Biking Distance to Community Facility	36.67%

Source: City of South El Monte

How

The City makes regular improvements and maintenance to public facilities to ensure their continued value to the community.

10 City of South El Monte. 2021. "Transportation Services." https://www.cityofsouthelmonte.org/278/Transportation-Services.

Safe Walking and Biking

What

Walking and biking around a community offers an affordable and healthy way to get around. Walking and biking as a replacement for car trips can also reduce air pollution, traffic, and wear and tear on local roads. Providing safe corridors to walk and bike are important in a healthy community, especially if community members walk or bike as part of their regular commute to school or work.

Where

One way to measure how unsafe an area is for walking and biking is through collision data. From 2014 to 2018, two major intersections in South El Monte have been the most common collision locations for people walking and on bikes: the Garvey Avenue and Rosemead Boulevard intersection, and the Durfee Avenue and Rush Street intersection.[11] Each of these are major intersections has high levels of traffic, surrounding commercial activity, and higher-speed cars.

Garvey Avenue and Rosemead Boulevard are two of the larger roads in South El Monte, each having multiple lanes. The crosswalks that span Rosemead are 125 feet long. This is quite long and could cause issues for people with less mobility. The Garvey Avenue crosswalks are also long, spanning 100 feet. Each of these crossings have pedestrian crossing buttons. There are no bike facilities or pathways at this intersection or on these two roads. In addition, bus stops are positioned next to this intersection, making it a necessary location for people taking transit.

On Durfee Avenue and Rush Street there are wide sidewalks that surround the commercial areas. The crosswalks that cross Durfee Avenue are about 90 feet long, which is long but not quite as long as Rosemead Boulevard or Garvey Avenue. Each crossing at this intersection is equipped with pedestrian crossing buttons. Pedestrian crosswalks span three of the sides of the intersection. Durfee Avenue has a Class 2 bike lane but Rush Street does not have any bike facilities.

Although these two intersections have been shown to be problem areas based on collision data, this only tells part of the story. Certain intersections may be just as dangerous but not have collision data because people avoid them. This is why it is important to have input from residents.

Generally, the portions of South El Monte where land uses are more mixed have better walkability because there are more commercial uses and it is easier to access daily errands by bike or foot. Areas that are more mixed include neighborhoods next to Monte Vista Elementary and Dean L. Shiveley Middle School.

Who

Walking and biking can feel or be more unsafe for certain individuals than others. Older adults and people with physical disabilities may be less able to cross an intersection during the time allotted by a stop light. People who are less-frequent bikers may be less comfortable navigating more-trafficked areas of town. However, people who regularly bike or walk for work or other regular errands are most at risk because they are on the street the most. The City has moderate rates of walkers

11 University of California Berkeley. 2021. ATP. TIMS. https://tims.berkeley.edu/tools/atp/.

and bikers getting hit by cars compared to the State, but fewer than Los Angeles County. This is especially notable because South El Monte has a high number of active commuters relative to both Los Angeles County and the State. Because there are a higher number of active commuters and a lower number of pedestrian injuries than Los Angeles County, South El Monte should be considered a safe place to walk and bike (see **Table PHS-5**).

Table PHS-5. Pedestrian Safety

Walkers/Commuters	Percent of Households		
	South El Monte	Los Angeles County	California
Pedestrian Injuries[1]	6.58	7.96	6.03
Active Commuters[2]	13.64	10.93	8.94

Source: Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Annual average rate of severe and fatal pedestrian injuries per 100,000 population

2 Percentage of workers 16 years and older who commute to work by transit, walking, or cycling

How

The City strives to accommodate alternative modes of transit and create better city-wide multimodal accessibility through a series of long-range goals within its Circulation Element. These goals prioritize infrastructural planning for consistent bicycle/walking paths connected to major destinations, such as Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, supporting the California Department of Transportation's efforts to increase carpooling and vanpooling and to provide on-street bike lanes. Encouragement of these alternate modes of transportation reduces strain on the existing roadway system and introduces more opportunity for safe choice in how residents get around.[12]

Safe and Sanitary Homes

What

Low-income residents are more likely to live in structures built before building standards regulating lead paint, asbestos, and other hazards were adopted. Living in these older homes, without removal of such toxins, can have significant health impacts. Many low-income communities have a higher proportion of old housing stock and are thus disproportionately exposed to these health threats. Older housing stock might also have poor ventilation, leading to uncomfortable indoor temperatures and excessive moisture, which can lead to mold. Other indoor housing conditions that can be common in older and less-expensive housing include pests and vermin. Finally, overcrowding, which often is a result of a lack of affordable housing, is a serious issue that impacts homes. According to the World Health Organization, overcrowding poses health risks by creating unsanitary

12 City of South El Monte 2021.

conditions that can contribute to the spread of disease.[13] High costs of housing can contribute to or perpetuate overcrowding and poor living conditions.

Where

Households in eastern South El Monte are more likely to experience housing burden (see **Figure PHS-8**).[14] This means that low-income households spend more than 50% of their income on housing. This makes it less likely that they can afford to make improvements to homes they own or move from rental properties that are unsanitary. In an effort to avoid increases in rent, these renters also may be less likely to bring up needed repairs to the property owners.

Who

South El Monte has few homeowners, severe homeowner cost burden, and overcrowding (see **Table PHS-6**). Overcrowding and homeownership rates are both about 10% worse in the City than in Los Angeles County, which is also in the lowest health indicator quartile for overcrowding and homeownership. Cost burden for homeowners in South El Monte is on par with Los Angeles County and within the lowest quartile for health indicators. Cost burden for renters is significantly less in the City than in Los Angeles County, and is above the 50th percentile in the State; however, a number of factors like overcrowding and quality of housing may be improving this metric without improving on-the-ground conditions.

Table PHS-6. Housing Indicators

Housing Indicator	Percent of Households		
	South El Monte	Los Angeles County	California
Homeowners[1]	37.08	47.36	54.96
Severe Homeowner Cost Burden[2]	15.37	16.82	13.14
Severe Renter Cost Burden[3]	21.85	29.14	26.33
Overcrowding[4]	23.56	13.59	9.45

Source: Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Percent homeowners

2 Percent of low-income homeowners who pay more than 50% of their income on housing costs

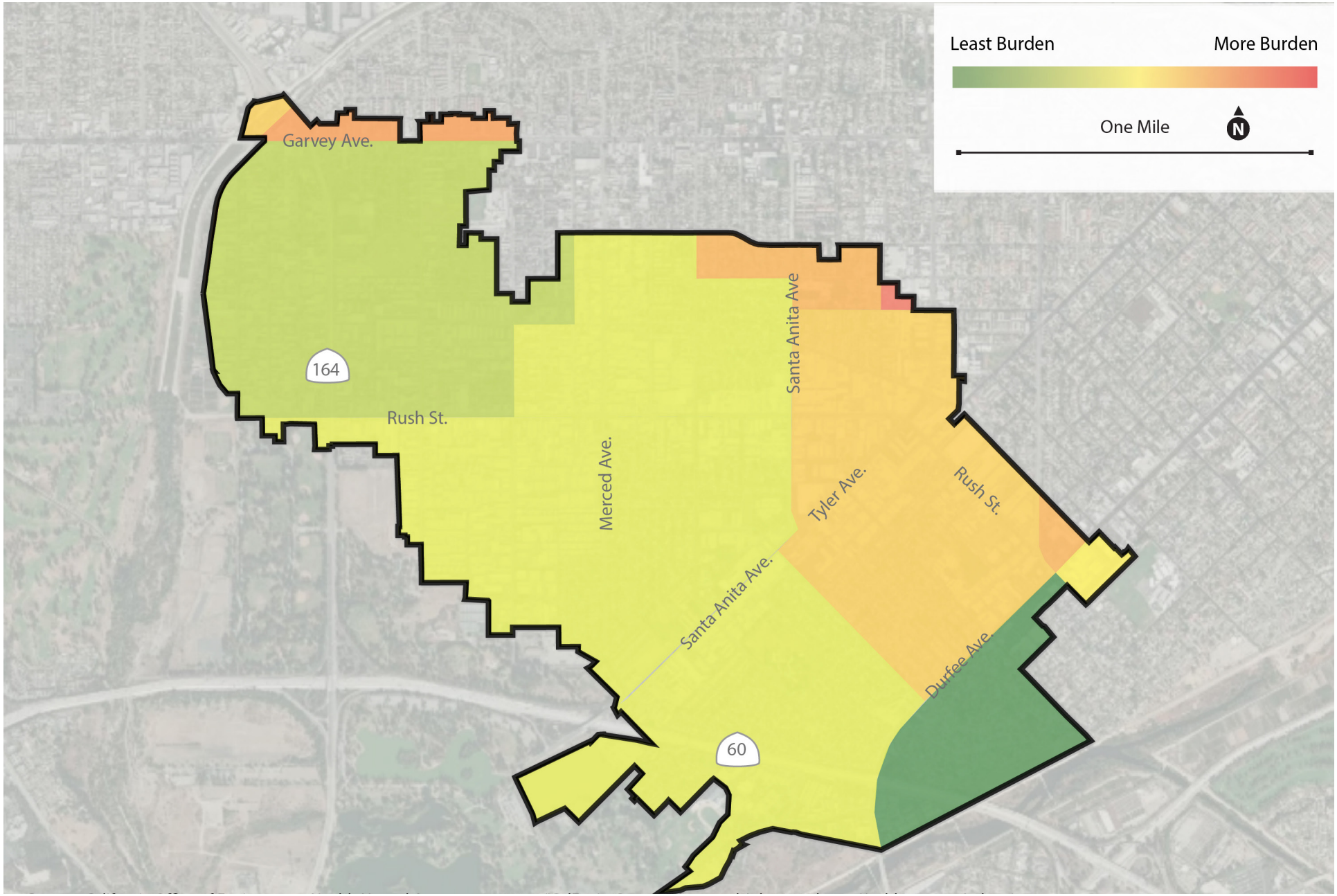
3 Percent of low-income renters who pay more than 50% of their income on housing costs

4 Percent of households with more than 1 occupant per room

13 WHO (World Health Organization). 2021. "What are the Health Risks Related to Overcrowding?" https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/emergencies/qa/emergencies_qa9/en/#:~:text=For%20communities%2C%20inadequate%20shelter%20and,the%20population%20density%20is%20high.

14 OEHHA (California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment). 2018. CalEnviroScreen 3.0 "Housing Burden." Accessed January 2021. https://oehha.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=aade7e52ae014d8cb7682bb57466eacb.

Figure PHS-8 Housing Burden



Source: California Office of Environment Health Hazard Assessment. 2020. "CalEnviroScreen." Accessed July 2021. https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen.

How

The City implements many regulations, policies, and programs to improve various housing conditions. For example, the City can provide incentives for homeowners and property owners to improve housing conditions, alter what housing is allowed to be built, or determine what housing conditions are able to persist. Although not all housing programs and policies are directly related to improving safe and sanitary housing, many have the secondary impact of doing so. For example, policies that allow for more affordable housing to be built can allow for residents to move away from overcrowded situations, which can improve the health of the housing situations for multiple people.

The City's Housing Element covers in detail the context of safe and sanitary homes in South El Monte, including goals, policies, and actions to improve conditions.

Pollution Exposure

People are exposed every day to pollution from air, food, water, and soil, often from living near industrial land uses that produce hazardous waste, such as car repair shops, gas stations, dry cleaners, manufacturing factories, and recycling centers. Chemicals from these businesses can get into the soil, water, and air and affect nearby residents. These land uses are often grouped together, and low-income residences are often in proximity to polluting businesses. Higher-income areas often do not face the same level of pollution exposure. This combination of limited financial resources and exposure to pollution is the basis for the environmental justice movement.

Air Pollution

What

The State of California measures 10 air pollutants. These pollutants are measured separately and compared to "healthy levels" determined by the State. Air is considered polluted when it does not meet the standard set by the State or Federal government. South El Monte is located within the South Coast Air Basin. Air basins were created by the State of California based on where air naturally stagnates. The South Coast Air Basin is a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills that extend across the entirety of Los Angeles and Orange Counties, as well as the western portions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. The Pacific Ocean forms the southwestern border and high mountains surround the rest of the air basin. Currently the South Coast Air Basin is not in attainment for ozone or particulate matter ($PM_{2.5)}$ standards.[15]

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is the air pollution control agency that provides direction regarding the management of air quality within the region. The SCAQMD is responsible for controlling air pollution mainly from stationary sources, such as large power plants, refineries, gas stations, and some consumer products. The SCAQMD also monitors air quality. The two air pollution monitoring sites closest to South El Monte are Pico Rivera and Closet World (Quemetco). The Pico Rivera site is 2 miles from South El Monte and is located south of Whittier

15 SCAQMD (South Coast Air Quality Management District). 2016. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) Attainment Status for the South Coast Air Basin. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/naaqs-caaqs-feb2016.pdf.

Narrows Recreation Area and east of Interstate 605. The Closet World site is also about 2 miles from South El Monte and is located near the railroad. These monitoring sites can provide a general understanding of air quality, but air pollution varies locally and reduces as it moves away from the source. Air pollution is likely worse in communities closer to the highly trafficked roadways of Interstate 10 and Interstate 605, as well as Garvey Avenue and Rosemead Avenue.

Ozone

Ground-level ozone is most commonly known as smog. Smog is caused by a chemical reaction when sunlight interacts with nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic chemicals (VOCs), both of which are common emissions from cars. As regional temperatures increase due to climate change, it is anticipated that the amount of ground-level ozone will also increase if the amount of car traffic and other sources of NOx and VOCs do not decrease. At the Pico Rivera station, ozone exceeded the 8-hour Federal standard 21 times in the past 3 years measured (2017–2019). Over this same time span, the site exceeded the California 1-hour ozone standard 15 times but did not exceed the Federal 1-hour standard. [16] The Closet World station did not have available data through the California Air Resources Board.

Some main contributors to the pollutants that form ground-level ozone in South El Monte are vehicle emissions and industrial processes. Ground-level ozone can cause health issues, including difficulty breathing, coughing, inflamed airways, asthma attacks, and heart disease.

16 CARB (California Air Resources Board). 2019. Air Quality Data Statistics. Retrieved April 9, 2021. https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam.

Particulate Matter

Particulate matter is made of microscopic solid and liquids in the air that are small enough to breathe. $PM_{2.5}$ is 2.5 microns or less in diameter, or 1/28th the thickness of human hair. $PM_{2.5}$ results from burning fuel for cars, trucks, and industrial processes. PM2.5 is small enough to get into the human bloodstream and can pose a high risk to human health. Similar to ozone, particulate matter causes asthma and heart disease.[17] From 2017 through 2019, PM2.5 exceeded 24-hour Federal standards four times at the Pico Rivera station.[18]

Where

Local air pollution is often higher in communities with low tree cover, limited park access, and high levels of traffic.[19] As shown in **Figure PHS-9**, many communities in South El Monte have elevated air pollution.

Who

People with existing health conditions, such as asthma and heart disease, are more sensitive to air pollution. These health conditions are also caused by exposure to air pollution. This means that living in **fenceline communities** causes cycles of health concerns. The average rate of asthma and heart-related hospitalizations for South El Monte is below the 50th percentile in the State, and is slightly worse than rates found across Los Angeles County.

Additionally, people who spend more time outdoors, including young children, people who work outdoors, and people who get to work without a car, are often exposed to polluted air at higher rates. These highly exposed populations are all more common in South El Monte than the rest of Los Angeles County and the 50th percentile of the State. Active commuters and outdoor workers are found at especially high rates for the region in South El Monte (see **Table PHS-7**).

FENCELINE COMMUNITIES

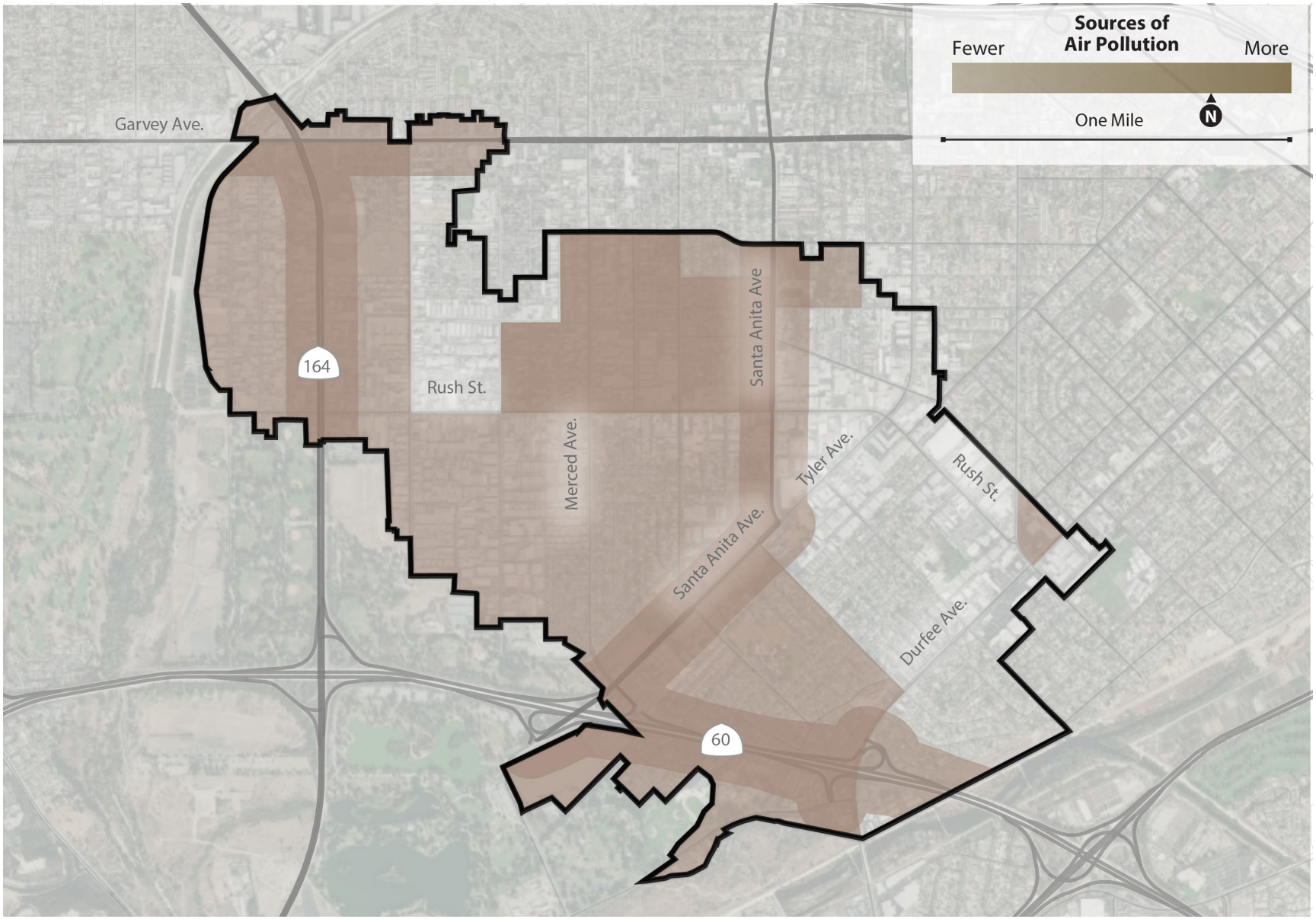
Fenceline communities are neighborhoods near sources of industrial pollution, such as ports, refineries, and major transportation routes.

17 Pope, C.A., 3rd, R.T. Burnett, M.J. Thun, E.E. Calle, D. Krewski, K. Ito, and G.D. Thurston. 2002. "Lung Cancer, Cardiopulmonary Mortality, and Long-Term Exposure to Fine Particulate Air Pollution." *JAMA 287: 1132*–1141.

18 CARB 2019.

19 Frumkin, H., L.D. Frank, and R.J. Jackson. 2004. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities. Washington, DC: Island Press.*

Figure PHS-9 Air Pollution



Source: Source: California Office of Environment Health Hazard Assessment, (2020). CalEnviroScreen. Retrieved July 09, 2020, from https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen. PHASC (Public Health Alliance of Southern California) and VCUCSH (Virginia Commonwealth University Center on Society and Health). "HPI Map." California Healthy Places Index. 2019. Accessed August 14, 2019. https://healthy-placesindex.org/map/.

Table PHS-7. Populations Vulnerable to Air Pollution

Population	Percent of Population		
	South El Monte	Los Angeles County	California
Children Under Five[1]	6.93	6.38	6.51
Outdoor Workers[2]	9.28	5.44	6.93
Active Commuters[3]	13.64	10.93	8.94
Asthma[4]	53.78	52.21	51.95
Cardiovascular Disease[5]	8.68	8.43	8.4

Source: Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.
Note: Higher populations are shown as worse in Table 4-7 specifically for vulnerability to air pollution, but these are not necessarily an overall "bad" trait for a community to have.

Legend: Quartile 1 = Good, Quartile 2 = Moderate, Quartile 3 = Poor, Quartile 4 = Challenged

1 Percent of population younger than 5 years old

2 Percent of people 16 and older who work outdoors

3 Percent of population who commute by walking, biking, or taking public transit

4 Asthma emergency department visits per 10,000 people

5 Heart attack emergency department visits per 10,000 people

How

The SCAQMD develops and adopts an Air Quality Management Plan every 3 years in compliance with Federal and State clean air standards. Primarily, Air Quality Management Plans provide municipalities with policy and program options to improve local and regional air quality. The City's General Plan Resources Element includes policies and programs to reduce vehicle miles traveled by more efficiently locating land uses.

When

South El Monte's levels of air pollution will increase as a result of climate change contributing to higher-than-average temperatures and longer warm seasons. Longer warm seasons can also contribute to longer pollen seasons, which can increase allergies and asthma episodes.[20] Higher temperatures associated with climate change can also lead to elevated ozone levels by causing a higher rate of chemical reactions in the air. This will likely have the greatest impact in the summer months when temperatures are highest. However, the future level of air pollution will also depend on State laws mandating standards such as fuel efficiency and potential electrification of cars and trucks. Regardless, the current air quality in Los Angeles County receives an "F" from the American Lung Association for high ozone days and particle pollution.[21]

20 Hall, A., N. Berg, and K. Reich. 2018. *Los Angeles Summary Report. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. University of California, Los Angeles. Publication number: SUM-CCCA4-2018-007.*

21 American Lung Association. 2020. *California State of the Air.* Accessed August 6, 2020. http://www.stateoftheair.org/city-rankings/states/california/.

Hazardous Materials

What

Hazardous materials are substances that can cause death, serious illness, or hazard to human health or the environment when they are not properly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of. Nearly all households and business have some amount of hazardous waste because many household substances are considered hazardous, including gasoline, refrigerants, paint, and some gardening supplies. Additionally, certain businesses, such as gas stations, car repair shops, and dry cleaners, generate greater amounts of hazardous waste. Hospitals, clinics, and laboratories generate medical waste, which can also be hazardous. Hazardous wastes are hazardous materials that no longer have practical use but have not yet been properly disposed of.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is a Federal law that regulates hazardous waste to protect human health, conserve resources, and reduce or eliminate hazardous waste generation. The RCRA regulates hazardous waste from **cradle-to-grave.** Large-quantity generators (LQGs) are regulated through the RCRA because they generate more than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month or 1 kilogram of acutely hazardous waste per month. LQGs must comply with certain State-specified requirements regarding recordkeeping, reporting, labeling, exporting, and containers.[22] Small-quantity generators generate more than 100 kilograms but less than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste and are also regulated through the RCRA. Transporters of RCRA-regulated waste are also regulated on their labeling, container standards, and recordkeeping. Lastly, treatment, storage, and disposal facilities (TSDs) must comply with recordkeeping, reporting, permitting, and other technical standards.[23]

CRADLE-TO-GRAVE

A management approach that regulates generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal.

Where

Hazardous materials and waste can be found anywhere as a result of improper disposal or storage, but sites with large concentrations of hazardous materials are catalogued by EnviroStor. EnviroStor is a

22 California Department of Toxic Substances. n.d. "Generators." Accessed March 17, 2021. https://dtsc.ca.gov/generators/.

23 EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). 2020a. Resource Conservation and Recovery ACT (RCRA) and Federal Facilities. December 8, 2020. Accessed March 17, 2021. https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/resource-conservation-and-recovery-act-rcra-and-federal-facilities.

data management program operated by the Department of Toxic Substances Control that is used to monitor, investigate, permit, and cleanup sites with known contaminants.

South El Monte contains 15 EnviroStor sites with hazardous materials that require cleanup. A majority of these sites line the major roadways of Rush Street and Tyler Avenue. Active hazardous waste cleanup sites can be seen in **Figure PHS-10**.

In addition to cleanup sites, the City contains active small-quantity generators, LQGs, TSDs, and transporters. Twenty LQGs are found across South El Monte, with a majority of them located in the more industrial portions of western South El Monte. Sixteen transporters are in South El Monte, with clusters occurring on Chico Avenue and near the intersection of Rush Street and Tyler Avenue. Sixteen TSDs are also found in South El Monte with no clear spatial concentrations.[24]

Who

Although it is not good for anyone to be exposed to hazardous waste near their place of residence, people more vulnerable to toxic chemicals include infants and children. Infants and children have a greater pound-for-pound exposure, and less ability to detoxify and excrete these chemical toxins. Additionally, older adults and those with pre-existing conditions might be more vulnerable to toxic chemicals due to compromised immune systems.[25] Of the population in South El Monte, 6.93% are children younger than 5, which is slightly more than the State and Los Angeles County averages. The older population in South El Monte is 2% less than Los Angeles County and 3% less than the State, at only 9.73%.[26]

How

The State and Federal government provide regulations regarding hazourdous waste storage and transportation. In addition, the City's Municipal Code language states, "any person who intentionally or negligently causes the deposit of dangerous or hazardous materials on any city property including street or sidewalk, shall be liable for the payment of all costs incurred by the city necessary to clean up such materials" (Chapter 8.32, Hazardous Materials, Section 8.32.010, Depositing Dangerous Materials – Cleanup or Abatement – Liability). South El Monte is part of a group of cities that have Too Toxic to Trash events every month put on by the County of Los Angeles.

Extreme Heat

What

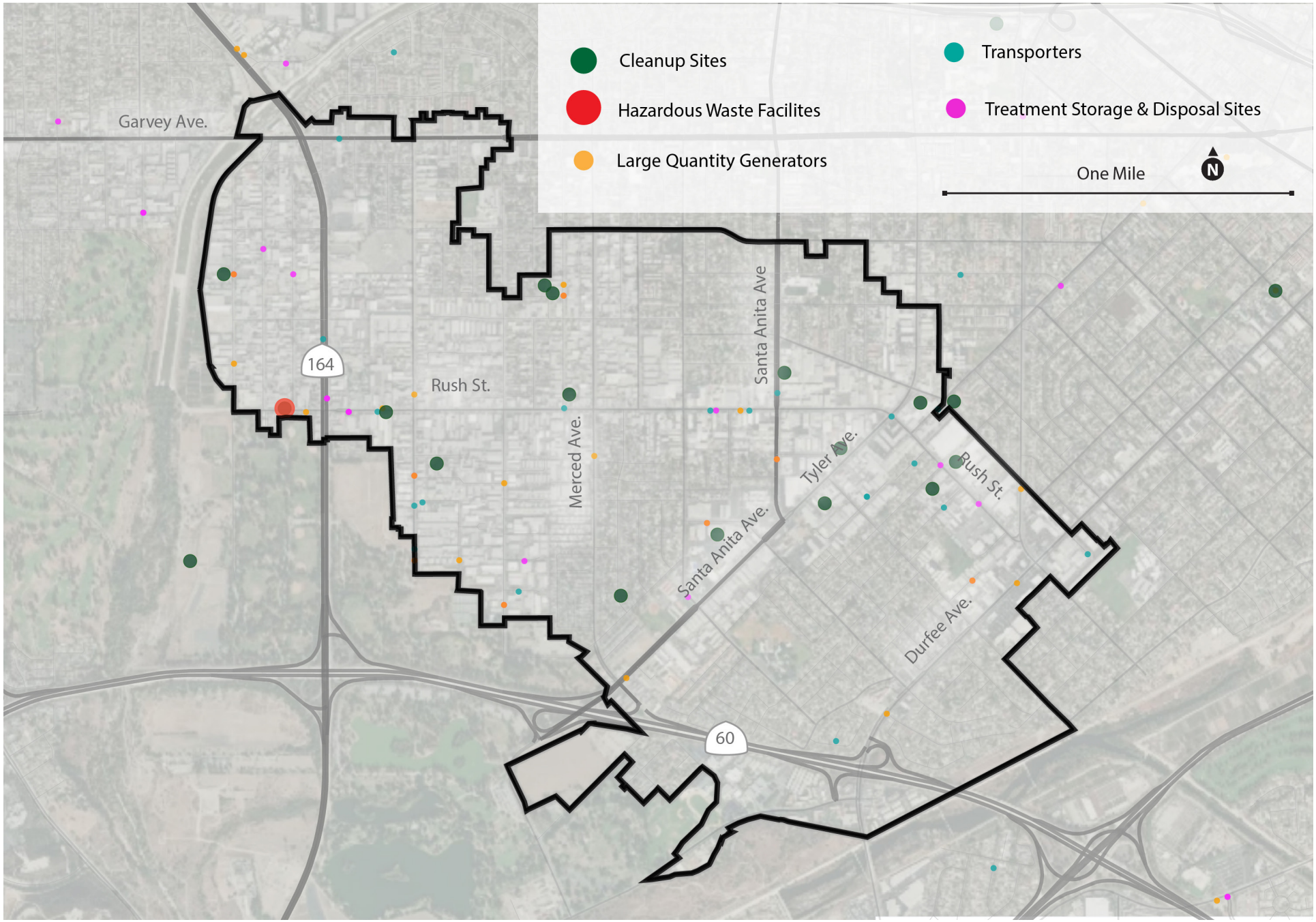
Extreme heat is defined as hot days, warm nights, or heat waves that can result in a heat-related illness and/or hospitalization. Extreme heat is measured differently depending on the location because communities become acclimatized to their historical environment. An extreme heat day

24 EPA. 2021. Geospatial Data Download. March 2021. https://www.epa.gov/frs/geospatial-data-download-service.

25 EPA. 2020b. "Exposure Assessment Tools by Lifestages and Populations - Highly Exposed or Other Susceptible Population Groups." Accessed August 19, 2020. https://www.epa.gov/expobox/exposure-assessment-tools-lifestages-and-populations-highly-exposed-or-other-susceptible.

26 Public Health Alliance. 2020. "The California Healthy Places Index." https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/.

Figure PHS-10 Hazardous Waste Cleanup Sites



Source: Source: California Office of Environment Health Hazard Assessment, (2020). CalEnviroScreen. Retrieved July 09, 2020, from https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen. placesindex.org/map/.

is one that is in the hottest 2% of days observed from 1960 through 1990. In South El Monte, an extreme heat event is a day hotter than 101°F.[27]

When

Extreme heat typically occurs within South El Monte during the summer and early fall. Climate change is expected to increase the average temperature year-round, including the frequency of extreme heat days. Historically, South El Monte has had 4 extreme heat days per year; it is projected to experience 15 extreme heat days per year by 2050. Historically, the longest heat wave in a year lasts 2.7 days on average, but they are projected to increase to 4.2 days between 2020 and 2050.[28]

Where

Heat waves and extreme heat days are exacerbated by the urban heat island effect. The urban heat island effect occurs when dark urban surfaces, such as roofs and roads, absorb heat and slowly release the heat over time. At night these surfaces slowly transfer heat to the air, creating warm nights, which do not allow people to cool off, making heat waves more dangerous.

The urban heat island effect inflates average annual urban air temperatures 1.8°F–5.4°F warmer than other areas. Heat islands also increase energy demand for air conditioning. The urban heat island effect is visualized in **Figure PHS-11**.

Due to the roles of dark urban surfaces and tree cover, the ambient temperature and experience of heat can change in a city block, making it difficult to accurately map communities in South El Monte that experience greater exposure to the urban heat island effect. In general, residential areas with larger lots, yard areas, and trees tend to be cooler than commercial areas with less shade and greenspace.

Who

Similarly to air pollution, people can be adversely affected by extreme heat if they have existing health conditions or spend increased time spent outdoors working, commuting, or playing. People who depend on walking, biking, or transit to get around; older adults; and young children are at risk for heat stroke. Specifically, residents in South El Monte are less likely to own a car and are more likely to walk, bike, or take public transportation to work than the average Los Angeles County resident. This means they often cannot avoid times outdoors during heat waves when doing important daily errands. In Los Angeles County as of 2009, approximately 66% of households had air conditioning.[29] Additionally, even if residents do have air conditioning available, they may not be able to afford to increase air conditioning usage during heat waves.

27 Cal-Adapt. 2021a. "Extreme Heat Days & Warm Nights." Accessed April 11, 2021. https://cal-adapt.org/tools/extreme-heat/.

28 Cal-Adapt 2021a.

29 California Energy Commission. 2009. Residential Appliance Saturation Survey. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/surveys/2019-residental-appliance-saturation-study/2009-and-2003-residential-appliance.

PHS-11 Urban Heat Island Effect

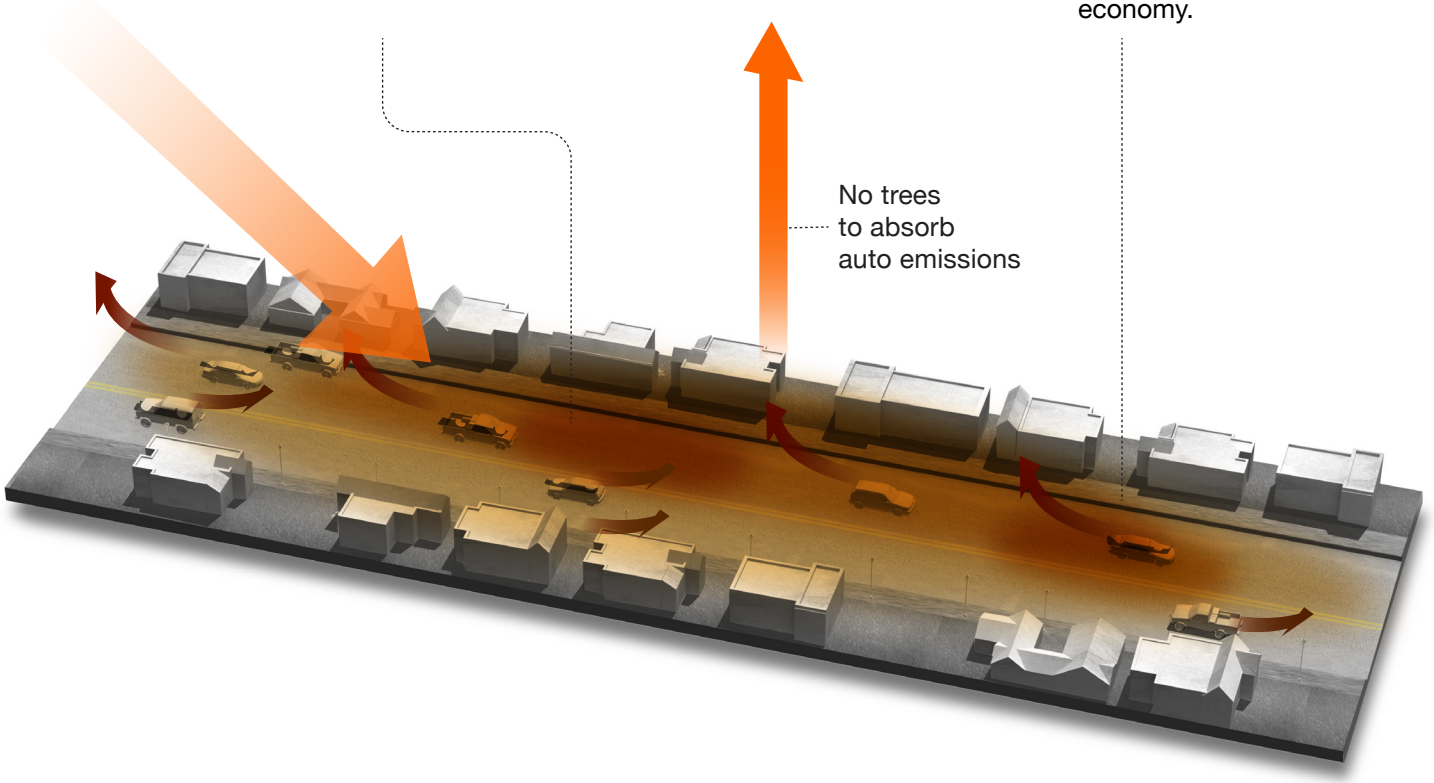
No Greenery

1 Solar energy is emitted by the sun.

2 Heat is absorbed and retained by dark, urban surfaces.

3 Heat is slowly emitted throughout the day and evening, increasing temperatures.

4 Increased temperatures discourage pedestrian traffic, negatively impacting local economy.



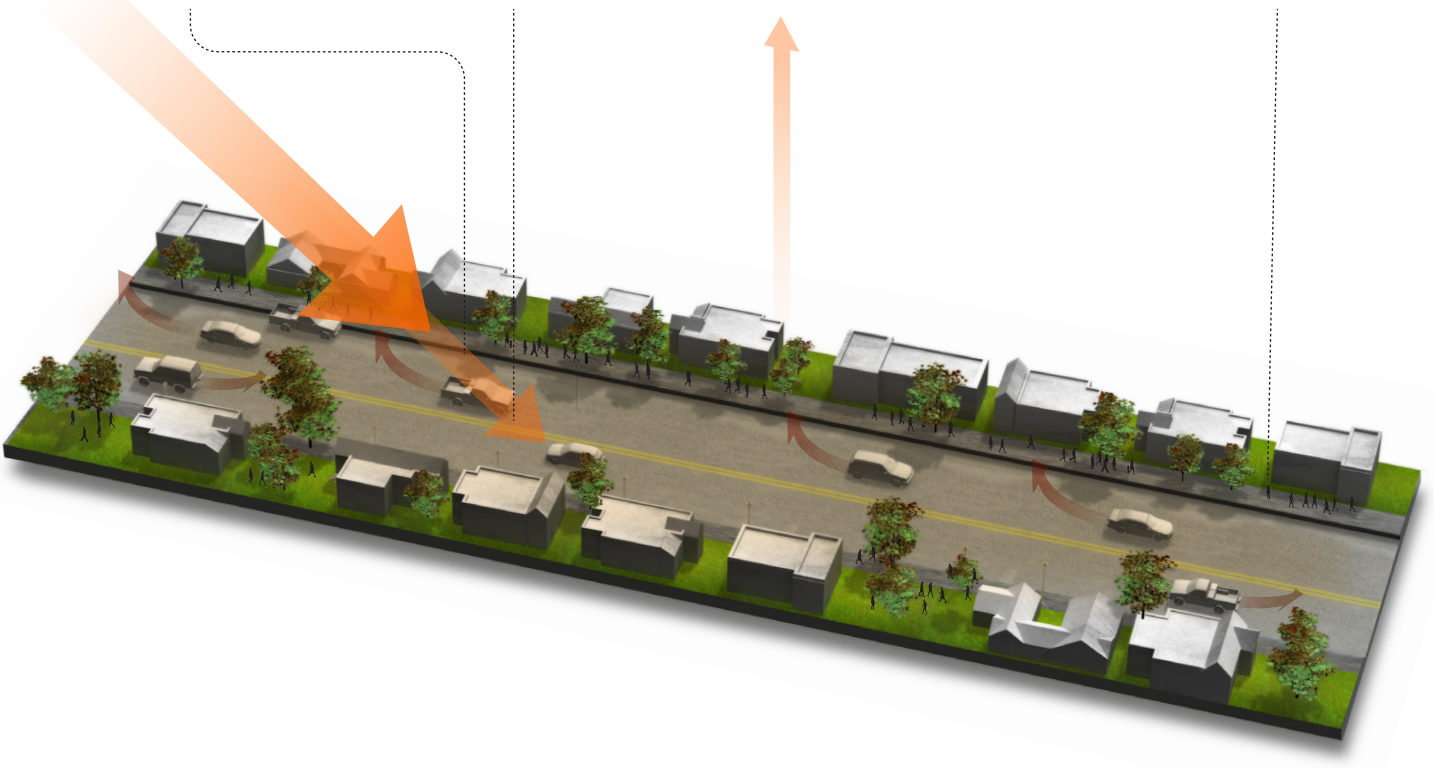
With Greenery

1 Solar energy emitted by the sun partially absorbed by trees.

2 Light surfaces absorb, retain less heat.

3 Auto emissions partially absorbed by trees.

4 Cleaner air, cooler weather creates a pedestrian-friendly environment positively impacting local businesses.



How

South El Monte uses its Senior Center and Library as cooling centers during extreme heat events. Cooling centers are free spaces where people can go to access air conditioning.

Emergency Events

Emergency events are natural hazards that happen suddenly and often cause evacuation or shelter-in-place orders. Emergency hazards are variable, but hazard zones have been developed to show where hazards are likely to occur in the future by studying historical events, landcover, climate, and topography. For the region, wildfires are expected to increase in size and frequency, and flooding events are forecasted to increase in intensity between 2020 and 2050.[30] This may mean that hazards will spread beyond their previous zones, and that large events that only occurred once in the 20th century may occur multiple times before 2050.[31]

Flooding and Extreme Storms

What

Flooding is caused by rainfall filling soil, rivers, and urban drainage basins to the point of overflow. More intense flooding can happen when rainfall occurs over a shorter period of time, even if there is less overall rain, because the soil does not have enough time to absorb the rainfall. Flooding most often occurs in low-lying areas near creeks and other waterways; this area adjacent to a river or stream is called the floodplain. Generally, the floodplain most often refers to the area that would be inundated by a 100-year flood, or a flood that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. The 500-year floodplain is the area that has a 0.2% chance of being flooded in any year. These estimates are based on historical observations, but flood events are projected to happen more frequently as climate change causes more intense rainfall. Increased **urbanization** can also contribute to flooding if development covers natural areas with **impervious surfaces,** leading to heightened levels of runoff. South El Monte is already built out, which allows for future redevelopment to actually benefit the City's ability to handle intense rainfall through increased vegetation and stormwater infrastructure.

URBANIZATION

Urbanization is an increased density of people becoming concentrated in small areas, creating cities. These dense areas are called urban areas, and historically have large amounts of gray infrastructure.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Impervious surfaces, such as asphalt and concrete, hinder or completely prevent natural runoff of water and can cause water to pool in unwanted places.

30 Hall et al. 2018.

31 Hall et al. 2018.

When

South El Monte receives the most rain in the winter months, but climate change may extend the flood hazard season.[32] Climate change is also predicted to increase the number of annual extreme rain events, when large amounts of rain falls over a short period of time. In South El Monte, extreme rain events are when 1.31 inches of precipitation occurs in the span of 2 days. Historically, three extreme precipitation events occur on average every year in South El Monte. This average is expected to increase to four extreme precipitation events per year over the course of 2020–2050.[33] Extreme rain events often do not allow the rain to soak into the ground and can overwhelm stormwater infrastructure. With this increase in frequency of storms, the chance of a storm overwhelming the stormwater infrastructure and causing flooding in areas of South El Monte that had not flooded before is a possibility.

Where

Due to the human-made flood control systems in places surrounding the City, South El Monte does not have any areas considered a 100- or 500-year floodplain. The San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo, which run along the City limits to the south and west, are both channelized and buffered with trails and roads, which makes for low likelihood of overflowing and flooding any part of South El Monte. These two rivers converge on the Whittier Narrows Dam, a tall earthen dam that serves as a major flood control system for Los Angeles County, with a reservoir that can hold 67,060 acre-feet of water. It should be noted that the Whittier Narrows Dam was determined to be structurally unsafe in 2017, and its failure could cause flooding from Pico Rivera all the way to Long Beach.[34] However, this type of dam inundation is not expected to impact South El Monte residents or structures because it is upstream of the dam. Additionally, structural modifications are planned and have been approved for funding by Congress as of July 2020.[35]

Locally some intersections, primarily along Rush Street, flood regularly during heavy rain events. These inundation events occur as a result of local streets redirecting rainwater before it soaks into the ground, even though these areas are outside of a flood hazard area.

Who

People can be more vulnerable to flooding due to factors such as social isolation caused by language barriers or physical disabilities, thereby causing evacuation challenges during a flood event. Language barriers are especially present in South El Monte, with 22.6% of households (more than 1,000 households) having limited English proficiency (see **Table PHS-8**). The majority (68%) of

32 Hall et al. 2018.

33 Cal-Adapt. 2021b. "Extreme Precipitation." Accessed April 11, 2021. https://cal-adapt.org/tools/extreme-precipitation/.

34 Sahagún, L. 2017. "U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says Whittier Narrows Dam is Unsafe and Could Trigger Catastrophic Flooding." *Los Angeles Times. September 14, 2017. Accessed April 16, 2021. https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-whittier-narrows-dam-20170914-story.html*

35 Hydro Review Content Directors. 2020. "Corps Appropriations Bill Includes $384.9 Million for Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Project." July 13, 2020. Accessed April 16, 2021. https://www.hydroreview.com/dams-and-civil-structures/corps-appropriations-bill-includes-384-9-million-for-whittier-narrows-dam-safety-project/#gref.

these households speak Spanish, with the remainder speaking Asian and Pacific Island languages. People with physical difficulties in South El Monte are roughly on par with the State and region.

Table PHS-8. Populations with Difficulty Evacuating

Evacuation Barrier	Percent of Population		
	South El Monte	Los Angeles County	California
Language Barriers[1]	22.6	12.7	8.9
Mobility Difficulty[2]	6.4	5.7	5.8
Self-Care Difficulty[3]	2.8	2.9	2.6

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019. 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates: Disability Characteristics. Table S1810. U.S. Census Bureau. 2019. 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates: Limited English Speaking Households. Table S1602.

1 Percent of population not proficient in English

2 Percent of people having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs

3 Percent of people having difficulty bathing or dressing

Additionally, low-income renters often face increased challenges in recovering from flood events because they are less likely to have renter's insurance and often face higher levels of displacement and homelessness if their residence is damaged during a flood event. Nearly two-thirds of residents within South El Monte are renters, compared to about one-half of Los Angeles County residents (see Table PHS-6), making them more vulnerable to flooding.[36]

How

The City regularly clears storm drains and the curb and gutter system that lead to local lakes. These preventive measures can reduce urban flooding and water pollution.

Geologic Hazards

Geologic hazards are natural geologic processes with the ability to impact life, health, and property. Geologic and seismic hazards include landslides and slope instability, earthquakes, and liquefaction.

Landslides/Slope Instability

What

Landslides are a geological hazard caused by disturbances in the natural stability of a slope. Different types of landslides can have varying speeds and effects. Slower-moving landslides can cause gradual damage to structures and foundations. More rapid landslides, such as mudslides, can quickly destroy property and even threaten lives. This means that landslides must be planned for on multiple time scales.

36 Public Health Alliance 2020.

When

Landslides can be triggered by multiple factors, including drought, heavy rain, soil erosion, earthquakes, and/or human activities. The factors can be connected. For example, surface runoff may be intensified by paved roads and parking lots in urban areas due to the surface material's inability to naturally drain. This can cause a heavier load to be placed on potential landslide zones, amplifying the risk of a landslide event. Landslides are often unpredictable and pose a threat because of their capacity to occur without warning, which can quickly destroy structures and threaten lives.

Where

Historically, significant landslides have occurred in cities surrounding South El Monte, but there is no history of landslides in South El Monte itself.[37] No areas have been determined to be at high risk of landslides due to South El Monte's relatively flat nature.

Who

Those most vulnerable to landslides are people who have difficulty responding quickly to protect themselves. This may include members of the community who are socially isolated due to language barriers, or those unable to quickly respond to changing environments due to things like physical disabilities. In addition, those with difficulty paying for repairs, should they be necessary, are more vulnerable to landslides. Language barriers and low-income households are especially relevant for South El Monte.

How

As previously stated, landslides and slope instability are not expected in South El Monte. Proper engineering during project review phases continues to maintain this.

Earthquakes and Seismic Hazards

What

Earthquakes are sudden ground-shaking events caused by the release of pressure in the earth. This quick release of pressure poses a safety risk to people and structures due to the unpredictability of both magnitude and timing.

When

Earthquakes can occur with little to no warning. There are no U.S. Geological Survey–approved methods of predicting a major earthquake before the event occurs, and therefore earthquake events pose a major threat to structures and people. It is currently only possible to calculate the probability that a major earthquake event will occur in an area in a given number of years, making long-term earthquake forecasts unreliable and often incorrect. **Table PHS-9** presents the probabilities for

37 San Bernardino County. 2017. *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (San Bernardino County). July 13, 2017. Retrieved August 6, 2020. http://cms.sbcounty.gov/portals/58/Documents/Emergency_Services/Hazard-Mitigation-Plan.pdf.*

earthquakes of different magnitudes to occur from 2014–2044 in the Los Angeles region.

Table PHS-9. Regional Earthquake Magnitude Likelihood

Magnitude (greater than or equal to)	Average Repeat Time (years)	30-Year Likelihood of One or More Events
5	1.4	100%
6	10	96%
6.7	40	60%
7	61	46%
7.5	109	31%
8	532	7%

Source: USGS (U.S. Geological Survey). 2015. UCERF3: A New Earthquake Forecast for California's Complex Fault System. March 2015. https://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2015/3009/pdf/fs2015-3009.pdf.

Where

The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act of 1994 defines active faults and provides mapping resources to the public. Active faults are those that have ruptured in the last 11,000 years. Faults are identified by the U.S. Department of Conservation, and a zone (called an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone) is drawn around them to disallow certain development in order to prevent safety threats to occupants and the potential for repetitive structure loss. South El Monte does not contain any faults or fault zones within City limits.

The San Andreas Fault is a major fault that runs across much of California, and cuts through Los Angeles County approximately 30 miles east of South El Monte. This fault is capable of generating up to an 8.3 magnitude earthquake, which would cause significant ground shaking and have the potential for ground failures and structure damage.

In addition to the San Andreas Fault, there are hundreds of smaller faults in Los Angeles County. The closest active fault is the East Montebello Fault, which is about 1 mile east of City limits. Other nearby active faults include the Raymond Fault, approximately 5 miles to the north, and the Whittier Fault, approximately 3.5 miles south.

Who

Residents located in fault zones are at higher risk of their homes being damaged by earthquakes. There are no fault zones within City limits. Additionally, groups more vulnerable to earthquakes are those that have difficulty responding to the impacts of an earthquake. For example, lower-income homeowners, especially those who are housing burdened, may have difficulty paying for repairs. Homes and structures that were built before 1930 are most at risk of being damaged in a seismic

event because unreinforced masonry buildings were allowed until that year. Within South El Monte, 365 homes were built before 1939.[38]

Peak Load Water Requirements

The City is a part of the San Gabriel Valley Water Company (San Gabriel Water Company) service area. San Gabriel Water Company's most recent water demand statistics report 32,846 acre-feet per year (equivalent to 29.3 million gallons of use per day). Future water demands are expected to increase over time, increasing by nearly 50% and reaching 48,604 acre-feet per year (43.4 million gallons per day) by 2040. Water demand is typically evaluated using three primary scenarios: average day demand, maximum day demand, and peak-hour demand. San Gabriel Water Company's water use statistics found that the Water Companys water use rate during 2015 was 109 gallons per-capita per day, with a projected increase to 142 gallons per-capita per day by 2020.[39]

San Gabriel Water Company's existing water supply comes from a combination of groundwater pumped from the Main Basin and the Central Basin and recycled water. It is important to identify peak load water supply when discussing seismic risks because large seismic events have the potential to destroy or incapacitate the normal water supply. If a local earthquake occurs, local water piping would be at risk.

It is also important to mention trends surrounding water supply. Groundwater pumped from the Main Basin constitutes 90% of San Gabriel Water Company's total production, supplemented by 5% as groundwater pumped from the Central Basin and the final 5% from recycled water. Because climate change is projected to increase the frequency and severity of droughts, it is likely that water supplied by these sources will be reduced.

San Gabriel Water Company also has interconnections with other water agencies and sources that can serve as temporary emergency exchange opportunities in the event of a loss of water sources. These interconnections allow the water system to continue serving water during critical situations and local water supply shortages, which may follow earthquake events, fires, prolonged power outages, and droughts.

Liquefaction

What

Liquefaction is an event that can occur when soil is saturated with water and subject to a destabilizing force, such as an earthquake, resulting in the soil losing the ability to support its own weight. This event causes the soil to behave as a fluid, potentially destroying structures or infrastructure built upon it and threatening the safety of people in a liquefaction zone.

38 U.S. Census Bureau. 2019a. 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Year Structure Built. Table B25034.

39 San Gabriel Valley Water Company Los Angeles County Division. 2017. *2015 Urban Water Management Plan. https://www.sgvwater.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Volume-I-FINAL-AMENDED_2015-UWMP_SGVWC_LACD.pdf*.

When

Liquefaction generally occurs during significant earthquake activity, and has been a major cause of earthquake damage in Southern California in the past. The duration and magnitude of an earthquake are important factors in causing liquefaction; ground-shaking events continually build pressure in saturated soil, and if that pressure exceeds the bond between soil materials, it will collapse and behave as a liquid. Soils that are saturated and fine-grained, such as silt or sand, can be at risk of liquefaction due to the decreased amount of pressure required to destroy the bond in fine soil material.

Where

Liquefaction may damage structures on saturated, granular soils, such as silt or sand, during an earthquake. These geologic conditions are typical throughout South El Monte. Areas at risk of liquefaction due to soil composition and heightened exposure to runoff cover all of South El Monte.

Who

Older adults living alone and people with disabilities may be more prone to evacuation challenges during a liquefaction event. In South El Monte, populations with disabilities are relatively average compared to Los Angeles County and the State (refer to Table PHS-8). Approximately 3% of households in South El Monte are people older than 65 who live alone, which is on par with Los Angeles County and the State.[40]

How

State statutes require cities to use liquefaction zones as part of the construction permitting process.[41] South El Monte's Building Code adopted the Los Angeles County Building Code, which is consistent with the 2019 California Building Code. The City's Municipal Code also requires preliminary soil reports during the subdivision process. This allows the City and landowners to detect the presence of critically expansive soils or other problems that could lead to structural defects or environmental impacts. Further soil reports and geologic investigations can be required by the City Engineer or Building Official if conditions warrant.

Wildfires

What

Wildfires are most commonly caused by humans. Human-caused fires can result from electric transmission line malfunctions, campfires left unattended, the burning of debris, negligently discarded cigarettes, or intentional acts of arson.[42] Lightning can also naturally cause wildfires. Wildfires are known to spread more quickly on dry, windy days, and move more easily in an uphill

40 U.S. Census Bureau. 2019b. "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." ACS 5-Year Estimates. Table ID: DP02.

41 California Department of Conservation. 2019. "Seismic Hazards." https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/shp.

42 National Park Service. 2021. "Wildfire Causes and Evaluations." https://www.nps.gov/articles/wildfire-causes-and-evaluation.htm#:~:text=Nearly%2085%20percent*%20of%20wildland,and%20intentional%20acts%20of%20arson.&text=Lightning%20is%20one%20of%20the%20two%20natural%20causes%20of%20fires.

direction, particularly in areas with a higher density of dry vegetation. Wildfires are a natural and important part of the ecosystem, but can be destructive and deadly if they occur near more developed areas. Fires will become more intense and dangerous as a result of climate change.

When

Small fires should occur regularly in the Los Angeles region's natural chaparral landscape, but development into natural lands and years of fire suppression have created a dangerous buildup of fuel. Climate change is likely to intensify the fall fire season by extending the dry season further into the Santa Ana wind season, which drives most wildfires in the Los Angeles region.[43]

Where

South El Monte is built out and bordered by cities to the north and east. To the south and west is Whittier Narrows, which is a large open space that can pose a fire risk to South El Monte, but none of South El Monte is considered to be a very high fire hazard severity zone. Freeways and urbanized areas create natural fire breaks, and it is unlikely that wildfire would spread into South El Monte; however, air pollution is likely to become hazardous from fires in adjacent wildland areas. The nearest fire hazard severity zones can be found east of South El Monte, across Interstate 605, covering an area called Hacienda Hills between Hacienda Heights and Whittier. The Hacienda Hills area is approximately 1 mile from City limits and has had more than twenty 100-plus-acre fires in the last 100 years. Only two wildfires have actually crossed into City limits in the past 100 years, and only three have occurred within 1 mile of South El Monte (see **Figure PHS-12**). There are no wildfire fire hazard severity zones within South El Monte.

Who

Similar to flooding, certain members of the community may be more vulnerable to wildfires due to social isolation as a result of language barriers, or physical disabilities leading to difficulty evacuating (see Table PHS-8). An inability to quickly evacuate is also affected by access to a car, which, for South El Monte, is lower than State averages.

Low-income renters may face increased challenges recovering from fire events because they are less likely to have renter's insurance and therefore may face higher levels of displacement and homelessness if their residence is damaged. Although the rate is lower than the region, 21.85% of the renters in South El Monte spend more than half of their income on rent, meaning these community members might have more difficulty recovering from a wildfire than most.

How

To protect residents and their property from wildfire, the City uses multiple policies within its General Plan and regulations within its Municipal Code. These policies include development review within fire hazard areas, fire safety standards within the Municipal Code, public education about wildfires, and enforcement of standards related to emergency water service and fire sprinklers. Vegetation maintenance along roadways is another aspect that impacts fire mitigation, evacuation, and

43 Hall et al. 2018.

emergency response. Roadway clearance is under the jurisdiction of the road owner, which in most cases is the City of South El Monte, but also includes the California Department of Transportation for State highways, such as State Route 60.

The City has adopted the California Fire Code as amended by the County of Los Angeles, which regulates fuel modification and defensible space regulations. The nearest fire safe council is located in Pasadena and is called the Meadows Fire Safe Council. This fire safe council assists with home hardening, homeowner inspections, volunteer fire fuel reductions, and native plant giveaways. There are no Community Wildfire Protection Plans for South El Monte or for areas near City limits.

Emergency Preparation and Response

Emergency preparation and response are important components in ensuring residents are ready for hazards and first responders can adequately serve residents in the event of a hazard. The State of California Emergency Plan and the Los Angeles County Operation Area Emergency Operations Plan inform actions taken during an emergency.

Preparedness

The City is committed to preparing and educating the community on emergency preparedness. It has partnered with the American Red Cross and the City of El Monte to create the Prepare El Monte/South El Monte Coalition. This partnership includes representatives from various organizations, including school districts and public safety agencies. This coalition offers first aid and CPR trainings, fire and earthquake safety trainings, and up-to-date information on hazards and risks that impact the community. The City also runs a sandbag program that helps to prepare properties for floods by offering sandbags at Fire Station 90. Sand is provided by the City, and sandbags are provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. This program is promoted on the City's website.

Response

The Los Angeles County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Sherriff's Department respond to small- and large-scale hazard events in South El Monte. Currently, the City's response capacity meets the needs of the community; however, hard-to-reach populations with functional and medical needs can still face challenges evacuating. Regarding mutual aid and coordination, South El Monte is located within California Office of Emergency Services Mutual Aid Region I and the Office of Emergency Services Southern Administrative Region.[44] The City also promotes on its website how people can report and have fixed various issues that are caused by hazards. Downed trees and large debris can be reported to the Public Works Department. Downed wires are considered emergencies and are reported by calling 9-1-1.

Emergency Response Facilities

Emergency response facilities are those activated during an emergency and used to respond to the

44 California Office of Emergency Services. 2021. "Southern Region Operational Area Assignments." July 2021. https://www.caloes.ca.gov/RegionalOperationsSite/Documents/EMA_ESC_OA_Assignments_Southern.pdf.

hazard. The City contracts with the Los Angeles County Fire Department for fire protection and other fire-related services. In South El Monte, there is one fire station, Fire Station 90, centrally located at 10115 Rush Street, South El Monte, CA 91733. There is also the Greater El Monte Community Hospital near the center of South El Monte at 1701 Santa Anita Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733. Each of these sites would be in use during a hazard event.

Critical Facilities

Critical facilities include infrastructure important to the regular functioning and emergency response services for a community. These can include schools, airports, or other major community assets. These assets need to be protected from hazards to ensure people can evacuate, find shelter, and recover from hazards. South El Monte's critical facilities include the five schools within City limits. These facilities, as well as the emergency response facilities, are listed in **Table PHS-10.**

Table PHS-10. Emergency Response and Critical Assets in South El Monte

Asset Type	Asset Name	Potential Hazard to the Asset
Local and Regional Infrastructure	Fire Station 90	Liquefaction
Medical	Greater El Monte Community Hospital	Liquefaction
Schools	South El Monte High	Liquefaction
	New Temple Elementary School	Liquefaction
	Dean L Shively Middle School	Liquefaction
	Monte Vista Elementary School	Liquefaction
	Miramonte Elementary	Liquefaction

Non-Critical Public Facilities

Non-critical facilities are those that can be used during hazard recovery to gather resources, distribute information, or serve as shelters. These are flexible facilities that can be activated as needed during a hazard event. Non-critical facilities can also serve as cooling facilities that provide air condition during extreme heat events. Some of the City's non-critical public facilities include South El Monte's Community Center, Senior Center, and public library.

Evacuation Routes

In the event of an extreme fire, flood, or other circumstances, evacuation may be necessary. To keep residents safe, it is important to ensure that the routes used for evacuation are unobstructed and in good condition. Evacuation routes in South El Monte include State Route 60, Interstate 10, Interstate 605, Rosemead Boulevard, Garvey Avenue, Santa Anita Avenue, Durfee Avenue, Rush Street, and Peck Road. These evacuation routes are outside of flood, fire, landslide, and earthquake hazard zones, but are all within liquefaction hazard areas. If necessary, different routes can be activated to avoid hazards both inside and outside of South El Monte.

Findings

Public Health and Chronic Hazards

Based on the above analysis of each hazard, South El Monte's public health concerns were categorized into three categories from high to low priority: critical, important, and marginal. This was determined by comparing the relevant **vulnerable populations** and **built environment** and compared to the State. Each public health concern was assessed using unique and relevant vulnerable populations and built environment factors. Where there was a high proportion of vulnerable people in South El Monte and the relevant built environment factors scored low, that public health concern was ranked as a priority (see **Figure PHS-13**).

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Vulnerable populations are those people who are sensitive to a public health issue due to socio-economic or physiological concern. For example, households without cars are more sensitive to not having parks or grocery stores within walking distance, and older adults are more likely to be hospitalized from extreme heat.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is the physical parts of cities, including streets, parks, and homes.

Critical

South El Monte's critical public health and chronic hazards are access to parks, safe and sanitary housing, extreme heat, and air pollution. These hazards rank critical because there is both a high number of vulnerable people and the built environment does not adequately address the hazard. Each is described in detail below.

Access to Parks

South El Monte residents face many health challenges compared to the State averages. This includes elevated rates of asthma, cardiovascular disease, low birth weight, diabetes, and obesity. Park access has a positive benefit on health outcomes. South El Monte has four parks, with a large regional park adjacent to South El Monte. Still, South El Monte has significantly fewer park acres per 1,000 residents than Los Angeles County. Additionally, when compared to Los Angeles County and the State, fewer South El Monte residents live within a half mile of a City park.[1] For these reasons, access to parks is a critical public health focus of this Public Health and Safety Element.

Air Pollution

Residents of South El Monte are exposed to chronic air pollution on a daily basis from adjacent freeways. Air pollution has long been an issue in the Los Angeles region, and the air pollution monitoring stations nearest to South El Monte reflect these challenges. In the

1 Public Health Alliance 2020.

past 3 years there have been exceedances of Federal and State standards for ozone and particulate matter. South El Monte residents are particularly vulnerable to poor air pollution because South El Monte is home to more children under the age of 5, outdoor workers, active commuters, people with asthma, and people with cardiovascular disease than Los Angeles County and the State, on average.[2] For these reasons, air pollution is a critical public health focus of this Public Health and Safety Element.

Extreme Heat

Individuals who have to be outside more, like outdoor workers and active commuters, are more exposed to extreme heat. South El Monte has a high number of outdoor workers and active commuters, making its residents at higher risk during heat waves.[3] Additionally, South El Monte has a combination of **impervious surfaces** and lower than average tree cover, which can create an urban heat island effect. South El Monte is forecasted to experience nearly three times more extreme heat days by 2050 than currently, and, therefore, extreme heat is considered critical.[4]

IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Impervious surfaces are non-natural urban surfaces, such as asphalt or concrete. These surfaces promote the urban heat island effect by absorbing heat and slowly releasing it. This is why it is cooler in a park – even outside of the shade – than a city street.

Important

South El Monte's important public health and chronic hazards are access to libraries and community centers, and safe and sanitary housing. These hazards rank important because there is either a high number of vulnerable people or the built environment does not adequately address the hazard. Each is described in detail below.

Libraries and Community Centers

All members of a community can benefit from having safe public spaces to gather, use free Wi-Fi, and access information, but this is especially true for low-income residents and those in over-crowded housing, both populations that are more common in South El Monte than Los Angeles County and the State. The existing community center and library are located next to each other, in the center of South El Monte. Although central location provides equal access across South El Monte, it is only within walking distance of 12% of residents and biking distance of 36% of residents. For these reasons, access to such facilities is considered important.

2 Public Health Alliance 2020.

3 Public Health Alliance 2020.

4 Cal-Adapt 2021a.

Safe and Sanitary Housing

Residents of South El Monte are much more likely to be renters than the average resident of Los Angeles County or the State. However, the rates of renters with severe housing cost burden are lower in South El Monte than Los Angeles County or the State.[5] Of the households that are homeowners, cost burden is significantly higher than State averages. Additionally, South El Monte residents are more than twice as likely to experience **overcrowding** than the average Californian. Overcrowded households and renters are more likely to have health and safety issues with their housing situation. The City of South El Monte (City) is addressing these issues with multiple programs, as detailed in the Housing Element. For these reasons, safe and sanitary housing is considered important.

OVERCROWDING

Overcrowding is measured as more than one person per room. Uncrowded housing can improve mental health, including stress and depression; decrease the spread of communicable diseases; and improve children's wellbeing and educational outcomes.

Marginal

South El Monte's marginal public health and chronic hazards are access to healthy food, hazardous materials, public transportation, and safe walking and biking. These hazards rank marginal because South El Monte does not have vulnerable populations and the built environment addresses these concerns well. These concerns should not be ignored, however, and existing success should be celebrated and replicated throughout the community.

Access to Healthy Food

South El Monte residents are more likely to be diagnosed with obesity and diabetes than State averages.[6] However, there is relatively good access to grocery stores in South El Monte. Residents in South El Monte who are lower income and have less access to cars are more concentrated around the majority of grocery stores. Many residents are within walking or biking distance of a grocery store. Those who live in Southern South El Monte and are farther from grocery stores are closer to the Earthworks Farm and Community Garden and the monthly food bank at the San Gabriel Valley Service Center. For these reasons, maintaining access to healthy food and ensuring it is affordable is considered marginal.

Hazardous Materials

There are no populations that are considered more or less vulnerable to hazardous materials, and therefore risk is assessed by how close

5 Public Health Alliance 2020.

6 Public Health Alliance 2020.

people live to cleanup sites and routes where hazardous materials are transported. There are multiple hazardous waste sites in or near South El Monte, the highest concentration of which is along Rush Street and Tyler Avenue. Therefore, hazardous materials are considered marginal.

Public Transportation

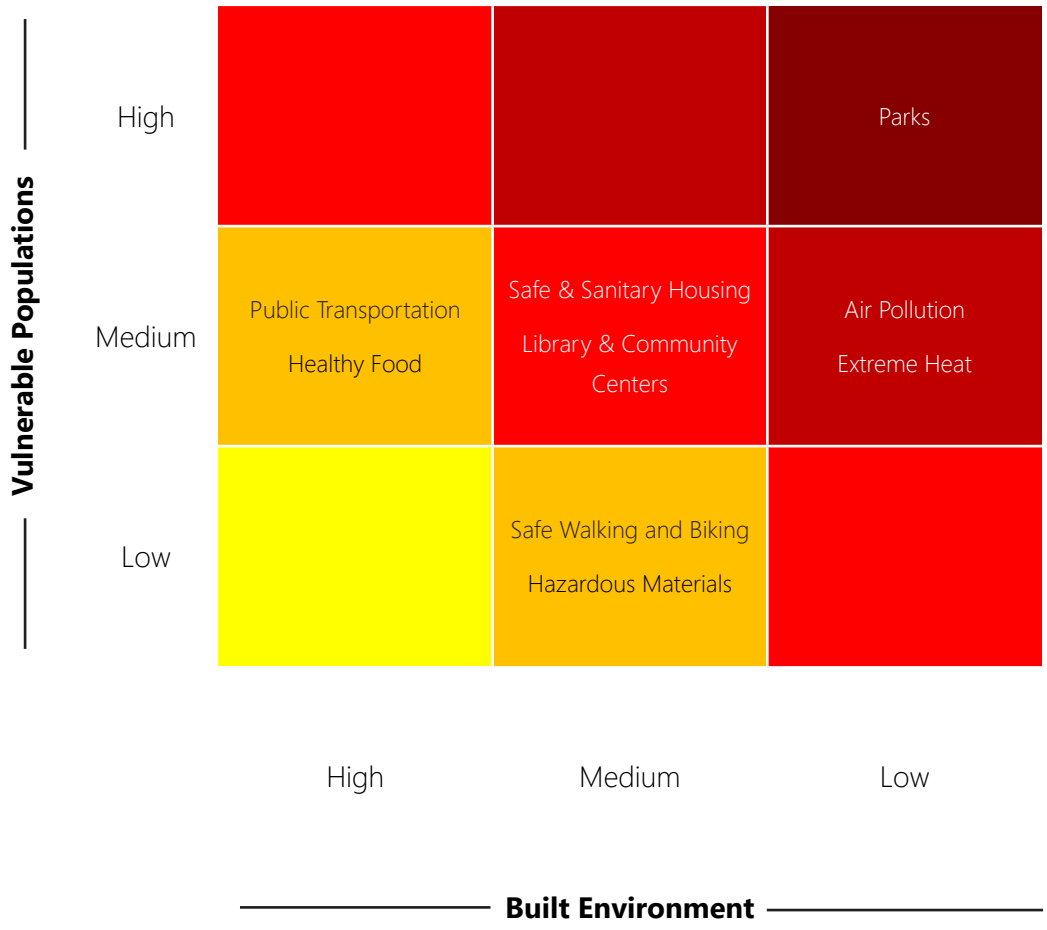
South El Monte's households have lower than average access to a personal vehicle and a high portion of active commuters. The majority of South El Monte residents live close to public transit, with 100% being within biking distance and 77% within walking distance.[7] Due to these facts, this issue is considered marginal.

Safe Walking and Biking

South El Monte has a high proportion of residents who depend on walking and biking to get to work compared to the region and State. With this, they have slightly more pedestrian injuries than is average for the State, but a lower rate than Los Angeles County. Because of these reasons, safe walking and biking is considered marginal.

7 Public Health Alliance 2020.

Figure PHS-13. Public Health and Chronic Hazard Prioritization



Emergency Events

The findings for emergency events were broken apart from the public health and chronic hazards due to the sudden nature of emergency events, which presents unique concerns. Similar to the public health concerns, emergency events are still categorized as critical, important, and marginal. Categorization again considered the adaptive capacity of the City, but looked at the potential overall impact as the secondary factor. This still includes an assessment of vulnerable populations in the analysis, but assesses these events across all areas of hazard risk (see **Figure PHS-14**).

Critical

No emergency events are considered critical for South El Monte due to a lack of hazard risk areas within City limits.

Important

Seismic hazards may occur in South El Monte between 2020 and 2050. The City currently has relevant policies and programs to ensure that new development minimizes the risk from this hazard, but older infrastructure and buildings are vulnerable, causing seismic hazards to be considered important.

Seismic Hazards

Similar to many Southern California communities, an earthquake could occur in South El Monte at any time. There are no active faults within City limits, but there are two active faults within 5 miles of South El Monte. The San Andreas Fault is approximately 30 miles away. Additionally, more than 300 buildings in the City were built before 1939, near the time that unreinforced masonry buildings were banned. For these reasons, seismic hazards are considered important.

Marginal

Both flooding and wildfire are considered marginal hazards for South El Monte due to the City's lack of hazard risk areas, making the likelihood of either of these events occurring low.

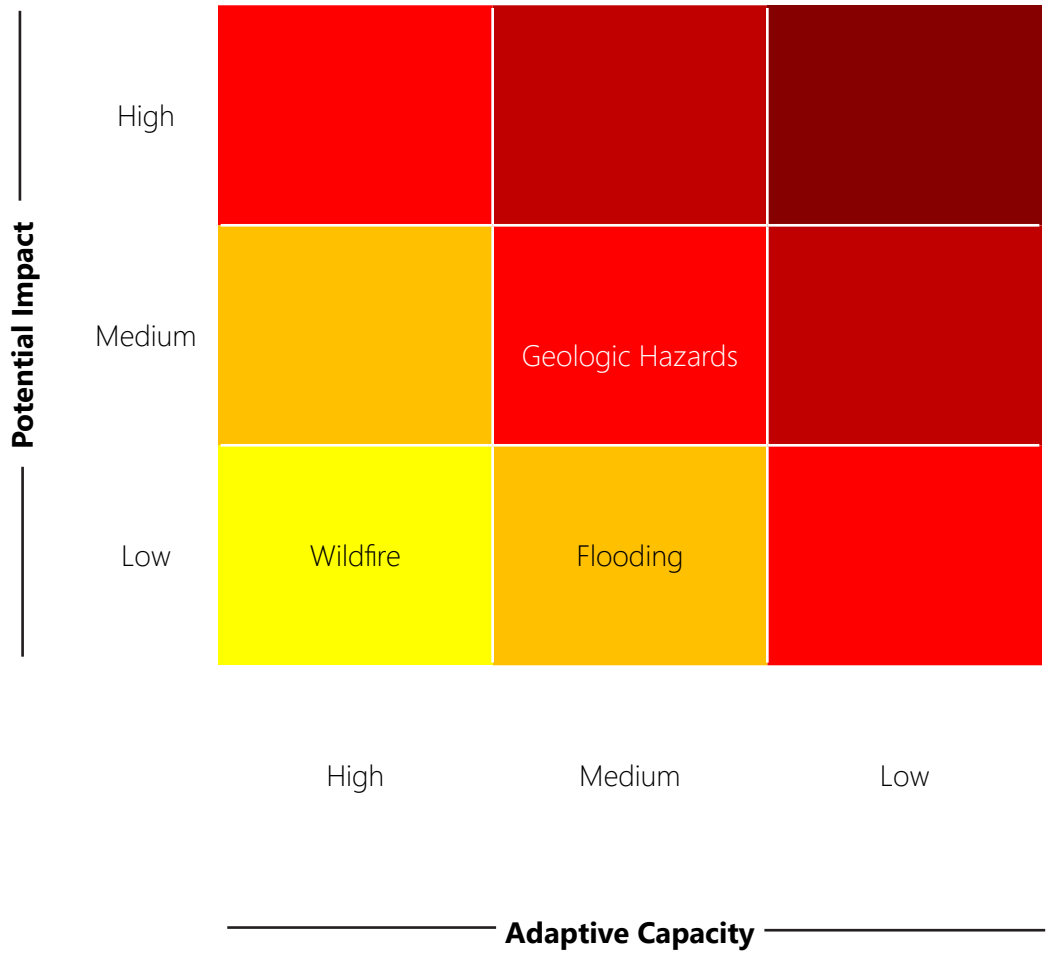
Flooding

No portion of South El Monte is within a 100- or 500-year flood zone. Although this is true, there may be small pockets of localized flooding. The City regularly clears debris from the stormwater system to further reduce the likelihood of flooding. For all these reasons, flooding is considered a marginal emergency event.

Wildfire

None of South El Monte is within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. In the past, fires have not been an issue for South El Monte, with only small overlaps into City limits from the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. Still, the City follows State-required fire codes. For these reasons, wildfire is considered marginal as an emergency event for South El Monte.

Figure PHS-14. Emergency Events Prioritization



Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal 1: **Minimize risks, such as loss of life, injury, property damage, and natural resource destruction from natural hazards.**

Policy 1.1: Adopt Policies and Standards for the Built Environment that Reduce Urban Heat Island.

Action 1.1a: Promote and support programs to weatherize and insulate residences.
Action 1.1b: Adopt cool roof standards, including incentives for "green roofs," which allow for growing plants, stormwater retention, and reduced heat island effect.
Action 1.1c: Modify public construction standards to require light pigmentation in pavement materials in high-density areas with little shade.
Action 1.1d: Coordinate with local transit agencies to ensure all identified bus stops include shade structures and the adequate movement of air to safeguard the health and comfort of transit users due to the potential increase in high heat days.

Policy 1.2: Enforce Development Standards to Reduce Geologic Risk.

Action 1.2a: Establish an ordinance requiring the retrofit of unreinforced masonry buildings and the seismic reinforcement of buildings constructed prior to 1971 that are susceptible to damage in the event of an earthquake.
Action 1.2b: Require liquefaction studies to be prepared for new development proposed to be located in areas of South El Monte with high susceptibility to liquefaction hazards.
Action 1.2c: Work with owners of high-pressure gas lines to ensure that the lines are adequately safeguarded against rupture in the event of an earthquake.

Policy 1.3: Minimize Flooding Risks through Appropriate Siting and Protection of Structures and Occupants.

Action 1.3a: Strengthen the City of South El Monte's Public Works Department Storm Patrol Program with safety and other necessary equipment and training.
Action 1.3b: Encourage Caltrans to identify bridges at risk from flood or earthquake hazards, identify enhancements, and implement projects needed to reduce the risks.

Policy 1.4: Implement Programs and Standards to Mitigate Fire Risk and Secondary Impacts.

Action 1.4a: Use the expertise of County of Los Angeles Fire Department personnel to review development proposals where fire hazards are of concern.
Action 1.4b: Inventory alternative firefighting water sources and encourage the development of additional sources.

Goal 2: **Promote a community safe from human-caused hazards.**

Policy 2.1: Reduce Localized Air Pollution Exposure Near Major Roads.

Action 2.1a: Update the Zoning Code to protect residential uses and park uses from the impacts of industrial and roadway pollution.
Action 2.1b: Designate truck routes away from residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.

Action 2.1c: Use landscaping and other buffers to separate existing sensitive uses from rail lines, heavy industrial facilities, and other emissions sources.

Policy 2.2: Promote a Healthy Urban Forest.

Action 2.2a: Update the Landscape Ordinance to incentivize the preservation or replacement of mature trees.
Action 2.2b: Develop a new street tree species palette that prioritizes trees based on having low water needs and adaptability to climate change and future environmental conditions.
Action 2.2c: Identify grant funding to develop a program to install additional street trees or provide canopy trees to residents for planting.
Action 2.2d: Update the Landscape Ordinance to require shade trees from an approved street tree list in surface parking lots for all new developments.

Policy 2.3: Limit the Potential Hazards from the Transportation and Disposal of Hazardous Waste.

Action 2.3a: Maintain programs that require the periodic inspection of businesses that use, store, or manufacture flammable and/or explosive materials.
Action 2.3b: Cooperate with responsible Federal, State, and County of Los Angeles agencies to reduce the risk from the use and transport of hazardous materials.
Action 2.3c: Continue to contract with the County of Los Angeles for services provided by the Hazardous Materials Response Team.

Policy 2.4: Support Remediation and Pollution Prevent Efforts that Arise from Industrial, Roadway, and Household Sources.

Action 2.4a: Work toward the gradual removal of nonconforming residential uses from industrial zones.
Action 2.4b: Identify and secure internal and external funding, and as feasible, leverage existing community resources by brokering public, private, and nonprofit partnerships to expedite the identification, acquisition, and remediation of contaminated lands suitable for community revitalization purposes.
Action 2.4c: Limit diesel truck idling, including construction and transit vehicles, within 100 feet of schools, parks, and residences.
Action 2.4d: Require air pollution point sources to be located at safe distances from sensitive sites such as homes and schools.

Goal 3: **Build social cohesion and increase preparedness and public health through community collaboration.**

Policy 3.1: Create Culturally Appropriate Hazard Preparation and Education.

Action 3.1a: Convene and regularly train neighborhood-based emergency response teams (e.g., Community Emergency Response Team [CERT]), and explore incorporating climate change response and recovery. Use the City of South El Monte's website, social media, and other paths (e.g., places of worship, community groups) to ensure CERT recruiting includes a diverse set of community members and leaders.
Action 3.1b: Grow partnerships between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to provide critical services to vulnerable residents in times of crisis.

Policy 3.2: Support Equitable and Inclusive Opportunities to Build Capacity and Leadership Skills for Residents and Organizations through Continued Civic Engagement.

Action 3.2a: Provide written notices and other announcements regarding key land use and development issues in all relevant languages, as feasible.
Action 3.2b: Specifically invite a diverse range of people, including youth, to become board, commission, and task force members as openings occur.

Goal 4: **Strengthen regional systems and fortify critical infrastructure.**

Policy 4.1: Maintain and Repair the Community's Infrastructure to Minimize the Potential for System Failure Because of a Disaster.

Action 4.1a: Identify surface water drainage obstructions for all parts of South El Monte.
Action 4.1b: Prioritize retrofits of buildings of critical facilities used during hazard response.
Action 4.1c: Encourage flood-proofing of critical facilities that flood regularly or must be built in areas susceptible of flooding. Improve intersections around critical facilitates to ensure vehicles can access the facility during a flood event.

Policy 4.2: Advance Seismic Safety, Prioritizing the Most Vulnerable Buildings, Infrastructure, and Systems.

Action 4.2a: Continue to work closely with SoCalGas on its First Responders Program, which includes its annual natural gas safety training and training materials showing how cities can safely respond to natural gas incidents and work collaboratively with SoCalGas during emergencies.
Action 4.2b: Seek funding to conduct seismic strength evaluations of critical and essential facilities in South El Monte to identify vulnerabilities for mitigation of public infrastructure and critical facilities to meet current seismic standards.
Action 4.2c: Integrate new earthquake hazard mapping data for the City of South El Monte and improve technical analysis of earthquake hazards.

Goal 5: **Design emergency response to serve a range of community needs.**

Policy 5.1: Strengthen Emergency Services Preparedness and Response.

Action 5.1a: Review the City of South El Monte's contract with the Los Angeles County Fire Department annually to ensure that adequate fire protection services are provided.
Action 5.1b: Ensure the Emergency Operations Center has adequate capacity to respond to hazard events.
Action 5.1c: Establish a secondary or back-up local Emergency Operations Center that can function in the event of damage to the City's primary Emergency Operations Center.
Action 5.1d: Include provisions for populations and communities with special needs and with low rates of automobile ownership in evacuation plans.

Policy 5.2: Create Resilience Centers Throughout South El Monte.

Action 5.2a: Back-Up Power. Continue to ensure that critical City of South El Monte facilities have back-up energy sources, such as battery storage. Prioritize clean energy sources, such as solar, where feasible.

Action 5.2b: Refrigeration. Install refrigerators at resilience centers, such as existing cooling centers and emergency shelter locations, to provide storage for medication in black-out and other hazard events.

Action 5.2c: Audit Emergency Childcare. Work with non-profit organizations, such as the Red

Cross, to offer emergency childcare for frontline workers in the event that schools are closed in a hazard event.

Action 5.2d: Food Distribution. Work with local food banks to distribute food and pop-up food pantries during hazard events.

Action 5.2e: Advertise Regional Programs. Include information on regional assistance programs in appropriate languages during a hazard event.

Goal 6: **Provide public facilities that promote health and hazard preparedness.**

Policy 6.1: Improve the Health and Well-Being of All Ages through Improvements in Mobility.

Action 6.1a: Consider the development and implementation of Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Guidelines that also include streetscape standards that emphasize pedestrian and cyclist safety (e.g., lighting, trees, greenery, traffic-calming measures).
Action 6.1b: Prioritize safety improvements and maintenance on walking and biking routes to public facilities.

Policy 6.2: Increase Access to Open Space.

Action 6.2a: Improve existing park quality by providing amenities and programs for play, exercise, and enhanced safety. Prioritize efforts that should be deployed quickly in under-parked communities.
Action 6.2b: Pursue funding for recreational development through capital improvement programs and State grants.
Action 6.2c: Promote the use of vacant land within developed neighborhoods for temporary recreational use, with maintenance provided by neighborhood residents and businesses.

Policy 6.3: Ensure Public Spaces Feel Safe to Use During the Day and Night for Everyday Play, Family Gatherings, and Community Events.

Action 6.3a: Use the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) during the review of development projects.
Action 6.3b: Address both actual and perceived safety concerns that create barriers to physical activity by requiring adequate lighting, street visibility, and defensible space in walking and biking routes to public facilities, public transit, and other important community spaces.
Action 6.3c: Promote park and facility design that discourages vandalism, deters crime, provides natural surveillance, and creates a safe and comfortable environment.

Goal 7: **Ensure safe, equitable, and efficient recovery.**

Policy 7.1: Expand Workforce Preparedness Training Opportunities and Programs to Quickly Restore Essential City Services after a Major Shock.

Action 7.1a: Adopt emergency land-use tools to address displacement and redevelopment in advance of a major earthquake or other catastrophic event.
Action 7.1b: Establish post-disaster restoration targets for critical infrastructure.
Action 7.1c: Establish neighborhood-based, short- and long-term post-disaster housing plans.

Policy 7.2: Protect and Preserve Natural, Cultural, and Economic Resources in Hazard Mitigation and Recovery Planning.

Action 7.2a: Assess and implement recommended actions to ensure historic, cultural, and other significant (e.g., high-occupancy) facilities/locations are safe from and will be preserved after major events.
Action 7.2b: Ensure that vital records are regularly backed up on a cloud-based system to retain necessary information and expedite the recovery process in the event of a hazard destruction of City property.

Goal 8: **Ensure access to healthy food.**

Policy 8.1: Promote Urban Agriculture.

Action 8.1a: Ensure that residents are permitted to grow fruits and vegetables in their yards, so long as there are not significant negative impacts to adjacent property owners.
Action 8.1b: Identify properties, vacant and developed, that are suitable for community gardens, and work with landowners to determine interest and availability.

Policy 8.2: Support the Promotion of Healthy Food and Food Assistance Programs.

Action 8.2a: Address whether zoning allows providers of fresh produce (grocery stores, farmer's markets, produce stands) to locate within three-quarters of a mile of all residences in South El Monte.
Action 8.2b: Encourage the development of healthy food establishments in areas with a high concentration of fast-food establishments, convenience stores, and liquor stores. For example, through updated zoning regulations, tailor use requirements to encourage quality, sit-down restaurants in areas that lack them.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