



DECEMBER 2024

SERVICE AREA PLAN (SAP)

CITY OF EL CENTRO



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	Average Day Demand (water)
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFD	Community Facilities District
City	City of El Centro
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CIPs	Citizens in Police Services
County	County of Imperial
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPSM	Center for Public Safety Management
CSD	Community Services Department
CUHSD	Central Union High School District
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
ECESD	El Centro Elementary School District
ECFD	El Centro Fire Department
ECPD	El Centro Police Department
EIFD	Enhanced Infrastructure Finance Districts
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FY	Fiscal Year
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
gpd	gallons per day
gpm	gallons per minute
HCD	State Department of Housing & Community Development
HCDA	Housing and Community Development Act of 1974
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
I-8	Interstate 8
ICAPCD	Imperial County Air Pollution Control District
ICFD	Imperial County Fire Department
ICOE	Imperial County Office of Education
ICTC	Imperial County Transportation Commission
IID	Imperial Irrigation District
JRMP	Jurisdictional Runoff Management Program
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
LCFF	Local Control Funding Formula
LLMD	Landscape and Lighting Maintenance Districts
LOS	Level of Service
MDD	Maximum Daily Demand
mg	million gallons
mgd	million gallons per day
MHMP	Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

MPD	Master Plan of Drainage
MUESD	McCabe Union Elementary School District
MUSD	Meadows Union School District
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAT	No Action Taken
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
Non-res.	Non-residential
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
PAX	Police Auxiliary
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Assessment
PLF	Public Library Fund
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board (Colorado River Basin)
SAP	Service Area Plan
SB	Senate Bill
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
sf	square feet
SOI	Sphere Of Influence
SWMP	Storm Water Management Program
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TDA	Transportation Development Act
TDS	Total Dissolved Solids
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TOT	Transient Occupancy Tax
UDP	Urban Development Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VLF	Vehicle License Fee
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WDF	Water Demand Factors
WTP	Water Treatment Plant
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

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SECTION 1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of El Centro (City) is home to approximately 44,000 residents and serves as the center of commercial, general government, recreational, and cultural activities for much of the surrounding Imperial Valley region. Undeveloped land within the City's boundaries and the City's sphere of influence (SOI) boundaries is currently being developed for residential, commercial, public, and industrial uses. The City of El Centro General Plan (General Plan) guides the City's growth.

This Service Area Plan (SAP) outlines the City's existing public services and facilities, estimates the current and future anticipated demand for such facilities and services, and describes how necessary facilities and services will or may be developed and extended to meet demands. The SAP is intended to demonstrate the City's intent and ability to provide adequate services to the SOI boundaries at the time of annexation. An approximately 10-year planning horizon is used to forecast growth, and the estimated demands and provision to meet demands are based on population projections for 2035.

The following is a brief summary of the existing resources, demands, financing mechanisms, and mitigation measures related to the nine public services and facilities topics examined in this SAP. It should be noted that the following discussion is substantially abbreviated from that contained in the rest of the document and is not meant to replace the comprehensive discussion provided in Sections 2 through 5 of this SAP.

1.2 PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES

General Government Facilities

The City's general government facilities are comprised of approximately 26,800 square feet (sf) of building area in a centralized location on Main Street that is easily accessible to many City residents. The existing amount of office and meeting space is acceptable to accommodate current employees, customers, other users of the City's general government facilities, and the future population. Based on performance standards set forth by the City and estimation of population projections, the existing administrative facilities encompassing 26,800 sf of space would accommodate the anticipated 2035 population. With 55 government personnel, the City currently satisfies the performance standard and the City is on track to accommodate future growth by 2035, in terms of adequate staffing.

It is not likely that growth within the SOI will demand that additional facilities be constructed in new locations, as the current central location will remain accessible to new development throughout the SOI. Currently, the City exceeds the performance standard for general government facility space for the existing population, which is essential for preparing for future population growth in the City and SOI. Improvements in technology, amount of general government personnel, and other facility enhancements will be necessary to accommodate population growth in the future, however there is no immediate necessity for extensive new facility construction.

Mitigation

- Comply with the performance standards for City general government facilities and government personnel.
- Periodically review the general government facilities, services and personnel of the City through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as City growth continues to increase the demand on facilities, services, and staff.
- Continue to periodically review user fees charged for services of the Planning, Building and Engineering Divisions and implement annual fee adjustments proposed by the 2019 User Fee Study.
- Allocate Measure P funds strategically to finance necessary capital improvements toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements.

Funding

- General Fund
- User Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- Measure P Revenue

Drainage Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system of drains that conveys storm water and urban runoff. The system is managed by the wastewater division of the Department of Public Works, and the City does not maintain a separate budget for drainage maintenance or improvements. To monitor and implement state stormwater programs, the City added an Environmental Compliance Division. Drainage issues are reviewed on a project-by-project basis. As a general policy, the City approves of the installation of retention basins on development projects. Several existing storm drains have inadequate capacity to convey runoff produced by a ten-year design storm event. The 2009 Master Plan of Drainage (MPD) identified ten locations that require improvements at existing deficient drainage facilities which includes extensions to the existing storm drains, the installations of a parallel storm drain, and the replacement of existing undersized systems. Drainage facilities will need improvement to accommodate increased demand as the City's population grows. The City plans to update the MPD in 2024 using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The City has allocated ARPA funds to address critical infrastructure needs, enhance public safety, improve essential municipal services, and overall invest in long-term improvements that benefit residents. In addition to updating the MPD, ARPA funding is allocated to support infrastructure improvements including the conversion of gas chlorine systems within Public Works, upgrading the electrical infrastructure at raw water structures, and improving the City's water distribution through upgrades to the Southern Pump Station.

Mitigation

- Continue implementation of the 2009 City of El Centro MPD and perform the identified high-priority drainage improvement projects.
- Update the MPD to identify the latest necessary drainage improvements and reestablish design criteria to achieve the ten-year frequency flood event performance standard.
- Continue to require new roadways within the City boundaries and the City SOI boundaries to meet City requirements for provision of gutter features and slopes to properly convey storm flow.
- Continue to require that new development projects address potential drainage issues and provide adequate facilities to convey storm flow. For developments which drain into facilities of the City’s system, require the developer to consult with the Department of Public Works to ensure improvements are engineered and constructed to City standards.
- Require compliance with construction permits for MS4 stormwater quality requirements.
- Continue implementation of the City Storm Water Protection Program through enforcement of JRMP requirements and BMP standards for development projects.
- Implement the adopted policies from the City of El Centro’s Implementation Program outlined in the 2021 Imperial County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.
 - Develop and adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is required for state, local, tribal and territorial governments to receive funding for hazard mitigation projects or determine whether the existing MHMP of the County qualifies the City to apply for funding and and work with the County to implement hazard mitigation projects effectively.

Funding

- General Fund
- Development Impact Fees
- Legacy Ranch Community Facilities District (CFD)
- New facilities funded and installed by developers
- Wastewater Enterprise Fund

Fire Facilities

The City manages the El Centro Fire Department (ECFD), which provides fire response, suppression, prevention, and investigation; emergency medical response and advanced life support; community disaster preparedness; hazardous materials response and mitigation; confined

space rescue services; and water rescue services within the City boundaries as well as to other jurisdictions pursuant to a mutual aid agreement.

The ECFD has three fire stations; one located in the center of the City, the other in the northwestern part, and the third near the southeastern boundary. In all, the ECFD has 41 uniformed personnel, three (3) non-uniformed personnel, and various vehicles and pieces of equipment.

Increased development within the City boundaries and City SOI boundaries will continue to place strain on the services, personnel, and equipment of the ECFD. As calls become more numerous with the increased density of the City and as land is annexed into the ECFD service area, the ECFD will experience an increase in emergency and non-emergency response times.

In September of 2017, the City retained services from the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) to complete a comprehensive analysis of the ECFD. The primary recommendation advised that the City consider replacement of Fire Station No. 1 with a contemporary facility to accommodate the evolving mission and needs of the ECFD. In June 2021, the ECFD initiated internal studies to establish a plan for a potential Fire Station No. 1 rebuild. In May 2023, a feasibility study for the proposed project was completed. The project awaits approval.

Mitigation

- Implement the measures from the updated mutual aid agreement to provide for systematic mobilization, organizational, and operation of fire, medical, and rescue resources with the County of Imperial and City of Yuma, to mitigate the effects of any disaster.
- Develop plans annually to provide updated fire, medical and rescue service inventory of all personnel, apparatus, and equipment within the County of Imperial.
- Collaborate between fire officials of local, area, regional and state agencies to facilitate communication for the interchange and dissemination of fire rescue data, directives, and information.
- In conformance with General Plan Public Facilities Policy 5.2, continue the periodic review of number of calls and response times to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for improvement or additional resources.
- Design and implement a year-long workload monitoring program to determine the adequacy of the existing staffing standard of providing ten sworn and uniformed personnel to be available to respond to calls at any given time throughout the day or night.
- Pursue additional finances to fund additional personnel, equipment, and vehicles for the ECFD as identified in the workload monitoring program.
- When the City determines the need, purchase land and construct Fire Station No. 4. The new station would be located east of La Brucherie Avenue and south of Wake Avenue.

- Review existing development impact fees for ECFD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement the revised fee structure.
- Periodically review the mutual aid agreement with the ICFD for service within the SOI to maintain adequate and efficient protection to all areas within the City, the SOI, and the remainder of the unincorporated County land.
- Periodically review service area boundaries and service goals to maintain adequate and efficient protection to all areas within the City.
- Integrate recommendations from the 2018 Fire Operational & Administrative Analysis Report prepared by the CPSM.

Funding

- General Fund
- User Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- Measure P Revenue

Law Enforcement Facilities

The El Centro Police Department (ECPD) is the primary law enforcement agency that serves the citizens of the City and land within City boundaries. The ECPD primarily operates out of one main police station located within the Civic Center zone. Sworn officers of the ECPD patrol the city and respond to calls reporting crimes and emergencies and requesting law enforcement services within ECPD jurisdiction. Non-sworn personnel of the ECPD are responsible for various administrative tasks, animal control, and parking enforcement. Volunteer personnel of the ECPD supplement regular officers and non-sworn members of the Citizens in Police Services (CIPS) provide assistance in other areas of ECPD jurisdiction.

A new station is needed to accommodate the facilities required by the ECPD to provide law enforcement services to the residents, property and business owners, government and private business employees and customers, and visitors of El Centro. In November 2023, the City broke ground on the planned facility, which will be constructed in the same location as the previous police station, per the community's request. The project is expected to be completed in early 2026.

As development continues to occur in the northern, western and southern portions of the City SOI and as City boundaries are extended, new stations or substations will be developed in the vicinity of new development to assure adequate patrol coverage and call response times. All stations must be adequately staffed by ECPD personnel. Prior to the construction of new stations or substations, the ECPD must hire new officers and staff to demonstrate adequate staffing.

Mitigation

- Continue the periodic review of number of calls and response times to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for improvement or additional resources.
- In conformance with General Plan Public Facilities Policy 4.1, continue the periodic review of personnel, vehicles and equipment, and facilities to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for additional resources.
- Design and implement a year-long workload monitoring program to determine the adequacy of the existing staffing standard of 1.75 sworn officers per 1,000 residents and to have a minimum of five police personnel on duty, including four responding officers and one supervising sergeant at any given period throughout the day and night.
- Pursue additional finances to fund additional personnel, equipment, and vehicles for the ECPD.
- Obtain additional sworn personnel, non-sworn personnel, and vehicles to meet the existing and future deficit of officers identified according to the workload monitoring program.
- Continue to promote the volunteer officer program to aid in meeting staffing needs.
- When the ECPD is able to acquire additional personnel, the traffic enforcement unit will be instated. Implementing the traffic unit would require the ECPD to acquire additional vehicles.
- Identify land in the northern portion of the City SOI for an additional station or substation to accommodate anticipated development. Adequate staffing must be available in order to open such a station.
- Identify land in the southern portion of the City SOI for an additional station or substation to accommodate anticipated development. Adequate staffing must be available in order to open such a station.
- Review existing development impact fees for ECPD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Implement incremental User Fee increases based on the recommended CPI financing mechanism to guide annual adjustments.

Funding

- General Fund
- User Fees

- Development Impact Fees
- Grants

Library Facilities

The City owns and operates the El Centro Public Library system. This system includes one main library and one satellite facility that is open to the public and used by a broad spectrum of community members. The Main Branch of the public library held its grand opening in November of 2022 and comprised a 19,811 sf building area. The new library features a 1,000 sf lobby that can be entered from both the front road and the parking lot, facilitating access for both patron vehicles and public transportation. On opposite sides of the building are two (2) outdoor, shaded courtyards: a 500 sf reading patio with access from the adult area and homework center, and a 1,600 sf patio that serves as overflow space from the community rooms. In analyzing future library resource needs, expansion of physical space is less urgent relative to other priorities. Since existing infrastructure falls within adequacy guidelines for projected population growth through 2035, focusing on growing library personnel, inventory of library volumes and access to public computers should take precedence as more cost-feasible, impactful upgrades manageable in stages.

Mitigation

- Continue to periodically review the facilities and personnel of the El Centro Public Library system through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as City growth continues to increase the demand on library facilities and staff. Such review should also involve research and coordination with organizations such as the American Library Association, who have numerous resources and guidelines on the library facility, staff, library volumes, and technology.
- Continue to utilize General Fund revenue as the primary source of financing for the El Centro Public Library System. Review the allocation of General Fund finances per State recommendation that local libraries receive five percent of local general fund resources.
- Continue to apply for all possible library funding opportunities from the State. Re-apply for certification in the State Public Library Fund program when funds are allocated.
- Review existing development impact fees for library services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Continue to accept donations of money and supplies as a means of augmenting library services while conserving allocated finances.

Funding

- General Fund
- Development Impact Fees
- User Fees
- Measure P Revenue
- Donations
- Grants

Park and Recreation Facilities

The Community Services Department (CSD) is responsible for overseeing parks and recreation facilities and services. Parks within the jurisdiction of the City are used by the public for various recreational activities. Parks include amenities such as athletic fields, hard court playgrounds, open space areas, picnic areas, swimming facilities, gymnasias, and skateboard facilities.

The City is currently operating with a surplus of parkland per its current parkland performance standard. To continue meeting parkland demand and to accommodate the anticipated population increase, the City will continue to require that new development include the provision of additional public parks and recreational facilities. Any future expansion and construction of additional park facilities will be completed in phases as funding is made available.

The City has made progress in advancing parkland and recreation facilities through recent initiatives, including the construction of the El Centro Aquatic Center and First Responders Park.

Mitigation

- Continue to require the provision of parkland or the payment of a park development fee, in accordance with Section 24, Article V of the City of El Centro Code of Ordinances. As developments are processed within the City, provision of public parkland or collection of development fees should be enforced to maintain the surplus of public parkland.
- Apply for grant funding from both public and private sources.
- Offset operation costs by charging user fees where appropriate.
- Continue to periodically review the performance of CSD through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as the amount of City parkland continues to grow.
- Review existing development impact fees for CSD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Implement incremental User Fee increases based on the recommended CPI financing mechanism to guide annual adjustments.
- Determine the projected revenue needs to sustain and improve parks and recreation services. This should take into account any anticipated increases in operating costs, maintenance requirements, or planned enhancements to facilities.
- To address concerns regarding equitable distribution and community impact, implement a robust community engagement plan for leveraging Measure P funds, ensuring that residents have a role in prioritizing and shaping the projects supported by the initiative.
- Update the Parks & Recreation Master Plan to ensure it is reflective of community needs regarding developed parkland and recreation facilities.

Funding

- Developer contribution of parkland and construction of parks
- General Fund
- User Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- Measure P Revenue
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds
- Donations
- Grants
- Bonds
- Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista and Town Center Landscape and Lighting Maintenance Districts (LLMDs)

Transportation Facilities

The City is responsible for the development and maintenance of a system of public roadways and bicycle routes within its jurisdiction. The City's transportation system also links to various State and County facilities that traverse the city. The development of new roads or improvement of existing roads is often accomplished by private developers when physical improvement of the City's circulation system is deemed necessary due to anticipated increases in traffic from various development projects. The General Plan includes a Mobility Element, which was updated in 2021, that discloses the City's goals, policies, and performance criteria for a balanced, multimodal transportation system presenting design standards for City streets and a Planned Roadway Network, which shows the anticipated development of the system as growth occurs in the city.

The existing circulation system is generally adequate to accommodate the current needs of the city. Paved roadways properly link existing residential, commercial, and industrial development. The City intends to expand and provide transportation facilities in the future to accommodate anticipated population growth. Certain projects, like the Imperial Avenue extension project, have already been approved as specific capital improvement projects. Additional expansion projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis as demand dictates.

Mitigation

- Implement identified circulation system projects to improve circulation and accommodate growth within the City.
- Continue to periodically review the list of approved roadway capital improvement projects slated for implementation by the City to determine project status, need for revision of the program schedule, and budgetary needs.

- Review the existing development impact fees schedule for circulation and roadway projects, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement the revised fee structure.
- Consider future roadway capital improvements listed in the 2040 General Plan Mobility Element.

Funding

- General Fund
- Development Impact Fees
- Local Transportation Authority (Imperial County Transportation Commission)
- State Transportation Improvement Program
- State Gas Tax
- Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista and Town Center LLMDs
- Legacy Ranch CFD
- Transportation Development Act – Article 3 Fund

Wastewater Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system of approximately 125 miles of wastewater collection pipelines, pump stations, and treatment facilities that serves approximately 8,000 residences, businesses, and public facilities within the City and the City SOI. Facilities within this system are developed and maintained by the Department of Public Works. The existing wastewater service facilities are adequate to meet existing demands within the service area. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and delivery system will meet demand of growth for the next ten years.

Growth within the City will require repairs and improvements to the wastewater facilities throughout the City, including the extension of existing lines, construction of new loop lines, and construction or relocation of lift stations. \$15 million in energy efficiency improvements have been completed at the City’s WWTP since the 2016 SAP. Planned improvements to expand the WWTP and delivery system will be considered for the anticipated 2024 update of the Sewer Master Plan.

Mitigation

- Implement improvement projects recommended in the Sewer Master Plan as funds become available.
- Implement wastewater system improvement projects identified in the City’s budget and capital improvement project program.
- Continue to periodically review the wastewater rate and financing structure to secure adequate funding for the implementation of projects and maintenance of existing facilities.

- Review and update the wastewater rate and finance structure in 2024, aligning with the future sewer master plan, to ensure effective financial management of wastewater services.

Funding

- Wastewater Capacity Fee Fund
- Wastewater Enterprise Fund
- Wastewater Stabilization Fund
- Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista and Town Center LLMDs
- Legacy Ranch CFD

Water Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system for the treatment, storage, and distribution of potable water resources that serves residences, businesses, and public facilities within the City and the City's SOI. The City purchases all of its untreated water from the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), which is conveyed to City facilities from the Colorado River via the district's canal system. City facilities are developed and maintained by the Department of Public Works.

The existing storage and conveyance capacity of 21 million gallons per day is sufficient for existing daily water demand and peak flow requirements. The system also has adequate capacity to accommodate anticipated near-term development. Periodic improvements have been made to modernize the facilities and materials. The system has never faced serious capacity concerns but will continue to require periodic improvements to accommodate growth in the City and the City's SOI. The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) provided a comparison between the supply and demand for projected years between 2025 and 2045. According to the report, the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) will be able to meet El Centro's demands in all projected years through 2045.

Mitigation

- Implement improvement projects recommended in the Water Master Plan, as funds become available and as deemed necessary by the Director of the Department of Public Works.
- Update the Water Master Plan by 2024.
- Continue to implement water system improvement projects identified in the City's annual budgets and the updated Water Master Plan to maintain compliance with State regulations.
- Continue to periodically review the water rate and financing structure to assure adequate funding for the implementation of new projects and the maintenance of existing facilities to maintain compliance with State regulations.
- Require that system improvements conducted by the City or a private developer are designed to conform to relevant Federal, State, and local regulations.

Funding

- Water Enterprise Fund
- Water Capacity Fee Fund
- Water Stabilization Fund

School Facilities

Residents within the City of El Centro are served by four school districts that serve approximately 10,800 students in a total of 18 schools geographically dispersed throughout El Centro. These districts include the El Centro Elementary School District (ECESD), the Meadows Union School District (MUSD), the McCabe Union Elementary School District (MUESD), and the Central Union High School District (CUHSD).

The adequacy of existing facilities is determined by comparing school year student enrollment with student teaching station (classroom) capacity. Per this analysis, several schools are over-capacity. To accommodate future population growth and increases in student enrollment, each school district prepares a school facility needs assessment/facility fee justification report. This report evaluates the number of potential new students generated from approved residential units from the City of El Centro within their respective district boundaries to determine the future demand for facilities. The phasing of new schools will be directly linked to the approval of new development and the issuance of building permits.

Mitigation

- Support the local school districts by working with them to determine the most appropriate location and distribution for school facilities to serve the educational needs of the community and encourage equitable access.
- Collaborate with school districts to determine suitable locations for new school sites that are equitable, safe, healthy, technologically equipped, aesthetically pleasing, sustainable, and support optimal teaching and learning environment.
- Encourage the joint use of school facilities to provide a range of recreational and educational opportunities for residents.
- Provide opportunities for students to attend schools within their residential neighborhoods as well as choices in educational settings outside their neighborhoods.
- Incorporate project planning and site selection to proactively inform land use policy decisions regarding residential development in proximity to existing school facilities.

Funding

- General Obligation Bonds from property taxes
- State funding
- Development Impact Fees

1.3 FINANCING SUMMARY

Existing Revenue Sources

- Sales Tax
- Property Tax
- Motor Vehicle In-Lieu Fee
- Transient Occupancy Tax
- Development Impact Fees
- User Fees
- Gasoline Tax
- Local Bonds
- State Circulation/Roadway Funding Sources
- Community Development Block Grants
- Landscape and Lighting Maintenance Districts / Community Facilities Districts

Future Revenue Sources

- Updated User Fees
- Updated Development Impact Fees
- Measure P
- State and Federal Funding

Existing Financing Mechanisms

- General Fund
- Capacity Fee Funds
- Enterprise Funds

- Developer/Builder Contributions
- Special Assessment Districts
- Community Facilities Districts
- Measure P Revenue
- Lease Revenue Bonds
- Local/State/Federal Grants

Future Financing Mechanisms

- Special Assessment Districts
- Community Facilities Districts
- Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts
- SB 614
- Disadvantaged, Unincorporated Community (DUC) Designation

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SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background on the City of El Centro

The City of El Centro (City) is located in the south-central portion of the County of Imperial (County), State of California (State). The City is located along Interstate Route 8 (I-8) between San Diego, California and Yuma, Arizona, and is situated approximately 10 miles north of the United States-Mexico border. State Route 86 (SR-86) traverses the City in a north-south direction. Rail lines of the Southern Pacific Railroad traverse the city in a northwest-southeast direction.

The City is home to approximately 44,000 residents and serves as the center of commercial, general government, recreational, and cultural activities for much of the surrounding Imperial Valley region. Land within City boundaries comprises approximately 12 square miles. The City's SOI contains land outside the existing boundaries of the City that is currently in the jurisdiction of the County but is planned for incorporation into the City boundaries in the future. The City and the City's SOI encompass approximately 26 square miles, or about 16,500 acres of land.

The existing General Plan provides a structure for development and planning within the City and the City's SOI. To guide planning within the area, the Land Use Element includes six major land use groupings: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Mixed Use, Community Facilities, and Overlay. While the General Plan does not contain a specific agricultural land use designation, the City shares in the rich agricultural heritage of the surrounding region, and much of the land within the City's SOI is still used for various agricultural purposes. The maintenance of agricultural uses is allowed within the General Plan's Rural Residential land use designation. The General Plan does not foresee the permanent retention of large-scale agricultural operations within City limits, but the City generally maintains a policy of allowing small agricultural operations on certain land as it is transitioned from agricultural uses to other urban uses.

The City provides many public facilities and services to residents and businesses within its boundaries. The General Plan Public Facilities Element outlines the existing systems and future plans for the public provision of facilities and services such as parks, schools, libraries, fire protection, law enforcement, water and wastewater, and general government facilities. The General Plan Mobility Element discusses the system of public roadways maintained by the City and outlines future plans for the system's expansion and improvement.

2.2 Purpose of the Service Area Plan

This SAP has been prepared for the City in accordance with the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, which requires that a plan identifying the existing and projected demand for public facilities and services be prepared by all incorporated cities and special districts within the State. The 2000 legislation is implemented by Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), whose policy states that a city within the jurisdiction of Imperial County LAFCo must prepare an SAP in order for any formal annexation of land into the city's boundaries take place.

2.3 Organization and Use of the Service Area Plan

This SAP outlines the City’s existing public services and facilities, estimates the current and future anticipated demand for such facilities and services, and describes how necessary facilities and services will or may be developed and extended to meet demands. The SAP is intended to demonstrate the City’s intent and ability to provide adequate services to the SOI boundaries at the time of annexation.

An approximately 10-year planning horizon is used to forecast growth, and the estimated demands and provision to meet demands are based on population projections in five-year increments until 2035. The population projections used in this document was provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Projected population growth was placed into the structure and policies of the land use plan presented in the General Plan.

The document is organized into the following six chapters that satisfy the requirements set forth in the LAFCo guidelines:

Chapter 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Provides a brief summary of the SAP, highlighting key information regarding demand and financing.

Chapter 2.0 INTRODUCTION: Outlines the purpose and intent of the SAP and presents its layout to help the reader use the document. This chapter also provides background information on the City and of the planning documents that enabled the preparation of the SAP.

Chapter 3.0 GROWTH PROJECTIONS: Provides general information about projected population, current and future land use trends in the City and the City’s SOI, and the implications of these trends for the development of City services and facilities.

Chapter 4.0 FACILITIES AND SERVICES: Details the current and planned facilities and services, their current and projected adequacy, measures to ensure adequacy, and how such measures will be achieved and financed. An analysis of the following facilities and services are provided:

- Administration
- Drainage
- Fire
- Law Enforcement
- Library
- Parks and Recreation
- Circulation
- Wastewater
- Water

Analysis for each public service and facilities area in the SAP is based on the standards developed by LAFCo. Each subchapter of Chapter 4 contains the following four sections:

- **Performance Standard:** A description of any standards or goals that have been adopted by the City to the review of the adequacy of service within the existing and future timeframes.
- **Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis:** An inventory of the existing facilities, the adequacy of the facilities when compared to existing demands, the anticipated demand for facilities pursuant to growth of the City, and the phasing of the demand for facilities.
- **Financing:** An explanation and identification of how services and facilities are currently being funded, including a per capita cost where available and applicable, and how future services and facilities may be funded.
- **Mitigation:** A series of recommendations to ensure that adequate facilities will be provided and proper levels of service will be maintained.

Figures are often provided within the various sections of Chapter 4 that show City maps and the relationship of existing and planned facilities to anticipated growth within City boundaries and the SOI. Figures for each service and facilities area are presented at the end of each section.

Chapter 5.0 FINANCING: Identifies all of the potential funding mechanisms for public services and facilities provision that are available to the City. This section presents potential funding sources and then identifies how each service or facility sector is currently funded and appropriate future funding opportunities, as well as cost saving opportunities.

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SECTION 3 – GROWTH AND PHASING PROJECTIONS

3.1 Existing Land Use

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the City has a population of 44,322 residents and is the regional center for the greater Imperial Valley region, which has a population of approximately 179,702. As the regional center for the surrounding area and the seat of the County, the City provides general government services and many opportunities for shopping, dining, healthcare, recreational, and cultural activities. In addition to its residential, commercial, and general government uses, the City includes various agricultural and industrial operations.

The City's incorporated area and Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundaries are shown in Figure 3-1. In all, the total area consists of approximately 16,500 acres of land bound on the north by the Central Drain/Treshill Road, the south by West McCabe Road, the east by State Route 111, and the west by Austin Road. The City of Imperial is located directly north of the City's northern SOI boundary. The unincorporated township of Heber is located directly south of the City's southern SOI boundary.

Existing land use in the City is governed by the provisions of the City of El Centro Zoning Ordinance and is guided by the goals and policies presented in the General Plan. The Land Use Element of El Centro's General Plan was updated in June 2021 to reflect current demographic, economic, and environmental considerations, ensuring that the city's growth and development strategies are in line with contemporary needs and goals. By implementing the language of the General Plan Land Use Element, the City dictates what type of land uses are allowed throughout specific areas within its boundaries.

The General Plan Land Use Element lists the following land use designations: Rural Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High Medium Density Residential, General Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial, Office Commercial, Heavy Commercial, Tourist Commercial, Downtown Commercial, Mixed Use, General Industrial, Light Industrial, Civic, and Public. Land use designations within the City and SOI boundaries are shown in Figure 3-2. In addition to the land use designations, the Land Use Element includes a series of overlays including: Single Family Neighborhood Overlay, El Centro Regional Medical Center (ECRMC) Overlay, Medical Office Overlay, and Mixed Use 2 Overlay. Certain areas are also overlaid as Special Planning Area – Master Planned Mixed Use, where development standards are guided by a Specific Plan if/when property is annexed into the City.

Much of the land surrounding the City is involved in agricultural uses, as farming has historically been a principal component of the region's economy. The General Plan does not contain an exclusive agricultural land use designation, but agricultural uses are allowed within the Rural Residential designation. It is generally the City's policy to allow continuation of existing agricultural activity on land while planning for the development of this land for other uses.

3.2 Planned Land Use

Planning and development within the City and its SOI boundaries is guided by the goals and policies of the General Plan Land Use Element. Through the implementation of this element and the application of the land use designations detailed above, the City is able to foresee where and to what extent growth would occur within its boundaries and the SOI boundaries. Generally speaking, the City's land use policy encourages infill development within the boundaries of existing developed areas instead of new development of agricultural lands or vacant lands. These residential policies intend to enhance access to existing facilities, increase utilization of public services and encourage walkability. Additional development in the outlying areas is not, however, precluded by any City policy and development often occurs as such. Overall, the objective for planned land uses is to accommodate anticipated population projections for the planning period while providing the community with a variety of housing opportunities at a range of densities, housing types, and affordability levels.

There are several areas outside of the City boundaries and within the jurisdiction of the County that are planned for future development and annexation into the City. It is assumed that all of the land within the City's SOI will one day be annexed into the City proper. Some of the areas planned for annexation have already been developed for residential, industrial, or public uses, but remain unincorporated land within the County jurisdiction. The existing levels of public service and facilities provided in the potential annexation areas are identified by their categorization into one of the three growth level tiers of the Urban Development Program (UDP), which is described below. The General Plan does not provide a specific schedule for annexation of land into the City.

3.2.1 Urban Development Program

El Centro adopted an Urban Development Plan (UDP) to facilitate residential, industrial, and business growth in those areas where public services are available and to provide a variety of growth locations so that an adequate supply of developable land will maintain reasonable housing costs and promote economic development. The UDP is designed to create a community that is compact, pedestrian- and transit-oriented, that avoids the premature removal of land from agricultural production, and that enables the City to meet the public service and infrastructure needs of the existing and future residents.

The UDP divides the City and the SOI into three tiers of growth areas and delineates availability of land for growth, identifies the areas that will require more extensive planning, and ensures the provision of adequate public services and facilities, as described below. The three growth levels are not necessarily meant to provide a sequence of development, but to delineate areas where different levels of planning efforts would be necessary due to the greater or lesser extent of existing services and facilities.

The UDP includes a requirement that a Community Facilities Study be prepared for certain projects under review within the development areas. Community Facilities Studies, prepared at the expense of the project applicant, address existing conditions, anticipated needs, and financing plans for city sewer, water, drainage/flood control, and Circulation Element roadways affected by the prospective development.

A Community Facilities Study is not required when: 1) an Environmental Impact Report or Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the project discusses the existing conditions and impacts to the relevant public services and utilities; 2) the project is a subdivision of five or fewer lots or a commercial or industrial development of five acres or less and the owner/subdivider does not own or control other contiguous property within the same Development Tier Subarea; and 3) the Initial Study prepared for the project does not conclude that the project may have a significant impact of public services and facilities or the project does not require sewer or water facilities. Reimbursement agreements, improvement districts, and other public finance strategies may be used to cost-effectively provide needed public infrastructure, as deemed necessary by the City Council.

As identified in the General Plan Land Use Element, the three tiers of the UDP are as follows:

Development Tier I – Current Urban Service Area includes land within and adjacent to the present City Limits. In most cases, new development within this area can be served by gravity sewer lines to existing trunk sewers. Generally, existing water lines and reservoirs are also adequate to serve new development; however, easements and financial contributions to improve the ultimate wastewater and water systems may be required by developments within this tier. Existing facilities for fire, police, schools, parks, library, medical, roads, and other City services are also in proximity to these areas, though service capacities are likely to be limited and improvements to existing facilities and/or new facilities may be needed to adequately accommodate new development. Subdivisions of land and commercial or industrial development within this area would usually follow existing standard procedures for zoning, subdivision, and environmental review, and, due to the general availability of services and facilities, would usually not require the preparation of a Community Facilities Study.

Development Tier II – Planned Urban Service Area includes land both within and adjacent to the City limits, but differs from Development Tier I in that public infrastructure to serve new development is more limited. Essential required improvements may include wastewater and water pump stations, water storage reservoirs, and sewer trunk lines or force mains. New schools, parks, roadway improvements, and fire stations may also be required to adequately serve development within Tier II areas. As with Tier I areas, additional service capacity for police, library, medical, and other City services may also be needed to accommodate new development. Preparation of a Community Facilities Study would be required for most development projects within Tier II areas unless otherwise exempted as described in the Community Facilities Study Requirements and Exemptions.

Development Tier III – Future Urban Service Area encompasses unincorporated lands that are generally not planned for development within at least the next ten years. However, identification of a parcel as Tier III does not necessarily preclude development within this timeframe. Rather, the Tier III label indicates that services and facilities are usually not available in the area and that subdivision of land and subsequent commercial or industrial development within this area would require that a Community Facilities Study be prepared, unless otherwise exempted.

Development Tier Subarea establishes development projects proposed in the Development Tier III area to allow for the planning for water and sewer services through the preparation of a Community Facilities Study. This is not required for development in the Development Tiers I and II since the City's Water and Sewer Master Plans delineate water and sewer improvements needed to serve those areas. The Water and Sewer Master Plans shall be used to evaluate the project's water and sewer needs and the impact of those needs on the City's water and sewer systems. The project drainage and flood control facilities shall be evaluated using whatever master plans are available from the City or other agency having jurisdiction over such matters. The project needs and impacts related to local and regional roadways are evaluated using the Mobility Element.

The three development tiers and their geographical association with the City and SOI boundaries are shown on Figure 3-3. There is some overlap between the City boundaries and the development tiers, as portions of the existing City proper are indicated as Tier I and Tier II areas. The area within the City limits that is considered developed and not within any of the development tiers is shown on Figure 3-3 with underlying aerial imagery.

3.2.2 Approved, Planned, and Proposed Development

While the General Plan identifies the general areas of the UDP that are planned for development as the City grows, there are several specific projects that either are under construction, have been approved by the City, are currently in the planning stages for implementation within the 2035 horizon, or which the City expects to be developed in the future. These future projects present an anticipated demand on some or all of the City's services. The projects are listed below and are located within the City's current boundaries.

Residential

Parkside Residential is a proposed 114-single family residential development located along the east side of 8th Street approximately 625 feet south of Horne Road. This site is outside of the City's incorporated boundaries, and an annexation would accompany development of the project.

Willowbend is a proposed 134-single family residential development located along the west side of 4th Street approximately 630 feet south of Horne Road. This site is outside of the City's incorporated boundaries, and an annexation would accompany development of the project.

6th Street and Spear Avenue Apartments is a multi-family apartment project that is located at the north-east corner of 6th Street and Spear Avenue. The project entails the construction of 288 affordable housing units.

La Brucherie Apartments is a proposed 177-unit multi-family apartment project that is located at the southeast corner of La Brucherie Avenue and West Main Street.

Town Center Village Phase IV Apartments is a multi-family project located at the northwest corner of North 8th Street and Bradshaw Avenue. The project at full completion will develop 180 total units. Currently there are 24 units constructed and 48 units that will begin construction.

Lotus Ranch is a proposed 213-acre project that consists of 609 single-family units, a 10.8-acre park, and offsite improvements on La Brucherie Avenue south of Interstate 8. This project was annexed into the City of El Centro and began construction shortly thereafter in early 2018. There are currently 22 units constructed and 22 pending construction.

Mixed Use

Town Center Single Family and Industrial Park is a 102 single family unit subdivision and 17.3 acre industrial park project located at the north west corner of North 8th Street and Cruickshank Drive.

Commercial

Imperial Valley Commons consists of approximately 780,000 square feet of commercial/retail space located in the southeastern portion of the City south of the I-8 on Danenberg Drive and Dogwood Avenue.

City Projects

Police Station is located at 150 North 11th Street will be upgraded to a brand-new state of the art facility that at full completion will include two buildings that will be a combined 44,477 square feet. This will include a 32,671 square foot- 2 story building that will include a lobby, community meeting space, offices for administration, investigators, records and also patrol related functions such as report writing areas, lockers, and a fitness area. The remaining 11,806 square feet will house property and evidence, K-9 officer facilities, fingerprint laboratory, and other police support and storage function. As of February 2024, the construction has commenced and is expected to be completed in fiscal year 2025-2026.

South Imperial Avenue Extension Phases I and II will continue the connection from Interstate 8 to Danenberg Drive. The project is currently under construction which is expected to conclude in early 2024. The project will improve the quality of life of the Citizens of El Centro by providing the southern portion of the City additional access to housing, shopping centers, medical and governmental facilities.

3.3 Projected Population Increase

In 2020, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the “Connect SoCAL Technical Report: Demographics and Growth Forecast.” The document provides detailed information and projections about population trends, demographics, and growth patterns in the Southern California region. In this report, SCAG forecasted that the City of El Centro population would increase to 58,800 residents in 2045. In September 2021, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the population of El Centro in the 2020 Census was 44,322.

The population difference between 2020 and 2045 is 14,478. The year-to-year average growth rate was calculated by dividing the population difference by the number of years between 2020 and 2045, which is 25 years. With the calculated year-to-year average growth rate, population projections were generated for incremental years between 2020 and 2045. The results from using this methodology produced the population projections shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Projected Population Increase

Year	Population
2020	44,322
2025	47,769
2030	50,513
2035	52,009
2040	56,104
2045	58,800

Source: SCAG

These estimates assume a constant year-to-year average growth rate, and actual population changes may vary due to various factors not accounted for in this calculation. An approximate 10-year time horizon was used for the purposes of this SAP, and the population projection for the year 2035, 52,009 residents, was utilized to evaluate future demand on public facilities and services.

State law specifies that the City must assess housing needs by reviewing the current housing market and identifying programs that will meet housing needs as part of the required Housing Element of the General Plan. Included in this evaluation is the City’s “Regional Housing Needs Allocation” (RHNA) which provides an estimate of the number of housing units that should be provided in the City to meet its share of new households in the region. The RHNA cycle period for compliance began on June 30, 2021 and extends through October 15, 2029 (before the 10-year time horizon for this SAP ends in 2035).

SCAG is responsible for allocating the RHNA to individual jurisdictions based on the following State Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) household income categories and County Area Median Income (AMI):

- Extremely Low Income – up to 30 percent of AMI
- Very Low Income – 31 to 50 percent of AMI
- Low Income – 51 to 80 percent of AMI
- Moderate Income – 81 to 120 percent of AMI
- Above Moderate Income – greater than 120 percent of AMI

It should be noted that the current RHNA cycle utilized the most recent AMI, which was \$47,622 in 2019. Therefore, SCAG assigned a RHNA of 3,442 units, in the following income distribution:

- Extremely Low Income: 500 units
- Very Low Income: 501 units
- Low Income: 490 units
- Moderate Income: 462 units
- Above Moderate Income: 1,489 units

3.4 2040 Buildout Projections

In June 2021, the City of El Centro completed the Land Use Element (LUE) of the El Centro General Plan Update 2040. This document provides a strategic framework for where and how growth will occur in the future. The Land Use Element is integrated with various city plans and programs such as the Service Area Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Water Master Plan. These documents provide essential guidance and data for estimating the current and future demand for public facilities and services, allowing for comprehensive planning.

The Land Use Element 2040 Build-Out Projections, outlined in Table 3-2, estimate the potential future development of the city, including the number of housing units, population, and non-residential development square footage. While total build-out at maximum capacity is not expected during the planning period for this Service Area Plan, these projections provide a basis for understanding the city's potential growth trajectory.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the average household occupancy in the city of El Centro is 3.72 persons per household. Using the number of dwelling units for each land use designation outlined in the table below, projected population numbers for 2040 were calculated using the average household occupancy metric.

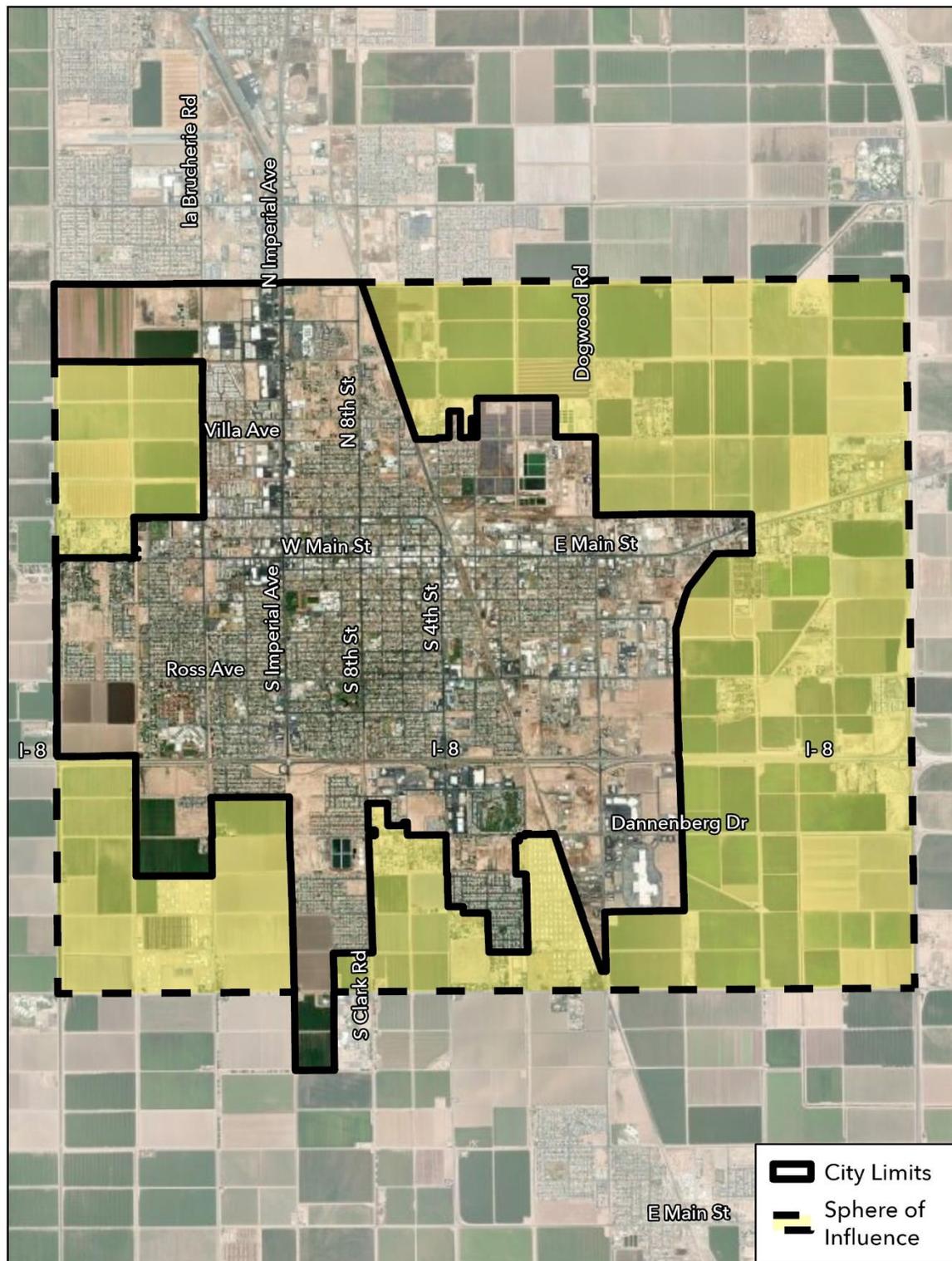
Table 3-2 2040 Buildout Projections

Land Use Designations	Number of Dwelling Units ¹		Non-Residential Square Feet (thousands) ²		Population ³	
	City	SOI	City	SOI	City	SOI
Residential	18,152	29,318	---	---	60,773	98,157
Commercial	---	---	10,454	570	---	---
Industrial	---	---	11,103	8,346	---	---
Mixed Use	---	---	---	---	---	---
Community Facilities	---	---	11,944	1,264	---	---
Overlays	602	---	396	---	2,015	---
Opportunity Areas	2,016	1,739	10,541	742	6,750	5,822
TOTAL	20,770	31,057	44,438	10,922	69,538	103,979

Notes: City = City of El Centro; SOI = Sphere of Influence

- ¹ The number of dwelling units is based on average density at build-out, not maximum allowable density.
- ² Shown in thousands of square feet. The non-residential development square footage is based on average intensity (average FAR) at build-out, not maximum allowable intensity.
- ³ Per buildout assumptions and average household size for El Centro. A 10% vacancy rate is assumed.

While this SAP utilizes an approximate 10-year planning horizon for the year 2035, 2040 Buildout Projections provided by the El Centro General Plan Update 2040 contributes valuable insights toward understanding how development potential can influence future population growth.

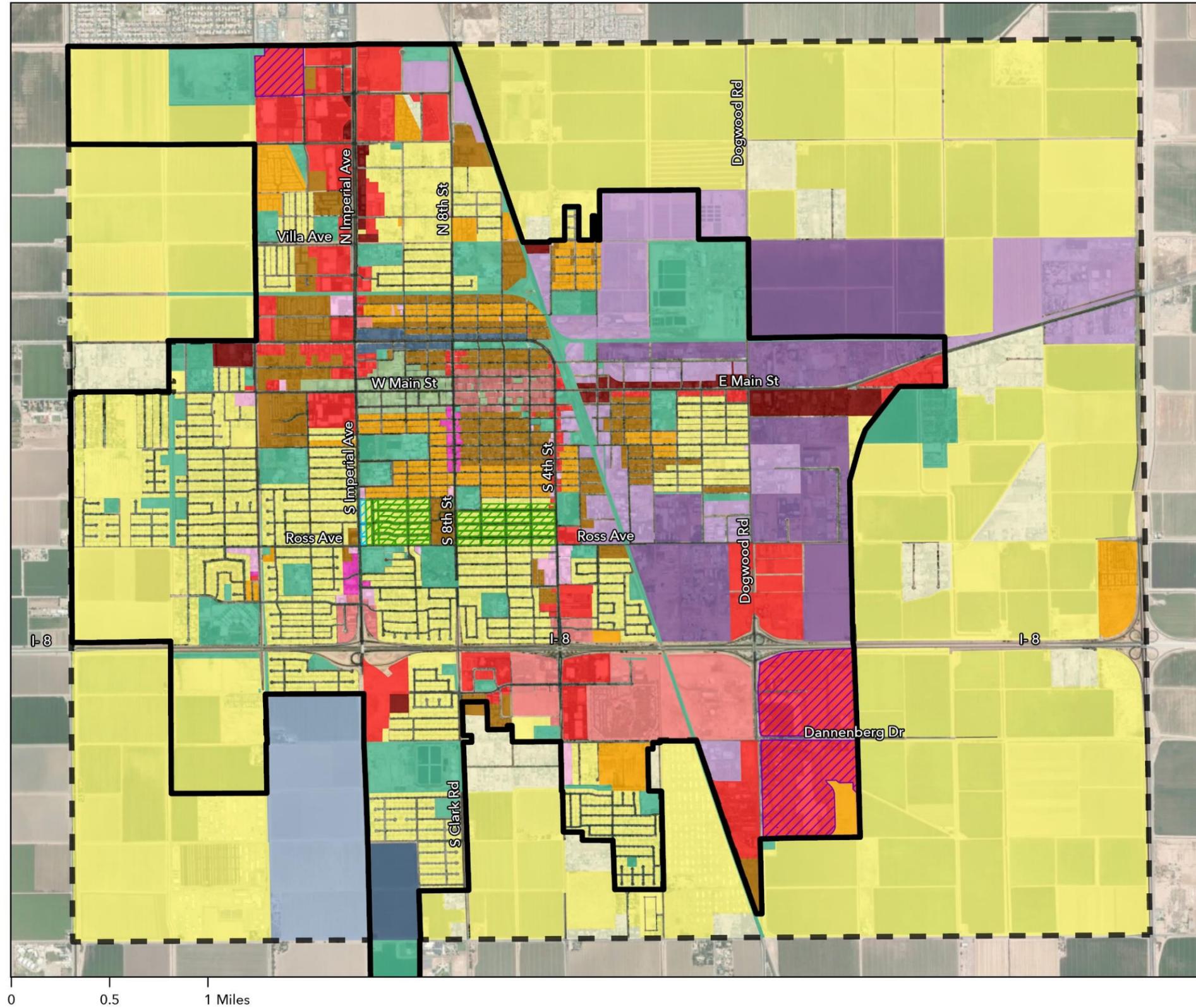


0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



Figure 3-1
Sphere of Influence

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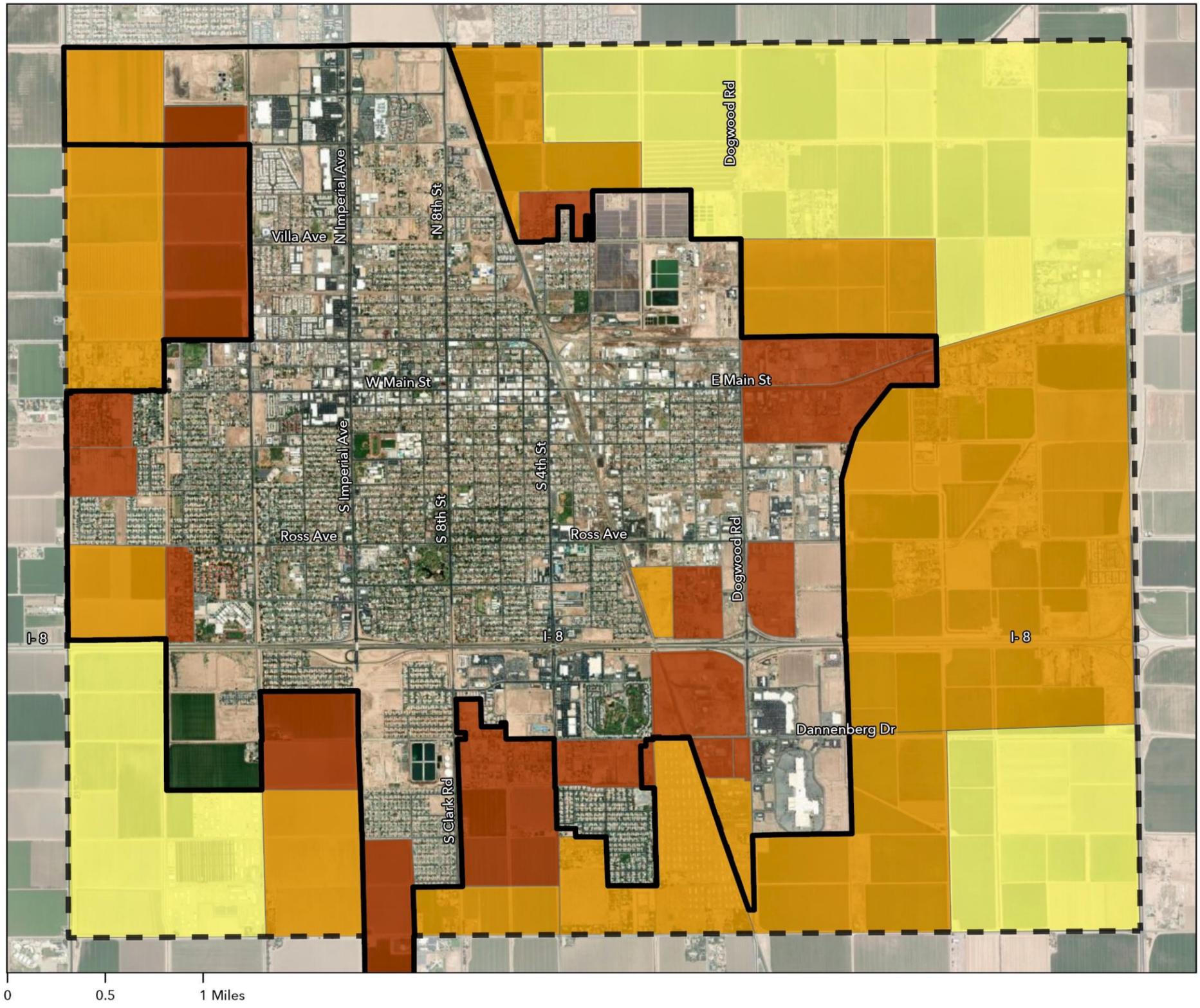


Figure 3-3
Urban Development
Program Tiers

- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- Development Tier Areas**
- Tier I Growth Areas
- Tier II Growth Areas
- Tier III Growth Areas



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SECTION 4 – PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The following chapter provides a detailed account of the various public services and facilities that are developed, maintained, and operated by the City. This section covers facilities and services for City administration, drainage, fire, law enforcement, library, parks and recreation, transportation and roadways, wastewater treatment and sewer, water and schools. For each of these facilities, an inventory of existing facilities is given and performance standards are identified (where applicable) to gauge the effectiveness and adequacy of the existing facilities. Demands for future facilities are discussed relative to projected growth outlined in Chapter 3. Where applicable, plans for future facilities are discussed. Discussion is presented regarding the current funding methods for each facilities area and the prospective sources of funding that could be used in the future. Finally, mitigation measures are presented that would aid the City in ensuring future adequacy and efficiency.

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4.1 General Government Facilities

The City owns and operates buildings that house general government services. These general government facilities are located in several centrally located buildings collectively known as City Hall, located at 1275 Main Street. There are currently three buildings in City Hall. The southeastern building houses the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, and Human Resources. The northeastern building houses the Finance Department, City Clerk's Office, Engineering Division of Public Works and the Community Development Department. The northwestern building consists of the Council Chambers. The City is divided into the following Departments: City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Human Resources, City Clerk's Office, Finance, Community Development, Community Services, and Public Works. Additional government offices and buildings that provide specialized functions are located at various locations throughout the City. Several state and federal government offices are located in El Centro, including the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Border Patrol, Social Security Administration, Employment Development Department, and the Department of Agriculture.

A brief description of each Department follows:

City Manager's Office: The City Manager's Office oversees the entire organization, with policy direction from City Council. The City Manager's Office is also responsible for the preparation of the City's periodic newsletter, social media accounts and the City's website.

City Attorney's Office: The City Attorney's Office and its staff provide legal services to the City Council and all City departments. The Office provides a wide assortment of services to the City, such as representing the City in litigation, preparing ordinance and resolutions, reviewing and preparing contracts, advising the City on all legal affairs, and other legal matters as necessary.

Human Resources: The office of Human Resources is responsible for services which include staff recruitment; classification and compensation; benefit and retirement administration; employee relations; training and organizational development; employee assistance; employee recognition programs and policy and procedure development and interpretation.

City Clerk's Office: The City Clerk's office and its staff are under the direction of the City Council. The Office is generally charged with fulfilling public records requests, preparing agendas and minutes for the City Council, Successor Agency, and the Finance Authority.

Finance: The Finance Department manages the financial affairs of the City and Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency. Responsibilities include providing financial information to the City Manager and City Council regarding the fiscal affairs of the City, preparing the annual budget and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, administering the payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable programs, cashiering, business license administration, purchasing and utility billing.

Community Development: The Community Development Department is responsible for coordinating long range planning and regulating private development in the City, which includes planning, zoning, code enforcement, and building inspections. The Department also issues building permits. This Department also coordinates the activities of the City's Planning Commission. The Commission meets once monthly to review development projects and makes recommendations to the City Council.

Community Services: The Community Services Department (CSD) offers a wide variety of community services and oversees an array of City-owned facilities. The Community Services Department contains the following Divisions and facilities: Economic Development, Public Library, Parks and Recreation, Adult Center, Community Center, and Youth Center. The Economic Development Division is responsible for the City's economic development and housing activities. The Public Library Division is tasked with managing the City's public library and public library activities. The Parks and Recreation Division manages the City's public parks and landscaping within City-owned right of ways. The Community Services Department is located at 1249 West Main Street, neighboring City Hall on the east side.

Public Works: The Department of Public Works is the largest department in the City. It is organized into six Divisions that provide a wide range of services needed by residents and businesses: Engineering, Street & Utility Maintenance, Environmental Compliance, Facility Maintenance, Water Treatment Plant, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Engineering Division is tasked with overseeing private development and maintaining public infrastructure by providing professional engineering and inspection services. Street & Utility Maintenance is responsible for all local City streets as well as the storm sewer collection system, water distribution and sewage collection system. The Environmental Compliance Division oversees compliance with applicable State regulations and City ordinances related to Trash and Recycling, Stormwater, Sewer Pretreatment and Water Conservation. Facility Maintenance is a support division for all other departments in the City and has the responsibility of keeping the City's buildings operating effectively and economically. The Water Treatment Division ensures that the local public water supply system continues to deliver safe and plentiful supply of drinking water to the public. The Wastewater Treatment Division ensures that wastewater is treated effectively and ensures compliance with state and federal water treatment requirements.

I. Performance Standard

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) requires that the general government facilities section of the SAP include a performance standard that measures demand generated for square feet of facility. The performance standard is a range of 500 to 600 square feet of general government facility space per 1,000 residents. In interviews with City general government staff as part of the SAP process, it was determined that the current space is adequate to serve the staff and population. In November 2014, the City completed a \$1.2 million dollar renovation of the City Council Chambers that included upgrades to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

requirements, new ventilation, enhanced lighting, and technology upgrades. The renovation allowed the City to improve existing general government facilities without having to add additional space. The performance standard range allows the City the flexibility to accommodate future growth and provide adequate service through a variety of enhancements without having to necessarily add additional space. In addition to the amount of square footage, the performance standard for providing personnel is a range of 0.75 to 1.0 full-time equivalent staff members per 1,000 residents. This standard is based on the current ratio of general government personnel employed at the City of El Centro to the current population.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

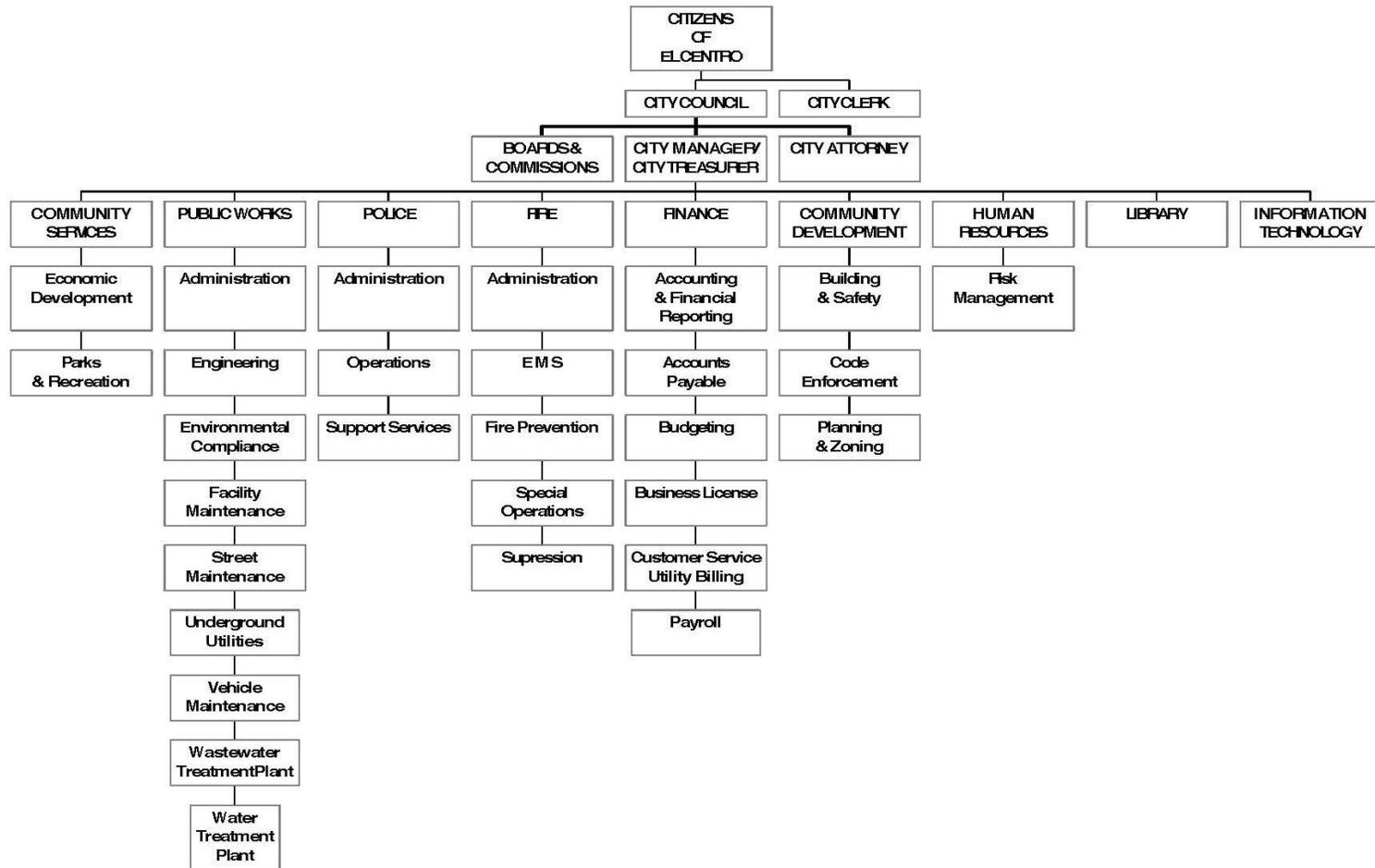
The City’s general government facilities are located within what is known as the Civic Center zone; encompassing several blocks with a central location along Main Street, State Street and Broadway between Imperial Avenue and 8th Street. Along with City Hall and the Economic Development Building, the Civic Center zone also includes the El Centro Police Department (ECPD), whose facilities are discussed in Section 4.4 of this SAP. Several County buildings, including the Courthouse and general government facilities, as well as the El Centro Customer Service Center and the Bill Conduit Auditorium of the Imperial Irrigation District are also located in Civic Center, although these structures are not operated by the City. The following list provides an inventory of the square footage of the City general government facilities.

Table 4.1-1 General Government Facilities

Facility	Size (Square Feet)
City Hall Building A (City Manager and Human Resources)	4,800
City Hall Building B (City Clerk, Community Development, and Finance)	10,700
City Hall Building C (City Council Chambers)	2,500
Facility Maintenance Building	4,700
Economic Development Building	4,100
Total	26,800

The square footage totals listed above include the remodeling of the City Council Chambers which was completed in November 2014.

Figure 4-1 City of El Centro Organizational Chart



Adequacy of Existing Facilities

The existing City general government facilities are in acceptable condition and spacious enough to accommodate the scope and scale of City general government services. With 26,800 sf of building area of general government facility space and a population of 44,322 residents, the City meets the performance standard of 500 - 600 sf of general government facility space per 1,000 residents, currently providing 605 sf of general governmental space per 1,000 residents. The existing amount of office and meeting space is acceptable to accommodate current employees, customers, other users of the City's general government facilities, and the future population.

Although the City was deeply affected by the recession that began in 2008, it did not layoff any City employees, thereby, continuing to provide adequate levels of service to the community. According to City staff, 55 full-time equivalent general government employees work for the City, including the City Council, City Clerk's office, City Manager's office, Human Resources, City Attorney's office, Information Technology, Engineering Division, Economic Development Department, Community Development Department, Finance and Facility Maintenance. With a population of 44,322 in 2020, the current staffing ratio is 1.24 employees per 1,000 residents, satisfying the performance standard range of 0.75 to 1.0 full-time equivalent employees per 1,000 residents.

Future Demand for Facilities

Increased development within the City boundaries and SOI will present increased demands on the City's general government facilities as programs and personnel are added to serve the increase in population to 50,513 in 2030 and 52,009 in 2035. To meet the minimum performance standard for government facility square footage for the projected population of 52,009 residents by 2035, the City would need to provide approximately 26,000 sf government facility space. The existing administrative facilities encompassing 26,800 sf of space would accommodate this anticipated population. To meet the minimum performance standard for general government staff, the City would need to employ 39 full-time equivalent general government employees. Currently, with 34.5 government personnel, the City is on track to accommodate future growth by 2035, in terms of adequate staffing.

The existing general government facilities are centrally located in an area that is easily accessible to many City residents. Maintaining a centrally located City Hall within the Civic Center zone is an effective way to administer City programs and services and is in conformance with General Plan Public Services Policy 6.1. It is not likely that growth within the SOI will demand that additional facilities be constructed in new locations, as the current central location will remain accessible to new development throughout the SOI. Currently, the City exceeds the performance standard for general government facility space for the existing population, which is essential for preparing for future population growth in the City and SOI. Improvements in technology, amount of general government personnel, and other facility enhancements will be necessary to accommodate population growth in the future.

When needed, future demands can be met by expanding existing structures. Should this not prove to be a feasible option, the City may consider purchasing additional land within the immediate vicinity of the City Hall, especially land within the adjacent Civic Center zone.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

A publicly available conference room located in the City of El Centro Public Library is occasionally used for meetings when conference space is unavailable in City Hall buildings.

Phasing

The City does not currently have any plans for the construction or expansion of the general government facilities within the Civic Center. Any new or future expansion or construction of administrative facilities will be tied to population growth, available funds and budget considerations, strategic planning, and infrastructure and services requirements.

As the City grows, the expansion of general government facilities would likely occur within the existing City Hall building complex or the adjacent Civic Center zone. Maintaining a single, centrally located Civic Center will facilitate efficient operation of general government programs and services.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to provide residents adequate general government services and to assure that future demands for services and facilities are properly identified and addressed, the City will implement the following measures:

- Comply with the performance standards for City general government facilities and government personnel.
- Periodically review the general government facilities, services and personnel of the City through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as City growth continues to increase the demand on facilities, services, and staff.
- Continue to periodically review user fees charged for services of the Planning, Building and Engineering Divisions and implement annual fee adjustments proposed by the 2019 User Fee Study.
- Allocate Measure P funds strategically to finance necessary capital improvements toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

The maintenance and operation of the City’s general government facilities and staffing for general government services is financed by the General Fund. The City charges user fees for performing various general government tasks, as well. The funds from these fees are deposited into the General Fund. The General Fund is further described in Section 5 of this SAP.

The City charges development impact fees for “other public facilities.” These fees may be partially used to fund large-scale development and improvement projects related to general government facilities. The City’s development impact fees program is described in Section 5 of this SAP.

In November of 2016, El Centro residents approved Measure P. This measure increased the sales tax rate by ½ of 1% effective April 1, 2017. The purpose of the tax was to address major capital needs, focusing on improving and replacing important facilities needed by the City’s residents and employees. The annual revenue from this tax is estimated to be approximately \$5 million. Ballot language for Measure P indicated that funds would be allocated toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements.

In March of 2019, the City of El Centro completed a User Fee Study to determine the full costs incurred by the City to support the various activities for which the City charges user fees and identify potential fee deficiencies. The total cost of each service included in this analysis was based on the full cost of providing City services, including direct salaries and benefits of City staff, direct departmental costs, and indirect costs from central service support. The proper identification of additional services (new or existing services) and creation of a consistent and comprehensive fee schedule was the primary objective of this study.

The fee schedule was adopted in 2019, updating the user fees charged by the following City Departments: Fire Department; Police Department; City Clerk; Library and Parks & Recreation. Planning & Zoning; Engineering; and Building & Safety. Fees increase at the beginning of each fiscal year based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a cap of 3%.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

There are no cost savings opportunities for the City identified at this time.

Recommended Funding

The City will continue to use the General Fund for the maintenance and operation of the general government facilities and general government staff. As the City continues to grow, any necessary expansion of the facilities or acquisition of additional property for general government facilities could be financed by issuing bonds or collecting development impact fees.

An updated Development Impact Fee Study would serve to evaluate fees and align revenues with capital projects that mitigate new growth through the expansion of public facilities and services. Any increase in development impact fees for general government facilities would increase the funds available to pay for specific large-scale development or improvement projects related to such facilities.

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4.2 Drainage Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system of drains that conveys storm water and urban runoff. The majority of the drainage system was constructed in “piecemeal” fashion. As areas in the City developed and streets were improved, the drainage system was extended or retrofitted to convey surface runoff from the development and streets. The system is managed by the wastewater division of the Department of Public Works, and the City does not maintain a separate budget for drainage maintenance or improvements.

I. Performance Standard

In April of 2009 the City drafted a Master Plan of Drainage (MPD) to establish drainage design criteria, identify the existing drainage deficient areas subject to localized flooding, and recommend drainage improvements that eliminate or reduce existing deficiencies to a level of insignificance. The MPD also presents cost estimates and schedules for the design and construction of the recommended drainage improvements. Per the MPD, the performance standard for drainage facilities is intended to prevent flood conditions that would adversely affect residences, businesses, and facilities during a ten-year frequency storm event. The City’s Storm Water Ordinance details specific design standards for roadways and development, which include gutters and proper slopes from the centerline to the edge of the roadway to address drainage and prevent pooling.

The drainage system must conform to the specific standards set forth by National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) requirements, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements, and Imperial Irrigation District (IID) requirements. The NPDES Phase II Final Rule prevents the release, or discharge, of pollutants to receiving water bodies. Administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin (RWQCB), this rule mandates the regulation of stormwater discharges from small MS4s. SWRCB subsequently issued Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ in 2003, establishing the previous Phase II Small MS4 General Permit, ensuring compliance with SWRCB performance standards for the City's drainage facilities.

Since the City was classified as a small MS4, the City updated its Jurisdictional Runoff Management Program (JRMP) in 2015 to meet SWMP requirements. The program identified new development and reporting requirements, as well as new stormwater quality design standards, establishing construction permit requirements fully enforceable via the City Code. The JRMP Post-Construction Storm Water Standards Manual identifies requirements to implement post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) applicable to certain development projects.

The City intends to update the Drainage Master Plan in 2024 using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to identify recommended drainage improvements and reestablish design criteria to achieve the ten-year frequency flood event performance standard. The City also added the Environmental Compliance Division to monitor and implement State stormwater programs.

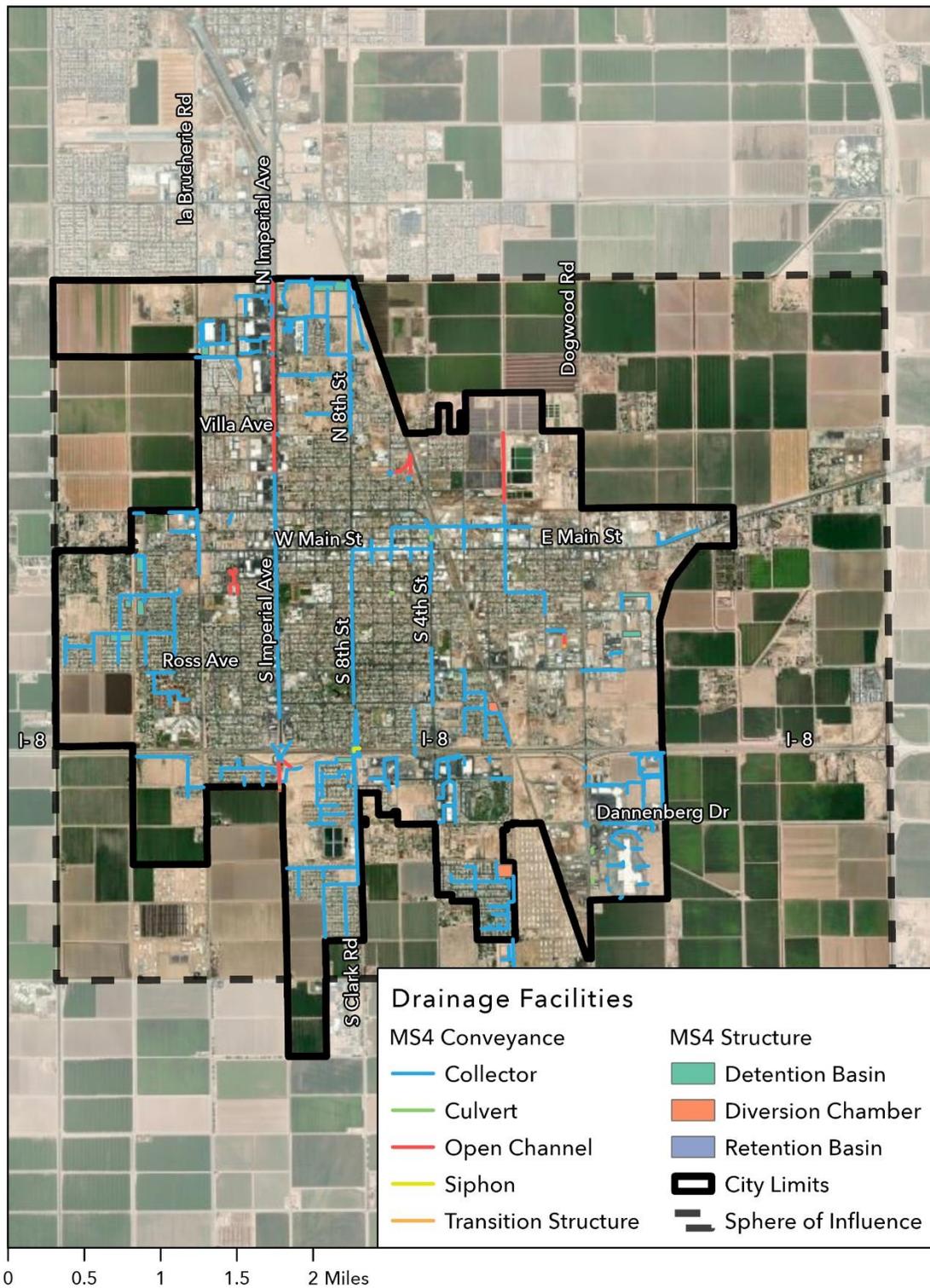


Figure 4-2
Drainage Facilities

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

In general, the City of El Centro drains in a north easterly direction and is tributary to the Salton Sea. According to the 2022 El Centro Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the City owns and operates 36.9 miles of storm drains. Underground drainage facilities primarily exist in the downtown portion of the City. Some City-operated facilities drain into irrigation drains owned and operated by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). Major improvements were last made to the drainage system in the 1980s. The inventory of drainage facilities are shown in Figure 4-2.

Contract Specification Special Provisions for all Capital Improvement Projects enforce compliance with NPDES requirements for all new developments and construction projects within the City. Gutters are required in new streets within the City, with curbs required along the outside edges of the streets and a two percent slope required from the roadway's center line to the curb. Gutters convey storm water and keep water from pooling in the roadway. The extensive drainage system begins at residence and businesses, flowing into streets, gutters, catch basins, curb inlets, pipes, channels, and rivers, eventually reaching the Salton Sea.

The City prepared a master plan for the drainage system in April of 2009 to provide comprehensive long-range plans for the implementation and performance of drainage facility improvements to align development with the City's drainage requirements. Drainage issues are reviewed on a project-by-project basis. As a general policy, the City approves of the installation of detention basins on development projects following Detention Basin Design Criteria standards. Projects developed within the City often contain grass fields or vegetated areas into which development-related flows drain and seep into the ground. Thus, drainage within the City is often self-contained within specific developments and may not flow into the larger, City-operated system.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

According to the Master Plan of Drainage (MPD), several of the existing storm drains have inadequate capacity to convey the runoff produced by a ten-year design storm event. There are several causes for a deficient storm drain system: undersized catch basin inlets, undersized catch basin lateral, undersized mainlines and street slopes flatter than the desired minimum value. The 2016 Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan notes that, historically, the Gillett/Cannon Roads area receives the heaviest flooding. It is at a low elevation east of El Centro, south of East Evan Hewes Highway. Numerous residences and mobile homes are located in the inundation area. Identification of high-priority flood areas in the City is critical for the implementation of necessary drainage improvements to avoid high-risk flooding events.

Ten high priority drainage projects were recommended to mitigate drainage deficiencies. Locations with chronic maintenance and confirmed flooded areas, flooded street areas of major arterials collectors and residential streets were identified to protect properties from a 10-year frequency storm. The entire storm drain system owned by the City was analyzed using the HYDRA routing software and using criteria on the following page to determine if a system component was deficient.

1. Where a problem area has been identified by City maintenance crews.
2. Where a 10-year storm exceeded the full capacity of the existing mainline storm drain.
3. Where 10-year frequency storm exceeds the top of curb elevation.

Ten segments of drainage facilities located throughout the City were identified as inadequate and needing improvements to meet the ten-year storm event performance standard. According to the City, these select facility improvements were not performed since they were proposed by the 2016 SAP as mitigative measures to accommodate for future population growth within the Service Area.

Future Demand for Facilities

The MPD identified ten locations that require improvements at existing deficient drainage facilities. These improvements include extensions to the existing storm drains, installations of a parallel storm drain, and the replacement of existing undersized systems. These facilities will require improvements to accommodate increased demand as the City's population grows. In addition, as the City continues to grow, additional impervious surface will be constructed over agricultural land or otherwise undeveloped land, disabling storm water and urban runoff from seeping into the ground through its natural drainage mechanism. This will require consideration for additional drainage facilities to prevent flood conditions.

The City will allow the construction of drainage facilities in each development that contains the flows from the development. Since 2015, both private developments requiring municipal permits and public projects were required to follow BMP standards described in the Post-Construction Storm Water Standards Manual. Facilities would be constructed and funded by the developer to prevent the City from needing to construct further major improvements in most parts of the City boundaries and SOI boundaries.

With the increasing intensity and frequency of severe weather events, flooding remains a significant hazard for the City, particularly when it exceeds the capacity of existing drainage infrastructure. Severe weather events like Tropical Storm Hilary, which occurred in August 2023, can overwhelm the city's drainage system and impact the efficacy of stormwater conveyance. Therefore, implementing capital improvements outlined in the Master Plan of Drainage (MPD) is crucial to mitigate these risks and enhance the city's resilience against future flood events.

In January 2021, Imperial County completed the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) Update in partnership with local Planning Jurisdictions which included the County of Imperial, City of El Centro, City of Brawley, City of Calexico, City of Calipatria, City of El Centro, City of Holtville, City of Imperial, and the City of Westmorland. The purpose of the MHMP is to significantly reduce deaths, injuries, and other disaster losses caused by natural and human-caused hazards in Imperial County. The MHMP describes past and current hazard mitigation activities and outlines goals, strategies, and actions for reducing future disaster losses.

Drainage improvement projects are considered for funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). This grant funding is available after a presidentially declared disaster.

Following the declaration of Tropical Storm Hilary as a disaster in November 2023, Imperial County and its jurisdictions became eligible for HMGP funding. This program offers financial support to develop hazard mitigation plans and implement projects aimed at reducing the impact of future disasters on the community. To access HMGP funding, the City must develop and adopt a hazard mitigation plan. These plans are essential prerequisites for submitting hazard mitigation project applications to ensure eligibility for receiving funding for such initiatives. The City should determine if the existing MHMP prepared by the County qualifies the City to apply for funding and should work with the County to implement future hazard mitigation projects effectively.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The City requires retention basins be landscaped and include pedestrian pathways. Thus, retention basins may also serve recreational purposes. Lotus Park is an example of a retention basin that also includes soccer fields for use by the public. However, these retention basins are not officially included as City park space since their primary function is for drainage, and they become inaccessible during rainstorms. The developer is responsible for the costs associated with establishing a landscape and lighting maintenance district for the maintenance of the detention/retention basin and any other development amenities. Any necessary stormwater pumps shall be maintained by the Lighting and Landscape District.

Phasing

Phasing of storm drain improvements is outlined in the twenty-year storm drain Capital Improvement Program (CIP) from the MPD. The proposed CIP scheduled the design and construction of the top ten Priority 1 projects over a twenty-year period. The projects will be constructed in phases over time as necessary funds become available and will be based on development impacts.

As development continues within City boundaries and the SOI, close consideration will be given for storm water drainage issues to prevent water quality and flood conditions. Newly constructed roads associated with new development will be engineered to City standards to include gutters and adequate slope from the centerline to facilitate proper conveyance.

III. Mitigation

For the City to assure the adequate provision of storm water and urban runoff drainage within the City boundaries and within the SOI, the City will implement the following measures:

- Continue implementation of the 2009 City of El Centro MPD and perform the identified high-priority drainage improvement projects.
- Update the MPD to identify the latest necessary drainage improvements and reestablish design criteria to achieve the ten-year frequency flood event performance standard.
- Continue to require new roadways within the City boundaries and the City SOI boundaries to meet City requirements for provision of gutter features and slopes to properly convey

storm flow.

- Continue to require that new development projects address potential drainage issues and provide adequate facilities to convey storm flow. For developments which drain into facilities of the City’s system, require the developer to consult with the Department of Public Works to ensure improvements are engineered and constructed to City standards.
- Require compliance with construction permits for MS4 stormwater quality requirements.
- Continue implementation of the City Storm Water Protection Program through enforcement of JRMP requirements and BMP standards for development projects.
- Implement the adopted policies from the City of El Centro’s Implementation Program outlined in the 2021 Imperial County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.
 - **Flooding Risk Reduction:** Reduce the risk to the community from hazards related to flooding by requiring feasible mitigation of such impacts on existing, new development and redevelopment. Assess development proposals for potential hazards pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.
 - **Storm Drainage Facilities:** Enforce the City’s Public Works Standards, which give specific requirements for design of drainage facilities to ensure that they are properly sized to handle storm runoff and flash floods. Require new development to provide adequate flood control facilities, if needed, to control runoff generated by the project. Identify new public and private funding sources to fund needed improvements.
 - **Flood Hazard Education:** Promote programs and actions that educate the public about flood hazards and how to reduce the risks and losses associated with flooding.
- Develop and adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is required for state, local, tribal and territorial governments to receive funding for hazard mitigation projects or determine whether the existing MHMP of the County qualifies the City to apply for funding and implement hazard mitigation projects effectively.

IV. Financing

The 2009 MPD proposed a 20-year fee program encompassing both drainage facility improvements and annual operation/maintenance expenses. Currently, the city funds the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) maintenance of the existing storm drain system through wastewater rates. In 2009, the estimated annual O&M cost for drainage facilities was \$300,000.

According to the 2009 MPD, the top ten Priority 1 projects were ranked from 1 to 10 with an estimated total cost of approximately \$25 million (2009 dollars). Construction costs were based on 2009 unit costs. Design costs were estimated at 10% of the construction cost and the construction administration and inspection was also estimated at 20% of the construction cost. An additional 35% was added for catch basin inlets, manholes, junction structures, and other direct costs while a 20% contingency was added for unknowns such as utility relocation or subsurface conditions.

The analysis of the 20-year program involved three project scenarios, combining the top ten projects and priorities 1, 2, and 3. The cost estimation was done considering a typical 6,000 square foot high/medium density residential lot and a 160-acre development with an 80/20 split between residential and commercial areas. For the top 10 Priority 1 projects, the estimated annual cost without O&M is \$25,096,066, rising to approximately \$31,396,066 when including maintenance over the next 20 years. These figures translate to about \$2,459,677 annually without O&M and roughly \$3,069,968 annually with O&M factored in.

The proposed fee program encompassed improvement costs and annual O&M expenses to address the city's drainage facility needs over the 20-year period. Since the proposed scenario costs were calculated in 2009, construction costs and fees should be reviewed to account for potential escalation of the costs based on the Engineering News Record's Construction Cost Index (ENR-CCI). Because most of the recommended facilities are located in the existing public right-of-way or easements, right-of-way acquisition costs were not included. Since the 2009 MPD, the City has not implemented the 20-Year Fee Program or performed the proposed drainage facility improvements due to financial challenges experienced by the community in the 2008 recession.

Current Funding

The City of El Centro's Master Plan of Drainage outlines several financing strategies for funding the Capital Improvement Program:

General Fund: The City General Fund is comprised of revenues from various sources and serves as a traditional funding source for drainage facility construction and maintenance. While not designated for any specific purpose, these funds are versatile. However, due to the diverse public services funded by this pool, it faces significant demands, making allocation decisions challenging.

Development Impact Fees: Within the City and the SOI, drainage facilities are typically installed and funded by developers as projects are implemented. Developer fees for drainage facilities in the City are calculated based on the type of development and the percentage of impervious area. The fee is determined using the total cost of all deficiencies in drainage facilities, including those

categorized as Priorities 1 through 3. This total cost serves as the basis for calculating the fee per acre. These developer fees, contribute to the Drainage Facility Capital Projects Fund, providing essential funding for addressing deficiencies and improving drainage infrastructure within the City. Development impact fees charged on new development for drainage facilities are regularly collected however, according to the City, the collection amount and available funds is very low.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act (Act) of 1982: The 1982 Act authorizes local governments and developers to create Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) for the purpose of selling tax-exempt bonds to fund public improvements and collect revenue for the service and maintenance of the areas in the CFD. Bonds are secured by these taxes, and approval requires a two-thirds vote from registered voters within the proposed district. The City established the Legacy Ranch CFD for the purpose of issuing bonds to finance public improvements for streets, sewers, storm drains.

It is essential to note that while these methods provide potential funding avenues, a comprehensive financial plan considering various sources is crucial for implementing the Master Plan of Drainage, given the diverse community needs and funding challenges.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Drainage Fees: Governed by the Subdivision Map Act, the City can establish a drainage fee program based on a master drainage plan. Developers, as a condition for final subdivision map approval, contribute fees proportionate to the required facilities' costs within specific drainage areas. This method, although limited due to the number of annual subdivisions, adds to the Drainage Facility Capital Projects Fund. This fund and the interest accruing shall be expended solely for the design and construction of the city's drainage facilities.

Development Impact Fees: The City is able to avoid costs for the development of drainage facilities by requiring developers to construct adequate facilities and retention basins on their projects. New drainage facilities and retention basins have been constructed solely for new developments.

Recommended Funding

Given the high cost of the drainage improvements identified in the 2009 MPD, it is likely that no single funding method will be sufficient to fully implement the MPD and the identified capital improvement projects. Therefore, it is recommended that the City consider various combinations of funding methods to implement the program, including General Fund monies, drainage fees, HCDA grants, special assessments, highway improvement projects, and general obligation bonds.

Funding responsibilities for project-related facilities shall remain with the developers and secured prior to construction. Improvements to the centrally located City-maintained facilities shall remain under the guidance of the wastewater division of the Department of Public Works. Each of these proposed funding sources are subject to extensive community debate and discussion. The number and timing of development projects is largely beyond the control of the City and, thus, the availability of funds is difficult to assure.

Stormwater Service Fees: A Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update was completed in 2012 to determine the adequacy of the existing rate structure charged to City customers for storm water service and recommended rate changes and other revenue sources to pay for storm water facilities. The City was contemplating the establishment of a stormwater fee to cover costs outlined in the Master Plan of Drainage from April 2009. Stormwater management has evolved from basic flood control to an integrated water resource management and environmental protection function. While the City currently doesn't charge a Stormwater Fee, expenses amounting to \$300,000 annually are incurred for stormwater system operation and maintenance to comply with state regulations.

A previous proposal to implement a stormwater fee was deferred due to high anticipated costs, challenges in collection, and the need for resident approval through the Proposition 218 process. Various factors, including impervious area, gross area, percentage imperviousness, and land use, are considered in designing stormwater service fees. Legal considerations are critical, differentiating between taxes and fees, with fees being related to specific services and based on the actual cost of the service provided. The implementation of user fee-based funding involves evaluating political, financial, legal, informational, and technical aspects, and fostering citizen and stakeholder participation is crucial in this process.

Development Impact Fees: Funding responsibilities for project-related facilities shall remain with the developers and must be secured prior to construction. Improvements to the centrally located City-maintained facilities shall remain under the guidance of the wastewater division of the Department of Public Works. However, according to the City, the collection amount and available funds from Development Impact Fees contributing to the Drainage Facility Capital Projects Fund is very low. It is recommended that the City prepare an updated Development Impact Fee Study to reflect current financial conditions and secure substantial funds to contribute to the CIP.

Federal Housing and Community Development Act (HCDA) of 1974: This Act offers federal grant funds for community development, making storm drains eligible for funding. To secure funds, the City must demonstrate that drainage facilities align with community development needs, providing housing and infrastructure for low and moderate-income families. When Congress passed the HCD Act of 1974, it broke down the barriers of prevailing practice - where under separate categorical programs, the Federal Government made decisions about every community development project undertaken by cities. The HCD Act departed from this model by creating the CDBG program.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program: Starting in 2004, the City of El Centro became an entitlement jurisdiction and started receiving CDBG Program funds directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The primary objective of the CDBG Program is to develop viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities. Eligible CDBG spending includes Public Services and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Public Facilities/Infrastructure.

American Rescue Plan Act Funds: ARPA funds are distributed nationwide by the U.S. Treasury Department to help cities mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The local funding portion is equally divided between cities and counties. El Centro is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement jurisdiction, automatically qualifying a significant

portion of the funding to the City. Funds can be used for public health and safety initiatives, personnel, administrative costs, and to offset revenue losses as well as infrastructure upgrades.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP): The President formally declared Tropical Storm Hilary a disaster for Imperial County, its cities, and special districts in November 2023. This made the City eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), opening avenues for securing financial support for flood mitigation efforts. It is strongly recommended that the City develop and adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan is a prerequisite for state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to access funding for their hazard mitigation initiatives and will position the City to access funding opportunities for projects aimed at improving drainage facilities to mitigate flooding.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs): EIFDs are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as flood control and drainage projects.

Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LLMD): The developer shall be responsible for the costs associated with establishing a landscape and lighting maintenance district for the maintenance of the detention/retention basin and any other development amenities. Any necessary stormwater pumps shall be maintained by the Lighting and Landscape District.

Special Assessments: Special assessments have a historical precedent in funding stormwater systems, apportioning costs based on direct and special benefits to specific properties. This methodology, applied to various public facilities, requires costs to be proportionate to benefits. Benefits must be definable, measurable, and available within a practical timeframe. Unlike service fees, special assessments have stricter standards, needing precise and costly data to reflect individual property benefits accurately.

Special assessments work best for localized projects, like improving a specific channel benefiting few properties. They are less suitable for wide-area projects and unsuitable for facilities providing general community benefits. Special assessments create a lien on properties, ensuring debt service on bonds used for construction. Assessments can be initiated by property owner petitions or City Council action, involving public hearings and assessment ballot proceedings.

Municipal Improvement Act of 1913: The most commonly used procedural act for formation of an assessment district is the Municipal Improvement Act of 1913. The 1913 Act is most often used in conjunction with the Improvement Bond Act of 1915. Under the 1915 Act, all or a portion of the assessment is payable each year in an amount sufficient to pay the principal and interest on the bonds when due. The assessment is most often included on the property tax bill which is payable in the same manner and time as the general taxes of the public agency. Formation of an assessment district may be difficult where properties have already developed. Therefore, prior to undertaking the formation of an assessment district, the City should test property owner support.

Benefit Assessment Act of 1982: The 1982 Act authorizes assessments to operate and maintain drainages, flood control, street lighting and street maintenance services and to install and improve drainage and flood control facilities. This Act permits the imposition of assessments on benefited properties to finance drainage and flood control services. Assessment districts, created under this Act, allow different assessment zones and need voter approval. The benefit is evaluated annually, with special taxes levied to fund the services.

Highway Improvement Projects: Gas tax monies, received directly by the City, can be utilized for roadway improvement drainage facilities. This funding source is applicable for integrating storm drain components into highway designs, ensuring flood prevention during significant storms.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act (Act) of 1982: Local governments are forced to require developers to put in the necessary regional infrastructure for new home developments. The 1982 Act authorizes local governments and developers to create Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) to fund public improvements and collect revenue for the service and maintenance of the areas in the CFD. It is recommended to leverage CFDs to accommodate future growth and development.

General Obligation Bonds: General obligation bonds can be issued if the City's financial position supports the proposed debt service without levying ad valorem property taxes. Approval by two-thirds of the electorate is necessary for these bonds.

Federal and State Funding: Federal and state funding for local stormwater management takes many forms, including technical support, facility construction, cooperative programs, and grants and loans for various purposes. Local governments are generally authorized to make use of federal and state government funding, such as the State Revolving Fund Loans financed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to achieve Clean Water Act (CWA) objectives, for various purposes including stormwater management, flood control, and water quality protection.

4.3 Fire Facilities

The City manages the El Centro Fire Department (ECFD). The ECFD provides emergency and disaster response to mitigate fire, emergency medical (EMS), hazardous materials (hazmat), and other incidents within its boundaries as well as to other jurisdictions pursuant to a mutual aid agreement. This also includes fire and EMS first response services, as well as ancillary services such as fire prevention, public education, and emergency management. ECFD services, capabilities, response times, staffing, fire station locations, external mutual aid assistance, apparatus, and information management systems. The mission of the ECFD is to protect life, property, and the environment through mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery actions.

I. Performance Standard

The Public Facilities Element of the General Plan includes Public Facilities Goal 5, which states that the City “strives to ensure that adequate standards of fire protection are met by providing the ECFD with personnel, equipment, and facilities.” The ECFD has adopted standards for fire and emergency response performance based on the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1710 (2020 Edition) – Standard for the Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.

The ECFD standards require that they meet the response times listed below at least 90% of the time. All times are from the receipt of a dispatch notification for emergency service:

Turnout Times:

EMS	60 Seconds
Fire	80 Seconds
Special Operations	80 Seconds

Response Times*:

First Arriving Engine:	240 Seconds
Full Alarm Assignment:	480 Seconds
Basic Life Support with AED**:	240 Seconds
Advanced Life Support:	480 Seconds

* - Fire response times are for single family residences.

** - Automated External Defibrillator.

The ECFD also maintains a staffing standard providing that ten sworn and uniformed personnel will be available to respond to calls at any given time throughout the day or night. The ECFD provides services for a significant number of visitors and residents from nearby and distant jurisdictions that are conducting business, accessing public or private services, or just passing through El Centro.

While shifts are staffed with 13 per shift, the ECFD continues to operate with a minimum staffing level of 10 sworn personnel on duty a day. Minimum staff includes:

- 1 Battalion Chief
- 3 Fire Captains
- 3 Fire Engineers
- 3 Fire Fighters

While shifts are fully staffed (no vacation, sick days, misc. leave, etc.):

- 1 Battalion Chief
- 3 Fire Captains
- 3 Fire Engineers
- 6 Fire Fighters

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The ECFD provides service within the City limits and, pursuant to a mutual aid agreement with other jurisdictions, other parts of Imperial County and California. The ECFD has three fire stations as shown in Figure 4.3-2. Fire Station No. 1 is centrally located within the City at 775 West State Street. Fire Station No. 2 is located near the City’s eastern boundary at 900 South Dogwood. Fire Station No. 3 is situated near the City’s Northwestern boundary at 1910 North Waterman Avenue. The ECFD currently has 41 sworn uniformed personnel, 3 non-sworn or non-uniformed personnel, and several vehicles and pieces of equipment, as detailed below. The following table provides a breakdown of sworn uniformed personnel is presented that indicates the staffing of department positions and any relevant specializations within the department, or “collateral assignments”.

Table 4.3-1 Fire Personnel

Staff	Number
Uniformed Personnel	41
<u>Department Position Assignments:</u>	
Fire Chief and Director of Disaster Services	1
Battalion Chiefs	4
Fire Captains	9
Fire Engineers	9
Firefighters	18
<u>Collateral Assignments:</u>	
Advanced Life Support Personnel (Paramedics)	17
Limited Advanced Life Support (Advanced EMT)	6
Hazardous Materials Tech. Specialists	18
Non-Uniformed Personnel (Admin)	3

Table 4.3-2 Fire Equipment

Apparatus/Fleet:	Number
Fire Engine Type 1	4
Fire Engine WUI Type 1/3	1
Ladder Truck	1
Rescue Squad	1
Quick Response Vehicles	2
Mobile Air Machine	1
Incident Command Vehicle (Ford F-250)	4
Hazardous Materials Unit*	1
Urban Search and Rescue Type II**	1
Mobile Light and Generator**	1
Type 6 Fire Apparatus**	1

* - Shared through the Joint Powers Authority

** - Shared through Office of Emergency Services

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

ECFD prepares an annual report that includes response calls for the various services performed throughout the year. The annual report aids the City and the ECFD in periodically reviewing its performance and determining where additional resources are needed. Most recently, the ECFD logged an average response time of 5:30 for all emergency calls. The ECFD responded to 5,523 calls for service in 2022.

Response time, also known as total response time, is the time interval that begins when the call is received by the primary dispatch center and ends when the dispatched unit(s) arrives on the scene of the incident to initiate action. According to NFPA 1710, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Departments, 2020 Edition, the standard states that average response time shall be less than or equal to 240 seconds for the first arriving engine company 90 percent of the time. As shown in Table 4.3-4: the Average Response Times for Stations No. 1, 2 and 3 for all incidents were all above the NFPA 1710 benchmark of 240 seconds or 4 minutes.

In September of 2017, the City of El Centro retained the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) to complete a comprehensive analysis of the city’s fire department. The Fire Operational & Administrative Analysis Report was designed to provide an unbiased report reviewing the services provided by the department. Utilizing information provided by the City, the ECFD and Imperial County, the report assessed ECFD’s existing service delivery performance through a comprehensive data analysis process.

The CPSM also developed several recommendations regarding the delivery of fire and first response EMS services. The number one recommendation stated that “The City of El Centro and El Centro Fire Department should consider replacing existing Fire Station No. 1 with a

contemporary facility to accommodate the evolving mission and needs of the department.” Additional recommendations also identified steps for short and mid-term for existing fire facilities.

To supplement the assessment of ECFD response times, the CPSM report also included a more conservative and stricter measure of total response time through the 90th percentile measurement to assess response times for 90 percent of calls. Observations from the report stated that the aggregate fire and EMS 90th percentile travel time was 4.8 minutes. Fire alone was 4.9 minutes, while EMS is 4.8 minutes, both slightly above the NFPA 1710 benchmark.

Table 4.3-3 lists Average Response Times per Station and Table 4.3-4 lists Average Response Times per Station for All Incidents for the ECFD in 2022.

Table 4.3-3 Average Response Times per Station (in minutes)

Station	EMS	Fire
Station No. 1	4:59	4:37
Station No. 2	5:44	6:13
Station No. 3	5:17	3:50

Table 4.3-4 Average Response Times per Station for All Incidents (in minutes)

Station	Dispatch to En Route	Dispatch to Arrive
Station No. 1	1:30	5:14
Station No. 2	1:52	5:50
Station No. 3	1:33	5:26

Table 4.3-5 Incident Count by Major Incident Type

Major Incident Type	# of Incidents	% of Total
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	3,779	68.42%
Good Intent Call	616	11.15%
Service Call	365	6.61%
False Alarm & False Call	363	6.57%
Fires	296	5.36%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	66	1.20%
Special Incident Type	31	0.56%
Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (No Fire)	4	0.07%
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	3	0.05%
Total Calls for 2022	5,523	100%

Fire Station No. 1 is centrally-located within the city at 775 State Street. This facility is approximately 7,300 square feet and is staffed with 3 to 5 personnel depending on the staffing level for the day. Minimum staffing includes 1 Fire Captain, 1 Fire Engineer, and 1 Firefighter. Station No. 1 is equipped with the following complementary fire apparatus and emergency equipment:

- 2022 Pierce PUC Enforcer type 1 fire engine
- 2006 American La France Quint with 75ft aerial ladder (reserve status)
- 2019 Ford XLT quick response vehicle (in-service dependent upon staffing)

Recommendations which emerged from the 2018 CPSM analysis of the department highlighted the need to restructure ECFD priorities, specifically the need to replace Fire Station No. 1 with contemporary structure. More specifically, Fire Station No. 1 was built in 1946 and "...is in fair condition and is nearing the end of its useful life as an emergency services deployment facility."

Fire Station No. 2 borders the eastern boundary of El Centro and is located at 900 S. Dogwood Road. The facility is approximately 5,670 square feet and is staffed with 3 personnel including 1 Fire Captain, 1 Fire Engineer, and 1 Firefighter. Station No. 2 is equipped with the following complementary fire apparatus and emergency equipment:

- 2016 KME type 1 fire engine
- 2008 Pierce Arrow XT type 1 fire engine (reserve status)
- OES Type II Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) trailer
- OES Mobile and light and Generator trailer

Constructed in 1989, Fire Station No. 2 was originally built to be a temporary station. This facility is a metal "Butler" type building. Although it has less immediate concerns than station 1, and thus for the immediate future remains functional as a fire station, long-term consideration will need to be given to the costs versus benefits of significantly renovating/upgrading this facility compared to replacing it with a new facility.

Fire Station No. 3 resides within the northwestern boundary of El Centro at 1910 N. Waterman Avenue and serves as headquarters for fire department administration staff. The facility is 18,000 square feet and is staffed at minimum by 4 personnel including 1 Duty Battalion Chief, 1 Fire Captain, 1 Fire Engineer, and 1 Firefighter. Station No. 3 is equipped with the following complementary fire apparatus and emergency equipment:

- 2020 Rosenbauer Timberwolf Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fire engine type 1/3
- 2019 Ford F-250 Battalion Chief vehicle
- 2008 Pierce Arrow XT type 1 fire engine (reserve status)
- 2010 Rosenbauer Ford F-550 rescue squad (reserve status)
- 2016 Chevy Silverado quick response vehicle (reserve status)
- 2022 OES type 6 fire apparatus HME Ahrens-Fox
- 2019 Ford F-250 utility vehicle
- Mobile light and air machine

The Fire Chief, 1 Battalion Chief and 3 non-uniformed personnel are assigned to this facility Monday through Friday. Fire Department Administration Staff is equipped with one 2019 Ford F-250 Fire Chief vehicle and one 2019 Jeep Cherokee staff vehicle.

According to the CPSM report, Fire Station No. 3 is in excellent condition and is rightfully the department's showcase station. It serves as the ECFD's administrative headquarters and houses the training and fire prevention functions. Fire Station No. 3 is equipped throughout with complete automatic fire suppression and fire detection systems. The administrative portion of the building contains technological and administrative attributes found in most administrative facilities today.

The station was completed in 2012 after the city received a rural development grant in 2009 for its construction. At the time the grant was originally applied for, significant new development was proposed for the area west of this station. However, many of the projects were cancelled during the economic downturn which occurred around that time. This contributes to the ECFD's long-term preparation for future growth and development in and around the service area.

With the minimum staffing requirement at each of the fire stations listed above, there are at least ten sworn and uniformed personnel available to respond to calls at any given time throughout the City. This is consistent with and meets the ECFD staffing performance standard. Each station is also equipped with complementary fire apparatus and emergency equipment, ensuring that their respective service areas are adequately covered and prepared to respond to emergency calls. This distributed allocation of resources allows for rapid, effective response times no matter where an incident may occur throughout an around the City.

Future Demand for Facilities

The 2016 SAP stated that the ECFD responded to 4,122 calls for service in 2014. In 2022, the ECFD responded to 5,523 calls for service, amounting to a difference of 1,401 additional calls. The annual growth rate in calls for ECFD from 2014 to 2022 was approximately 6.85%, therefore, the projected number of calls for ECFD in 2035 is approximately 12,645 calls.

Fire Station No. 3 was constructed and located in the northwestern portion of the City in anticipation of growth in the northern SOI. Development in the southern SOI area would include annexations to the City and to the service area of the ECFD, and would place new homes and businesses outside an area in which the ECFD is able to provide services.

Annexation of land beyond the existing service area would increase the response time for emergency and non-emergency calls due to the increase in distance required to arrive at the location of the emergency. As development within the current boundaries of the City increases, the ECFD relies on internal metrics and industry standards to develop plans for future demands for service.

In June 2021, ECFD initiated internal studies to establish a plan for a potential Fire Station No. 1 rebuild. In Fall 2022, in cooperation with El Centro Public Works and Arrington Watkins Architects, LLC, the creation of program documents and floor plan designs for a new Station No. 1 were completed. In May 2023, a feasibility study was completed. The project awaits approval.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

A mutual aid agreement between the ECFD and the other jurisdictions in Imperial County and California for the provision of emergency services. The mutual aid agreement between all fire agencies within Imperial County received an update in 2019. The intent of the agreement is that “no community has the ability or resources sufficient to cope with any and all emergencies for which the potential exists. The plan is designed to meet the anticipated needs of local agencies within their zones, to access resources of other jurisdictions within Region VI, or beyond if necessary, to meet the needs of emergency incidents.” The ECFD responds to calls within the City limits and a portion of the SOI boundaries. As indicated in the updated mutual aid plan, the City of El Centro is located within Zone 2. Mutual resources for Zone 2 are as follows:

1st Alarm

- Local Responsible Agency (ECFD units)

2nd Alarm

- 1 Fire engine from City of Calexico
- 1 Fire engine from City of Holtville
- 1 Battalion Chief and 1 Fire Engine from the County of Imperial

3rd Alarm

- 1 Fire engine from City of Westmoreland
- 1 Fire engine from City of Brawley
- 1 Fire engine from Centinela State Prison
- 1 Fire engine form Naval Air Facility El Centro

4th Alarm

- 1 Fire Engine from Calipatria State Prison
- 1 Fire Engine from Calipatria City
- 1 Fire Engine from City of Yuma, AZ
- 1 Fire Engine from Rural Metro Yuma, AZ

5th Alarm

- OES Region Dispatch through El Centro Dispatch to request out of county resources

The ECFD and other local agencies share a Hazardous Materials Unit managed through a multi-agency Joint Powers Authority (JPA). ECFD continues to receive access to the Live Burn Trailer for training located at Imperial Valley College. ECFD maintains an agreement with the California State Office of Emergency Service (OES) that provides a Type II Urban Search and Rescue Trailer, Mobile Light and Generator, and a Type 6 Fire Apparatus. Resources support both local and state missions for emergency service. These agreements allow multiple agencies to utilize the equipment and share maintenance which aids in avoiding costs for all agencies involved.

The City shall continue to pursue this relationship with these agencies and the jurisdictions shall periodically review their service area boundaries and their service goals to maintain adequate and efficient protection to all areas within the City, the SOI, and the remainder of Imperial County. Table 4.3-5 lists Mutual Aid Support Arrivals by Fire Station for the ECFD in 2022.

Table 4.3-6 Mutual Aid Support Arrivals by Fire Station

Station	No. of Arrivals
Station No. 1	3,050
Station No. 2	1,085
Station No. 3	1,288
All Stations	38

In 2018, the ECFD established a partnership with AMR (American Medical Response), an ambulance service provider, allowing them to co-locate at its three fire stations. Since the development of this recent partnership, Each ECFD station normally has a minimum of one paramedic on duty 24/7. The fire department responds to all medical emergencies in the city with either a fire suppression unit or a quick response squad.

Phasing

ECFD staffing relies on population, community expectations, critical tasking, benchmarking, risk analysis, workload of units, innovations, call demand, travel times, EMS demand, and ability to fund as primary metrics. While each component presents its own metrics of data, consensus opinion, and/or discussion points, aggregately they form the foundation for informed decision making geared toward the implementation of sustainable, data-supported, effective fire and EMS staffing and deployment models that fit the community’s profile, risk, and expectations.

Increased development within the City boundaries, SOI and jurisdictions within the mutual aid agreement will place additional demands on the services, personnel, and equipment of the ECFD. As calls become more numerous with the increased density and intensity of development, the ECFD will experience an increase in demand for emergency and non-emergency service responses; making it more difficult for the ECFD to meet their performance standards.

According to ECFD staff, the need to plan and develop for Fire Station No. 4 persists. However, as identified previously, the priority shifted from developing Fire Station No. 4, to reevaluating and developing plans to address replacing Fire Station No. 1 with a contemporary facility. Regardless, the ECFD will continue to gather data based on identified metrics to develop comprehensive plans addressing future needs for service expansion, including Fire Station No. 4. As stated, the ECFD has seen a consistent increase in calls for service since the 2016 SAP.

The location for Fire Station No. 4 identified in the 2016 SAP (East of La Brucherie and South of Wake Avenue) remains consistent with projected service area needs, particularly with the planned extension of Imperial Avenue and the potential for heightened development near the City’s southern boundaries and sphere of influence. Public Facilities Goal 6 and Policy 6.2 of the General Plan remain pertinent to phasing for the ECFD.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to assure adequate fire and emergency response service within its boundaries as development continues within the City boundaries and within the SOI, the City will implement the following measures:

- Implement the measures from the updated mutual aid agreement to provide for systematic mobilization, organizational, and operation of fire, medical, and rescue resources with the County of Imperial and City of Yuma, to mitigate the effects of any disaster.
- Develop plans annually to provide updated fire, medical and rescue service inventory of all personnel, apparatus, and equipment within the County of Imperial.
- Collaborate between fire officials of local, area, regional and state agencies to facilitate communication for the interchange and dissemination of fire rescue data, directives, and information.
- In conformance with General Plan Public Facilities Policy 5.2, continue the periodic review of number of calls and response times to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for improvement or additional resources.
- Design and implement a year-long workload monitoring program to determine the adequacy of the existing staffing standard of providing ten sworn and uniformed personnel to be available to respond to calls at any given time throughout the day or night. The monitoring program should analyze and measure actual workload of uniformed personnel, including chiefs, captains, engineers and firefighters for each on-duty period or shift.
- In addition to reviewing the number of calls and response times that are currently tracked, the monitoring program should be designed to measure the time used for the following:
 - incident documentation
 - apparatus and station maintenance
 - training
 - various administrative tasks
- The monitoring program should be used to evaluate the following:
 - response time goals for calls for emergency service
 - use of overtime to backfill minimum staffing slots due to personnel vacancies or personnel who are on various types of leave
 - ability to cover the absence of one shift worker without requiring overtime
 - need to use budgeted overtime to cover staff vacancies when needed
- The monitoring program should be used to make adjustments to staffing levels, either increasing or decreasing uniformed personnel for various shifts based on actual measured workloads.

- Pursue additional finances to fund additional personnel, equipment, and vehicles for the ECFD as identified in the workload monitoring program.
- When the City determines the need, purchase land and construct Fire Station No. 4. The new station would be located east of La Brucherie Avenue and south of Wake Avenue.
- Review existing development impact fees for ECFD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Periodically review the mutual aid agreement with the ICFD for service within the SOI to maintain adequate and efficient protection to all areas within the City, the SOI, and the remainder of the unincorporated County land.
- Periodically review service area boundaries and service goals to maintain adequate and efficient protection to all areas within the City.
- The 2018 CPSM report included the following recommendations:
 - The City of El Centro conduct a Threat Hazard and Risk Assessment (THIRA) for the community that incorporates the top seven threats of earthquake, hazardous materials, fire, flooding, power outages, public health emergencies, and terrorism.
 - Using VISION, conduct a community risk assessment and continually analyze/utilize the results in the categorization and pre-incident planning of target hazards, the planning of fire station locations, apparatus needs, and staffing and deployment models.
 - ECFD develop an annual training and exercise schedule to educate, test, and gauge the effectiveness of the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).
 - ECFD develop and implement a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) that clearly defines how the agency will operate if staffing, resources, and/or facilities are compromised because of an emergency or unforeseen event.
 - Develop performance measures for each agency activity and implement a performance measurement system to be included in the department's strategic plan and fiscal/budget documents.
 - Develop a long-range capital plan for funding the replacement of all fire apparatus and fire department support vehicles.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

The El Centro Fire Department operational and maintenance costs for facilities, equipment and personnel are financed by the General Fund. Revenues from user fees charged by the ECFD go into the General Fund and are used to fund the ECFD programs. The 2019 User Fee Study was intended to identify the cost of City and fire protection services, to provide information to help the City make informed decisions regarding the actual fee levels and charges. Development impact fees required of development projects generate revenue that is used for large-scale improvement and development projects related to fire facilities as a result of increased capacity.

Measure P: This measure increased the sales tax rate by ½ of 1% effective April 1, 2017. The purpose of the tax was to address major capital needs, focusing on improving and replacing important facilities needed by the City’s residents and employees. Funding is allocated toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements. Since its adoption, Measure P funding has been used to finance major fire facility upgrade and replacement projects recommended by the CPSM report.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The ECFD operates and shall continue to operate under a mutual aid agreement with the County of Imperial County Fire Department for as-needed assistance and backup. This assures that people and property within the City, the SOI, and the rest of the County are covered by adequate fire and emergency response. The two agencies also share a hazardous materials emergency response unit. The ECFD participates in a countywide joint purchase program. Further, the ECFD conducts fire inspections while a private vendor conducts plan review of new structures which enables the ECFD staff to focus on additional priorities.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Fire Department services. Expansion or additions to the existing inventory of facilities could be funded through issuance of new bonds backed by the general fund to meet fire service protocol.

The ECFD indicated the potential for developing a subscription-based EMS fee that could be part of the fee study update. Also, there could be a study of receiving reimbursement from insurance carriers for fire department response to incidents.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for ECFD service or facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects. The City also may consider the establishment of a community facilities district for the ECFD to centralize funding for the Department and allow an efficient and effective means of financing Department needs.

The CPSM study recommended the City of El Centro and El Centro Fire Department should develop a long-range capital plan for funding the replacement of all fire apparatus and fire department support vehicles.

The City of El Centro is set to receive a substantial allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the federal government, with flexible spending parameters. Specifically, the funding source can be utilized for public health and safety initiatives, personnel and administrative costs, revenue loss recovery, and infrastructure upgrades. As ECFD is a vital public health and safety service for the city, ARPA funds represent a potential source to strengthen the department's capabilities.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as fire facilities.

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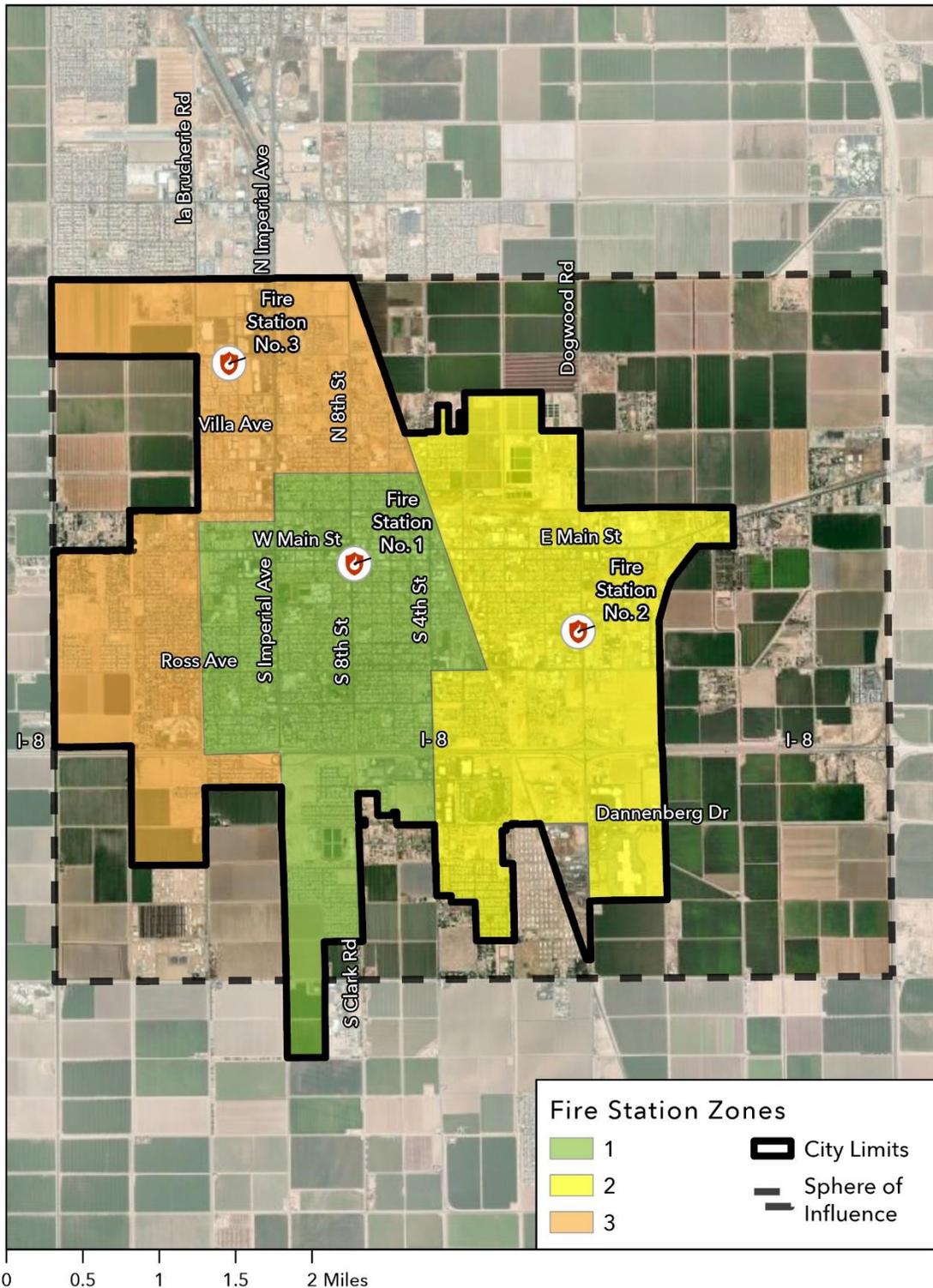


Figure 4.3-2
Fire Station Zones

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4.4 Law Enforcement Facilities

The City operates the El Centro Police Department (ECPD), which is the primary law enforcement agency that serves the residents of the City as well as the property and business owners, government and private business employees and customers, and visitors within City boundaries. Sworn officers of the ECPD patrol the City and respond to calls for crimes, emergencies, and other law enforcement services within their jurisdiction. Non-sworn personnel of the ECPD are responsible for various administrative tasks, animal control, and parking enforcement. Volunteer personnel of the ECPD provide assistance and supplement regular officers and non-sworn members of the Citizens in Police Services (CIPS).

The Chief of Police is responsible for administering and managing the El Centro Police Department. There are six divisions in the Police Department as follows:

- Administration Division
- Patrol Division
- Investigations Division
- Training and Recruitment Division
- Communications Division
- Records Division

I. Performance Standard

The General Plan for the City contains the goal of maintaining a staffing goal of 1.75 sworn officers per 1,000 City residents. In addition, the ECPD staffing goal is to have six (6) officers and one (1) sergeant per shift, including a minimum of four (4) responding officers and one (1) supervising sergeant at any given period throughout the day and night. However, sworn officer per 1,000 staffing goals lead to a one size fits all type analysis that has limited use in making comparisons with other cities and evaluating adequacy of the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Traditional law enforcement staffing level models have measured crime trends, officer’s per-capita, minimum staffing levels per shift, authorized/budgeted levels, and workload-based models to make staffing decisions. El Centro currently uses a combination of officer’s per-capita and minimum staffing levels per shift, as described above. However, a better evaluation of law enforcement staffing adequacy is required to analyze and measure the actual workload of sworn patrol officers.

Officer workload measures the amount of time that an officer is able to spend on discretionary patrol time while not responding to calls for service and mandatory administrative activities. Discretionary patrol time allows officers to make self-initiated stops to investigate suspicious activity when observed, talk with citizens to recommend crime prevention measures when appropriate and act as a deterrent to crime by just being visible on patrol.

The measurement of officer workload allows for the City to determine the actual levels of demand for police services and matches that demand with the supply of police resources. Use of this performance evaluation would require a complex data analysis that may be beyond the capacity of the ECPD, but it would provide a more accurate and reliable predictor of police staffing levels.

As a general guideline, law enforcement staffing levels should result in 60% of total sworn officers available for patrol activities and not more than 60% of patrol resources are used on calls for service and mandatory administrative activities.

The ECPD does not maintain response time goals but tracks and reviews response times on an annual basis to determine the adequacy of their service and any possible alterations or improvements to their methods that would reduce response time. The ECPD also tracks phone call quantities to determine annualized trends and adequacy of staffing. According to the 2022 CAFR, total calls to police in 2022 fiscal year were 30,876 and total number of 911 calls was 24,324.

The current average response times for the various categories of calls for service is:

- Priority One: 3:48 minutes
- Priority Two: 6:52 minutes
- Priority Three: 6:21 minutes

The ECPD performance standard for the number of non-sworn personnel is one non-sworn employee for every two sworn officers in order to adequately serve the City. This goal is used to assess the existing and future desired staffing levels of the ECPD in this document.

The ECPD performance standard for the number of vehicles is one patrol car (including both marked and unmarked cars) for every two sworn officers. This goal is used to assess the existing and future desired number of vehicles needed by the ECPD in this document.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities and Staff

The main station of the ECPD is located within the Civic Center zone at 150 North 11th Street. The station consists of several buildings, constructed at different times for different purposes that have been remodeled and interconnected to house the various functions needed. The existing structure is planned to be replaced within the next two to three years.

The El Centro Police Department Reserve Unit was established to supplement and assist regular sworn police officers in their duties. This unit provides professional, sworn volunteer reserve officers who can augment regular staffing levels. The City does not pay salaries for volunteers but ECPD supplies volunteers with equipment, uniforms, weapons, vehicles, and communication equipment. ECPD assumes costs for training volunteers and maintaining acceptable training levels.

The following is a detailed list of ECPD’s sworn personnel, non-sworn personnel, and vehicles:

Table 4.4-1 Sworn Police Personnel

Title	Personnel
Chief of Police	1
Deputy Chief	1
Commanders	1
Lieutenants	2
Sergeants	8
Police Officers	38
School Resource Officers	2
Total	53

The ECPD also employs 28 non-sworn personnel that are assigned to various services including records, communication, evidence, animal control, community service, computer information services, and parking enforcement.

Table 4.4-2 Non-Sworn Police Personnel

Title	Number
Supervisor	3
Dispatcher	11
Animal Control Officer	2
Community Service Officer	3
Parking Enforcement	1
Staff Assistant	1
Secretarial Assistant	2
Maintenance	1
Records Clerk	4
Total	28

Table 4.4-3 Police Vehicles

Type	Number
Marked Patrol Car	24
Unmarked Car	19
Parking Vehicle	1
Animal Control Vehicles	2
Truck	2
SWAT Armored Vehicle	1
Trailers	2
Sign Board/LPR Trailers	4
Total	55

Monthly monitoring and reporting are conducted for response times. Workloads are assessed by measuring calls for service per officer, with monthly reporting and monitoring. Plans for the implementation of a citizen volunteer program are in place, and a Police Explorer program has been implemented since the last SAP.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities and Staff

With 53 sworn officers, the ECPD is currently staffed at a ratio of approximately 1.2 officers per 1,000 residents. This rate was calculated as follows:

$$53 \text{ sworn officers} / 44,322 \text{ residents} \times 1,000 \text{ residents} = 1.2 \text{ officers per } 1,000 \text{ residents}$$

This existing sworn officer ratio is below the established goal of 1.75 officers per 1,000 residents. To meet the City's established goal, the ECPD would need to employ 78 sworn officers. Accordingly, the ECPD is currently operating at a deficit of 25 sworn officers when compared to the established goal.

Applying the goal of one non-sworn personnel for every two sworn officers, the projected existing demand of 78 sworn officers would necessitate 39 non-sworn personnel. As such, the ECPD is currently in deficit of 11 non-sworn employees.

Similar to the desired ratio of non-sworn staff to sworn officers, the ECPD would need one patrol vehicle for every two officers. That means that 39 patrol vehicles would be needed to accommodate 78 sworn officers. As the department currently has 24 patrol cars, they are in a deficit of 15 vehicles.

These deficits in sworn officers, non-sworn personnel, and patrol vehicles underscore challenges in meeting the city's public safety goals. Adequacy of existing facilities and staff may be a concern, potentially affecting the department's ability to effectively respond to the needs of the community and maintain public safety standards. Addressing these deficits could be crucial for enhancing the overall capacity and efficiency of the ECPD.

Future Demand for Facilities and Staff

The ECPD is currently understaffed and does not meet its staffing goal. In addition to supplementing the staff required to meet its staffing goal, the ECPD will require more patrol vehicles to provide adequate services to the City as the population grows. The projected 2035 population of 52,009 residents would necessitate 92 sworn officers, 46 non-sworn personnel and 46 patrol vehicles if the ECPD were to meet its staffing and patrol vehicle goals.

A new station is needed to accommodate the facilities needed by the ECPD to provide law enforcement services to the residents, property and business owners, government and private business employees and customers, and visitors of El Centro. In 2021, the conceptual design for a future police station was approved. In November 2023, the City broke ground on the planned state-of-the-art facility, which will be constructed in the same location as the previous police station, per the community's request. The \$49.7 million project is expected to be completed in early 2026. The new facility will encompass two buildings totaling 44,477 square feet. The main building will

be two stories with 32,671 square feet and will include a public lobby, a community meeting/multi-purpose space, offices for administration, investigations and records. The main building will also include an area for patrol-related functions, including lockers, a fitness area and an area for writing reports.

The second building is a support building of 11,806 square feet. The ground floor of this new area will house property and evidence, the K-9 unit, the fingerprint laboratory, and various police support and storage functions. The upper floor is proposed to house an indoor police firearms range depending on the overall cost of the project.

As development continues to occur in the northern, western, and southern portions of the City SOI and as the City boundaries are extended, new stations or substations will be developed in the vicinity of new development to assure adequate patrol coverage and response to calls. Stations must be adequately staffed by ECPD personnel, and the ECPD must hire new officers and staff and demonstrate that staffing is available prior to the construction of new stations or substations. It should be noted that the ECPD provides services for a significant number of visitors and residents from nearby and distant jurisdictions that are conducting business, accessing public or private services, or just passing through El Centro.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

When necessary, the ECPD cooperates with the Imperial County Sheriff’s Department for the provision of emergency backup services, but the two agencies do not currently share any facilities and would not share any facilities in the future.

The potential expansion or utilization of upcoming substations, including the one under consideration for placement at the Imperial Valley Mall, will depend on the establishment of shared facilities or partnerships.

Phasing

Table 4.4-4 below shows the numbers of sworn officers, non-sworn personnel, and patrol cars that would be required to meet the staffing and patrol vehicles goals pursuant to projected population increase through the 2035 planning horizon.

Table 4.4-4 Police Demand

Year	Population	Officers	Non-Sworn	Patrol Cars
2025	47,769	84	42	42
2030	50,513	88	44	44
2035	52,009	92	46	46

As development occurs in the northern portion of the City and the City SOI, the City will open a substation in a central northern location to serve additional development in this area. As development occurs in the southern portion of the City and the City SOI, the City will consider developing a station or substation to serve additional development in this area.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to assure adequate law enforcement service within its boundaries as development continues within the City boundaries and within the SOI, the City will implement the following measures.

- Continue the periodic review of number of calls and response times to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for improvement or additional resources.
- In conformance with General Plan Public Facilities Policy 4.1, continue the periodic review of personnel, vehicles and equipment, and facilities to determine the adequacy of existing service and any need for additional resources.
- Design and implement a year-long workload monitoring program to determine the adequacy of the existing staffing standard of 1.75 sworn officers per 1,000 residents and to have a minimum of five police personnel on duty, including four responding officers and one supervising sergeant at any given period throughout the day and night. The monitoring program should analyze and measure the actual workload of sworn officers, including chiefs, commanders, sergeants and patrol officers for each on-duty period or shift. In addition to reviewing the number of calls and response times that are currently tracked, the monitoring program should be designed to measure amount of time that an officer is able to spend on discretionary patrol time while not responding to calls for service and mandatory administrative activities. Discretionary patrol time allows officers to make self-initiated stops to investigate suspicious activity when observed, talk with citizens to recommend crime prevention measures when appropriate and act as a deterrent to crime by just being visible on patrol.
- The monitoring program should be used to evaluate the following;
 - response time goals for calls for emergency service,
 - percentage of discretionary patrol time per shift and per year,
 - use of overtime to backfill minimum staffing slots due to personnel vacancies or personnel who are on various types of leave,
 - ability to cover the absence of one shift worker without requiring overtime,
 - need to use budgeted overtime to cover staff vacancies when needed.
- The monitoring program should be used to make adjustments to staffing levels that allow patrol officers to use 40% of their time for discretionary patrol time on their various shifts based on actual measured workloads.
- Pursue additional finances to fund ECPD personnel, equipment, and vehicles.

- Obtain additional sworn personnel, non-sworn personnel, and vehicles to meet the existing and future deficit of officers identified according to the workload monitoring program.
- Continue to promote the volunteer officer program to aid in meeting staffing needs.
- When the ECPD is able to acquire additional personnel, the traffic enforcement unit will be instated. Implementing the traffic unit would require the ECPD to acquire additional vehicles.
- Identify land in the northern portion of the City SOI for an additional station or substation to accommodate anticipated development. Adequate staffing must be available in order to open such a station.
- Identify land in the southern portion of the City SOI for an additional station or substation to accommodate anticipated development. Adequate staffing must be available in order to open such a station.
- Review existing development impact fees for ECPD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Implement incremental User Fee increases based on the recommended CPI financing mechanism to guide annual adjustments.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

Funding for law enforcement is derived from many funding sources. They include the general fund, developer fees, and grants. The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Police Department services. As part of the revenue, the City receives Proposition 172 public safety tax revenue based on sales tax receipts, as well cost recovery for judicial court appearances to provide testimony on cases. Revenue from user fees charged by the ECPD is paid into the General Fund. The 2019 User Fee Study provided updated metrics and mechanisms for structuring User Fees based on CPI. Parking enforcement revenue is also deposited for funding of police activities. Development impact fees required of development projects generate revenue that is used for large-scale improvement and development projects related to police facilities and services.

The ECPD was awarded a \$50,000 grant aimed at deterring unsafe behaviors and enhancing road safety. This funding supported increased patrols, DUI checkpoints, distracted driving enforcement, and targeted efforts to address dangerous driver behaviors. The grant also facilitated community presentations on traffic safety issues and collaborative enforcement initiatives with neighboring agencies. Officer training in Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST), Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE), and Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) is part of the program. Running until September 2023, this initiative was funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Funds for the construction of the new police station, which were acquired from bonds issued in May of 2023, are included in the FY 2024 budget. Construction is expected to commence during the 2024 fiscal year. Measure P funds were also allocated to finance the construction and operational needs of the new police facility, ensuring a dedicated and sustainable financial source for enhancing law enforcement infrastructure and services.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

While the ECPD cooperates with the Imperial County Sheriff's Department for the provision of as-needed emergency backup services, the two agencies do not currently share any facilities and would not share any facilities in the future. Although there are no substantial cost avoidance opportunities for the ECPD, the department achieves cost savings through the leasing of equipment including computers and phone system.

Non-sworn department staff is used where feasible in place of a sworn officer to conduct city business to reduce personnel cost.

Further, school districts share the cost of School Resource Officers with the City.

Recommended Funding

The ECPD will continue to be funded by the General Fund, public safety grants and other sources. The general fund remains a flexible funding source for both operations and maintenance, and capital expenses. Expansion or additions to the existing inventory of facilities could be funded through issuance of new bonds backed by the general fund to meet police service protocol.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for ECPD service or facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

The City also may consider the establishment of a community facilities district for the ECPD to centralize funding for the Department and allow an efficient and effective means of financing Department needs. Land based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund police infrastructure and/or police protection services.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as police facilities.

Grants such as those identified below, if capacity permits it, can be procured for specific operations while general fund and developer fees are available for capital facilities.

California Department of Justice Grants: The California Department of Justice offers grants to law enforcement agencies for programs related to criminal justice, public safety, and victim services.

California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Grants: Cal OES provides grants to support emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. Law enforcement agencies may access funding for equipment, training, and resources to enhance their capabilities during emergencies.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG): Administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, JAG grants provide funding to state and local law enforcement agencies to support a variety of initiatives, including equipment purchase, technology upgrades, and community programs.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Grants: The COPS program offers grants to law enforcement agencies to hire additional officers, enhance community policing efforts, and address specific public safety challenges.

California Traffic Safety Grants: Grants from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) support law enforcement efforts to improve traffic safety. Funding may be allocated for DUI enforcement, distracted driving programs, and initiatives targeting specific traffic safety issues.

California Community Foundation Grants: Private foundations in California, such as the California Community Foundation, may offer grants to law enforcement agencies for community-oriented projects and programs.

California Endowment Grants: The California Endowment provides grants that focus on improving community health and well-being. Law enforcement agencies may access funding for initiatives that contribute to overall community safety.

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4.5 Library Facilities

The City owns and operates the El Centro Public Library system. This system includes one main library and one satellite facility that is open to the public which is used by a broad spectrum of community members. Services provided by the library include circulation of library materials such as books, magazines and audio/visual materials. Additional services include computer/internet access; reference service; shut-in service; inter-library loans; photo copy machines; tutoring programs; digital books; and income tax services for residents. With an El Centro Public Library card, users can access various databases from home and print items for free.

The El Centro Public Library also offers a robust selection of children's services. Materials available include picture books, early reader books, chapter books and novels across both fiction and non-fiction genres. The library also provides children's DVDs, read-along kits, and weekly story time sessions for preschool-aged children. Every year, the library hosts a Summer Reading Program centered around creative themes and activities to encourage children to continue growing their literacy skills while classes are not in session. The mission of the El Centro Library is to provide quality materials, programs, and access to current technology to meet the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the diverse local community.

I. Performance Standard

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) requires that the library facilities section of the SAP maintain a performance standard measured in demand for square feet (sf). The performance standard for the City is a range of 300 to 600 sf of library facility space per 1,000 residents (0.30 to 0.60 sf of library facility space per capita). This standard is based on the current total square footage of library facilities and population and is consistent with the American Library Association's (ALA) previous recommendation of 500 to 600 sf of library space per 1,000 residents.

The range provides the City flexibility in addressing current and future facility needs while considering changing demographics and increasing influence of technology. It should be noted however, that the ALA no longer sets quantitative, prescriptive standards for square footage and focuses instead on processes to develop outcome-based measures for libraries based on each community's needs.

The performance standard for the number of volumes is a range of 2,500 to 2,750 per 1,000 residents (2.5 to 2.75 volumes per capita).

The performance standard for the number of public-access computers is 0.50 computers per 1,000 residents.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The City maintains the Main Branch of the El Centro Public Library, which is located at 1198 N. Imperial Avenue. The Main Branch of the public library held its grand opening November 14th, 2022 and comprised a 19,811 sf building area. The new library features a 1,000 sf lobby that can be entered from both the front road and the parking lot, facilitating access for both patron vehicles and public transportation. On opposite sides of the building are two (2) outdoor, shaded courtyards: a 500 sf reading patio with access from the adult area and homework center, and a 1,600 sf patio that serves as overflow space from the community rooms.

The newly constructed library provides an array of available amenities designed to empower community enrichment for residents of all ages and needs. There are two (2) study rooms that accommodate 12-24 people, a designated teen room and four (4) study pods assigned for individual study. The facilities are intended for educational, informational, and training purposes. Two large community rooms are separated by a removable divider, one fitting 234 people and the other 232, which together can hold 466 people. These spaces are suitable for and available to host public events for the El Centro community.

The library consists of approximately 52,351 volumes including 50,767 books, 41 magazines, and 1,543 audio/visual materials. For public use, 15 computers are available for internet access or general word processing uses. The library employs a total of eight (8) full time permanent positions and two (2) temporary positions. In 2023, the City of El Centro hired a new library director who holds a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science.

The City also offers a Satellite Library Branch at the El Centro Community Center at 375 South First Street. The branch, comprised of 1,008 sf, holds a collection of 1,032 volumes and four (4) computers. Available amenities and materials include computer areas, printing services, audiobooks, books, a children's area, study table and a couch to relax and do homework. The branch is staffed by one full-time employee.

In Summer of 2023, the Satellite Library Branch underwent renovations and improvements including: review and replacement of the older book inventory with new materials; an upgrade to the children's area; installation of new, modern furniture; and the addition of a large exterior sign for improved public visibility.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

El Centro Public Library facility opened to the public on November 10, 2022. The previous library structure was damaged in a 2010 earthquake and was demolished in 2016. Funding for the \$17 million replacement building was provided through Measure P, approved by voters in 2016. Upon its completion, the modern new library earned top honors from the San Diego-Imperial chapter of the American Public Works Association for excellence in design and construction for public works projects. The design team incorporated sustainable strategies such as optimized building insulation, high-performance glazing, and energy-efficient mechanical and lighting systems.

Based on the performance standard and existing population of 44,322 residents, the existing library facilities should be approximately between 13,300 and 26,600 sf to be considered adequate. With existing library facilities totaling 20,819 sf, the current capacity falls within the adequacy range calculated based on performance standards and resident population.

Considering the population and performance standard of 2.5-2.75 volumes per resident, the adequacy range for library facilities is between 110,805 to 121,885 volumes. With 53,383 volumes, the library's current collection falls short of the expected adequate range based on population and industry standards. It's worth considering whether this standard remains valid in the context of the increasing prevalence of online books.

For the existing resident population, performance standards would call for provision of 22 computers. With 19 public computers available between the main library and satellite branch, existing facilities are slightly inadequate in terms of number of computer stations. Adding a few more would help meet best practice recommendations for their population size.

According to library staff, there is a lack of storage, and need for three (3) temporary Library Pages, one temporary Custodian and a full time Children's Librarian to adequately service the community's needs.

Future Demand for Facilities

Increased development within the City boundaries and the SOI will present an increased demand on the personnel, services, and facilities of the public library. According to population projections the City is expected to increase from 44,322 to 52,009 residents by 2035. This growth will present the need for additional volumes, computers and personnel. Currently, El Centro's library facilities total 20,819 sf, while projections estimate a need for 15,600 to 31,200 sf for adequate service by 2035 based on population growth. The existing 53,383 volumes are lower than the called for 130,000 to 143,000 volumes in 2035. With 19 public computers, technology access lags behind the expected inventory of 26 computers in 2035.

Despite not having formal performance standards for library personnel, the City will require additional staff to align service capacity with projected demands by 2035. Given the community's strengthening identity as an educational hub, substantial resident population growth is expected to drive heightened utilization of library resources for learning, skill-building and training opportunities.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The El Centro Public Library features versatile community gathering spaces that provide expanded potential to inform and engage local residents through public programming. The library's community rooms have the meeting space, seating capacity and supporting amenities to readily host everything from municipal meetings to classes and cultural events. Similarly, the library's study rooms allow hands-on, technology-infused teaching and training tailored to smaller groups. These spaces feature technology access, display monitors and program-oriented seating layouts.

By coordinating schedules around core library hours, the community rooms and study spaces can become neighborhood hubs for civic engagement, community enrichment and informational sessions through public gatherings. Their central location coupled with accessibility to all residents enables delivering educational enrichment and purposeful programming.

Phasing

In analyzing future library resource needs, expansion of physical space is less urgent relative to other priorities. Given existing infrastructure already falls within adequacy guidelines for projected population growth through 2035, focusing on growing the library's inventory of material volumes and public computer access should take precedence as more cost-feasible, impactful upgrades.

Supplementing staffing levels will also prove vital not only toward meeting baseline service standards now but also sustaining quality patron experiences moving forward. Even without major structural changes, heightened demands from increased circulation, programming, computer usage and foot traffic from community growth will tax current personnel. Budgeting phased additions of specialized librarians, support staff and even part-time positions can make handling present needs and future expansions in traditional mediums and emerging offerings viable.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to provide its residents adequate library services and to assure that the library system is sufficiently expanded to accommodate growth within the City and the boundaries of the SOI, the City will implement the following measures.

- Continue to periodically review the facilities and personnel of the El Centro Public Library system through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as City growth continues to increase the demand on library facilities and staff. Such review should also involve research and coordination with organizations such as the American Library Association, who have numerous resources and guidelines on the library facility, staff, the library's collection, and technology.
- Continue to utilize General Fund revenue as the primary source of financing for the El Centro Public Library System. Review allocation of General Fund finances in light of State recommendation that local libraries receive five percent of local general fund resources.
- Continue to apply for all possible library funding opportunities from the State. Re-apply for certification in the State Public Library Fund program when funds are allocated.
- Review existing development impact fees for library services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Continue to accept donations of money and supplies as a means of augmenting library services while conserving allocated finances.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Library services. Development impact fees are levied for library facilities. Revenue generated by development impact fees are not placed in the General Fund but are used for specific library improvement projects.

Measure P: The construction of El Centro's new \$17 million public library facility was made financially achievable as a result of pivotal funding from the voter-approved Measure P. Passed in November 2016, Measure P allocated portions of a local transactions and use tax for funding allocated toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements.

California Library Literacy Services (CLLS): CLLS is a program of the California State Library. It is supported by funds from the State of California, provided through the California Library Literacy and English Acquisition Service Program, and by local contributions to individual literacy programs. The Literacy Initiatives program is supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. The El Centro Public Library applied for two CLLS literacy program grants potentially worth over \$65,000 combined for 2023-2024. One proposal focused on general Adult Literacy while the other targeted English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. If awarded, each grant would provide around \$33,000 over the 2023-2024 cycle to expand free community programming in these vital areas.

California State Library Fund: El Centro Public Library pursues California State Library Fund ZIP grants which support the innovative ZIP Books direct mailing program. A recent application sought to renew \$12,000 in ZIP project backing for 2023-2024 after already securing \$8,000 for the current 2022-2023 fiscal year.

User Fees: User fees were updated in 2019 and are charged by the following City Departments: Fire Department; Police Department; City Clerk; Library and Parks & Recreation. Planning & Zoning; Engineering; and Building & Safety. Fees increase at the beginning of each fiscal year based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a cap of 3%.

The library also accepts private donations material and funding grants to offset the costs of operation and to implement improvement projects.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Through inter-library loan programs, the library shares resources with other libraries in the region which keep costs low while providing acceptable services to City residents. The library offers an e-book service for customers to download digital copies of reading materials. The library also offers an innovative service called ZIP Books where patrons can request books that are not currently in the library's catalog. The library will order the requested title online and have it shipped

directly to the patron's home address. Once the borrower finishes reading the book, they simply return it to the library, where it is added to the permanent collection. Through grant funding, the library can fulfill reading requests while increasing the breadth and circulation of the library's holdings through community recommendations.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund will continue to cover the expenditures necessary to carry out library services. The library will continue to apply for all possible funding opportunities from the State and will continue to accept donations of money or materials.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for library facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects related to library facilities and services.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as libraries.

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4.6 Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks, recreation, and open spaces (collectively called parkland) provide social, health, environmental, economic, and cultural benefits to a community, and improve the quality of life for residents of all ages. The City provides parks and recreation facilities to the public within its boundaries. Park facilities are typically provided by developers of residential property in accordance with Section 24, Article V of the City of El Centro Code of Ordinances. This ordinance was established in accordance with Section 66477 of the California Government Code (commonly known as the Quimby Act), which provides local jurisdictions throughout the State with the authority to establish provisions for acquisition of parkland in association with new development. Payment of a park development fee is often accepted in lieu of land dedication. The acreage of land required for dedication or amount of park development fee is determined by the density of residential development dictated by the residential zoning designation applied to the site.

The Community Services Department (CSD) is responsible for overseeing City park facilities and services. Parks within the City jurisdiction are used by the public for various recreational activities, and include such amenities as athletic fields, hard court playgrounds, open space areas, picnic areas, swimming facilities, gymnasias, and skateboard facilities. City parks often contain restrooms and irrigation systems that are maintained by the Department.

In addition to operation and maintenance of facilities, CSD sponsors many youth and adult recreational programs at the City's park facilities. Existing programs include swimming lessons, day camps, and various educational and recreational activities offered at the community centers. Programs sponsored by the Department are offered to the public and often entail a participation fee to help pay for expenses.

I. Performance Standard

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) requires that the parks and recreation section of the SAP maintain a minimum performance standard. The City's Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2008) serves as a guide to the future development and improvement of parks and recreational facilities in El Centro. Its recommendations include increasing the parks and recreation standard (park acreage per 1,000 people) from three (3) acres to five (5) acres per 1,000 residents. The City of El Centro General Plan 2040 Land Use Element (LUE) incorporates the developed parkland standard recommended in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan of 5 acres per 1,000 residents.

Additionally, the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan presents goals to provide facilities within a one-half mile distance of all residential areas, expand existing facilities to meet Statewide and City standards, orient facilities toward special ethnic and age groups within the City and efficiently maintain the facilities.

According to the City, five (5) acres of developed public parkland is not achievable with the current property availability, however future development guided by the LUE can increase designated parkland to achieve that standard in the future. Currently, the SAP uses a performance standard for parks and recreational facilities of three (3) acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The current inventory of park and recreation facilities includes parks, recreation, community center facilities, and school facilities that are available for limited public recreation use. Stormwater retention basins are not counted in parkland acreage. School recreation facilities with which the City has joint-use agreements for limited public use are counted at 25% of the developed recreational acreage. The City provides more than 160.6 acres of parks and recreation facility acreage, in the 20 parks, eight (8) recreation and community center facilities and 14 school recreation facilities within the City’s jurisdiction. The following list presents the names, acreages and building areas of the City’s park and recreation facilities, as shown in the General Plan Public Services Element and further described in the City of El Centro Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2008).

Table 4.6-1 Park Facilities and Acreage

PARK	PARK ACREAGE	RETENTION BASIN ACREAGE
Adams Park	9.33	0.0
Bucklin Park	20.0	0.0
Buena Vista Park	0.0	8.0
Carlos Aguilar Park	4.75	0.0
Countryside Park	2.0	5.9
Debbie Pitman Park	4.73	0.0
Desert Village Park	0.0	3.5
Farmer’s Park	1.29	0.0
First Responders Park	2.4	0.0
Frazier Field	3.55	0.0
Gomez Park	2.66	0.0
Leeper Park	3.71	3.7
Legacy Ranch Memorial Plaza	1.5	0.0
Lotus Park	3.85	3.9
McGee Park	5.31	0.0
Plank Park	3.62	0.0
Stark Field	11.44	0.0
Sunflower Park	13.0	0.0
Swarthout Field	15.49	0.0
Town Square	0.5	0.0
Wildflower Park	0.0	3.96
Subtotal	109.13	28.96

Table 4.6-2 Recreation and Community Center Facilities and Acreage

RECREATION & COMMUNITY CENTER FACILITY	FACILITY ACREAGE	FACILITY SQ. FT
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Sports Pavilion	2.35	22,950
Conrad Harrison Youth Center	0.68	11,000
El Centro Adult Center	0.2	4,173
El Centro Aquatic Center	3.4	16,131
El Centro Community Center	2.5	8,450
Sidewinder Skate Park	2.24	24,000
Martin Luther King Jr. Sport Complex	0.67	29,200
Old Post Office Pavilion	0.23	10,000
Subtotal	12.27	125,904

Table 4.6-3 School Recreation Facilities and Acreage

SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITY	FACILITY ACREAGE AVAILABLE	FACILITY ACREAGE NOT AVAILABLE
Central Union High School	17.5	0.0
De Anza Elementary School	14.7	0.0
Desert Garden Elementary School	13.3	0.0
Harding School	8.1	0.0
Hedrick Elementary	10.9	0.0
Kennedy Elementary/Middle School	16.7	0.0
King Elementary School	0.0	12.2
Lincoln School	7.7	0.0
McKinley School	10.9	0.0
Southwest High School	16.5	0.0
Sunflower Elementary School & Field	0.0	4.2
Sunflower Park	16.7	0.0
Wilson Jr. High School	14.4	0.0
Washington Elementary School	9.4	0.0
subtotal	156.8	16.4
25% joint-use	39.2	4.1
TOTAL	160.6	

The City constructed and opened the El Centro Aquatic Center in 2019 which features a 25-yard competition pool, an interactive children’s / recreational pool, an instructional / fitness pool, a lazy river, and state-of-the-art support buildings. The El Centro Aquatic Center finalized a master plan that included other recreation facilities, such as the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Sports Pavilion, an indoor sports complex, and the Sidewinder Skate Park, and beautified the Adams Avenue corridor.

To administer and maintain the parks and recreation system, CSD currently employs seven full-time staff members. Approximately two (2) temporary staff members work for the department to support recreational activities at various times throughout the year. The City is currently recruiting one (1) more full-time staff member. The administrative offices of CSD are located at 1249 W. Main Street. CSD contracts with private companies for some maintenance work in City parks. See Figure 4-6 for a map of the existing Parks, Fields and Facilities within the City.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

Applying the parkland goal of three (3) acres per 1,000 population, the City's current population of 44,322 would require a parkland area of 132.97 acres, which is less than the existing park and recreation facility acreage of 160.6 acres, including parks, recreation facilities and the shared recreation facilities. Thus, the City operates with a parkland surplus of approximately 27.63 acres.

The surplus was calculated as follows:

$$44,322 \text{ existing residents} \times 3.0 \text{ acres} / 1,000 \text{ population} = \mathbf{132.97 \text{ acres}}$$

$$160.6 \text{ existing acres} - 132.97 \text{ demand acres} = \mathbf{27.63 \text{ surplus acres}}$$

Future Demand for Facilities

The City currently operates at a surplus of parkland within its jurisdiction. In addition to the parkland required to meet current demands, future growth of the City will require acquisition of additional parkland to continue meeting its performance standard past 2035. The projected 2035 population of 52,009 residents would necessitate 156.03 acres or 4.57 less acres of public parkland than currently exists in the City's jurisdiction.

Parkland is generally provided by developers as part of large residential or commercial developments within the City, and it is anticipated that this future demand would be met by such provision. CSD will also require funding throughout the planning period for maintenance and administration of the facilities and the various programs offered by the department. Demand for such funding will increase as additional parkland is developed and as existing parks experience increased utilization as a result of population growth within the City.

Updated in June of the City of El Centro General Plan Land Use Element (LUE) was updated in June of 2021 as a guide to policy makers, decision makers, the general public, and planners in the City regarding the desired pattern of land use and development through the 2040 planning period. The LUE supports the City's Parks and the Recreation Master Plan by designating parkland on the Land Use Policy Map and incorporates the developed parkland standard recommended in Parks and Recreation Master Plan of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. As the City experiences growth and development, parkland facilities will continue to expand accordingly to meet parkland standards.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The City currently maintains joint-use agreements with the local school districts for the use and maintenance of athletic fields and park facilities associated with most of the schools in these districts. Such joint-use parks are available to students of these districts and City residents alike. Whenever possible, CSD will maintain such existing relationships and will pursue similar relationships with these districts and other jurisdictions. The City generally adheres to the best practices established by the JPIA for the maintenance of ballfields and facilities by personnel.

Phasing

Table 4.6-4 below lists a breakdown of parkland demand phasing over the SAP planning period.

Table 4.6-4 Parkland Demand

Year	Population	Total Demand	Difference
2020	44,322	132.97 acres	27.63 (surplus)
2025	47,769	143.31 acres	17.29 (surplus)
2030	50,513	151.54 acres	9.06 (surplus)
2035	52,009	156.03 acres	4.57 (surplus)

In order to adhere to the demand for parkland and continue meeting performance standards linked to expected population growth, the City will continue to require that new development include provision of additional public parks and recreational facilities to the maximum extent allowed by law, in accordance with Public Facilities Policy 1.2 of the General Plan. When developments are approved and processed within the City, attention should be paid to this policy and to Section 24, Article V of the City of El Centro Code of Ordinances to continue operating at a surplus of public parkland.

Provision of adequate parkland meeting the City’s existing and future demand will require adherence to these parkland provision requirements. The City plans to expand or provide additional services as fiscally possible. Any future expansion and construction of additional park facilities will be completed in phases as funding is made available.

The El Centro Park and Recreation Facilities Master Plan identified 11 park and recreation facilities that are pending completion:

Table 4.6-5 Planned Parks and Recreation Facilities

Facility	Facility Acreage	Status
Adams Park (Dog Park)	1.4 acres	Under Construction
Athletic Sports Complex (Tournament Quality)	40 - 60 acres	Feasibility Study Completed
Buena Vista Park	2.3 acres	Site Plans Approved, Project Out to Bid
Cultural and Performing Arts Center	TBD	Incomplete
Discovery Center	TBD	Incomplete
Environmental Education Facility Adventure Playground	TBD	Incomplete
Exploratorium	TBD	Incomplete
Golf Course (Links)	TBD	Incomplete
Gomez Park Expansion	+ 0.60 acres	In Progress
Toddler Center	TBD	Incomplete
Trails and Connectivity	TBD	In Progress

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to provide to its residents adequate parkland that is efficiently managed and maintained as growth continues within the City and within the boundaries of the SOI, the City will implement the following measures:

- Continue to require the provision of parkland or the payment of a park development fee, in accordance with Section 24, Article V of the City of El Centro Code of Ordinances. As developments are processed within the City, provision of public parkland or collection of development fees should be enforced to maintain the surplus of public parkland.
- Apply for grant funding from both public and private sources.
- Offset operation costs by charging user fees where appropriate.

- Continue to periodically review the performance of CSD through the preparation of annual reports. Such review will identify staffing and budgetary concerns as the amount of City parkland continues to grow.
- Review existing development impact fees for CSD services, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement revised fee structure.
- Implement incremental User Fee increases based on the recommended CPI financing mechanism to guide annual adjustments.
- Determine the projected revenue needs to sustain and improve parks and recreation services. This should take into account any anticipated increases in operating costs, maintenance requirements, or planned enhancements to facilities.
- To address concerns regarding equitable distribution and community impact, implement a robust community engagement plan for leveraging Measure P funds, ensuring that residents have a role in prioritizing and shaping the projects supported by the initiative.
- Update the Parks & Recreation Master Plan to ensure it is reflective of community needs regarding developed parkland and recreation facilities.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

The City receives funding for parks and recreation facilities including from the general fund, development impact fees, user fee charges, fundraisers and donations, and regional, state and federal grants. The State of California Urban Greening Grant Program and State Proposition 68 funds were used to design and develop Buena Vista Park and Gomez Park. The State’s Urban Greening Grant Program awarded the City \$1,293,831 for Buena Vista Park and the State Prop 68 Grant allocated \$5,700,000 for Gomez Park. Additionally, Measure P funds have been used to match State grants and build new facilities. Measure P has also been used to leverage Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in qualifying areas.

The City constructed and opened the El Centro Aquatic Center in 2019. The \$18 million project was funded by a Redevelopment Agency Tax Allocation and Revenue Bonds with Local Transportation Authority funding. To meet the diverse needs of area residents, the City of El Centro has developed a cost structure for using the aquatic center on a variety of levels from individual day use, family rates, summer passes, and annual membership along with rates for private parties and events.

With an investment of \$2 million from Measure P funds, the City built First Responders Park which is the City’s first inclusive and accessible park for children of all abilities. It includes play structures, outdoor fitness equipment, seating areas, and a memorial wall honoring first responders.

Maintenance fees for landscaping improvements along street rights-of-way are also collected from the Legacy Ranch Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LLMD), as well as from the Buena Vista LLMD and Town Center LLMD. The LLMD was created for maintenance and improvements for assets including drainage, sidewalks, and medians. In the case of Legacy Ranch, the LLMD can be used for park maintenance of the open space dedicated to the city by the developer. Maintenance includes landscaping, open grass field, playground equipment, and structural amenities like a covered picnic area and furnishings.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City currently maintains joint-use agreements with the local school districts for the use and maintenance of athletic field and park facilities associated with most of the schools in these districts. These joint-use agreements save the City some of the operations and maintenance costs.

City policy requiring private developers to dedicate parkland and construct parks in conjunction with development projects eliminates substantial cost to the City for undertaking the purchase or dedication of land or the construction costs. The City will continue this cost avoidance measure.

The City routinely writes grant applications to rehabilitate existing park spaces and plan for the construction of new facilities. City staff should actively research grant programs and take note of application deadlines to acquire funding for facility improvements to meet community needs for parkland and recreation facilities. Competitive grant programs such as the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program and Outdoor Equity Grants Program support new parks and recreation opportunities in underserved communities across California.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund will continue to cover the expenditures necessary to carry out the Parks and Recreation services. To continue meeting performance standards and to accommodate the anticipated population increase, the City will continue to require that new development include provision of additional public parks and recreational facilities to the maximum extent, in accordance with Public Facilities Policy 1.2.

User fees were updated in 2019 and are charged by the following City Departments: Fire Department; Police Department; City Clerk; Library and Parks & Recreation. Planning & Zoning; Engineering; and Building & Safety. Fees increase at the beginning of each fiscal year based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a cap of 3%. The incremental increases to City user fees and charges implemented by departments including Parks & Recreation represent a viable route to sustainably fund ongoing maintenance needs as well as future facilities expansion.

The CDBG Program is a federal initiative in the United States that provides funds to local governments to support a variety of community development activities that benefit low- and moderate-income individuals. CDBG funds can be allocated to enhance or construct new parks and recreational facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, walking trails, picnic areas, and community centers. Local governments receiving these funds must adhere to regulations set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Additionally, the use of CDBG

funds for parks and recreation should align with the overall goals and objectives outlined in the jurisdiction's Consolidated Plan, which is a comprehensive planning document that guides the use of CDBG funds over a multi-year period.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for parks and recreation facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects related to parks and recreation. Development of a Capital Improvement Program for parks will provide guidance for the capital projects that will be needed, their timing of implementation, and the possible funding sources and mechanisms.

Land based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund park facilities and/or maintenance of parks, parkways and open space. Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as parks and childcare facilities.

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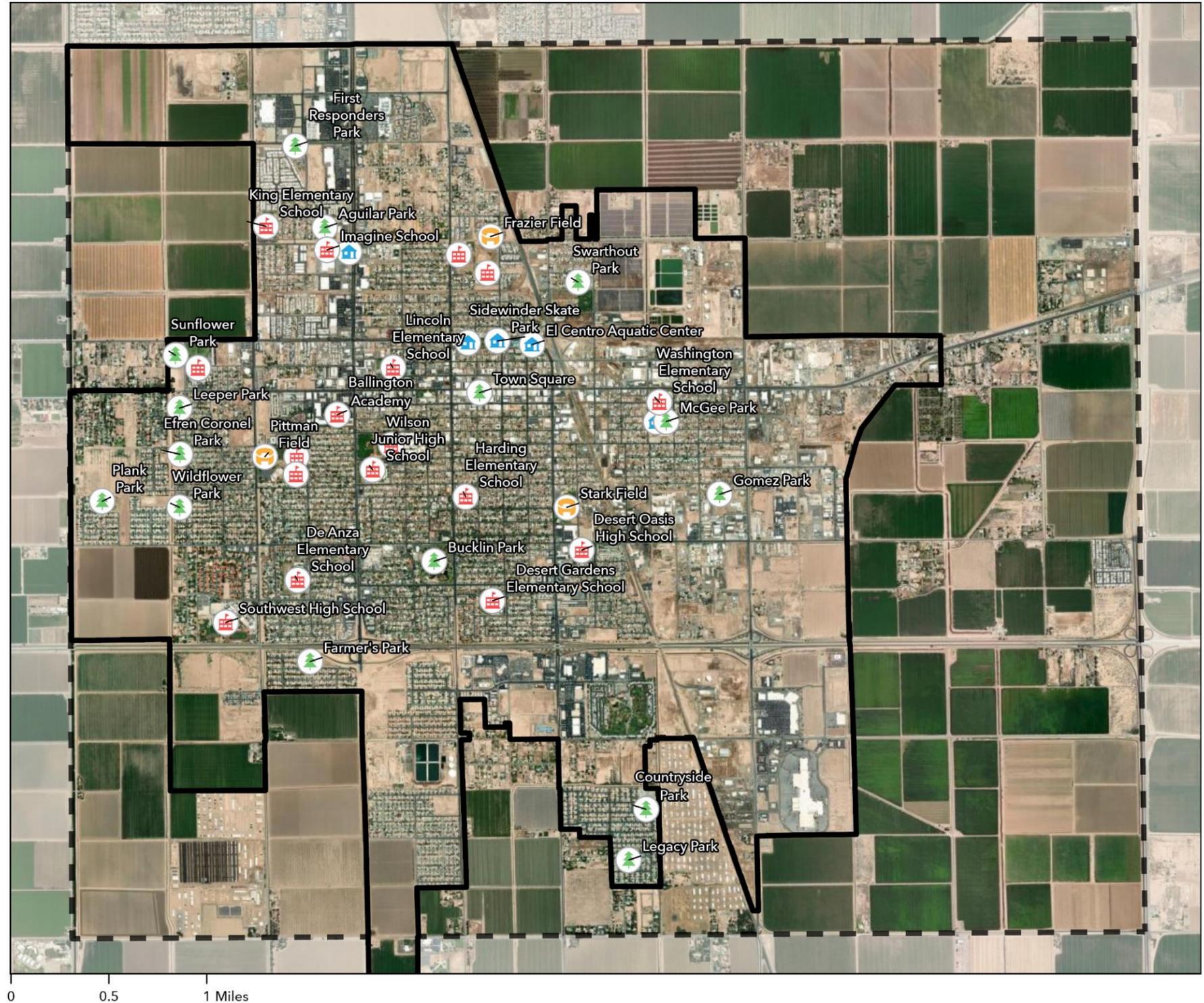


Figure 4-6
Parks, Fields and Facilities



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4.7 Transportation Facilities

The City is responsible for the development and maintenance of a system of public roadways and bicycle routes within their jurisdiction. The City’s transportation system links to those of the State and the County, as facilities of these other jurisdictions traverse the City. Development of new roads or improvement of existing roads is often accomplished by private developers when physical improvement of the City’s circulation system is deemed necessary due to anticipated increases in traffic from various development projects.

The General Plan includes a Mobility Element that discloses the City’s goals, policies, and performance criteria for a balanced, multimodal transportation system that presents the minimum design standards for City streets and provides a Planned Roadway Network that shows the anticipated development of the system as growth occurs within the City.

I. Performance Standard

The Mobility Element of the General Plan identifies performance criteria for the various types of roadways found in the local system. The criteria, which are summarized below in Table 4.7-1, are based on the graded scale “level of service” (LOS) classification system. The LOS system quantifies the effective operation of a particular roadway by determining the average daily traffic (ADT) capacity and how changes in ADT affect roadway service. LOS A represents effective service with little traffic congestion, while LOS F represents ineffective service with a great deal of traffic congestion.

While Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) now serves as the primary traffic impact metric for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Mobility Element Policy 4.4 states Level of Service retains its significance as a critical benchmark for assessing traffic operations within the City. The City’s objective is to maintain all Mobility Element roadways and intersections at a threshold of LOS C. Any deviation from LOS C requires review and approval by the City Engineer, considering public impacts and right-of-way constraints. Except for Imperial Avenue between Ocotillo Drive and I-8 westbound ramps may have LOS E as acceptable due to right-of-way constraints, subject to City Engineer approval. If a development project is anticipated to present traffic conditions in excess of this threshold, the project would be required to implement physical improvements to address project-related traffic impacts to the circulation system.

In September 2013, the California state legislature adopted SB 743, which requires the development of an alternative transportation metric other than Level of Service (LOS) as part of the CEQA process. LOS, which is typically based upon vehicle delays at intersections during peak travel periods, is the standard transportation metric used in the Mobility Element. The alternative transportation metrics are intended to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is an alternative that other jurisdictions are using in response to SB 743, based on the number of additional trips the development is anticipated to generate, reflecting the impact of land use, transportation network capacity, multimodal facilities, road connectivity, and system operations.

Table 4.7-1 Circulation System Performance Criteria (LOS)

Roadway Functional Classification	ADT Capacity					
	LOS A	LOS B	LOS C	LOS D	LOS E	LOS F
6-Lane Arterial	≤ 32,000	32,001-38,000	38,001-43,000	43,001-49,000	49,001-54,000	> 54,000
4-Lane Arterial	≤ 22,000	22,001-25,000	25,001-29,000	29,001-32,300	32,301-36,000	> 36,000
2-Lane Arterial	≤ 11,000	11,001-12,500	12,501-14,500	14,501-16,000	16,001-18,000	> 18,000
2-Lane Collector	≤ 6,000	6,001-7,500	7,501-9,000	9,001-10,500	10,501-12,000	> 12,000

** LOS is not applied to residential streets since their primary purpose is to serve abutting lots, not carry through traffic. The number for residential streets is a generally accepted ADT threshold for LOS C operation.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The circulation system within the City is oriented in a north/south and east/west grid system. The major circulation facilities located within City limits include one freeway and several highways that are operated by the State through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

The State facilities traversing the City are Interstate 8 and State Route 86. State Route 111 is outside of the City limits, but currently serves as the eastern boundary of the City’s SOI. Interstate 8 is independent of City streets but includes on-ramps and off-ramps at Imperial Avenue, 4th Street, and Dogwood Avenue. Unlike Interstate 8, the State Routes within the City boundaries are intertwined with the grid of City-operated roadways. While the City is not responsible for maintaining these State roadways, upkeep and adequate circulation on such facilities affects traffic throughout the City-operated system.

City-operated roadway facilities include arterials, collector streets, residential streets, and alleys. Arterials are six, four, or two-lane roadways, that are designed to carry moderate to heavier vehicular traffic volumes, while providing direct access to regional transportation corridors such as I-8 and SR-111. Their primary focus is on prioritizing vehicular mobility and network connections across the City while maintaining the safety of other modes. City-maintained arterials do not typically provide direct access to residential lots, whereas collector roads are designed to provide that essential connection. Collector roads include residential streets, residential loop streets, and cul-de-sacs. Collectors are two-lane roads that are smaller than arterials and can have turn pockets at larger intersections. Their primary purpose is to collect and distribute local traffic throughout the community while not providing direct access to the regional freeways or state routes. Lower speed limits and the addition of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on collector roads makes it safer and more suitable for accommodating bicycle routes. Residential streets and alleys provide direct access to property by local traffic and are not meant to serve through traffic. At one time, alleys were required within all residential, commercial, and industrial development in the City. This is no longer the case, but the City plans to maintain the existing alley network.

The Active Transportation and Safe Routes to School Plan identifies the existing and previously proposed bicycle facilities provided throughout the City. The network consists of roughly 27 miles of Class I Multi-use Paths, Class II Bike Lanes, and Class III Bike Routes. Currently, there are no Class IV Separated Bikeways or Cycle Tracks within El Centro. Almost 90 percent of the existing facilities are shared bicycle routes located on collector and local streets. The City assessed the existing facilities to identify suitable locations for future infill projects that could provide upgrades to the facilities.

The City operates and maintains signalized and unsignalized intersections that control the flow of traffic. Any additional improvement projects required to accommodate anticipated development will necessitate further traffic studies to determine the necessary enhancements, in accordance with the Mobility Element requirements.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

The City utilizes cumulative traffic analysis through the environmental review process for proposed large-scale development projects to assess the existing and long-term impacts to circulation facilities. The existing circulation system is adequate to accommodate the current needs of the City in that paved roadways properly link existing residential, commercial, and industrial development.

As discussed in detail as follows, the City has determined the need to implement circulation system improvements in the El Dorado Colonia area. This would accommodate anticipated development. In addition to this improvement project under consideration, extension of roadways and creation of additional roadways will be needed as development continues to occur within the City limits and SOI boundaries.

Future Demand for Facilities

As residential, commercial, and industrial development continues within the City limits and SOI, the City will need to continue to upgrade and improve existing roadways and create new roadways in order to maintain a service level that is in keeping with the goals established in the General Plan. Streets required to serve new development are typically provided by the developers as the project is constructed. The City has reviewed existing functional classifications and anticipated travel demands all while taking the existing built environment limitations into consideration to create the Planned Roadway Network Classifications.

In addition to the Planned Roadway Network Classifications, which are designed to accommodate the build-out traffic within the development tiers, the Mobility Element of the General Plan includes specific mobility improvement strategies. These strategies aim to address the City's mobility needs by maximizing service efficiency, increasing person throughput, reducing congestion, and lowering parking demand. They also focus on providing quality information to the commuting public.

Other mobility strategies include Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs and Transportation System Management (TSM) tools. TDM strategies, such as employer incentives,

like rideshare programs, flexible work schedules, and parking management, are implemented to reduce commute-related vehicle miles traveled. The City also recognizes the significant role the built environment plays in enhancing transit access, prioritizing transit treatments, and reducing dependence on single occupancy vehicles. TSM utilizes emerging technologies for future mobility concepts and enhances traffic management and operations. Furthermore, the City emphasizes the importance of flexibility in response to evolving technology that impacts facility types and design treatments. This flexibility is evident in their efforts related to shared micro-mobility devices and Neighborhood Electric Vehicles.

The planned bicycle routes within the City are designed a seamless, safe, and comfortable for individuals of all skill levels. These classifications fall into four classifications: Class I Bike Path, Class II Bike Lane, Class III Bike Route, and Class IV Separated Bikeway or Cycle Track. The Mobility Element provides a Planned Bicycle Network map that details the expansion of existing facilities. The City's primary 4-Lane Arterials will be upgraded to feature Class IV Cycle Tracks, while in the central area of the City along the 2-Lane Collectors, there are plans for Class III Bike Routes and Enhanced Class II Bike Boulevards.

The City intends to expand and provide transportation facilities in the future to accommodate anticipated population growth. Certain projects, like the Imperial Avenue extension project, have already been approved as specific capital improvement projects and are listed below under the “Phasing” heading in this section. Additional expansion projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis as demand dictates.

El Dorado Colonia Circulation System:

The General Plan Land Use Element acknowledges that El Dorado Colonia is no longer classified as a colonia. The City has made efforts to construct the necessary infrastructure improvements in order to meet its goals of providing safe and efficient transportation facilities. The El Dorado Colonia is currently bisected by the east/west streets of El Dorado Avenue and Pico Road and the north/south streets of 12th Street and 8th Street. In order for development to occur within this area, a street system connecting to the surrounding grid system needs to be improved. The Land Use Element has planned for improvements to continue during the planning period. The Mobility Element has no improvements planned for this specific area.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

While there are no real opportunities to share roadway facilities with any adjacent jurisdiction, the City’s system does not exist independently, and circulation within and through the City is mutually affected by the operation of the State and County circulation system. In order to maintain the best possible circulation within City limits, throughout the SOI, within the County, and the greater region as a whole, the City will continue to cooperate with the State, the County, and adjacent cities in monitoring the operation of the regional system and the implementation of necessary improvements. In accordance with General Plan policy, the City will also continue to cooperate with the Imperial County Transportation Commission to ensure that adequate bus service is available for all segments of the community.

Phasing

Future expansion and construction of additional transportation facilities will occur in phases, with phasing decisions linked to traffic demand and available funds allowed. Improvement of the City's circulation system will occur as needed in concurrence with development. The City will continue to require of developers the necessary roadway and intersection improvements to account for project-related trips and congestion. Necessary roadway infrastructure would be installed prior to the completion of development projects.

The 2016 SAP identified thirteen capital improvement transportation projects that would improve circulation and accommodate growth within the City. Since then, six (6) projects were completed, four (4) projects are on-going, and three (3) are not complete. The improvement projects that are complete are: El Dorado Colonia Street Improvement, Eastern Extension of Bradshaw Avenue, Interstate 8 and Imperial Avenue Interchange, Dogwood Avenue Bridge Improvements, La Brucherie Avenue Roadway Widening, and Undergrounding of North Date Canal.

The following list includes specific capital improvement transportation projects that have not been completed and were previously identified in the 2016 SAP.

1. Roadway Repaving and Enhancement (On-Going): Slurry and overlay several unspecified roadways within the City.
2. Extension of Imperial Avenue South to McCabe (On-Going): Design and construct the extension of Imperial Avenue south of Interstate 8 to McCabe Road.
3. Disabled Access Ramps (On-Going): Repair, replace, and install disabled access ramps at unspecified curb and intersection locations throughout the City.
4. Ross Avenue Roadway Widening: Acquire right-of-way and widen Ross Avenue between 1st and 3rd Street and align the railroad crossing with Ross Avenue.
5. Wake Avenue Extension: Engineer, design, acquire right-of-way, and construct Wake Avenue between 12th Street and La Brucherie Avenue. This project is in progress and is expected to be completed in FY 24.
6. Traffic Signs (On-Going): Install signs for street names, radar feedback, and directional indicators at unspecified locations throughout the City.
7. 8th Street Bridge Renovation: Design, engineer, and construct improvements to the 8th Street overpass bridge over Interstate 8 to widen from the current 2 lanes to 4 lanes.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to maintain adequate circulation and provide roadways that are sound and efficient, the City will implement the following measures.

- Implement identified circulation system projects to improve circulation and accommodate growth within the City.
- Continue to periodically review the list of approved roadway capital improvement projects slated for implementation by the City to determine project status, need for revision of the program schedule, and budgetary needs.
- Review the existing development impact fees schedule for circulation and roadway projects, identify necessary improvement to the current fee structure, and implement the revised fee structure.
- Consider roadway capital improvements listed in the 2040 General Plan Mobility Element.
- Develop and regularly update a Transportation Impact Fees (TIF) program to ensure adequate funding is allocated for the development, operation, and maintenance of the City's transportation system across all travel modes.

The City has been continuously implementing the above mitigation measures since the 2016 SAP. The 2040 General Plan's Mobility Element includes future required roadway capital improvement projects. Additionally, while the Development Impact Fees have not been revised yet, a new fee study is planned in the near future to identify necessary improvements to the current fee structure.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Street & Maintenance services. Funding sources include development impact fees, local transportation authority, and the State gas tax. The gas tax is used for roadway maintenance and improvement and is allocated to local jurisdictions based on formulas that account primarily for population. The Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) allocates Article 3 revenue from the Transportation Development Act (TDA) to each local jurisdiction in the County for non-motorized transportation such as bicycle and pedestrian projects. Street and road funding from TDA is not provided.

The Imperial County Local Transportation Authority administers the local transportation sale tax (Measure D) that provides street and road funding for maintenance and capital improvement. LTA revenues bonds were issued for street related expenditures. Traffic fines and forfeitures are collected by the City for traffic control supplies and equipment. Capital roadway projects are funded from state transportation improvement program (STIP) revenue that are programmed by ICTC and submitted to the California Transportation Commission.

STIP revenue is comprised of state and federal highway revenue sources and projects that receive funding are voted upon by the CTC. Many of these projects are tied to highway capacity, highway intersections and related projects.

Landscape and Lighting Maintenance Districts (LLMDs) are created for maintenance and improvements for assets including drainage, sidewalks, and median walkways. The City has three existing LLMDs created for Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista and Town Center developments. The Legacy Ranch development also created a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, drains).

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

While there are no real opportunities to share roadway facilities with any adjacent jurisdiction, the City's system does not exist independently, and circulation within and through the City is mutually affected by the operation of the State and County circulation system. In order to maintain the best possible circulation within City limits, throughout the SOI, and within the County and the greater region as a whole, the City will continue to cooperate with the State, the County, and adjacent cities in monitoring the operation of the regional system and the implementation of necessary improvements. In accordance with General Plan policy, the City will also continue to cooperate with the Imperial County Transportation Commission to ensure that adequate public transportation service is available for all segments of the community. Application to State and federal programs to receive funding for circulation and roadway projects also provides a significant opportunity to avoid direct cost to the City for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Recommended Funding

Growth in core transportation funding sources for future transportation projects are closely linked to economic growth. Economic stability and growth highly influence revenue sources such as the gas tax, Transportation Development Act Article 3, Measure D transportation funds, development impact fees, and State transportation revenue. Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds from Caltrans could be available for pedestrian and bicycle projects. The City's ability to leverage local sources for additional State and Federal funds improves its ability to fund additional facilities.

An update to the development impact fees (DIFs) study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for transportation facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as transportation facilities.

The Mobility Element states the City's intent to develop and regularly update a Transportation Impact Fees (TIF) program. A TIF program will provide adequate funding for the development, operation, and maintenance of the City's transportation system across all travel modes. TIF programs provide funding for construction of transportation facilities needed to support traffic generated by new development and to meet state law requirements.

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4.8 Wastewater Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system of over 125 miles of wastewater collection pipelines, pump stations, and treatment facilities that serves approximately 8,000 residences, businesses, and public facilities within the City and the City SOI. Facilities within this system are developed and maintained by the Department of Public Works. The City anticipates undertaking an update to the Sewer Master Plan with a goal for adopting this update by 2024.

I. Performance Standard

In general, the City's goal in the operation and maintenance of its wastewater facilities is to provide adequate service to every customer. The City utilizes several engineering criteria to determine the adequacy of existing wastewater facilities and the need for improvements to the system. These criteria consider the accommodation of flow volume and velocity, lift station capacity, and technical specifications that assure a properly designed system.

Wastewater treatment is generally regulated by the State of California. The City is held responsible to the Waste Discharge Requirements by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. The State Water Quality Board (SWQB) sets a performance standard for wastewater facilities not to exceed 85 percent capacity.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The City wastewater facilities include a collection of over 125 miles of sewer lines and pipelines that carry wastewater from residences and businesses to the Wastewater Treatment Plant located in the northern portion of the City along La Brucherie Avenue between the Central Drain and Cruickshank Drive. Treated water is carried east and discharges into the IID Drain System which eventually makes its way to the Alamo River. The City operates 15 pump stations within the collection system, including a station at the treatment facility and the Orange Avenue Regional Lift Station.

The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is a conventional primary/secondary plant followed by disinfection by ultraviolet (UV) irradiation. The original plant consisted of primary clarifiers followed by ponds. An activated sludge process replaced the ponds in 1972. The aeration basins have been further modified to replace mechanical turbine aeration with fine bubble aeration. The plant was originally constructed with a chlorine contact basin for disinfection. The chlorination system has since been removed and replaced with UV facilities.

The rated capacity of the plant is 8.0 million gallons per day (mgd). This flow is for any 30-day reporting period. The maximum month flow in 2022 was 3.6 mgd. The average annual flow for this same period was 3.4 mgd.

The City maintains an agreement with the County that limits the acreage of development south of I-8 that would contribute flow to the gravity pipeline along La Brucherie Avenue to 720 acres.

In 2018, Southern Pump Station 2 underwent relocation and expansion efforts, while concurrent upgrades were implemented at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). These enhancements specifically included the installation of new barscreens and an upgraded aeration system. There were no additions to the existing staff during this operational and infrastructural upgrade.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has the capacity to accommodate eight million gallons per day (mgd). Current generation from City wastewater customers averages approximately 3.4 mgd. The WWTP consistently meets Secondary Treatment standards and has adequate capacity to handle existing flows, and because the facility is operating at approximately 43 percent capacity, no expansions to accommodate additional capacity are planned. \$15 million in energy efficiency improvements have been completed at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant since the 2016 SAP.

Future Demand for Facilities

The WWTP and delivery system will meet demand of growth for the next ten years. Planning must begin for the next expansion when the monthly flow reaches 6.4 mgd, or 80 percent of the plant's capacity of the 8.0 mgd. Planned improvements to expand the WWTP and delivery system will be considered during the anticipated 2024 update of the Sewer Master Plan.

Low density housing that is planned to surround the City and minor industrial and commercial developments within the eastern portion of the City SOI will present additional demand on the City's wastewater system.

The La Brucherie trunk sewer line has adequate capacity to serve future development in the southwestern portion of the service area. Other trunk sewers generally do not have available capacity to serve future development outside of the existing service area and improvements will be made on a project-by-project basis by developers. Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) are being constructed by the City.

It is anticipated that provision of wastewater collection to the ultimate service area will require additional treatment capacity and extension of the wastewater collection and transmission system. The existing wastewater treatment plant is anticipated to be adequate treatment capacity for future demand.

In addition, all new development that occurs outside of the existing wastewater service area will require the developer to provide expanded wastewater services, primarily trunk sewers.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The City does not share wastewater treatment, storage, or distribution facilities with other jurisdictions, and there is no opportunity to share such facilities.

Phasing

The phasing plan for adding new staff and facilities, particularly in the Southern Pump Station project, involves a comprehensive construction and staffing strategy aligned with the master plan to accommodate projected population growth. The project, expected to be completed in 2024, entails the construction of approximately 9,000 lineal feet of pipeline and a new sewer pump station at the northeast corner of Danenberg Drive and Farnsworth Lane near the city boundary in the southeastern region of the City. The 9,000 linear feet pipeline project is divided into three phases, with the first phase scheduled for completion in the 2024-25 fiscal year. The allocated \$8 million investment is strategically phased to cover the costs associated with the construction and development of the Southern Pump Station project. This financial commitment is crucial for expanding wastewater capacity in specific areas along Dogwood Avenue, McCabe Road, and Farnsworth. The phased approach ensures that the Southern Pump Station project incrementally expands wastewater capacity, specifically catering to the needs of approximately 240 acres of land south of Interstate 8. As a part of the system's infrastructure demands, the addition of an Instrumentation Technician position has been proposed to support the integration of new technology.

Facility improvements, specifically sewer line enhancements to boost capacity, will be phased on a project-by-project basis by developers. The City Engineer has approved design criteria to meet performance standards, ensuring compliance with the sewer master plan. Developers are conditioned according to this plan and are required to upsize as necessary to align with the established standards and accommodate increased capacity. This phased approach ensures that each development project contributes to the overall enhancement of the sewer system in alignment with the city's master plan and regulatory standards.

III. Mitigation

For the City to assure adequate service to its wastewater customers as development continues within the City boundaries and within the SOI, the City will implement the following measures:

- Implement improvement projects recommended in the Sewer Master Plan as funds become available.
- Implement wastewater system improvement projects identified in the City's budget and capital improvement project program.
- Continue to periodically review the wastewater rate and financing structure to secure adequate funding for the implementation of projects and maintenance of existing facilities.
- Review and update the wastewater rate and finance structure in 2024, aligning with the future sewer master plan, to ensure effective financial management of wastewater services.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

Dynamic Consulting Engineers prepared a Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update in 2012 that determined the adequacy of the existing rate structure charged to City customers for wastewater service and recommended rate changes and other revenue sources to pay for wastewater facilities. Following the anticipated 2024 Sewer Master Plan, a rate update study is proposed to review wastewater rate and finance structure.

The City's wastewater funds are operated as business enterprises with revenue generated through monthly service charges that fund wastewater projects and maintenance. Revenue accrued by such billing is placed in the Wastewater Fund to help finance personnel, maintenance, and improvements.

Operations, maintenance, salaries, and equipment purchases are funded by the City's Wastewater Enterprise Fund. This fund is used to account for revenues and expenses associated with the collection and treatment of wastewater. Enterprise funds are used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises. The City receives money in this fund by charging connection fees and maintenance fees to its wastewater customers.

The Wastewater Enterprise Fund is separate from the Wastewater Capacity Fee Fund and is not used to finance the engineering or construction of major improvement projects. The City receives money for the Wastewater Capacity Fee Fund used for major improvement projects by charging wastewater capacity fees for development projects and by receiving interest earned from such fees.

The Wastewater Stabilization fund receives excess revenues from the Wastewater Enterprise Fund. Monies deposited into this fund can be withdrawn to assist the City in covering its income to debt service ratios.

The Legacy Ranch development also created a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, storm drains).

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City often requires developers to construct wastewater-related infrastructure that will connect the specific development with the existing City wastewater system. This requirement helps the City avoid substantial costs associated with infrastructure development.

Recommended Funding

The City will continue to use the existing financing mechanisms described above to finance the City's wastewater engineering, construction, operation, and maintenance. Bond measures may continue to be required to finance the large-scale improvements recommended within the full buildout timeframe. The City recently issued a large revenue bond that is backed by customer

charges. Current funding sources, especially customer fees, will remain the largest source for wastewater treatment and sewer facility maintenance, improvements, and possible expansions.

The City can enhance wastewater construction projects using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) by directing investments toward critical infrastructure needs. These funds can be allocated to expand wastewater facilities, upgrade technology, ensure environmental compliance, and promote green infrastructure initiatives. Additionally, ARPA funds can support projects that prioritize community health and safety, create local jobs, and stimulate economic growth. Collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions can be explored, and resilience planning for the wastewater system can be developed.

An updated wastewater study will be conducted that will identify funding sources to pay for the recommended improvements to the wastewater facility. Also, an update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for wastewater facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as sewage facilities.

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4.9 Water Facilities

The following section of the SAP contains information published in the Water Master Plan prepared by Carrollo Engineers in February 2008; the Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update from 2012 prepared by Dynamic Consulting Engineers, Inc. and the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan prepared by Psomas.

The City owns, operates, and maintains a system for the treatment, storage, and distribution of potable water that actively serves residences, businesses, and public facilities within the City and the City SOI. There are 10,458 current active and inactive service connections in the City's water distribution system. All active connections (including temporary construction meters) are metered. Included among the 10,458 service connections are 85 inactive connections where meters have been removed. Approximately 72 percent of the City's metered water use in 2020 (excluding non-revenue water) was residential use. Commercial/Institutional, industrial, and landscape irrigation account for the remaining 28 percent of water demands.

The City purchases all of its untreated water from the Imperial Irrigation District, which is conveyed to City facilities from the Colorado River via the District's canal system. The raw water is then treated at the City's water treatment plant, stored, and then pumped into the City's water distribution system. City facilities are developed and maintained by the Department of Public Works.

I. Performance Standard

In general, the City's performance goal in the operation and maintenance of its water facilities is to provide adequate potable water service to every customer. Potable water must meet or exceed water quality standards promulgated by the State Water Board.

The City utilizes several engineering evaluation criteria for determining the adequacy of water facilities to provide adequate quantity and quality of water service within the City and the need for improvements to the system. These criteria consider water system pressure, pipeline velocities, storage capacity, supply requirements, and booster station requirements. The criteria are developed using the typical planning criteria used in the systems of similar water utilities, local codes, engineering judgment, commonly accepted industry standards, and input from City of El Centro Staff. The "industry standards" are typically ranges of values that are acceptable for the criteria in question, and therefore, are used more as a check to confirm that the values being developed are reasonable.

Below is a summary of the planning and evaluation criteria used by the City in the Water Master Plan. The Evaluation Condition is the determined scenario for evaluation, which can include Maximum Day Demand (MDD), Peak Hour Demand (PHD), or Minimum Day Demand (MinDD).

The table on the following page presents the planning criteria which was used to evaluate the existing distribution system and its facilities and to address the existing system deficiencies, size future improvements and structure project phasing.

Table 4.9-1 Water System Evaluation Criteria Summary

	Evaluation Condition	Value	Unit
System Pressure			
Maximum	MinDD	80	psi
Minimum, without fire flow	PHD	40	psi
Minimum, with fire flow	MDD	20	psi
Pipeline Velocity			
Existing pipelines (excl. hydrant runs)	MDD	5	ft/s
New pipelines (\leq 12-inch diameter pipes)	MDD	5	ft/s
New pipelines (\geq 16-inch diameter pipes)	MDD	4	ft/s
PS suction pipelines	MDD	8	ft/s
Pipeline Headloss			
Existing pipelines (excl. hydrant runs)	MDD	10	ft/kft
New pipelines	MDD	5	ft/kft

	Evaluation Condition	Value	Unit
Storage Volume			
Operational Storage		30% of MDD	MG
Fire Fighting Storage		Max FF demand * duration	MG
Emergency Storage		100% of MDD	MG
Fire Flow Requirements			
Rural Residential	MDD	1,000 gpm	gpm for 2 hours
Low Density Residential	MDD	1,000 gpm	gpm for 2 hours
Medium Density Residential	MDD	2,000 gpm	gpm for 2 hours
High Density Residential	MDD	3,000 gpm	gpm for 3 hours
Commercial	MDD	3,000 gpm	gpm for 3 hours
Public	MDD	3,000 gpm	gpm for 3 hours
Civic	MDD	3,000 gpm	gpm for 3 hours
Industrial	MDD	4,000 gpm	gpm for 4 hours
Supply Requirements			
Supply with largest source out of service		Meet MDD for 7 days	MG
Supply with power outage		Meet MDD for 6 hours	MG
Supply with earthquake		Meet MinDD for 14 days	MG
Pipeline Breaks		Meet MDD with single transmission main out of service	\geq 40 psi
Pump Station Capacity			
Under normal conditions		Meet PHD with the largest unit out of service	gpm
Power outage		Meet MDD with back-up power only	gpm
Earthquake conditions		Meet ADD with the largest PS out of service	gpm
Distribution System			
Pipeline life expectancy		75	Years
Minimum pipeline size (new pipes)		8	inches

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

The current capacity of the City's water system is approximately 21 million gallons per day (mgd). The water system includes the Water Treatment Plant, four (4) treated water storage tanks, two (2) raw water storage reservoirs, two (2) booster pumping stations, and approximately 148 miles of pipeline. The City serves water to about 10,458 connections with an average day demand (ADD) of approximately 7.0 mgd and maximum daily demand (MDD) of 11 mgd.

The Water Treatment Plant is located south of I-8 at S. 8th Street and Danenberg Drive. Three of the four potable water storage tanks and a pumping facility consisting of four booster pumps are located at the treatment facility. The three storage tanks have a total capacity of 10 million gallons, and each of the four pumps have a capacity of 4,000 gallons per minute (gpm).

The water system also includes a fourth water storage tank and pumping facility located at La Brucherie Avenue and Barbara Worth Drive. The water storage tank has a four-million gallon capacity and the two booster pumps have a 4,000 gpm capacity. This site has space reserved for the installation of a second four-million gallon storage tank.

Potable water is distributed from these treatment and storage facilities throughout the City by a system of large diameter pipelines. Principal pipelines range in diameter from 30" to 18" and are mostly contained within existing streets. Smaller pipelines with diameters of eight to 12 inches splitting off from these principal pipelines make up a majority of the distribution system.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

According to the Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update 2012, the water demand has decreased even though the population has increased in the past 10 years. The average daily demand (ADD) on the City's water system is approximately 7.0 million gallons per day in 2010; and so, the maximum daily demand (MDD) is now approximately 11 million gallons per day. The existing storage and conveyance capacity of 21 million gallons per day is sufficient for existing daily water demand and peak flow requirements. The system also has adequate capacity to accommodate anticipated near term development. Periodic improvements have been made to modernize the facilities and materials since the system was overhauled in the 1950s, including a major modification of the pumping system in 1994 and the Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project that was constructed in 2007. The system has never faced serious capacity concerns. The system will continue to require periodic improvements in addition to the expansion necessary to accommodate growth in the City and the City's SOI, as discussed below.

The successful operation of the water system is closely tied to the personnel responsible for managing it. According to the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report as of June 2022, a total of 22.8 full-time employees worked for the water facilities, and the City deems this workforce as adequate to meet the system's needs. As a part of the system's infrastructure demands, the addition of an Instrumentation Technician position has been proposed to support the integration of new technology.

Future Demand for Facilities

Future water demand was determined in the Water Master Plan of 2008 using Water Demand Factors (WDFs) used to estimate the ADD for existing and potential development areas. Future water demand was determined by multiplying the WDF with the total number of acres of each land use category. Although WDFs are typically determined from a combination of geo-coded billing records and land use information using spatial GIS analysis, billing records were not available at the time of the Water Master Plan’s development. In place of billing records, existing water production and current population was used to calculate the WDFs.

According to the Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update 2012, connections to the water system will increase an estimated 1.0% each year beginning in 2013. The projected planning horizon scenario of a population of 52,009 for the year 2035 that includes infill growth within the City boundary and anticipated growth within the SOI. The existing storage and conveyance capacity of 21 million gallons per day is sufficient for the daily water demand and peak flow requirements through the planning horizon year 2035.

The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan provided a comparison between the supply and demand for projected years between 2025 and 2045, which is shown in Table 4.9-1. Given that 100 percent of the City’s demand is met through Colorado River water purchased from IID, and given the extreme reliability of that water source, IID will be able to meet El Centro’s demands in all projected years through 2045. Therefore, the Supply and Demand entries are the same in each year resulting in a zero difference in all years through 2045.

Table 4.9-2 Water Supply and Demand Comparison

Year	Total Supply	Total Demand	Difference
2025	7,905	7,905	0
2030	8,143	8,143	0
2035	8,334	8,334	0
2040	8,755	8,755	0
2040	9,176	9,176	0

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The City does not share water treatment, storage, or distribution facilities with other jurisdictions, and there is no opportunity to share such facilities other than for emergency cross-connection.

Phasing

The future expansion of additional water facilities will be provided in phases according to demand, guided by the Water Master Plan. This approach ensures that the design criteria for system improvements align with the comprehensive strategy outlined in the Water Master Plan. To support this expansion, developers are required to oversize improvements as necessary, in strict adherence to the Water Master Plan's specifications. The City has not yet updated the Water Master Plan, as originally planned and budgeted for approval by 2018; however, the update is expected to commence and be completed in 2024.

The future expansion or construction of additional water facilities will be phased based on demand, with the phasing tied to factors such as population growth and available funds. The design criteria for system improvements performed by developers have been approved by the City Engineer to meet performance standards, with improvements aligned with the Water Master Plan, and developers are required to oversize as needed to meet these master plan standards.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to assure adequate service to its water customers as development continues within the City boundaries and within the SOI, the City will implement the following measures.

- Implement improvement projects recommended in the Water Master Plan, as funds become available and as deemed necessary by the Director of the Department of Public Works.
- Update the Water Master Plan by 2024.
- Continue to implement water system improvement projects identified in the City's annual budgets and the updated Water Master Plan to maintain compliance with State regulations.
- Continue to periodically review the water rate and financing structure to assure adequate funding for the implementation of new projects and the maintenance of existing facilities to maintain compliance with State regulations.
- Require that system improvements conducted by the City or a private developer are designed to conform to relevant Federal, State, and local regulations.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

Dynamic Consulting Engineers prepared a Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update in 2012 that determined the adequacy of the existing rate structure charged to City customers for water service and recommended rate changes and other revenue sources to pay for water facilities. The City continues to receive its largest source of funding for the operation and

maintenance of wastewater treatment and sewer facilities from customer fees. Following the anticipated 2024 Water Master Plan, a rate update study is proposed to review wastewater rate and finance structure.

The City's water funds are operated as business enterprises with revenue generated through monthly service charges that fund water projects and maintenance. Revenue accrued by such billing is placed in the Water Fund to help finance personnel, maintenance, and improvements.

Operations, maintenance, salaries, equipment purchases, and capital projects are funded by the City's Water Enterprise Fund. This fund is used to account for revenues and expenses associated with the collection and treatment of water. Enterprise funds are used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises. The City receives money in this fund by charging connection fees and maintenance fees to its water customers.

The Water Enterprise Fund is separate from the Water Capacity Fee Fund and is not used to finance the engineering or construction of major improvement projects. The City receives money for the Water Capacity Fee Fund used for major improvement projects by charging water capacity fees for development projects and by receiving interest earned from such fees.

The Water Stabilization Fund receives excess revenues from the Water Enterprise Fund. Monies deposited into this fund can be withdrawn to assist the City in covering its income to debt service ratios.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City often requires developers to construct water-related infrastructure that will connect the specific development with the existing City water system. This requirement helps the City avoid substantial costs associated with infrastructure development.

Recommended Funding

Current funding sources, especially customer fees, will remain the largest source for water facility maintenance, improvements, and possible expansions. Bond issued against customer charges may continue to be required to finance the large-scale improvements recommended within the full buildout timeframe.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for water facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects and other capital infrastructure such as water facilities.

In addition, it is recommended that the City maintain the required reserve funds so as to provide working capital for unscheduled repair and replacement of capital infrastructure. The 2012 Water Rate Study update specifically concluded that the City maintain a cash reserve in its Water Enterprise Fund is to pay for repair and replacement of portions of the system as they age and deteriorate. The study also suggested the City continue to increase its cash balance in the enterprise fund to accumulate appropriate levels for future repairs to treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure.

The City can utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to enhance water construction projects by investing in critical infrastructure needs, including facility expansion, technology upgrades, and environmental compliance. The funds can also support projects focusing on community health, safety, job creation, and economic growth. Collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions and resilience planning will further optimize the effectiveness of these initiatives. One of the key advantages of these funds is that they enable cities to access financial resources for essential water infrastructure investments that align with the community's highest priorities. This means that the City can direct these funds to address its specific needs and priorities while retaining the flexibility to apply additional project eligibility criteria that are tailored to their unique circumstances.

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4.10 School Facilities

Residents within the City of El Centro are served by four school districts that serve approximately 10,800 students in a total of 18 schools geographically dispersed throughout El Centro. These districts include the El Centro Elementary School District (ECESD), the McCabe Union Elementary School District (MUESD), the Central Union High School District (CUHSD), the Meadows Union School District (MUSD). One magnet school is also located within the City and operated by the ECESD. The Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE) serves the City's alternative education needs and severely handicapped student population. The school districts and ICOE work together on classroom placements for these students. Although the school districts operate independent of the City government, cooperation between the City and school districts is essential in land use issues, shared use of facilities, and determining the location of future school sites.

I. Performance Standard

Although school districts are required to comply with numerous state and federal education performance standards that consider student test scores, teacher-to-student ratios, etc., the SAP focuses on performance standards that pertain to the land use and physical development of schools within the City. These performance standards originate from the School Facility Needs Assessments (SFNAs, also known as the School Facility Fee Justification Reports) that are prepared for the school districts by qualified consultants to determine development impact fees for residential, commercial, and industrial development projects.

Classroom student capacity is the basis for defining the other performance standards in the report. Capacity is determined by multiplying the number of classrooms in each district by the district student loading standard. The classroom counts comply with the District's State Allocation Board-approved capacity for purposes of School Facility Program new construction eligibility. This capacity standard is then compared to the number of enrolled students per school. For the specific capacity numbers for each school district, please see the *Adequacy of Existing Facilities* section.

To assist in determining suitable future school locations, the City and school districts should agree to require the inclusion of a school site into a development or identify a site within City limits if a certain threshold number of units of new residential development is surpassed. Schools are typically built for a school year enrollment of 600 students.

The three school districts have their own student yield rates (average number of students per dwelling unit) that range from 0.21 to 0.66 students per dwelling unit. The State yield rate according to the Office of Public School Construction is 0.69 students per dwelling unit. In order to standardize the student yield rate, the SAP utilizes the state rate of 0.69 students per dwelling unit. Therefore, each school of 600 students supports an estimated 870 residential units. The estimated 870 units serves as the threshold number that would trigger a development to incorporate a school within the project site or identify a site within City limits.

II. Facility Planning and Adequacy Analysis

Inventory of Existing and Approved Facilities

El Centro Elementary School District (ECESD)

The ECESD serves approximately 5,200 students in twelve campuses for grades K-8. The campuses consist of eight elementary schools, three middle schools, and one magnet school. These schools include Desert Garden, Harding, Hedrick, Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., McKinley, Sunflower, and Washington elementary schools; De Anza Middle, Kennedy Middle and Wilson Junior High schools; and De Anza Magnet School.

McCabe Union Elementary School District (MUESD)

The MUESD serves over 1,150 students in grades TK-8 and operates one contiguous campus (McCabe School) with students distributed in grades TK-3 and 4-8.

Central Union High School District (CUHSD)

The CUHSD currently serves over 4,000 students in five campuses for students in grades 9-12. The campuses consist of two high schools, one continuation school, and one adult school. These schools include Southwest, Phoenix Rising, and Central Union High Schools (CUHS); Desert Oasis High School; and Central Union Adult School. CUHS recently constructed a STEM building with 32 teaching stations, comprising standard lecture classrooms and laboratories for biology, chemistry, bio-medical anatomy, and sciences.

Meadows Union School District (MUSD)

The MUSD serves approximately 370 students in grades TK-8 and operates one contiguous campus (Meadows Union School). Meadows Union School completed construction of an indoor athletic facility in 2019, a 13,000 sf gymnasium, which includes space for two classrooms.

Adequacy of Existing Facilities

Adequacy of existing facilities is determined by comparing school year student enrollment with the student teaching station (classroom) capacity according to methodology specified by the State Department of Education (Education Code Sections 17071.10, 17071.25). Portable classrooms are generally not included in the official calculation of space except when they meet the criteria specified in the State Education Code Section 17071.30. For kindergarten through 6th grade the student capacity is 25 students per teaching station. For Grades 7th through 12th the student capacity for each teaching station is 27 students per teaching station.

El Centro Elementary School District

Based on the State methodology as outlined in the 2022 School Facility Fee Justification Study, the capacity for the ECESD is 4,365 K-8th grade students. With a 2023/2024 school year enrollment of 5,198 students (833 students, 19% beyond capacity), the ECESD's existing facilities are inadequate.

McCabe Union Elementary School District

According to the 2023 School Facility Fee Justification Report, the MUESD's total student capacity is 1,400 students, and the enrollment for the 2023/24 school year was 1,158 students. MUESD categorizes classrooms into three grade tiers (K-3, 4-6, 7-8) with three respective student loading standards of 20, 24, and 27. (The K-3 and 4-6 grade groups of students are 1.0% beyond capacity, while the 7-8 grade groups are 29% below capacity).

Central Union High School District

According to the 2013 School Facility Fee Justification Report, CUHSD's total capacity is 4,060 students. With a 2023/24 school year enrollment of 4,096 students (36 students, 1.0% beyond capacity), the CUHSD's existing facilities are inadequate to accommodate future needs.

Meadows Union School District

Based on the State methodology, the capacity for the MUSD is 675 K-8th grade students. The 2023/24 school year enrollment of 370 students (305 students, 45% under capacity), the MUSD's existing facilities are adequate and able to accommodate future needs.

Future Demand for Facilities

According to the Southern California Association of Governments, the population of El Centro is expected to increase from the current 44,322 (year 2020) to 52,009 by 2035, a projected growth of 17.4%. To accommodate this growth in population, each district evaluates the number of approved residential units within their respective district boundaries to determine the future demand for facilities in their school facility needs assessments/facility fee justification reports.

The acreage of elementary, middle and high school sites are calculated according to School Site Analysis and Development, 1998, California Department of Education guidelines as follows: 10 acres for an elementary school of 500 students, 25 acres for a middle school of 1,000 students, and 40 acres for a high school of 2,000 students.

El Centro Elementary School District

Based on the 2022 School Facility Fee Justification Report, the total residential units estimated to be built in the ECESD boundaries in the next five years is approximately 186 units (195,114 square feet). Based on the residential unit estimate, future students are projected to be a total of 79 additional K-8th grade students in the next 5 years.

McCabe Union Elementary School District

According to the 2023 School Facility Fee Justification Report, 313 new residential units are projected to be built within MUESD boundaries in the next five years. Based on this number of additional new units, the District estimates a total enrollment of 240 students. The estimated growth will cause the District to be at capacity. To accommodate this growth, the District plans to build additional Elementary and Middle Schools. In addition, the District may purchase or lease portable classrooms to use on existing campuses for interim student housing while permanent facilities are being constructed on new school sites.

Central Union High School District

According to the 2022 Level I Developer Fee Study, 4,284 new residential units (7,739,004 square feet) are projected to be built within CUHSD boundaries in the next 25 years. Based on the 25-year estimate of new residential units to be built in the CUHSD boundaries, approximately 552 students are projected. Therefore, CUHSD would be over-capacity in the next 25 years by about 588 students. To meet current needs and future growth, the District plans to modernize existing school facilities through upgrades, replacements, or the addition of new facilities. As enrollment increases, Ancillary facilities, administrative facilities and administrative staff will be required.

Meadows Union School District

The current enrollment of 370 students in MUSD represents 45% under the total capacity, indicating that there is available capacity for additional students. According to MUSD staff, the existing school facilities are deemed adequate and capable of accommodating future needs. MUSD also recently approved the addition of a new portable classroom, further increasing capacity.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The City and the School Districts have entered into Joint Use Agreements to allow for mutually beneficial use of playgrounds, sports fields and other amenities that serve the El Centro community. These agreements maximize the value of the public facilities that serve El Centro. The 2008 El Centro Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan describes the joint use agreements between the City, El Centro Elementary School District, and Central Union High School District that allow each party to program activities for both City and school-owned facilities. For example, a 2007 joint use agreement between the District and the City allows public use of the gymnasiums at Wilson Junior High School and Kennedy Middle School and multipurpose rooms, playing fields, restrooms and classrooms at various other schools within the District. The City in turn agrees to provide the Youth Center Parks and Sports Facilities for use by the District.

Joint use agreements between the City and ECESD for the shared use of Frazier Field and Sunflower Park establish a collaborative partnership between both entities to utilize these public spaces for various recreational and community-based purposes.

State-of-the-art facilities at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sports Pavilion and the El Centro Aquatic Center reflect commitment to community development for residents. It is recommended for the City and school districts to explore future joint use agreements, fostering collaboration and maximizing the shared benefits of these recreational facilities.

Phasing

The phasing of new schools will be directly linked to the approval of new development and the issuance of building permits, while taking into consideration the school districts' boundaries.

ECESD formed Community Facilities District No. 2005-1 (the “District”) in May 2005, in anticipation of the need for school facilities within the Victoria Place development in the City of Imperial. The new school would be a TK-eighth-grade elementary school and provide a neighborhood school for the children living in the area. Measure C was approved in November

2022, facilitating the construction of the New Victoria Ranch Division School. The number of students enrolled in ECESD impacts schools in El Centro, and the new school for Victoria Ranch will alleviate capacity demands for the population residing in El Centro. MUESD obtained approval for a TK/Kindergarten building comprising four classrooms, and the district plans to hire additional staff upon the completion of the building.

III. Mitigation

In order for the City to provide its residents adequate school facilities and to ensure that the school system is sufficiently expanded to accommodate growth within the City, the City will work with the school districts to:

- Support the local school districts by working with them to determine the most appropriate location and distribution for school facilities to serve the educational needs of the community and encourage equitable access.
- Collaborate with school districts to determine suitable locations for new school sites that are equitable, safe, healthy, technologically equipped, aesthetically pleasing, sustainable, and support optimal teaching and learning environment.
- Encourage the joint use of school facilities to provide a range of recreational and educational opportunities for residents.
- Provide opportunities for students to attend schools within their residential neighborhoods as well as choices in educational settings outside their neighborhoods.
- Incorporate project planning and site selection to proactively inform land use policy decisions regarding residential development in proximity to existing school facilities.

IV. Financing

Current Funding

State funding and associated state school construction bond funds provide a basis for school facility funds. Local property tax shares, developer fees dedicated to schools, and local school district general obligation bonds provide the balance of facility financing. The ratio of state to local funding is approximately 35% state/65% local.

- General Obligation Bonds – are paid for out of property taxes and require approval of two-thirds or 55 percent of its voters.
 - El Centro Elementary School District has three Measure Committees in place for overseeing the distribution of the general obligation bonds. The measures are Measure C, E, K, L and R.
 - Measure C and E: Both approved in November 2022, funds totaling approximately \$17,500,000 in bonds, may be utilized by ECESD to construct the Victoria Ranch Division School. The projects aim to establish a new elementary school, replace

temporary portables with permanent classrooms. Additionally, the funds will be allocated to enhance student access to computers and modern technology, as well as to construct and modernize outdated classrooms and facilities.

- Measure L: ECESD utilized Measure L funds, approved November of 2016, through the issuance of \$22.1 million in general obligation bonds. The community-backed measure aimed at addressing key educational needs, directing funds towards replacing temporary portables with permanent classrooms, improving student access to technology, and modernizing outdated facilities, ultimately to mitigate issues of student overcrowding.
- Central Union High School has a Citizens' Oversight Committee to oversee the use of Measure K funds. CUHSD recently exhausted its bonding capacity upon the issuance of the GO Bond Series from 2016 and 2019.
- Measure K: Measure K funds, specifically \$25 million from the 2016 election's \$30-million bond Measure K, were used to contribute to the construction of the new STEM building at Central Union High School. The project also received financial support from various state funds. The total cost of the new STEM building amounted to approximately \$38 million to ensure the completion of a state-of-the-art STEM facility to serve residents in Imperial Valley.
- Meadows Union School District has an independent Citizens' Oversight Committee to oversee the use of Measure R funds.
- Measure R: Measure R funds, approved by voters in November 2016, were utilized to finance the construction of the new gymnasium at Meadows Union School. The total cost of the project is approximately \$7.4 million, with a substantial portion, specifically \$5.8 million, derived from the Measure R bond issue. The funds were dedicated to covering construction costs, ensuring that the new gymnasium meets the facility needs of MUSD as specified by the approved bond measure.

In 2013, a new funding formula for school finance known as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was enacted. For school districts and charter schools, the LCFF creates base, supplemental, and concentration grants in place of most previously existing K–12 funding streams, including revenue limits and most state categorical programs. The aim of the LCFF is to provide each agency with the means to help every student achieve their highest possible level of success. The State projected that full implementation of the LCFF would occur in the FY 2020-21. However, the 2018-19 Budget Act fully funded the remaining LCFF gap, therefore in FY 2019-20 was the first year of full implementation of the LCFF.

In 2022, Central Union High School District and McCabe Union Elementary School District both qualified for general assistance, the first tier that provides resources and assistance available to all local educational agencies. While El Centro Elementary School District and Meadows Union Elementary School District qualified for the second tier, differentiated assistance.

Just as important to the fiscal piece, a school district is mandated by legislation to create a Local Control and Accountability Plan to explain how it will meet annual goals for all students with specific activities to address state and local priorities. This includes specifically supporting underperforming pupils by attaching funds to meet the needs of a school district's population of low income, English learners, and foster youth students.

The districts need to meet pertinent requirements of State law regarding the collection of developer fees. State law gives school districts the authority to charge fees on new residential and commercial/industrial developments if those developments generate additional students and cause a need for additional school facilities. Government Code Section 65995 authorizes school districts to collect fees on future development of no more than \$1.93 per square foot for residential construction and \$0.31 for commercial/industrial construction (Level 1 fees).

Level 1 fees are adjusted every two years according to the inflation rate for Class B construction as determined by the State Allocation Board. Government Code Section 66001 requires that a reasonable relationship exist between the amount and use of the fees and the development on which the fees are to be charged. In order to collect the Level II and Level III Fees in excess of the statutory Level I Fee for constructing school facilities, the school district must meet the requirements listed in Government Code Section 65995.5.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

School infrastructure and facilities are planned and funded independently from City of El Centro. Schools that have been under-built in terms of meeting student to teacher ratios will remain a concern for funding. However, the school districts and the City have executed joint use agreements to share facility use and reduce costs for overlapping facilities. The school districts also have specific lease agreements with the City that were enacted in 1997 and 2003.

In addition, a Joint Powers Use Agreement was adopted on July 18, 2007 between the City and the El Centro Elementary School District regarding the joint operation and use of Recreation Facilities. The agreement allows programed activities to take place on both park and school grounds. A Facilities Use Request Agreement between the City and Central Union High School provides for the shared use of recreation facilities. It should be noted that the City pays the school district for operations and maintenance costs for use of the school facilities under the joint use agreement; however, the school districts do not pay for operations and maintenance costs for use of the City facilities.

Recommended Funding

In addition to development impact fees outlined by the State, the school districts can obtain other potential sources:

- General Obligation (GO) Bonds – are paid for out of property taxes and require approval of two-thirds or 55 percent of its voters. In California, school districts receive GO Bonds through a process involving voter approval and subsequent issuance by the school district. The district assesses its infrastructure needs and develops a proposal outlining specific projects. After board approval, a local bond election is conducted, requiring a specified majority vote for approval. Upon voter approval, the district issues the bonds, which are purchased by investors. The funds acquired are used to implement approved projects, including construction and technology upgrades. Debt repayment is funded through local property taxes over several years.

- **Certificates of Participation (CoPs):** Following the identification of capital needs, a school district's governing board approves the decision to pursue CoPs, and a financial analysis is conducted to determine the required funding and assess the district's ability to make lease payments. Financial professionals collaborate with the district to structure the transaction, gaining necessary approvals from local authorities. Upon approval, the district issues CoPs to investors, raising funds for capital projects. Following project implementation, the district makes periodic lease payments over the agreed-upon term. Upon completion of payments, ownership of the funded assets typically transfers to the school district.
- **School Facility Program Funds –** The California School Facility Program (SFP) involves a process where school districts determine eligibility for construction and modernization projects, submit applications to the California Department of Education, and, upon approval, receive state funding. The funding allocation considers factors like project scope and student population, and districts may need to provide a local match. Approved funds support project implementation, with districts adhering to compliance, reporting, and audit requirements to ensure transparent and efficient use of state resources for creating safe and modern learning environments.
- **Parcel Tax –** revenues are historically minor, used to supplement operating budgets and require approval by two-thirds of voters.
- **Mello-Roos Community Facility Districts –** uses a tax on property owners within a defined area to pay long-term bonds issued for specific public improvements and requires approval from two-thirds of the voters (or land owners if fewer than 12).

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4.11 Healthcare Facilities

Previous Service Area Plans (SAPs) for the City of El Centro or any other cities, did not include a Healthcare Section. As of December 31, 2023, the SAP Guidelines provided by Imperial LAFCO, and stated below, do not include Healthcare as a public service to be incorporated in the SAP:

“Requirements for Public Services

A complete description and analysis is provided of when and how each facility will be provided and financed based upon build out projections and phasing assumptions. These services include but are not limited to: Administration, Drainage, Fire, Law Enforcement, Library, Parks & Recreation, Schools, Transportation, Wastewater Treatment, Sewer and Water.

In some instances (i.e., schools) the City may not have any jurisdiction over a particular service provider. In these instances, LAFCO needs to be assured that the affected service provider will be able to accommodate the projected growth within an amended Sphere of Influence. The proposed Service Area Plan should include an agreement between the City/District and the affected service provider on when and how facilities and or services will be provided.”

The City does not provide healthcare. Within the City of El Centro, healthcare is provided by a variety of doctors and clinics. El Centro Regional Medical Center (ECRMC) is an acute care hospital located within the City on property owned by the City. ECRMC operates independently as a distinct public agency from the City of El Centro, serving a broader area than the City itself. Further information regarding ECRMC can be found on its website. In addition, the residents of El Centro may seek healthcare services from the other acute care hospital within the Imperial Valley, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District (Pioneers), which also is a separate and independent special district located in the City of Brawley.

Effective on October 8, 2023, the Imperial Valley Health Care District (IVHD) was created pursuant to the provision of AB 918. By November 5, 2024, the IVHD may acquire ECRMC. Therefore, whether or not that occurs, ECRMC, Pioneers, and Heffernan Memorial Healthcare District in the City of Calexico will be dissolved in to the IVHD which is a separate, independent healthcare district with a separate Board of Directors.

SECTION 5 – FINANCING

5.1 Introduction

This section of the SAP lists and describes the revenue sources and financing mechanisms that are currently utilized by the City to fund the development and operation of the various facilities and services discussed within Chapter 4 of this SAP. Revenue sources and financing mechanisms that are not currently used but that are being reviewed and considered by the City for future funding are also described.

5.2 Existing Revenue Sources

The following list presents various sources of revenue that are currently utilized by the City to accumulate finances necessary to develop and operate the various facilities and services discussed within the SAP. The revenues are separated between general fund revenue and special revenue, meaning they are typically restricted for specific uses. Complete budgetary information is available for viewing at the City Finance Department.

General Fund

Sales Tax

The City receives one percent of State sales tax charged for point-of-sale purchases made at businesses within the City boundaries. City general sales tax revenue is deposited into the General Fund, which is further discussed below. The City Finance Department estimates that approximately \$16.4 million in sales tax revenue will be deposited into the General Fund during fiscal year (FY) 2022-23.

A separate countywide sales tax increase of one-half of one percent was originally approved by voters in 1989 for a 20-year duration. About 95% of the funds collected go directly to the cities and County to pay for critical road repair projects, and the remaining 5% is targeted for regional projects. The Measure D program is managed and administered by the Local Transportation Authority and was overwhelmingly approved by voters for an additional 40-years in November 2008. The City estimated that approximately \$23,000 in Measure D funds are available in FY 2022-23.

In addition to Measure D, Measure P was approved by El Centro residents in November 2016. That measure increased the sales tax rate by one-half of one percent citywide effective April 1, 2017. The horizon year for this sales tax sunsets in 2047. Funds from this tax are used toward major capital needs, focusing on improving and replacing important facilities needed by the City's residents and employees. The sales tax revenue from Measure P is budgeted in FY 2022-23 is \$7.3 million.

Property Tax

The City levies a tax to owners of property within the City. This tax, collected annually by the Imperial County Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, is deposited into the General Fund. The City Finance Department estimates that approximately \$4.2 million in property tax revenue will be deposited into the General Fund during fiscal year 2022-23. Pursuant to a master tax agreement entered into between the City and the County, these two jurisdictions exchange property tax revenue when an annexation from the County to the City occurs. The City has started the negotiation process with the County of Imperial.

Property Tax In-Lieu of Vehicle License Fee (VLF)

The State backfills reduced motor vehicle license fees (VLF) with property tax revenue. Revenue growth is tied to the change in assessed property values through market activity and Proposition 13 guiding increases in annual assessed values. The City Finance Department estimates that approximately \$5.2 million in in-lieu VLF revenue will be deposited in the General Fund during FY 2022-23.

Transient Occupancy Tax

Transient occupancy taxes (TOT) are levied on all individuals occupying their dwelling for 30 days or less. This is generally most applicable to room rentals at motels and hotels. The TOT rate is 10% of the room rental rate. Although the tax is collected for the City by the operators, it is a tax on the occupant, not the hotel or motel. It is anticipated that this tax revenue will continue to marginally increase for FY 2022-23 after declining in FY 2020 as a result of fewer people traveling in the COVID-19 pandemic. The City Finance Department estimates that approximately \$2.5 million in TOT revenue will be deposited in the General Fund during FY 2022-23.

Other General Fund Revenue

The City collects other fees and taxes, totaling \$982,600, that are deposited in the Other General Fund Revenue. They include Franchise Fees (FY 2022-23 estimate of \$342,100), Business License Tax (FY 2022-23 estimate of \$440,000), Fine and Forfeitures (FY 2022-23 estimate of \$54,500), User Fees (FY 2022-23 estimate of \$50,000) and other taxes (FY 2022-23 estimate of \$96,000).

Certain public services and facilities operated by the City entail various user fees that are charged to patrons or other users on a fee-for-service basis. User fees are charged for services such as vehicle impound and release (ECPD), fire permit inspection and issuance (ECFD), summer day camp (Parks & Recreation), and late or damaged book fees (El Centro Public Library). Revenue generated by these fees is deposited into the General Fund. City services provided through the Planning Department, Building Department, and Engineering Department regarding project processing, permitting, and review also incur user fees that are deposited into the General Fund.

The User Fee Study was prepared for the City Finance Department in 2019. The analysis examined how the City could more efficiently utilize user fees to increase revenue and recover the costs of operating City facilities and services. The scope of the study encompassed a review and

calculations of the user fees charged by the following City Departments: Fire Department; Police Department; City Clerk; Library and Parks & Recreation. Planning & Zoning; Engineering; and Building & Safety fees which are considered “development processing fees.”

The report contained cost elements that are included in the calculations for the following fully burdened rates: salaries and benefits of personnel involved, operating costs applicable to fee operations, departmental support, supervision and administration overhead, internal service costs charged to each department, and indirect City-wide overhead costs calculated through the Cost Allocation Plan. In 2019, the City established and adopted the City rates, charges, and user fees for various government services along with an annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) escalator.

Special Revenue

Development Impact Fees

Jurisdictions often charge private developers various development impact fees to assure that the demand for and physical and financial impacts to public services and facilities caused by development projects are adequately addressed. Mitigation of project impacts can be satisfied through imposition of development impact fees.

The City adopted a development impact fee program in 1989 and included fees for the following categories:

- General Government Facilities
- Fire
- Library
- Parks and Recreation
- Police
- Streets
- Water and Wastewater Treatment

The fee structure is outlined in the Development Impact Fee Report, which was prepared in 1989 and revised in 1994. The report was further updated by Tischler-Bise in June 2006. Development impact fees are used to fund the capital costs of facilities borne by the impacts from new development. The fees cannot be used to fund an existing infrastructure deficiency. This revenue stream has declined significantly since the recession due to the slowdown in residential construction. Since the SAP was last updated, this revenue stream has seen a decrease and revenue for FY 2022-23 is projected to be \$524,489.

Gasoline Tax

The State levies a tax on all in-state sales of gasoline. A portion of the revenue derived from this State tax is distributed by formula to local jurisdictions. The formula distribution is complex due to State budget activity making this revenue stream uncertain. Gas tax revenues are restricted by the State for street purposes only, therefore the City deposits money into a special fund. Projected revenue is \$1.1 million in FY 2022-23.

Local Bonds

Bonds are issued for Governmental Activities and for the Enterprise funds. Governmental activity bonds have been issued for specific capital projects whose revenue sources to repay the bonds are sales tax (Measure D) or Successor Agency – Debt Service Property Tax. The bonds for the Enterprise funds are used to finance the design, engineering, acquisition, and construction of certain repairs, renovations, extension, betterments and improvements to the City’s municipal water and wastewater system. The revenue sources to pay for these bonds are the water and wastewater user fees. Through the Community Facilities District, the City anticipates a revenue for FY 2022-23 is \$110,430.

Other Transportation Funding Sources

The City receives funding for specific circulation and roadway projects from several state and federal programs. They include the following:

- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP): Funds from this program are allocated for specific projects by programming of funds through the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC). The City projects \$0 in revenue for FY 2022-23.
- Federal Highway Administration: Grant funds from this revenue program are applied to improve major thoroughfares in the City. They include the Highway Safety Improvement Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program. Current roadway capital projects include Adams/La Brucherie, Euclid Avenue, and Buena Vista Avenue, as well as lighting and sidewalks. For FY 2022-23, the City projects a revenue of approximately \$7.3 million.
- Transportation Development Act – Article 3: Article 3 funds are allocated by ICTC for specific projects related to pedestrian and bicycle mobility. The City projects \$37,655 in revenue for FY 2022-23.

Community Development Block Grants

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Entitlement funds are a revenue stream from Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Communities Grant. These funds are allocated by the federal government to eligible entitled local agencies for housing and community development purposes and for expanding economic opportunities for low and moderate income persons. These revenues are subject to adjustment both in the total amount and in the amount allocable for costs by the federal government in the future.

Entitlement Communities must develop an Annual Action Plan that outlines how they intend to use the funds in a way that aligns with CDBG program goals and statutory requirements. The funds aim to empower local communities to address their unique challenges and promote sustainable community development. Revenues for the City are estimated to be \$108,045 in FY 2022-23.

5.3 Future Revenue Sources

The following list presents sources of revenue that the City Finance Department could consider to increase their available financial resources.

Updated User Fees

The User Fee Study was prepared for the City in March of 2019. The study identifies potential increases to existing fees and also identified user fees that do not currently exist but that could feasibly be charged to increase revenue for the City and recover costs. Specific user fees included for services are provided by city administration, planning, public works and engineering, public library, ECPD, ECFD, and Parks & Recreation.

Updated Development Impact Fees

While the City currently charges development impact fees for administration, library, law enforcement, fire protection, streets, parks, recreation, and public facilities, the fee structures and the nexus analysis upon which the fees are based are dated. A new nexus evaluation and subsequent updated impact fees provide a source of revenue for the City to offset the infrastructure impact from new development.

Measure P

Measure P is expected to remain a reliable source of revenue for the City to use toward maintaining City services and facilities. The annual revenue from this tax is estimated to be approximately \$5 million. Measure P is effective until June 30, 2047.

State and Federal Funding

Various government programs are available at the state and federal levels to assist local jurisdictions in financing public facilities and services. The City will continue to seek out such sources of revenue in the future. Most funding sources at the state level require an application requesting assistance and specifying the projects or purposes for which the funds can be used. Financial assistance from the state can include grants, low interest loans, and matching funds.

An example of a new State program is the cap-and-trade program that funds various projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Energy efficiency and clean energy projects include low-income weatherization and solar programs; while water use efficiency grants to local agencies help fund water conservation measures intended to reduce the amount of energy used to move, treat, and heat water. The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) authorizes the use of general obligation bonds for funding drought relief and critical water infrastructure projects.

At the federal level, financial assistance includes grants and federal matching funds for state run assistance programs.

For funding programs that include both federal and state components, the Active Transportation Program (ATP) administered by Caltrans consolidates several programs related to improvement projects for pedestrians and bicycles. The Active Transportation Program was created in 2013 by Senate Bill 99 and Assembly Bill 101 to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as biking and walking. The ATP consolidates various transportation programs; including the federal Transportation Alternatives Program, state Bicycle Transportation Account, and federal and state Safe Routes to School programs into a single program.

5.4 Existing Financing Mechanisms

The following are financing mechanisms currently utilized by the City.

General Fund

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the basis governmental activities of the City that are not accounted for through other funds. For the City, the General Fund includes activities such as public protection, public works and facilities, parks and recreation, and community development.

Capacity Fee Funds

The City maintains capacity fee funds for the water and wastewater systems. These funds are comprised of charges to developers for implementing projects that would contribute to demand on the City's water and wastewater facilities. The revenue is used to finance improvement projects for the respective facilities and is not used for personnel or other operational costs.

Enterprise Funds

The City maintains two major Enterprise Funds, the Water Fund and the Wastewater Fund. The Water Fund accounts for revenues and expenses associated with the treatment and distribution of potable water. The Wastewater Fund accounts for revenue and expenses associated with the collection and treatment of wastewater. Revenues come from water/wastewater user fees, connection fees, maintenance fees and interest. Bonds have been issued against Enterprise funds for infrastructure improvements.

Developer/Builder Contributions

Many of the improvements to municipal water, wastewater, drainage, and circulation systems that are required to serve new development within the City can be directly funded and constructed by the developer and/or builder through private funding sources and are not the responsibility of the City. Facilities earmarked for developer/builder funding are typically those that normally would have been imposed as a condition of approval of a tentative map under the City's existing development review process. Requiring such contribution through a developer agreement can save the City significant amounts of expenses.

Special Assessment Districts

Jurisdictions often form special assessment districts to achieve financial and operational efficiency in implementing improvements for a particular geographical location or a certain type or types of improvement. One type of assessment district is a Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LLMD) that is created for maintenance and improvements for assets including drainage, sidewalks, and median walkways. The Lighting and Landscaping districts ensure that ongoing maintenance related to the retention basin, green belts, lighting improvements and the operation and servicing of community parks. The Community Facilities District was set up to finance the public infrastructure facilities of the District. The City has three existing LLMDs created for the Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista, and Town Center Developments. The City expects to receive revenues of \$37,003, \$44,058 and \$30,801 from these assessment districts, respectively in FY 2023-2024.

Community Facilities Districts

The 1982 Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act allows a district to establish community facilities districts that provide funding for provision of services and development of facilities. Such districts often involve taxes levied on the public that generate revenue that is deposited into special funds specifically for the respective service or facility instead of into the jurisdiction's general fund. Land based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund public infrastructure and/or services. The Legacy Ranch development created Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, storm drains).

Measure P

This measure increased the sales tax rate by one-half of one percent effective April 1, 2017. The purpose of the tax is to address major capital needs, focusing on improving and replacing important facilities needed by the City's residents and employees. Funding is allocated toward maintaining City services and facilities, including police, fire protection, library, parks and recreation, senior programs, street maintenance and facility improvements.

Lease Revenue Bonds

Lease-revenue bonds are used in the State's capital outlay program to finance projects. These bonds are paid through lease payments from the occupying department to the governmental financing entity, generally paid to the State Public Works Board. In May 2023, the City entered into a Lease Revenue Bond for the new police headquarters. The bond is commonly referred to as the Police Station Project Lease Revenue Bond. The Bonds were sold to institutional and retail investors across California and the United States. The proceeds of the bond financing, in conjunction with Measure P reserves, will be used to provide funding for the City's new \$38 million Police Headquarters building. While the expected cost of the new headquarters is \$38 million, the Lease Revenue Bond is \$40.8 million. The higher issuance amount than the actual project cost is to cover the capitalized interest account and a debt service reserve fund.

5.5 Future Financing Mechanisms

In addition to the existing financing mechanisms listed above that the City will continue to utilize, a new financing mechanism was developed through recent legislation to recapture certain aspects of the former redevelopment fund process. SB 628 (Beall) was signed into law in November 2014 allowing for the creation of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts or EIFDs. EIFDs are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work so long as a direct connection can be made between the needed infrastructure and its users.

Projects can include traditional public works such as roads and highways, bridges, parking facilities, transit stations, sewage and water facilities, flood control and drainage projects, solid waste disposal, parks, libraries, and child care facilities. EIFDs may also finance other items including brownfield restoration and environmental mitigation, military base reuse projects, affordable housing, private industrial buildings, transit oriented development projects, and projects carrying out sustainable communities strategies.

The current law requires a two-thirds vote to form an Infrastructure Financing District; an EIFD can be formed without a vote. The legislative body of a city or county may designate one or more proposed EIFDs including areas which are not contiguous as well as any portion of a former redevelopment project area. Once an EIFD is established, SB 628 would require the creation of a public financing authority responsible for putting together an infrastructure financing plan.

The financing plan would specify whether the district would be funded through tax increment financing, public or private loans, grants, bonds, assessments, fees or some combination thereof. The issuance of tax increment bonds would require a voting threshold of only 55 percent for passage rather than the two-thirds majority now required except for school bonds.

Another financing tool recently signed into law is SB 614 (Wolk), which authorizes a city to include in its resolution of application an annexation development plan that would form or reorganize a special district to improve or upgrade structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other infrastructure to serve a disadvantaged, unincorporated community (DUC).

A DUC is defined as a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income. The financing plan would be included in the existing LAFCO process. As a condition of annexation until January 1, 2025, tax increment financing could be used by the special district, such as a community services district, to fund infrastructure improvements in a DUC.

5.6 Facility Financing

The following section provides a brief discussion of the funding sources used for the specific services and facilities included in Chapter 4 of the SAP. Any sources of funding that are not currently being utilized, as well as opportunities for cost avoidance, are identified.

General Government Facilities

Current Funding

The City receives funding for general government facilities primarily from the General Fund and development impact fees. The impact fees pay for capital costs of facilities while the General Fund pays for the maintenance and operations of the facilities.

Measure P serves as a pivotal funding mechanism for supporting general government facilities. Approved by voters, Measure P allocates funds to enhance and maintain essential infrastructure and public services within the community. These funds are available for various projects, including the development and maintenance of government facilities.

User Fees constitute a significant source of current funding for general government facilities. These fees are generated through charges levied on users who directly benefit from specific government services or facilities. The revenue generated from user fees is then reinvested into the maintenance, operation, and improvement of these facilities.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

There are no cost savings opportunities for the City identified at this time.

Recommended Funding

The City will continue to use the General Fund for the maintenance and operation of the general government facilities. As the City continues to grow, any necessary expansion of the facilities or acquisition of additional property for general government facilities could be financed by issuing bonds or by collecting development impact fees. An updated Development Impact Fee Study would serve to evaluate fees and align revenues with capital projects that mitigate new growth through the expansion of public facilities and services. Any increase in development impact fees for general government facilities would increase the funds available to pay for specific large-scale development or improvement projects related to such facilities.

Drainage Facilities

Current Funding

Within the City and the SOI, facilities are mostly installed and funded by developers as projects are implemented. Development impact fees charged on new development for drainage facilities are also collected.

The Legacy Ranch development also created a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, storm drains).

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City is able to avoid some costs for the development of new drainage facilities by requiring developers to construct adequate facilities and retention basins on their projects.

The City can establish a drainage fee program based on a master drainage plan. It is recommended that the City update its Master Plan of Drainage to reflect the costs associated with specific drainage areas.

Recommended Funding

Funding responsibilities for project-related facilities shall remain with the developers and secured prior to construction. Improvements to centrally located City-maintained facilities are under guidance of the Department of Public Works Wastewater Division. The 2009 MPD identified the following existing and potential funding sources for maintenance and capital expenditures:

- General Fund
- Drainage Fees
- Stormwater Service Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 – Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Funds
- Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs)
- Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LLMD)
- Special Assessments
 - Municipal Improvement Act of 1913
 - Benefit Assessment Act of 1982
- Highway Improvement Projects
- Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982
- General Obligation Bonds
- Federal and State Funding

Certain funding mechanisms, such as Special Assessments and Mello-Roos taxes, require voter approval from affected landowners to take effect, while others such as CDBG and highway funds may be used for drainage if a general relationship is established between the project and the program's intent for the funds. Mello-Roos funding can be used for flood and storm protection services, including, but not limited to, the operation and maintenance of storm drainage systems, and sandstorm protection services. In addition, a Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update was completed in 2012, which determined the adequacy of the existing rate structure charged to City customers for storm water service and recommended rate changes and other revenue sources to pay for storm water facilities.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as flood control and drainage projects.

Fire Facilities

Current Funding

The El Centro Fire Department operational and maintenance costs for facilities, equipment and personnel are financed by the General Fund. Revenues from user fees charged by the ECFD go into the General Fund and used to fund the ECFD programs. An updated User Fee Study was prepared in 2019 and fees were adopted in order to achieve full cost recovery for fire protection services. Development impact fees required of development projects generate revenue that is used for large-scale improvement and development projects related to fire facilities as a result of increased capacity.

Measure P allocates funds to enhance and maintain essential infrastructure and public services within the community. These funds are available for various projects, including the development and maintenance of fire protection facilities.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The ECFD operates and shall continue to operate under a mutual aid agreement with the County of Imperial Fire Department for as-needed assistance and backup. The two agencies also share a hazardous materials emergency response unit. The ECFD participates in a countywide joint purchase program. Further, ECFD conducts fire inspections while a private vendor conducts plan review of new structures which enables ECFD staff to focus on additional priorities.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Fire Department services. Expansion or additions to the existing inventory of facilities could be funded through issuance of new bonds backed by the general fund to meet fire service protocol. The Fire Department indicated the potential for developing a subscription-based EMS fee that could be part of the fee study update. Also, there could be a study of receiving reimbursement from insurance carriers for fire department response to incidents.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for ECFD service or facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

The CPSM study recommended the City of El Centro and El Centro Fire Department should develop a long-range capital plan for funding the replacement of all fire apparatus and fire department support vehicles.

The City of El Centro is set to receive a substantial allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the federal government, with flexible spending parameters. Specifically, the funding source can be utilized for public health and safety initiatives, personnel and administrative costs, revenue loss recovery, and infrastructure upgrades. As ECFD is a vital public health and safety service for the city, ARPA funds represent a potential source to strengthen the department's capabilities.

Land based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund fire infrastructure and/or fire protection services as well as ambulance and paramedic services.

Funding and resources for the future reconstruction of Fire Station No. 1 would come from a combination of impact fee funds and donation of land by developers undertaking projects in the relevant areas of the City.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as fire facilities.

Law Enforcement

Current Funding

Funding for law enforcement is derived from many funding sources. Sources include the general fund, developer fees, and grants. The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Police Department services. As a part of the revenue, the City receives Proposition 172 public safety tax revenue based on sales tax receipts, as well as cost recovery for judicial court appearances to provide testimony on cases.

Revenue from user fees charged by the ECPD is paid into the General Fund. An updated User Fee Study was prepared in 2019 and fees were adopted in order to achieve full cost recovery for law enforcement services. Parking enforcement revenue is also deposited for funding of police activities. Development impact fees required of development projects generate revenue that is used for large-scale improvement and development projects related to police facilities and services.

The ECPD was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to enhance and fund road safety programs.

Funds for the construction of the new police station, which were acquired from bonds issued in May of 2023, are included in the FY 2024 budget. Construction is expected to commence during the upcoming 2024 fiscal year. Measure P funds were also allocated to finance the construction and operational needs of the new police facility, ensuring a dedicated and sustainable financial source for enhancing law enforcement infrastructure and services.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

While the ECPD cooperates with the Imperial County Sheriff's Department for the provision of as-needed emergency backup services, the two agencies do not currently share any facilities and would not share any facilities in the future. Although there are no substantial cost avoidance opportunities for the ECPD, the department achieves cost savings through the leasing of equipment including computers and phone system. Non-sworn department staff are used where feasible in place of a sworn officer to conduct city business to reduce personnel cost. Further, school districts share the cost of School Resource Officers with the City.

Recommended Funding

The ECPD will continue to be funded by the General Fund, public safety grants and other sources. The general fund remains a flexible funding source for both operations and maintenance, and capital expenses. Expansion or additions to the existing inventory of facilities could be funded through issuance of new bonds backed by the general fund to meet police service protocol. Grants such as those identified above, can be procured for specific operations while general fund and developer fees are available for capital facilities.

Increased user fees increase the revenues that are available for the General Fund to carry out the Police Department services. An updated User Fee Study was prepared in 2019 and fees were adopted in order to achieve full cost recovery for law enforcement services.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for ECPD service or facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

The City also may consider the establishment of a community facilities district for the ECPD to centralize funding for the Department and allow an efficient and effective means of financing Department needs. Land-based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund police infrastructure and/or police protection services.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as police facilities.

Grants such as those identified below, if capacity permits it, can be procured for specific operations while general fund and developer fees are available for capital facilities.

- California Department of Justice Grants
- California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Grants
- Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)
- Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Grants
- California Traffic Safety Grants
- California Endowment Grants
- California Community Foundation Grants

Library Facilities

Current Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out library services. Development impact fees are levied for library facilities. Revenue generated by development impact fees are not placed in the General Fund but are used for specific library improvement projects. The library also accepts private donations material and funding grants to offset the costs of operation and to implement improvement projects.

The construction of El Centro's new \$17 million public library facility was made financially achievable from funding from the voter-approved Measure P. Measure P allocated portions of a local transactions and use tax for funding allocated toward maintaining City services and facilities which included library facility improvements.

The El Centro Public Library applied for two CLLS literacy program grants potentially worth over \$65,000 combined for 2023-2024. One proposal focused on general Adult Literacy while the other targeted English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. If awarded, each grant would provide around \$33,000 over the 2023-2024 cycle to expand free community programming in these vital areas.

El Centro Public Library pursues California State Library Fund ZIP grants to support the ZIP Books direct mailing program. A recent application sought to renew \$12,000 in ZIP project backing for 2023-2024 after already securing \$8,000 for the current 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Revenue from user fees is paid into the General Fund. An updated User Fee Study was prepared in 2019 and fees were adopted in order to achieve full cost recovery for library services.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Through inter-library loan programs, the library shares resources with other libraries in the region which keeps costs down while providing acceptable services to City residents.

The El Centro Public Library offers Zip Books. Zip Books is a new patron-driven model for securing the books a customer wants to read. For speed and cost-efficiency, the patron's request is

delivered by Amazon directly to their home mailing address. When finished reading the item, the patron returns it to the library. The library also offers an e-book service for customers to download digital copies of reading materials.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund will continue to cover the expenditures necessary for library services. The library will continue to apply for all possible funding opportunities from the State and will continue to accept donations of money or materials.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for library facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects related to library facilities and services.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as libraries.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Current Funding

The City receives funding for parks and recreation facilities including from the general fund, development impact fees, user fee charges, fundraisers and donations, and regional, state and federal grants. Proposition 84 (The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006) funds were used to build a skate park. Maintenance fees for landscaping improvements along street rights-of-way are also collected from the Legacy Ranch Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LLMD), as well as from the Buena Vista and Town Center LLMDs. The LLMD was created for maintenance and improvements for assets including drainage, sidewalks, and median walkways. In the case of Legacy Ranch, the LLMD can be used for park maintenance of the open space dedicated to the city by the developer. Maintenance includes landscaping, open grass field, playground equipment, and structural amenities like a covered picnic area and furnishings.

The State's Urban Greening Grant Program awarded the City \$1,293,831 for Buena Vista Park and the State Prop 68 Grant allocated \$5,700,000 for Gomez Park. Additionally, Measure P funds have been used to match State grants and build new facilities. With an investment of \$2 million from Measure P funds, the City built First Responders Park. Measure P has also been used to leverage Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in qualifying areas.

The City constructed and opened the El Centro Aquatic Center in 2019. The \$18 million project was funded by a Redevelopment Agency Tax Allocation and Revenue Bonds with Local Transportation Authority funding.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City currently maintains joint-use agreements with the local school districts for the use and maintenance of athletic field and park facilities associated with most of the schools in these districts. These joint-use agreements save the City some of the operations and maintenance costs.

City policy requiring private developers to dedicate parkland and construct parks in conjunction with development projects eliminates substantial cost to the City for undertaking the purchase or dedication of land or the construction costs. The City will continue this cost avoidance measure.

The City routinely writes grant applications to rehabilitate existing park spaces and plan for the construction of new facilities. City staff should actively research grant programs and take note of application deadlines to acquire funding for facility improvements to meet community needs for parkland and recreation facilities. Competitive grant programs such as the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program and Outdoor Equity Grants Program support new parks and recreation opportunities in underserved communities across California. With the recent construction and opening of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sports Pavilion by the City of El Centro in December 2014 as part of a larger infrastructure investment that will include a skate park and aquatics center, the city and the school districts may evaluate future joint use agreements.

Recommended Funding

The General Fund will continue to cover the expenditures necessary to carry out the Parks and Recreation services. To maintain the current parkland surplus and to accommodate the anticipated population increase, the City will continue to require that new development include provision of additional public parks and recreational facilities to the maximum extent, in accordance with Public Facilities Policy 1.2.

User fees were updated in 2019 are charged by the Parks & Recreation Department. The incremental increases to City user fees and charges implemented by departments including Parks & Recreation represent a viable route to sustainably fund ongoing maintenance needs as well as future facilities expansion.

The CDBG Program is a federal initiative in the United States that provides funds to local governments to support a variety of community development activities that benefit low- and moderate-income individuals. CDBG funds can be allocated to enhance or construct new parks and recreational facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, walking trails, picnic areas, and community centers.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for parks and recreation facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects related to parks and recreation. Development of a Capital Improvement Program for parks will provide guidance for the capital projects that will be needed, their timing of implementation, and the possible funding sources and mechanisms.

Land based funding mechanisms such as Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are possible for new development where there are few voters required to help fund park facilities and/or maintenance of parks, parkways and open space.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects and other capital infrastructure such as parks and child care facilities.

Transportation Facilities

Current Funding

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out the Street & Maintenance services. Funding sources include development impact fees, local transportation authority, and the State gas tax. The gas tax is used for roadway maintenance and improvement and is allocated to local jurisdictions based on formulas that account primarily for population. The Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) allocates Article 3 revenue from the Transportation Development Act (TDA) to each local jurisdiction in the County for non-motorized transportation such as bicycle and pedestrian projects. Street and road funding from TDA is not provided.

The Imperial County Local Transportation Authority administers the local transportation sale tax (Measure D) that provides street and road funding for maintenance and capital improvement. LTA revenues bonds were issued for street related expenditures. Traffic fines and forfeitures are collected by the City for traffic control supplies and equipment. Capital roadway projects are funded from state transportation improvement program (STIP) revenue that are programmed by ICTC and submitted to the California Transportation Commission. STIP revenue is comprised of state and federal highway revenue sources and projects that receive funding are voted upon by the CTC. Many of these projects are tied to highway capacity, highway intersections and related projects.

Landscape and Lighting Maintenance Districts (LLMDs) are created for maintenance and improvements for assets including drainage, sidewalks, and median walkways. The City has three existing LLMDs created for Legacy Ranch, Buena Vista and Town Center developments. The Legacy Ranch development also created a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, drains).

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

While there are no real opportunities to share roadway facilities with any adjacent jurisdiction, the City's system does not exist independently, and circulation within and through the City is mutually affected by the operation of the State and County circulation system. In order to maintain the best possible circulation within City limits, throughout the SOI, and within the County and the greater region as a whole, the City will continue to cooperate with the State, the County, and adjacent cities in monitoring the operation of the regional system and the implementation of necessary

improvements. In accordance with General Plan policy, the City will also continue to cooperate with the Imperial County Transportation Commission to ensure that adequate public transportation service is available for all segments of the community.

Application to State and federal programs to receive funding for circulation and roadway projects also provides a significant opportunity to avoid direct cost to the City for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Recommended Funding

Growth in core transportation funding sources for future transportation projects are closely linked to economic growth. Economic stability and growth highly influence revenue sources such as the gas tax, Transportation Development Act Article 3, Measure D transportation funds, development impact fees, and state transportation revenue. Active Transportation Plan funds from Caltrans could be available for pedestrian and bicycle projects. The City's ability to leverage local sources for additional state and federal funds improves its ability to fund additional facilities.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and increase revenue for the City. Any increase in development impact fees for transportation facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including transportation facilities such as roads and highways, bridges, parking facilities, transit stations, and transit-oriented development projects.

A Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) program will provide adequate funding for the development, operation, and maintenance of the City's transportation system across all travel modes. TIF programs provide funding for construction of transportation facilities needed to support traffic generated by new development and to meet state law requirements.

Wastewater Facilities

Current Funding

The City's wastewater funds are operated as business enterprises with revenue generated through monthly service charges that fund wastewater projects and maintenance. Revenue accrued by such billing is placed in the Wastewater Fund to help finance personnel, maintenance, and improvements. Following the anticipated 2024 Sewer Master Plan, a rate update study is proposed to review wastewater rate and finance structure.

Operations, maintenance, salaries, and equipment purchases are funded by the City's Wastewater Enterprise Fund. This fund is used to account for revenues and expenses associated with the collection and treatment of wastewater. Enterprise funds are used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises. The City receives money in this fund by charging connection fees and maintenance fees to its wastewater customers.

The Wastewater Enterprise Fund is separate from the Wastewater Capacity Fee Fund and is not used to finance the engineering or construction of major improvement projects. The City receives money for the Wastewater Capacity Fee Fund used for major improvement projects by charging wastewater capacity fees for development projects and by receiving interest earned from such fees.

The Wastewater Stabilization fund receives excess revenues from the Wastewater Enterprise Fund. Monies deposited into this fund can be withdrawn to assist the City in covering its income to debt service ratios.

The Legacy Ranch development also created a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District NO. 2007-1 to issue bonds for the purpose of financing certain public improvements (streets, sewers, storm drains).

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City often requires developers to construct wastewater-related infrastructure that will connect the specific development with the existing City wastewater system. This requirement helps the City avoid substantial costs associated with infrastructure development.

Recommended Funding

The City shall continue to use the existing financing mechanisms described above to finance the City's wastewater engineering, construction, operation, and maintenance. Bond measures may continue to be required to finance the large-scale improvements recommended within the full buildout timeframe. The City recently issued a large revenue bond that is backed by customer charges. Current funding sources, especially customer fees, will remain the largest source for wastewater treatment and sewer facility maintenance, improvements, and possible expansions.

An updated wastewater study will be conducted that will identify funding sources to pay for the recommended improvements to the wastewater facility. Also, an update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for wastewater facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects but also other capital infrastructure such as sewage facilities.

Water Facilities

Current Funding

Dynamic Consulting Engineers prepared a Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Rate Study Update in 2012 that determined the adequacy of the existing rate structure charged to City customers for water service and recommended rate changes and other revenue sources to pay for water facilities. The City continues to receive its largest source of funding for the operation and

maintenance of water facilities from customer fees. Following the anticipated 2024 Water Master Plan, a rate update study is proposed to review wastewater rate and finance structure.

The City's water funds are operated as business enterprises with revenue generated through monthly service charges that fund water projects and maintenance. Revenue accrued by such billing is placed in the Water Fund to help finance personnel, maintenance, and improvements.

Operations, maintenance, salaries, equipment purchases, and capital projects are funded by the City's Water Enterprise Fund. This fund is used to account for revenues and expenses associated with the collection and treatment of water. Enterprise funds are used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises. The City receives money in this fund by charging connection fees and maintenance fees to its water customers.

The Water Enterprise Fund is separate from the Water Capacity Fee Fund and is not used to finance the engineering or construction of major improvement projects. The City receives money for the Water Capacity Fee Fund used for major improvement projects by charging water capacity fees for development projects and by receiving interest earned from such fees.

The Water Stabilization fund receives excess revenues from the Water Enterprise Fund. Monies deposited into this fund can be withdrawn to assist the City in covering its income to debt service ratios.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The City often requires developers to construct water-related infrastructure that will connect the specific development with the existing City water system. This requirement helps the City avoid substantial costs associated with infrastructure development.

Recommended Funding

Current funding sources, especially customer fees, will remain the largest source for water facility maintenance, improvements, and possible expansions. Bonds issued against customer charges may continue to be required to finance the large-scale improvements recommended within the full buildout timeframe.

An update to the development impact fees study will bring such fees up to date and potentially increase revenue for the City based on development patterns. Any increase in development impact fees for water facilities would increase funds available for large-scale development and improvement projects.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) are empowered to provide financing for a broad range of infrastructure work, including traditional public works projects and other capital infrastructure such as water facilities.

In addition, it is recommended that the City maintain the required reserve funds to provide working capital for unscheduled repair and replacement of infrastructure. The 2012 water rate study update

specifically concluded that the City maintain a cash reserve in its Water Enterprise Fund is to pay for repair and replacement of portions of the system as they age and deteriorate. The study also suggested the City continue to increase its cash balance in the enterprise fund to accumulate appropriate levels for future repairs to treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure.

The City can utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to enhance water construction projects by investing in critical infrastructure needs, including facility expansion, technology upgrades, and environmental compliance. The funds can also support projects focusing on community health, safety, job creation, and economic growth. Collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions and resilience planning will further optimize the effectiveness of these initiatives. One of the key advantages of these funds is that they enable cities to access financial resources for essential water infrastructure investments that align with the community's highest priorities. This means that the City can direct these funds to address its specific needs and priorities while retaining the flexibility to apply additional project eligibility criteria that are tailored to their unique circumstances.