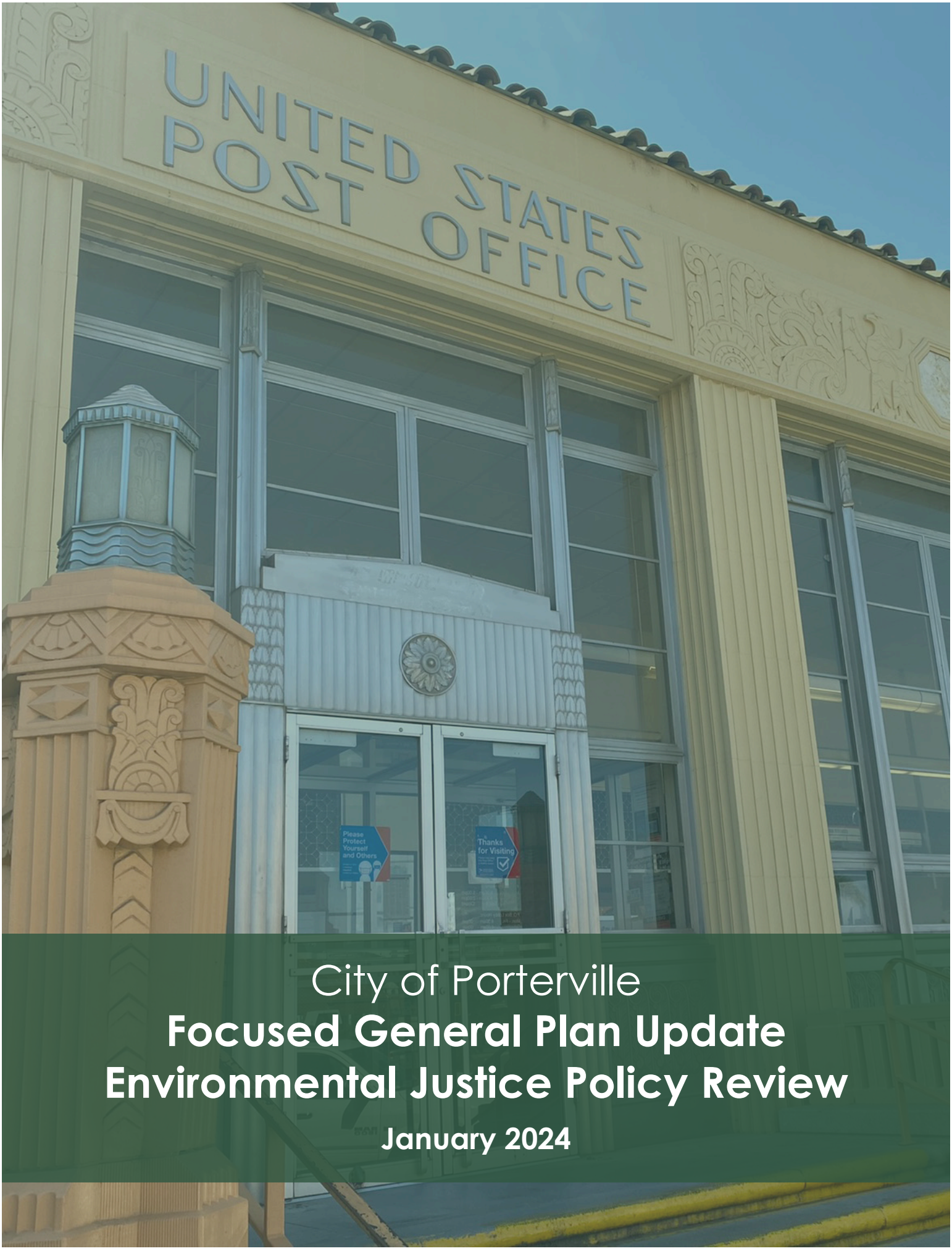

City of Porterville

Focused General Plan Update Environmental Justice Policy Review

January 2024

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Focused General Plan Update
Environmental Justice Policy Review

January 2024

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Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy paper is to provide an overview of Environmental Justice as it relates to land use planning, best planning practices, and statutory requirements for the City of Porterville's General Plan. This policy paper will provide analyses of the environmental justice issues currently facing the City of Porterville and identify potential challenges to be addressed as part of the ongoing planning process. Recommendations are also included to inform development of an Environmental Justice Element for incorporation into the Porterville 2030 General Plan.

Report Organization

This policy paper is organized around key concepts in environmental justice planning, discussing both the ideological concepts and practical methods for assessing conditions in environmental justice communities, as required by law. The sections of this paper include:

Background. Provides background on environmental justice, legislative requirements, the relationship between land use planning and environmental justice, and demographics that may play a role in environmental justice issues.

Environmental Justice Issues Analysis. Determines key challenges and potential obstacles and identifies a set of recommendations organized around the following topics:

- Pollution exposure and air quality,
- Access to public facilities,
- Food access,
- Safe and sanitary homes,
- Physical activity, and
- Civic engagement.

Discussions include an overview of the environmental justice framework for each topic, an explanation of methodologies used in gathering and analyzing the available data, a summary of each analysis, and policy recommendations for consideration in the General Plan update.

Background

Environmental Justice

Throughout the country and the State of California, it has been documented that certain communities experience a disproportionate burden of environmental health hazards.[1] Often, these communities are made up of low-income residents, communities of color, indigenous peoples, or immigrant communities,

[1] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)

leading to intersecting structural inequalities, or converging disadvantages, that further marginalize already under-served populations.

These burdens are often exacerbated by a range of factors which critically inform the land use planning process. Some of these factors include zoning, land use planning, discriminatory housing policies, limited community involvement in the land use planning process, and development patterns that tend to concentrate environmental hazards in certain impacted communities while simultaneously placing economically or environmentally advantageous uses elsewhere. The impacts of these factors leave certain communities, known as disadvantaged communities (DACs), facing significant barriers to their overall health, livelihood, and ongoing sustainability.[2] Evaluating the presence of DACs within a local jurisdiction, as well as the circumstances that contribute to the classification of a DAC, is an important step in establishing land use plans and policies which meet the needs of the most marginalized, vulnerable, and under-served populations in a community.

It may also be helpful to note that recent movements in social and environmental justice may utilize the terms "disadvantaged community" and "environmental justice community" interchangeably. While environmental justice communities and disadvantaged communities often share common issues and may be analyzed in similar ways, this analysis will use the term DACs in order to maintain consistency with the terms identified in SB 1000, which refers exclusively to Disadvantaged Communities, as described below.

Land Use Planning and Environmental Justice

There are three important concepts of environmental justice which are linked to land use planning: distributive justice, procedural justice, and social justice.

- Distributive justice refers to the inequitable distribution of harms and public benefits in which certain communities are exposed to pollution or lack access to public improvements.[3] Distributive justice is often exhibited through land use planning and local implementation documents, such as zoning codes or Capital Improvement Programs, which establish development requirements and prioritize investments in public improvement projects.
- Procedural justice refers to equity in decision-making and can be facilitated by targeted community involvement in the land use planning process.
- Social justice refers to the reality that racial, class, economic, and political factors influence the quality of life and the distribution of pollution.[4]

By recognizing these concepts and integrating policies which address environmental justice issues as part of the General Plan update process, the City can ensure that every community member is considered when planning future development in Porterville.

[2] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)
[3] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)
[4] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018, 5)

Senate Bill 1000

In order to recognize and address environmental justice issues, the State of California passed legislation requiring cities and counties to incorporate environmental justice policies and programs into their land use planning processes. Senate Bill (SB) 1000, also known as the *Planning for Healthy Communities Act*, was signed into law on September 24th, 2016. The purpose of this law is to create healthier cities and counties by protecting sensitive land uses and prioritizing the needs of DACs. This law defines DACs as "an area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation."

As a result of this law, cities and counties must now determine the presence of DACs in their communities and, if present, adopt an environmental justice element or integrate environmental justice goals, objectives, and policies into their General Plans. These policies must work to reduce unique or compounded health risks in DACs by addressing the following:

- Pollution exposure and air quality,
- Access to public facilities,
- Access to healthy food,
- Access to safe and sanitary homes,
- Access to spaces for physical activity,
- Community engagement, and
- Program improvements to identify and reverse systemic funding inequities for disadvantaged communities.

Based on mapping from CalEnviroScreen, Porterville is considered a DAC and is required to prepare an Environmental Justice element. Mapping is discussed in more detail in the Identifying Disadvantaged Communities section below.

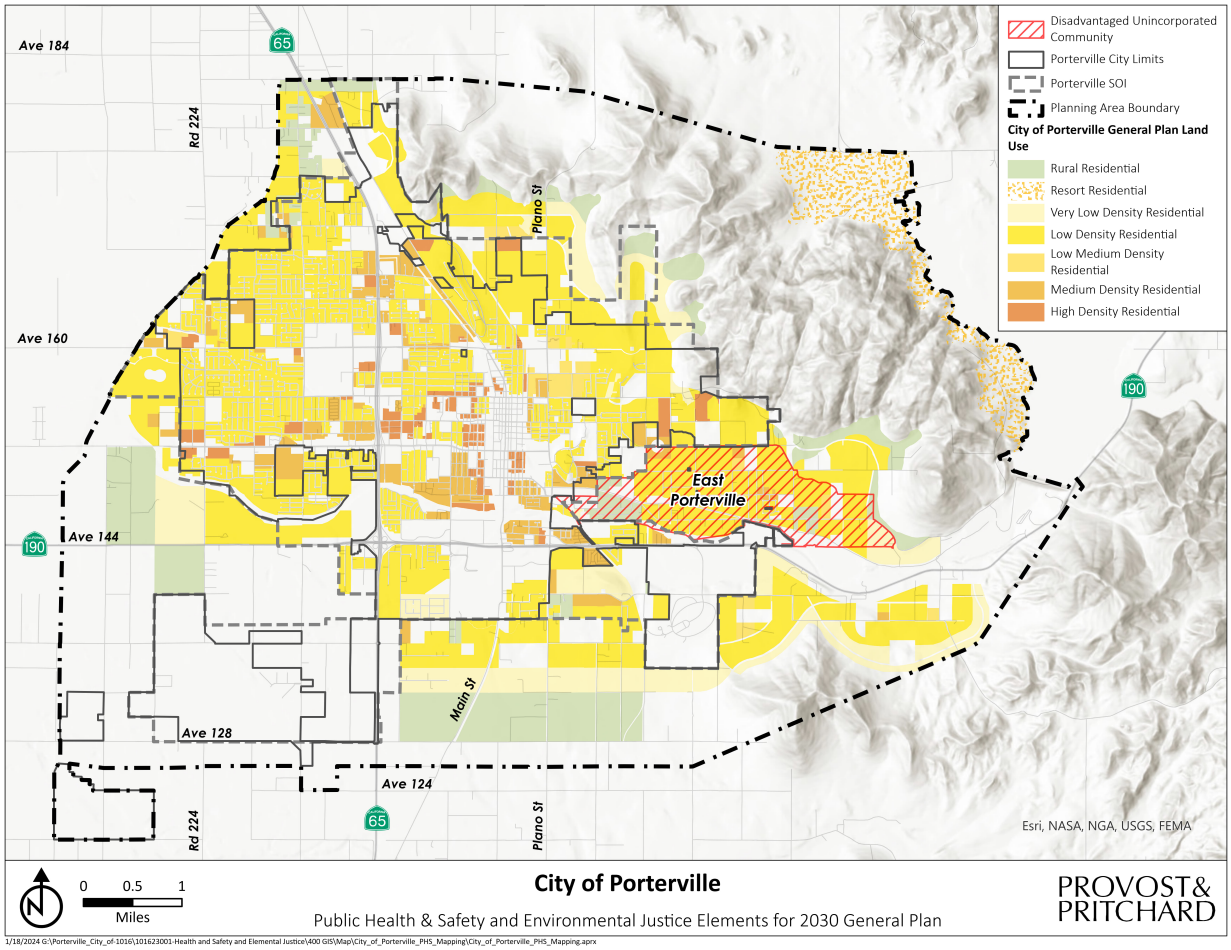
Senate Bill 244

SB 244 (Wolk), approved on October 7, 2011, requires jurisdictions to include identification of disadvantaged island, fringe, or legacy unincorporated communities (DUCs)[5] in the land use element of their General Plan. Specifically, cities are required to identify the presence of island or fringe DUCs within their Sphere of Influence (SOI). Where DUCs are present, an analysis of water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, and structural fire protection needs and/or deficiencies as well as potential service extensions is required in the General Plan. Tulare Local Agency Formation Commission (Tulare LAFCO) mapped and discussed DUCs in the 2014 Porterville Municipal Service Review (MSR). Additionally, Tulare County completed a DUC assessment in 2015. These reports discuss service needs and deficiencies in East Porterville and the other DUCs that were identified within the Porterville SOI at that time. However, more recent mapping by the Department of Water Resources, using the same income criteria as SB 244 to

[5] A disadvantaged unincorporated community is an unincorporated inhabited area where the annual median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide average.

determine the presence of DUCs, has demonstrated that most DUCs identified within the Porterville SOI in the earlier reports have either been annexed or are no longer considered DUCs (see Error! Reference source not found.). Only East Porterville is still considered a DUC and has been analyzed in the earlier reports, including all information required under SB 244. Additional analysis of services in East Porterville is being conducted as part of an ongoing Tulare County project related to housing development. While no major changes from the earlier reports are anticipated, if additional analysis is required to satisfy SB 244, additional data collection will be completed. The information and analysis contained in these reports will be incorporated in the General Plan to meet the requirements of SB 244.

Figure 1: Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities



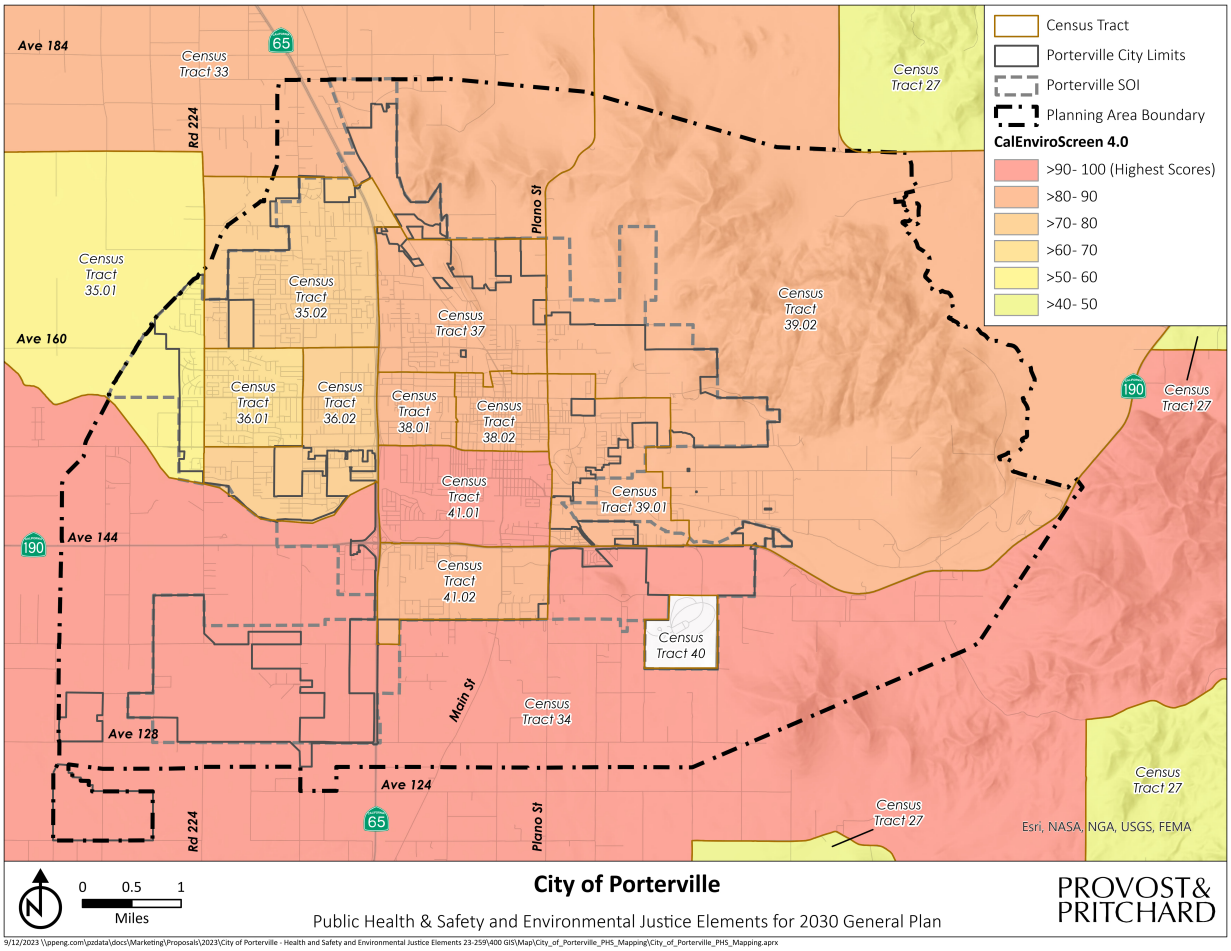
DUCs are mapped using California Department of Water Resources 2020 data

Identifying Disadvantaged Communities

The first step in planning for environmental justice is identifying the communities in a jurisdiction that are considered disadvantaged as defined in SB 1000. The primary screening tool used to identify DACs is CalEnviroScreen, a mapping tool maintained by CalEPA that identifies DACs by census tract. Scores are assigned to each census tract based on 20 different statewide indicators shown to significantly impact health or influence vulnerability to disease, including pollution exposures, other environmental effects such

as hazardous sites, sensitive populations, and socioeconomic factors.[6] The City of Porterville is made up of several census tracts, many of which score highly[7] in CalEnviroScreen requiring the City to consider environmental justice in its General Plan. CalEnviroScreen scores for the City are mapped in **Figure 2**, below.

Figure 2: Porterville CalEnviroScreen Scores



A CalEnviroScreen score was not generated for Census Tract 40 due to low population and limited available data.

Existing City Demographics

Incorporated in 1902, the City of Porterville is now home to approximately 62,998 residents, according to the 2022 population estimate from the United States Census Bureau.

[6] (California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment 2023)
[7] A high CalEnviroScreen score indicates that a census tract is highly negatively impacted by the environmental factors considered in the score.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Porterville is primarily White, with a significant population of Hispanic and Latino individuals as well. A breakdown of racial composition is provided in Table 1, below, which comes from the United States Census Bureau's 2022 population estimates.

Table 1: Porterville Racial & Ethnic Population

Race	Percentage of Population*
White alone	58.4%
Black or African American alone	0.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1.5%
Asian alone	5.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.2%
Two or More Races	18.9%
Hispanic or Latino	70.0%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	21.5%

**Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding and multiple designations being applicable in some cases.*

Household and Income

The City of Porterville is comprised of approximately 18,305 households. A household includes all people living together in a housing unit, which may include one or more families living together, a person living alone, or a group of related or unrelated people. Porterville's households have an average of 3.33 people, which is typical for Tulare County.[8]

In 2021 dollars, the average household income for Porterville is $48,955 annually, which is lower than the Tulare County average household income of $57,394.[9] Porterville's per capita average income is $20,419. Approximately 21% of the City of Porterville is considered to be living in poverty, higher than Tulare County's 18.7%.[10]

Employment and Workforce

The economic health of an area largely depends on the composition of its labor force. In part, major employers decide where to locate based on the availability of the workers that can meet their needs. Approximately 62.3% of residents in Porterville are considered part of the civilian labor force, which consists of members of the population over the age of 16. Tulare County and Visalia-Porterville's unemployment rate as of September 2023 was 9.7%, higher than California as a whole, which had a September unemployment rate of 4.7%.[11] The California Employment Development Department provides employment numbers by employment industry for various metropolitan areas within the state, including the Visalia-Porterville metropolitan area. As of September 2023, there were approximately 179,500 jobs in the area across several industries, as shown in Table 2 below.

[8] (United States Census Bureau 2023)
[9] (United States Census Bureau 2023)
[10] (United States Census Bureau 2023)
[11] (California Employment Development Department 2023)

Table 2: Visalia-Porterville Metropolitan Area Employment by Industry

Industry	Jobs	% of Total
Mining, Logging, and Construction	7,600	4.2%
Manufacturing	14,200	7.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	30,700	17%
Information	600	0.3%
Financial Activities	3,800	2.1%
Professional and Business Services	11,700	6.5%
Private Education and Health Services	21,300	11.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	14,300	8.0%
Other Services	4,100	2.3%
Government	33,600	18.7%
Total Nonfarm	*141,900*	*79%*
Total Farm	*37,600*	*21%*
Total	**179,500**	**100%**

Percent totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Environmental Justice Issues Analysis

In order to comply with the requirements of Senate Bill 1000, EJ policies must address the unique and compounded health risks presented in DACs by addressing the following topics:

- Pollution Exposure and Air Quality,
- Public Facilities,
- Food Access,
- Safe and Sanitary Homes,
- Physical Activity,
- Community Engagement, and
- Improvements and Programs that Address the Needs of Disadvantaged Communities.

Unique and Compounded Health Risks

Unique and compounded health risks refer to hazards or health risks caused by hazards that may not be harmful to health in isolation but are harmful when considered with other health risks or stressors associated with negative health outcomes. These are also referred to as cumulative risks.

While CalEnviroScreen is a useful tool for establishing a community's level of environmental burden in relation to other communities throughout California, there are some limitations to the tool. Data is collected and analyzed at the census tract level, which may not fully represent the nuanced issues faced in areas where census tracts do not correspond to neighborhoods and communities. To provide a more comprehensive, customized, and local analysis of environmental justice issues facing the City of Porterville, the analysis outlined below will consider additional indicators of equity, such as access to parks and open space or access to healthcare facilities.

Each of the required topics from SB 1000 is discussed in its own section below, with the exception of Improvements and Programs that Address the Needs of Disadvantage Communities, which is considered as part of the other required analyses. Each section includes a brief introduction to the topic, the methodology for the completed analysis, a summary of findings in Porterville, and recommendations for the policies and programs to be included in the new Environmental Justice Element.

Pollution Exposure

Pollution exposure occurs daily in all communities where people encounter air, water, and soil contaminants present in the built environment. A key concept in environmental justice is that some communities are exposed to multiple sources of pollution that make them more vulnerable, or disproportionately burdened by, pollution compared to other communities.

SB 1000 requires environmental justice elements to "reduce pollution exposure and improve air quality." Although air pollution is a type of pollution exposure, it is addressed separately by SB 1000 and is geared toward reducing specific air contaminants. Other types of pollution that should be addressed include water contamination and exposure to hazardous materials. Addressing these pollution exposures is critical to advancing environmental justice. This portion of the environmental justice analysis will focus on identifying the sources, types, and quantities of pollution to which the community in Porterville is exposed.

Air Quality

Methodology

Healthy air quality is defined as the degree to which ambient air[12] is pollution free.[13] DACs can be disproportionately exposed to air pollution due to the proximity of pollution-emitting sources. Air pollutants are split into three categories: greenhouse gases (GHGs), criteria air pollutants, and toxic air contaminants (TACs).

GHGs trap heat in the atmosphere to make the planet warmer. This is known as the greenhouse effect and is the primary cause of global climate change. GHGs are primarily made up of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, water vapor, ozone, and fluorinated gases. GHGs enter the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels; the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil; industrial activities; and agricultural practices.

Criteria air pollutants are made up of six common pollutants (carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, and lead) that cause smog, acid rain, and other health hazards. Typically, these pollutants are the products of the combustion of fossil fuels and industrial processes. The US EPA and the State of California have set acceptable concentration levels for criteria pollutants. Areas that exceed these concentrations are considered in nonattainment status.

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are pollutants that cause serious health issues even with low levels of exposure. TACs include benzene, asbestos, arsenic, chloroform, and particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines, among many others.

GHGs, criteria air pollutants, and TACs are generally emitted by three types of sources:

- Stationary sources, such as power plants, refineries, and manufacturing facilities.

[12] Ambient air refers to outdoor air that the general public has access to.
[13] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)

- Area-wide sources, which spread pollution over a large geographic area. These include fugitive dust and farming operations.
- Mobile sources, which include automobiles, boats, and airplanes, among others.

The California Air Resources Control Board (CARB) created an *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook* (Handbook) in 2005 which provides a method for assessing air pollution exposure. The Handbook outlines a three-step process to assess pollution exposure near sensitive land uses:

1. Locate mobile and stationary sources of air pollution, including freeways, high-volume roads, distribution centers, rail yards, gasoline-dispensing facilities, and others.
2. Establish what areas are at risk of exposure by applying CARB's recommended buffers around pollution sources.
3. Identify sensitive land uses existing within those buffers.

Analysis

The San Joaquin Valley's air quality is impacted by its topography, climate, and geography. The mountains surrounding the Valley cause pollution to collect in high concentrations with limited ability to disperse. Additionally, the presence of major transportation corridors through the San Joaquin Valley connecting northern and southern California exacerbate the problem.[14] There are several state and federal air quality standards not being met in the San Joaquin Valley. Specifically, the region is in nonattainment status for concentrations of ozone and particulate matter.[15]

To determine the extent to which sensitive land uses in Porterville are disproportionately exposed to air pollution, it is necessary to locate pollution sources and establish acceptable proximity of pollution sources to sensitive land uses. Sensitive land uses are places where individuals who are most susceptible to poor air quality, such as children, older adults, pregnant women, and those with health problems, are most likely to spend their time. These land uses can include schools, parks, playgrounds, daycare facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential communities.[16]

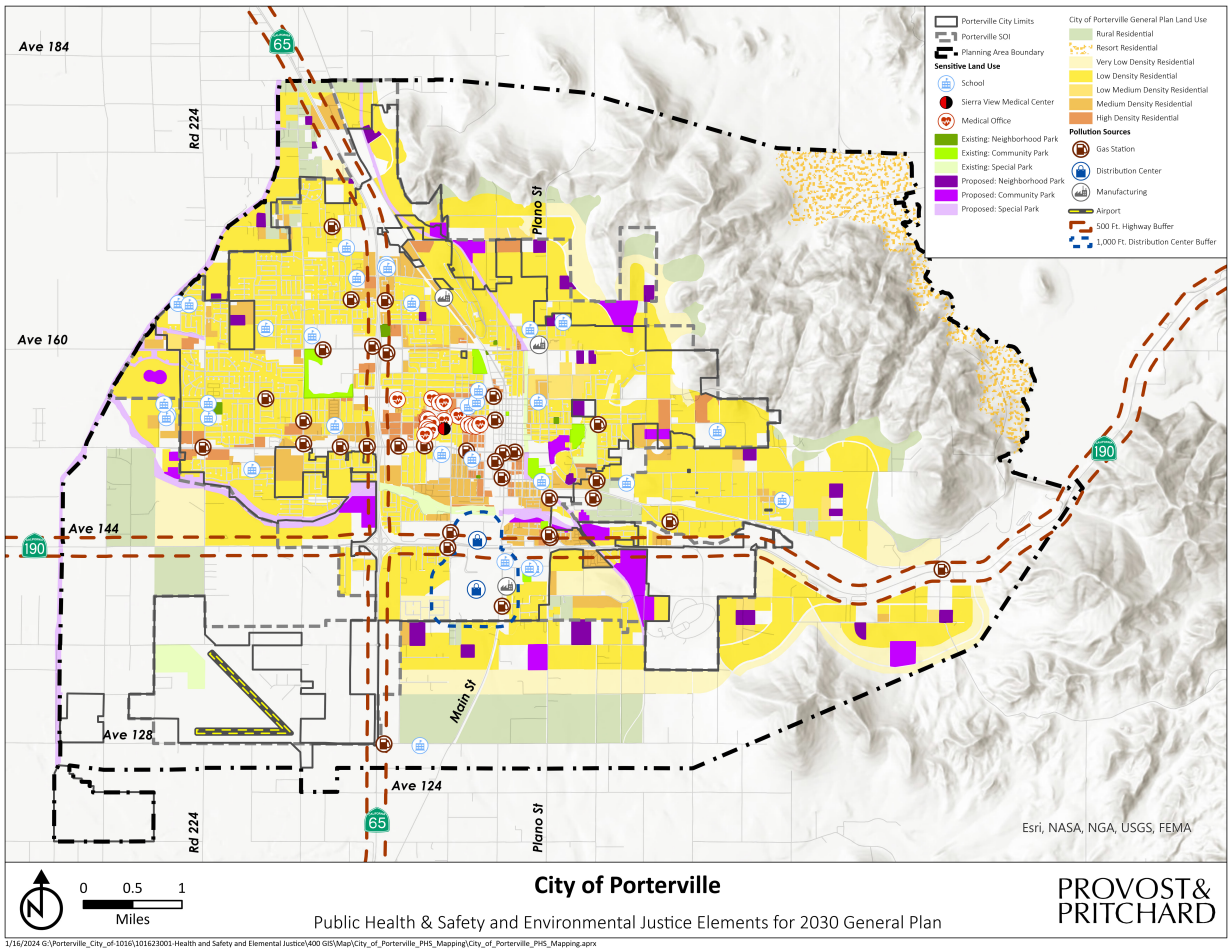
CARB provides siting recommendations for sensitive land uses around specific sources of air pollution, including high traffic freeways and roads,[17] distribution centers, rail yards, ports, refineries, chrome plating facilities, dry cleaners, and large gas dispensing facilities. Using these siting recommendations, it is possible to map the locations of sensitive uses in closer proximity to pollution sources than is recommended by CARB.

An inventory of Porterville's pollution emitting sources and sensitive land uses are shown in Figure 3. As seen in the figure, the primary air pollution sources in Porterville are mobile pollution sources from the highway, as well as gas stations. There are also distribution and manufacturing facilities that are considered pollution sources, as well as the airport. When considering the proximity of these pollution sources to

[14] (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2019)
[15] (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2018); (California Air Resources Board 2023)
[16] (California Environmental Protection Agency, California Air Resources Control Board 2005)
[17] The Handbook includes land use siting recommendations related to urban roads that see 100,000 vehicles per day and rural roads with 50,000 vehicles per day.

sensitive land uses, such as residences, schools, or health facilities, facilities are generally well-located. However, some sensitive uses are still located closer to pollution sources than recommended by experts such as the California Air Resources Board.

Figure 3: Porterville Pollution Sources



Summary and Recommendations

Land uses in Porterville are generally well-located to avoid conflicts between sensitive land uses and pollution emitting sources. However, there are some existing sensitive land uses, including schools, parks, and medical centers, within the recommended CARB buffer for several pollution-emitting sources, including the state routes, gas stations, and distribution centers.

CARB recognizes that other factors are considered when making land use decisions, including housing needs, existing land uses, and other development priorities. It is not always practical for jurisdictions to strictly adhere to the CARB recommendations. However, it is recommended that Porterville consider the buffers identified in the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook* when new development proposals are received. CARB does not make recommendations for the relocation of already established land uses that do not meet the siting recommendations outlined in the Handbook. Although policies related to relocation could be identified for the Element, they are not necessary at this time.

Water Contamination

Methodology

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards are regulatory agencies in charge of water quality. SWRCB tracks surface water conditions throughout California as well as water bodies with contaminants exceeding water quality standards.

Groundwater quality is often assessed through resources provided through SWRCB, including the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment program, the online database called GeoTracker,[18] as well as the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGMA) program.

Analysis

Groundwater

Porterville has historically relied on groundwater as its municipal water supply for residents, accessing this water through the City's system of 36 wells. There have been no water deficiencies, even in drought years. However, the Tule Sub-basin, from which the City draws its water, is considered to be in a state of overdraft. The City released their 2020 Urban Water Management Plan in January 2022. The Plan outlines the water supply system in Porterville and its ability to meet existing and future water needs in the City. The Plan also includes a conservation plan that outlines actions for drought and emergency response to preserve water quality and service in Porterville. Although some shallow wells within the City had an increased presence of nitrates, this level still met standards for potable water. The City is part of the Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency, who monitors groundwater sustainability for the subbasin and maintains the Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The City continues to monitor water quality. At present no wells have exceeded allowable contamination thresholds.

Surface Water

Porterville maintains and operates five hillside reservoirs. Three have a three-million-gallon capacity, one has a 305,000-gallon capacity, and the final has a 550,000-gallon capacity. A 300,000-gallon reservoir at the airport is also part of the City system. All six reservoirs allow the City to maintain system pressure during peak demand and fire flow situations.

The City does not import or purchase water for direct distribution through the public water system. Porterville's total surface water allocation is approximately 2,039 acre-feet (ac-ft), and the City has also acquired surface water rights to an additional approximately 2,017 ac-ft. The City purchases surface water from nearby water districts when available to be utilized for groundwater recharge and drought buffer. This water is not used as part of the potable water system in Porterville.

Summary and Recommendations

The City of Porterville's water system provides water to residents that meets all maximum applicable contamination levels. Quality is monitored through a variety of methods, including the 2020 Urban Water

[18] GeoTracker concerns are discussed in the **Hazardous Materials and Toxins** section.

Management Plan and Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Plan, which references annual Consumer Quality Reports that monitor contamination levels. No additional actions are recommended at this time to address environmental justice related to water quality.

Hazardous Materials and Toxins

Methodology

Sources of hazardous materials and toxic substances that may lead to exposure include industrial facilities, brownfields, hazardous waste cleanup sites, superfund sites, abandoned mines, or housing built on or near previously-industrial land that has not been properly cleaned up.

Envirostor, an online database maintained by CalEPA, is the primary tool for identifying hazardous sites in communities throughout California. The analysis section below discusses hazardous sites from Envirostor, which maps hazardous sites, and GeoTracker, which maps leaking underground storage tank (LUST) clean-up sites.

Analysis

The following locations were identified on Envirostor as hazardous sites. These sites are part of clean-up programs or have land use limitations in order to address potential impacts from hazardous materials. Envirostor sites in Porterville include:

1. Sequoia Middle School (54010013). This site was developed for a middle school on North Prospect Street and DDD (dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane), DDE (dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene), DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), and arsenic were identified as potential contaminants of concern. A removal action workplan was developed in 2004 and certified as complete in November 2005.
2. Porterville PCE Plume (60001216). Tetrachloroethylene (PCE) was observed in several area wells in the proximity of former dry cleaning operations which prompted an active cleanup status beginning in November 2009. A revised workplan was completed in June 2023.
3. East Olive Avenue 38-acre Parcel (60002015). This site entered voluntary cleanup after its use for agricultural purposes from the 1950's through the 1970's. Limited soil removal was conducted in 2014 to address concentrations of pesticides, arsenic, and lead, and no further action was required as of April 2015.
4. SoCalGas/Porterville Manufactured Gas Plant (54490016). The presence of soils contaminated with benzene, petroleum, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and semi-volatile organics on this site prompted a voluntary agreement with land use restrictions. A Deed Restriction was recorded with Tulare County to limit the use of the site to industrial and commercial uses per the current zoning designation.
5. Porterville Manufactured Gas Plant (60002076). This site was part of a former manufactured gas plant operated in the early 1900s. This cleanup site has been active since May 2014 to address cyanide, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and semi-volatile organics.
6. Beckman Coulter, Inc. (71002426) (CAD048645444). This site is subject to a tiered permit. The facility on site was previously a hazardous waste facility. Closure certifications for the facility are dated July 22, 1994 and June 25, 1996. The last compliance inspection was completed in 2001 and no violations were found.

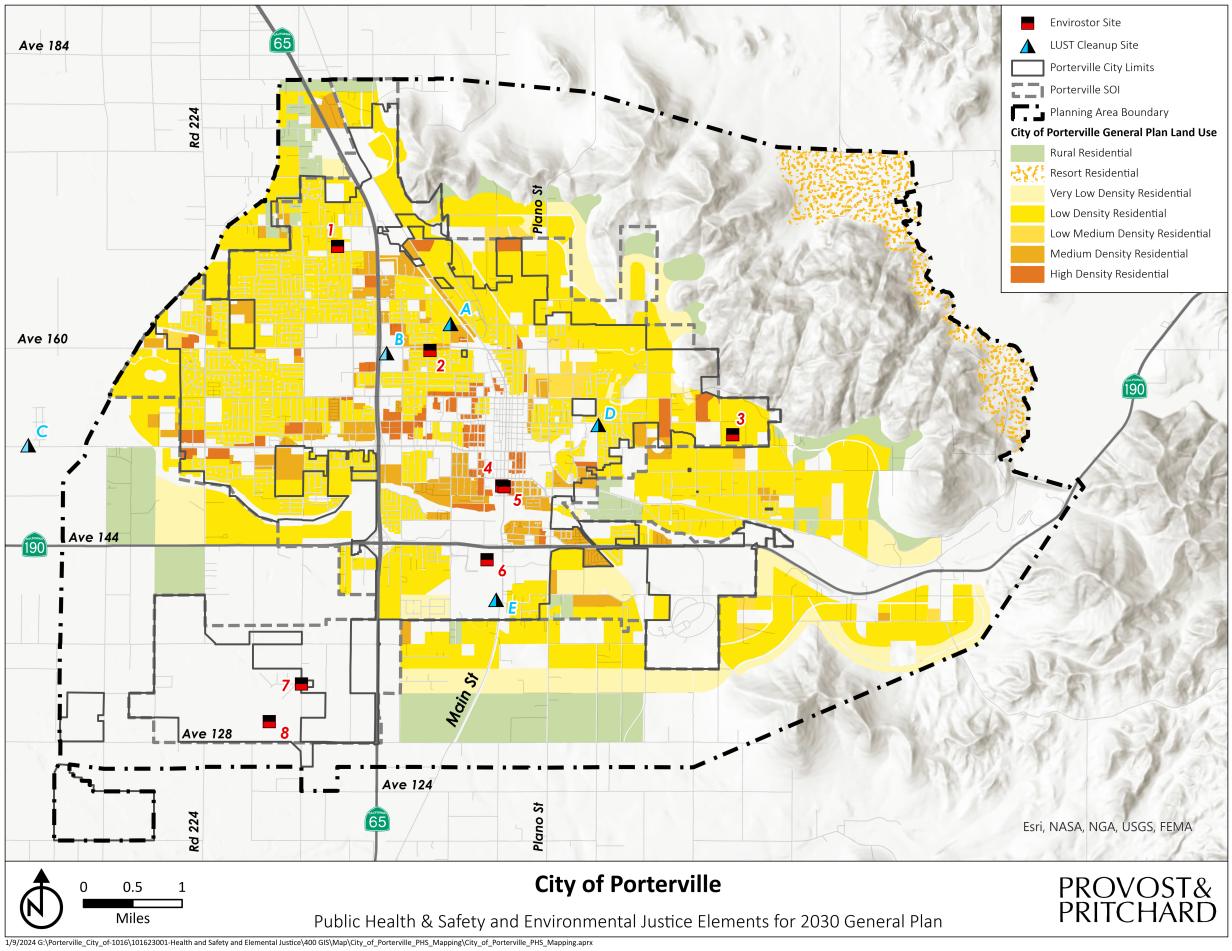
7. **Porterville Municipal Airport (54070296).** This site has been subject to voluntary cleanup as of September 2001 to address contaminated soil and the presence of organochlorine pesticides. A removal action completion report was completed in March 2009. The most recent inspection was completed in 2019.
8. **Porterville Army Airfield (J09CA0902) (80000693).** This site was used as an army pilot training facility during World War II where fuel tanks were stored underground. Training at the facility stopped in 1944 and the site was sold in 1953. The site was referred to the Regional Water Quality Control Board in 2017.

Additionally, there are LUST active cleanup sites located at:

A. Eyster Property (T0610700256),
B. Save Center (T0610793749),
C. Village Market (T0610700099),
D. Sunnyside Handy Market (T0610740454), and
E. Walmart Distribution Center (T10000018540).

The Envirostor and LUST sites listed above are mapped and labeled in **Figure 4** below.

Figure 4: Hazardous Site Locations



Summary and Recommendations

Although some sites in Porterville are hazardous sites and have been subject to clean-up, they are not disproportionately located in disadvantaged areas and have been addressed through cleanup efforts and land use limitations or are currently being addressed through these efforts. Additionally, the General Plan includes the following policies related to land use and hazardous sites:

Land Use Element

LU-I-18. Protect existing residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible activities and land uses, and environmental hazards.

Public Health & Safety Element

PHS-G-4. Protect soils, surface water, and groundwater from contamination from hazardous materials.

PHS-I-17. Require remediation and cleanup of sites contaminated with hazardous substances.

PHS-I-19. Ensure that all specified hazardous facilities conform to the Tulare County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

PHS-I-22. Coordinate with the Tulare County Department of Environmental Health, and other appropriate regulatory agencies during the review process of all proposals for the use of hazardous materials or those involving properties that may have toxic contamination, such as petroleum hydrocarbons, CAM 17 metals, asbestos, and lead.

PHS-I-23. Require applicants of projects in areas of known or suspected hazardous materials occurrences such as petroleum hydrocarbon contamination, CAM 17 metals, USTs, location of asbestos rocks and other such contamination to perform comprehensive soil and groundwater contamination assessments in accordance with regulatory agency testing standards, and if contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, require the project applicant to undertake remediation procedures prior to grading and development under the supervision of appropriate agencies, such as Tulare County Department of Environmental Heath, Department of Toxic Substances Control, or Regional Water Quality Control Board.

No additional policies are recommended at this time.

Public Facilities

SB 1000 refers to public facilities as “public improvements, public services, and community amenities”. SB 1000 seeks to ensure that DACs have access to safe, clean public facilities and the equitable distribution of public facilities is an important part of environmental justice. Many DACs do not have adequate access to necessary public facilities. Even basic infrastructure such as sidewalks and streetlights can be inequitably distributed around a community. This can create a range of health risks and quality of life issues including poor physical and mental health, increased exposure to safety hazards, and stifled community growth.

Methodology

Analyzing the conditions of public facilities requires three steps:

1. Inventorying existing facilities;
2. Assessing access, demand, and compliance; and
3. Identifying future opportunities.

This analysis should consider:[19]

- Distribution. Is the distribution of facilities equitable? Are there future facilities planned that may make it more equitable? Are there any barriers to achieving equitable distribution of facilities?
- Access. Is there vehicular, pedestrian, biking, and/or transit-served access to the facilities?
- Conditions and Regulatory Compliance. Do facilities meet regulatory and safety standards? Are facilities in good working condition?
- Environmental Impacts. Are facilities contributing to pollution burdens? Are facilities minimizing their impacts on the environment?
- Operational Sustainability and Interagency Coordination. Is there sustained funding for the facilities? Is there long-term maintenance infrastructure for the facilities? Are applicable agencies aware of DAC needs?
- Future Demand. Are facilities planned to meet the long-term needs of DACs?

Analysis

Two inventory maps were developed to help identify the distribution and access of public facilities, including community amenities and public services. Figure 5 shows the location of inventoried community amenities, which includes public facilities such as the library, City Hall, the Tulare County Superior Court, and Sequoia National Forest Headquarters. The map also shows parks and early education facilities, which includes both elementary schools and commercial day cares. Figure 6 is another inventory map showing public services including emergency response (fire and police) as well as the water service area in the City.

[19] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)

Figure 5: Porterville Community Facilities Inventory

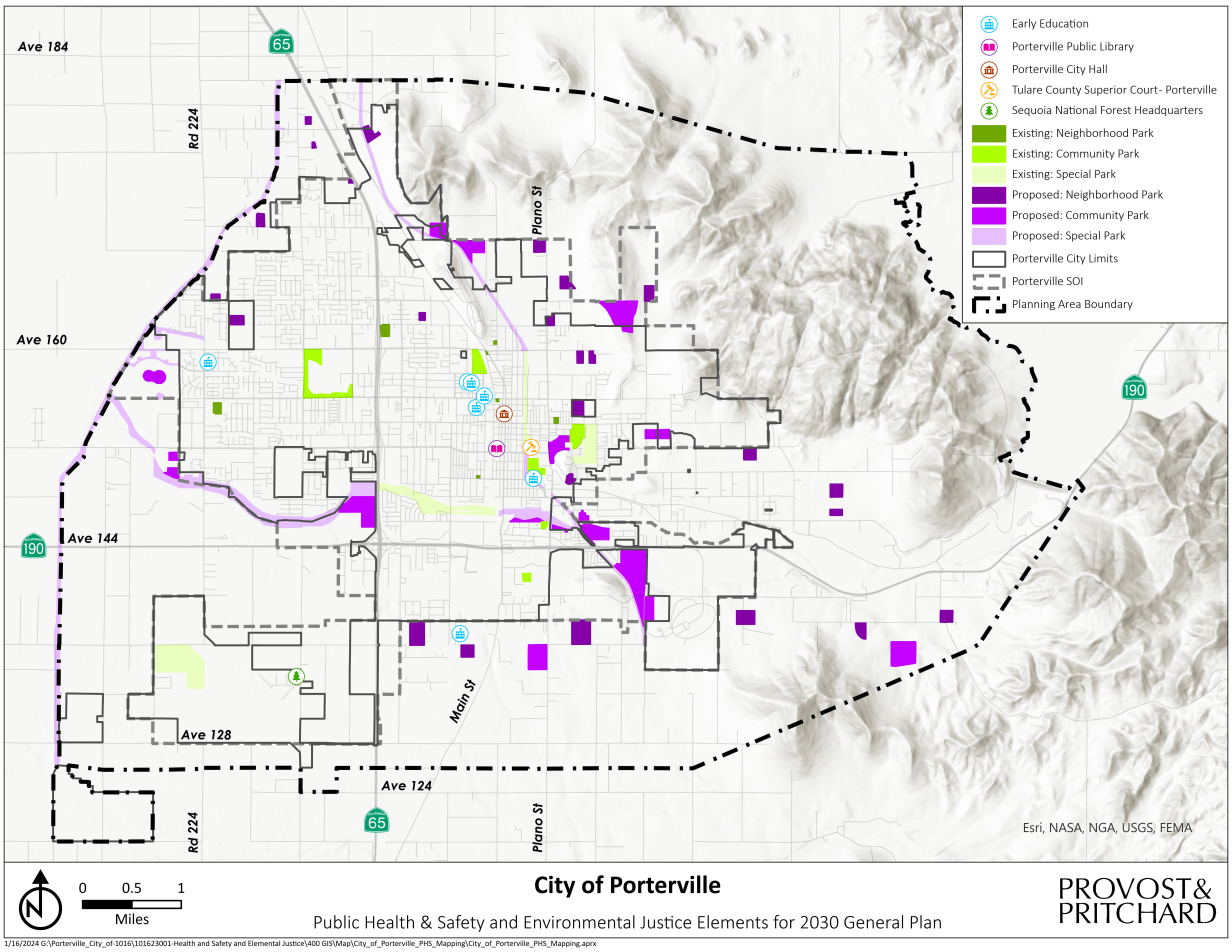
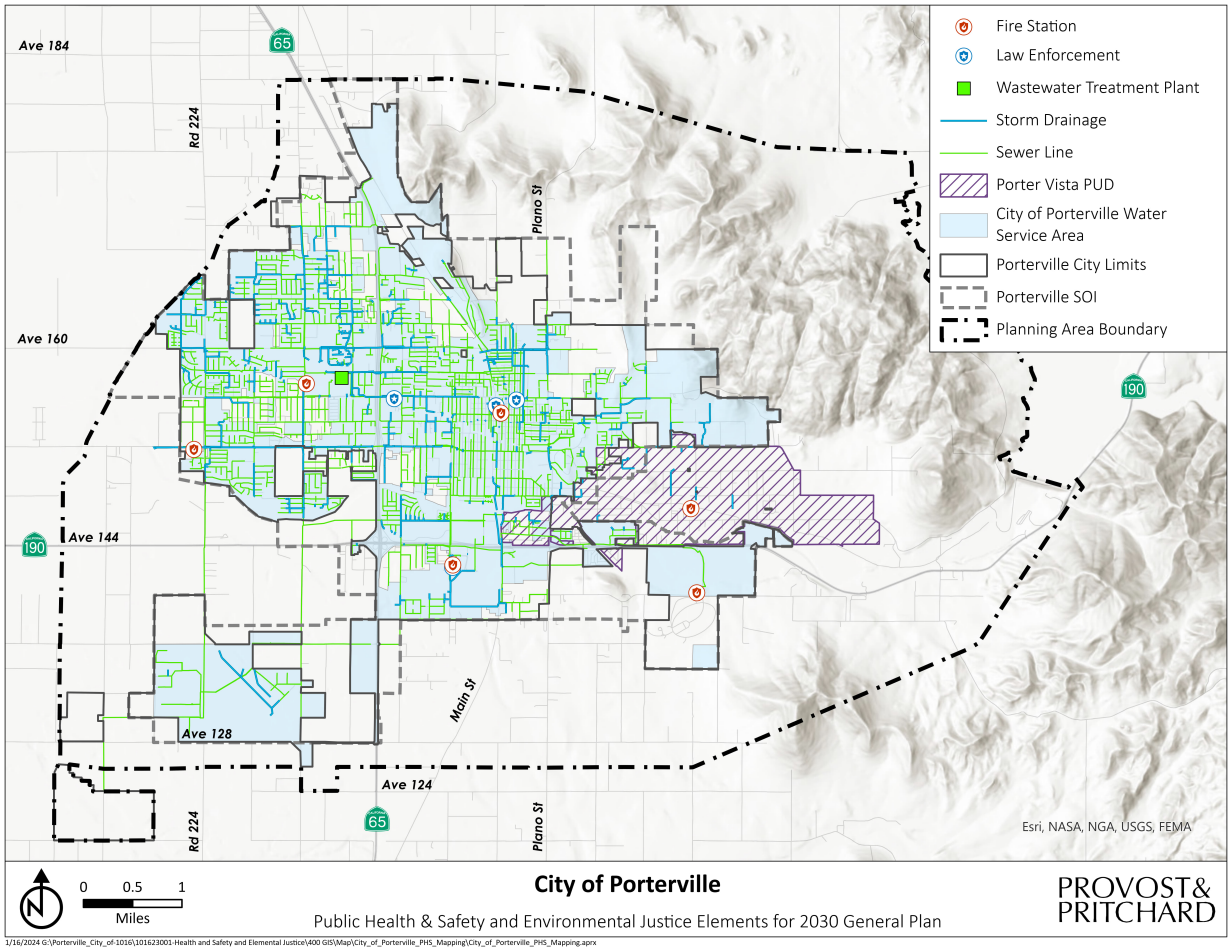


Figure 6: Porterville Public Services Inventory



Water, Wastewater, and Flood Control

The City of Porterville's domestic and fire flow water demand is generally well-served by its 36 local wells. The current General Plan contains a guiding policy to ensure the City maintains an adequate supply of fresh water to serve the existing and future needs of the community. Throughout the San Joaquin Valley groundwater overdraft and contamination from agricultural chemicals have presented groundwater quantity and quality challenges. The Tule Sub-basin, which the City relies on for its water, is considered to be in a state of overdraft. The City's Urban Water Management Plan, last updated in 2022, examines the existing water system and outlines the necessary steps to ensure the City has sufficient water capacity in future years. The Plan, which is updated every five years, includes strategies to address challenges such as climate change, natural hazards, and decreases in water availability and quality. Improvement and rehabilitation projects are identified in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to ensure funding for vital projects is identified in the annual budget for the City. Water quality has been historically good for the City; although there have been relative increases in nitrate concentrations, particularly in shallow wells, these levels continue to meet standards for potable water. The City is located within the Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency planning area and subject to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, most recently updated in 2022.

The City collects wastewater from the City service area as well as the Porter Vista Public Utilities District from the unincorporated community of East Porterville. The water is treated at the City-owned wastewater treatment plant located at the corner of North Prospect Street and West Morton Avenue. The treatment plant has an average day maximum month flow capacity of 8.0 million gallons per day (mgd). This capacity will likely need to be expanded to meet the future needs of the City at full build-out of the General Plan, but at present the treatment facility has sufficient capacity. A tertiary treatment facility is planned in the CIP, alongside other water infrastructure projects to ensure the City continues to meet community needs.

Stormwater facilities are primarily maintained within the public right-of-way. Facilities located on private property are maintained by the property owner or other private party, while Tulare County Flood Control and Water Conservation District is responsible for stormwater facilities in the unincorporated areas of the Planning Area. The City owns approximately 25 stormwater basins to serve as temporary storage facilities for storm waters and allowing some water to evaporate or percolate into the aquifer. Additional basins may be developed to assist with groundwater recharge and stormwater retention. General Plan policies require new development to limit impervious surfaces and runoff generation to help manage stormwater flows. The primary flooding concern in the City would be a failure of Success Dam, which is discussed in more detail in the *Health and Safety Policy Review Paper* also produced for this planning effort.

Solid Waste, Recycling, and Composting Facilities

Solid waste collection in the City of Porterville is provided by the City's Public Works Department. Private companies provide solid waste collection services in the unincorporated areas of the Porterville Planning Area. The City's solid waste program includes waste disposal collection, a regular recyclables pickup program, and an organics/green waste pickup program which is in turn collected by a contracted company, Pena Disposal. Tulare County Consolidated Waste Management Authority is responsible for waste collection services for Porterville. Waste is taken from the City to Teapot Dome Landfill.[20] When Teapot Dome Landfill closes, the City will take waste to Woodville Landfill. Green waste and recycling are taken to Corporation Yard transfer station. There are no waste disposal facilities within the City, although there are several recycling centers where residents can drop off recyclable materials. The City also hosts a household hazardous waste drop off event on the 3rd Saturday of every month from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the City of Porterville Corporation Yard located at 555 N. Prospect Street. The following items can be collected at the event: used motor oil & oil filters, anti-freeze, automotive batteries, e-waste, latex paints, household batteries and fluorescent lamps. Biannual collection days for hazardous waste, including e-waste, are organized by Tulare County Consolidated Waste Management Authority. All households in Porterville are served adequately by and have equal access to this system.

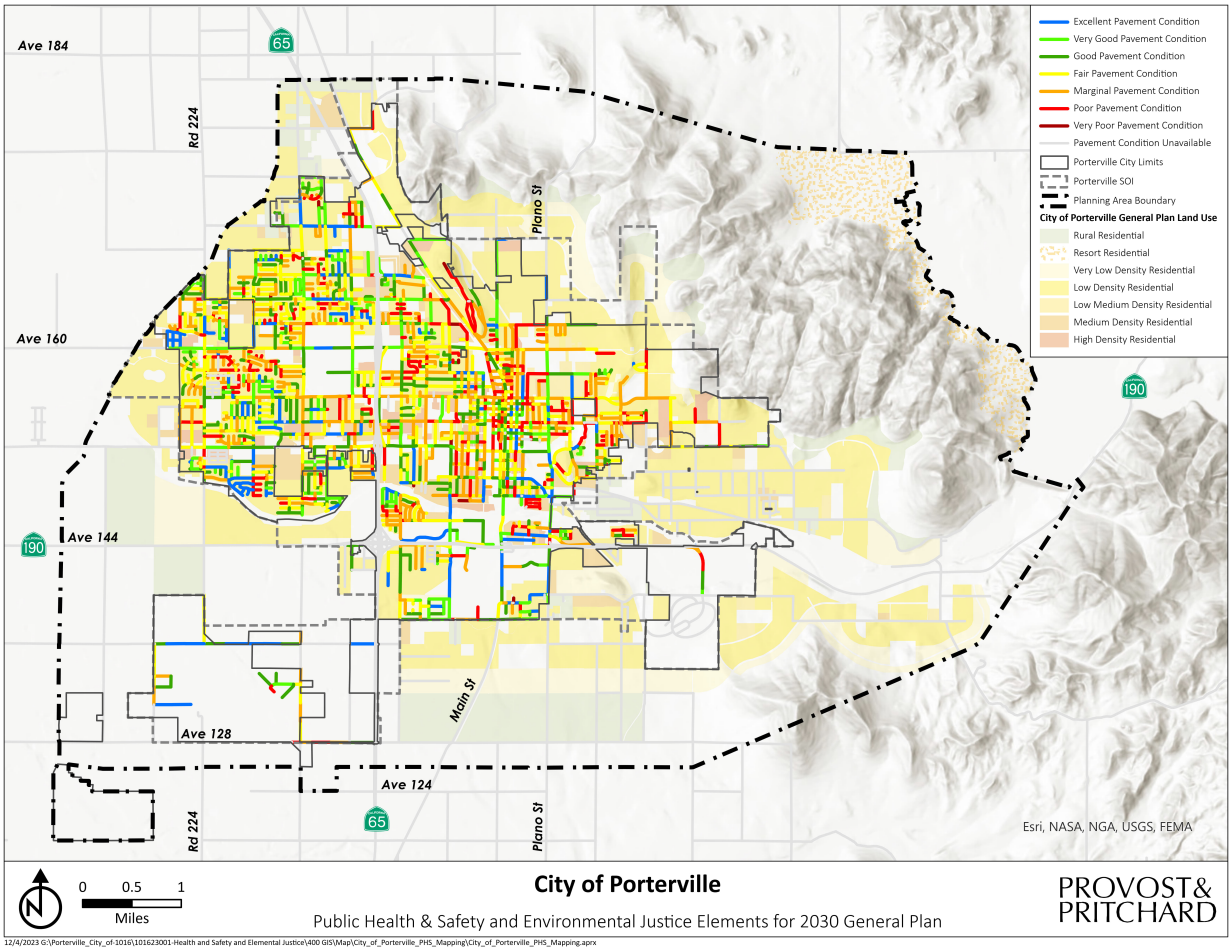
Streets and Roads

Porterville is located at the intersection of State Route 190 and State Route 65. Porterville's roadway network consists of numerous City and County roads. The state routes serve as primary entrances to the City, along with arterial streets in the City's local road network.

[20] Teapot Dome Landfill is currently closed to the public but does accept waste from the City of Porterville.

The Porterville planning area includes approximately 315 miles of roads. Street conditions of roads within the City limits is monitored by the City and improvements are identified and funded through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is used to designate City operating budgets each year. Generally, $100,000 is designated every three years to evaluate pavement conditions throughout the City. $1.5 million is typically designated each year to pavement maintenance, with an additional $400,000 for ADA and sidewalk improvements. Additional funds are also designated to alley, curb, gutter, median, and parking lot improvements. The CIP also identifies specific street segments for microsurfacing, redesign, and improvement projects that go beyond annual maintenance. The pavement evaluation is used by the City to ensure the areas that need the most improvements are addressed in the CIP and receive funding for these projects. Pavement Condition Analysis from December 2021 is mapped in **Figure 7** below. Although some areas have pavement in poor condition, these areas are prioritized for maintenance and repair in the CIP. Poor pavement conditions generally align with the age of roads in the City.

Figure 7: Porterville Pavement Condition



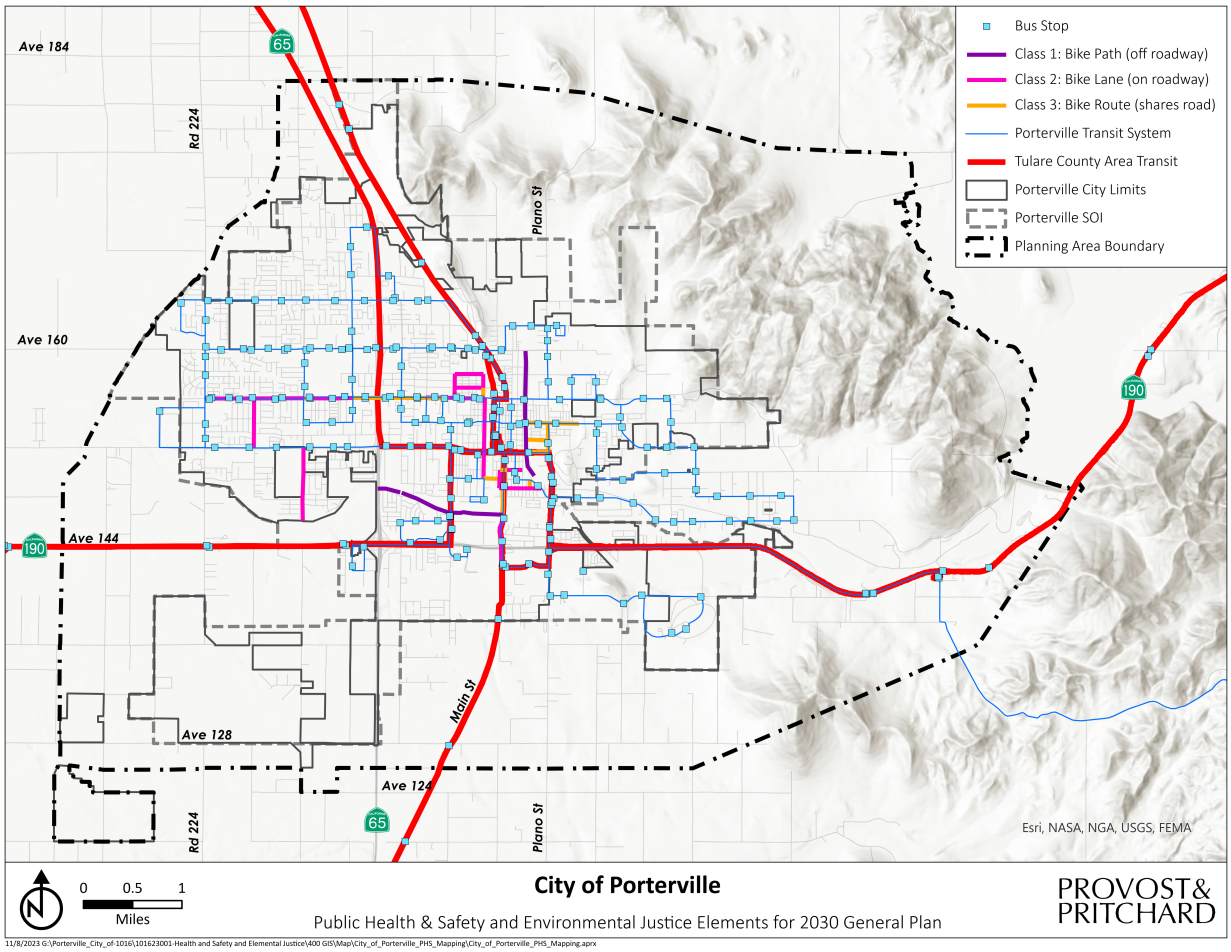
Public Utilities

Southern California Edison provides electric service to Porterville residents. Southern California Gas Company provides natural gas services in the City. AT&T, Sprint, and Verizon all provide communication services, while Charter Communications is the primary cable television and internet service provider for Porterville. There are no known areas without access to these services.

Transit Services

Transit in Porterville is provided by the Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA). The Agency operates six local transit routes in Porterville, connecting residents to various schools, medical centers, commercial areas, and parks, among other land uses. The fare for local routes is $1.50, with discounts available for seniors, persons with disabilities, children, and veterans. Day, week, and monthly passes are also available. Four commuter routes also operate in Porterville, connecting the City to other nearby jurisdictions, including the cities of Visalia, Lindsay, and Tulare, among others. The fare for commuter routes is $2.00, with discounts and passes also available. TCRTA also provides dial-a-ride paratransit services in Porterville which is $3.00 each way, which allows ADA-eligible individuals, seniors, and Medicare card holders to schedule origin-to-destination rides during service hours. Bus stop connectivity provides sufficient coverage with over 30 bus stops within each local fixed route throughout the existing City limits as shown in Figure 8, below. It is anticipated that coverage would be expanded as transit needs in the City change.

Figure 8: Porterville Transportation Facilities



Healthcare Access

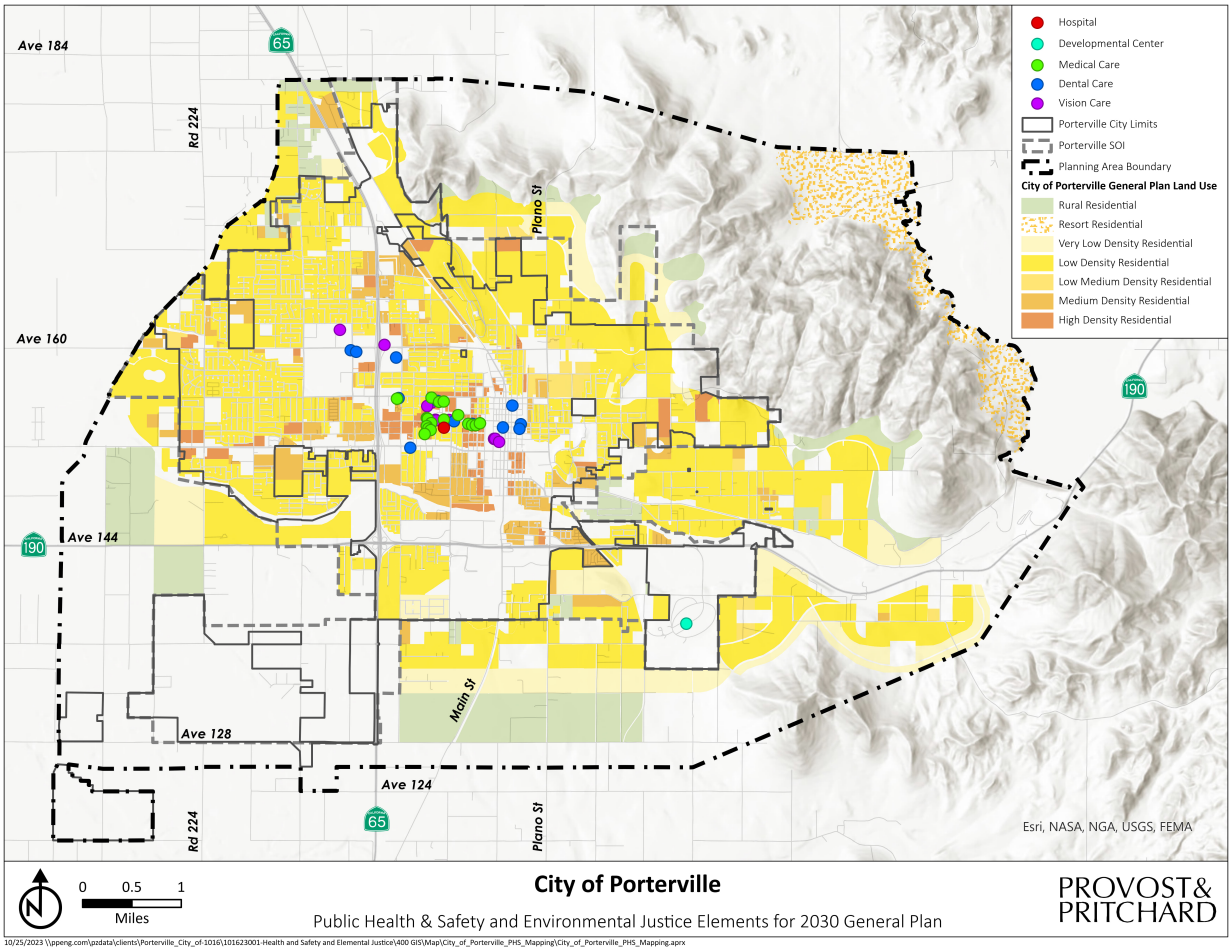
The Sierra View Medical Center serves as the primary hospital in Porterville. The medical center is open 24 hours and provides a variety of medical services including emergency services, critical care, physical therapy, and rehabilitation, among others. A variety of family medical services, dental offices, and vision care services are in Porterville as well, primarily near the downtown. There are 17 medical offices, 13 dental offices, and 12 vision care offices in the City, as well as Sierra View Medical Center and the Porterville Developmental Center.[21] Although the offices are generally concentrated downtown, Porterville's transit system includes routes to designated medical offices, providing greater access to these services. Healthcare service locations relative to existing and planned residential land uses can be viewed in **Figure 9**, below.

Emergency medical response is provided by the Porterville Fire Department. The Department aims to respond to emergency calls within 5 minutes 90 percent of the time. In 2022, the Department met this

[21] Porterville Developmental Center is a mental health facility that operates as a group home.

standard 74 percent of the time. Additional details related to the Fire Department can be found in the **Emergency Services and Public Safety** section, below.

Figure 9: Porterville Healthcare Offices



Emergency Services and Public Safety

Law enforcement services in Porterville are provided by the City of Porterville Police Department. The headquarters is located at 350 North D Street, with a Sheriff's Office substation located at 379 North Third Street. The Department currently has 85 officers and 39 civilian support staff, which results in an operating ratio of 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents. The Department is able to provide adequate response times and service with these levels of staffing but hopes to maintain a 1.2 to 1,000 resident ratio, which will require a total of 129 officers for full buildout of the General Plan. The current headquarters is nearing capacity but will still be maintained as a centralized station for efficiency purposes. Additional substations for the Porterville Police Department may be established as the community grows. The City of Porterville has a mutual aid agreement with Tulare County Sheriff.

The City's Fire Department provides fire and life safety response services for residents within the Porterville city limits. Tulare County Fire Department provides additional response services for the unincorporated areas in the Porterville Planning Area through mutual and automatic aid agreements. The Porterville Police Department provides dispatch services for the Porterville Fire Department. The Department currently

operates out of three fire stations: Station 71 (40 West Cleveland Avenue), Station 72 (500 North Newcomb Street), and Station 73 (980 South Jaye Street), which also serves as the Fire Administration Office. Tulare County Fire Department stations are located at 22315 Avenue 152 and 1551 East Success Drive. Three additional fire station locations are identified in the General Plan to be developed as community need increases. Existing stations are mapped in **Figure 6** above. The Insurance Service Office (ISO) provides fire ratings for communities, with 1 being the best and 10 corresponding to the slowest response times. At the time of the last General Plan update, Porterville had a Class III rating, which improved to Class II in 2016. The Department aims to respond to 90 percent of calls within 5 minutes and 20 seconds. In 2022 the Department met this standard for fire response 75 percent of the time.

City and Government Buildings

Porterville City Hall is located at 291 North Main Street and houses various City departments, including Community Development, Engineering and Project Management, Finance, Administration, and the Fire Department's Code Enforcement Division. The Tulare County Courts system currently maintains the South County Justice Center at 300 E Olive Avenue, which houses nine courtrooms serving the southern portion of Tulare County.

Santa Fe Senior Center, located at 280 North Fourth Street, provides activities for seniors. The City also owns the Zalud House Museum, located at 393 North Hockett Street. General Plan policies support the development of additional public cultural and community facilities to meet civic and social needs within the community. A United States Post Office is located at 65 North Mill Avenue.

Daycare Centers

A review of online listings for daycares and preschools operating in Porterville indicated approximately 20 facilities providing childcare in the City. This includes day care homes and commercial day care centers. Commercial centers are mapped in **Figure 5** above. Day care facilities are widely distributed throughout the City and include large and small day care homes, preschools, and commercial day care centers, providing equitable access to childcare.

Libraries

The Porterville City Library is part of the San Joaquin Valley Library System, a library consortium that allows member libraries to share materials throughout the network. A fire in February 2020 destroyed the primary library facility in the City, previously located at 41 West Thurman Avenue. In 2022, construction on a temporary library facility at 50 West Olive Avenue, Suite B, was completed. This facility is mapped in **Figure 5** above. In addition to lending materials, the branch location also offers accessible and inclusive programs for Porterville residents of all ages. Digital materials can be accessed through library services such as Hoopla and Libby. In August 2023 the City Council authorized Paul Halajian Architects to design a new library facility, to be located on East Olive Avenue, across from the South County Justice Center.

Summary and Recommendations

The following table summarizes the recommendations for the Environmental Justice Element based on the analysis completed above. The table considers distribution, access, condition, sustainability, and capacity for each of the topics addressed in this section.

Table 3: Public Facilities Summary and Recommendations

	Distribution	Access	Conditions	Operational Sustainability	Future Capacity	Recommendation
Public Improvements						
Water Distribution	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No action needed
Wastewater Treatment	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Adequate	Ensure capacity expansion of wastewater treatment facilities occurs in line with timeline from development
Flood Control & Drainage	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	Monitor development and ensure new stormwater retention basins are established as necessary
Solid Waste	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Adequate	No additional action needed
Streets & Roads	Equitable	Equitable	Adequate	Good	Good	No additional action needed
Public Utilities	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No additional action needed
Public Services						
Transit	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	Monitor development and consider route expansion when use-potential warrants it
Healthcare	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No additional action needed
Emergency Services	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No additional action needed
Community Facilities						
Government Buildings	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No additional action needed
Daycare Centers	Equitable	Equitable	Good	n/a*	n/a*	No additional action needed
Libraries	Equitable	Equitable	Good	Good	Good	No additional action needed

** The City is not responsible for the operation or maintenance of private facilities.*

Food Access

Food access is a concept that includes several related topics, including the availability of nutritionally adequate and affordable food, having enough income to purchase food, as well as proximity and the ability to travel to a food source that offers affordable, nutritionally adequate food.[22] People in DACs, especially those with low income, may face greater barriers to accessing healthy and affordable food retailers.[23] Research shows that people cope with food insecurity by consuming nutrient-poor but calorie rich foods, going hungry, or both, which leads to health issues ranging from micronutrient malnutrition to obesity.[24]

Methodology

Community food access conditions were evaluated using the following techniques and indicators:

- Identify and map existing food outlets, according to type. This includes healthier food sources, such as grocery stores or farmers markets, as well as stores that may have an abundance of unhealthy foods such as convenience stores or liquor stores.
- Identify means of access to food sources, whether by car, transit, or other.
- Identify barriers to shopping, such as situations where people must carry groceries home.
- Measure percentage of local residents without cars, including special populations such as home-bound seniors. Evaluate the level to which transit service meets community food shopping needs.

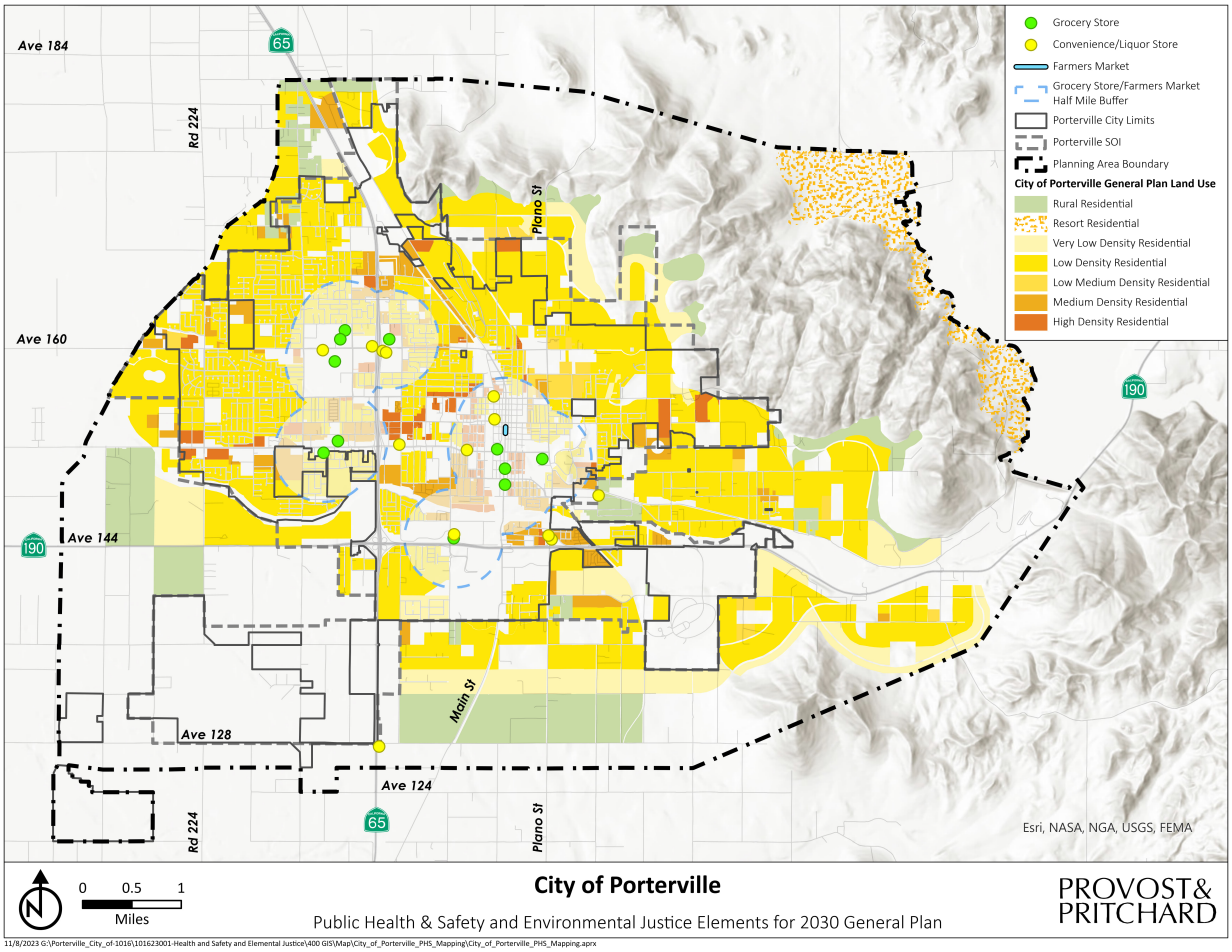
Analysis

Food access mapping was completed for the City of Porterville, demonstrating where healthy and unhealthy food sources are located. Grocery stores and farmers markets are considered healthy food sources, and Figure 10, below, shows their locations as well as what portion of the City is within ½ mile of the food source.[25] Convenience stores and liquor stores are considered unhealthy food sources, although it should be noted that healthy foods may still be available for purchase at these locations. Rather, their label as unhealthy food sources indicates that an individual would not be able to achieve a healthy and balanced diet if they shopped only at locations such as convenience stores.

The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service maintains the Food Access Research Atlas. This tool identifies census tracts where residents are more than one mile away from a grocery store and have limited access to personal vehicles. Porterville has three census tracts where residents are more than one mile from a grocery store (tracts 06107003601, 06107004102, and 06107004000). None of these tracts contain a high number of households without access to a personal vehicle that are more than one mile from a grocery store, although tract 06107004000 does contain a high percentage (98.6%) of people living in a group home (Porterville Developmental Center). Grocery store access is not a concern for residents at this facility, as meals are provided.

[22] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)
[23] (United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service 2019)
[24] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)
[25] ½-mile is considered to be walking distance.

Figure 10: Food Access



Summary and Recommendations

Several grocery stores provide access to healthy foods at a variety of price points for the City of Porterville. Additionally, a weekly market provides another source of fresh produce for the community. Although a significant portion of the City is located outside of the ½-mile buffer around these food sources, their location in commercial and mixed-use areas make sense for Porterville. Additionally, the City has a robust transit system that can assist people in reaching these food sources.[26]

Finally, unhealthy food source distribution was considered. Although there are several convenience and/or liquor stores located within the City, they are not unevenly distributed in poorer neighborhoods and are not a concern for environmental justice in Porterville.

Access to healthy food is not a concern for Porterville given the current distribution of healthy food sources, high prevalence of personal vehicles in the City, and robust public transit system. The project team may

[26] Mapped in **Figure 8**.

consider adding General Plan policies related to the future location of unhealthy food sources such as liquor stores.

Safe and Sanitary Homes

Safe and sanitary housing considers three dimensions: housing conditions, housing affordability, and land-use compatibility. Toxic building materials, extreme temperature variation, poor air quality, moisture intrusion, and overcrowding are all aspects of housing condition that can impact residents' health. Residents of DACs tend to live in older housing stock which is more susceptible to these issues. Cost-burdened households have reduced resources available for other necessities such as health care or food. Finally, housing next to incompatible land uses can compound issues related to unsafe housing conditions. While housing condition and affordability are discussed in this section, incompatible land uses are considered in Pollution Exposure.

Methodology

To analyze access to safe and sanitary housing, jurisdictions must assess indoor conditions and housing affordability. Age of housing stock is an important indicator for toxic substances, as regulation that reduces the use of those substances has increased over time. This analysis uses housing stock age data and regulation timelines to determine the risk for toxic substances in Porterville. Additionally, census data on issues such as overcrowding is used to indicate indoor housing conditions. Housing affordability is traditionally measured according to the percentage of income spent on housing. Cost-burdened households spend more than 30% of their income on housing.[27] However, recent studies have indicated that a more holistic approach that considers the affordability of other household expenditures beyond the cost of housing alone, such as transportation costs, is more accurate. Tools such as the Family Budget Calculator, prepared by the Economic Policy Institute, can be used to determine affordability. This analysis primarily considers housing costs alone but also briefly discusses relevant transportation costs to determine affordability.

Analysis

Toxic Substances

There are known risks associated with substances such as lead, asbestos, mold, and other contaminants that are often present in older homes. In 1978, the United States banned the consumer use of lead-based paint.[28] Structures built prior to the passing of that legislation tend to contain higher levels of lead than newer buildings. When lead-based paint begins to chip, exposure to the substance increases and presents a hazard. Additionally, these homes may contain plumbing components made from lead which can infuse drinking water with the substance. Children are especially at-risk for lead poisoning, although people of all

[27] Housing costs include both rent or mortgage costs and utilities.
[28] (Protect Your Famly from Exposures to Lead 2019)

ages may face serious health problems when exposed to lead. Housing stock built prior to 1980 is at higher risk of containing lead-based paint.

Asbestos is a fiber that occurs in rock and soil and has been used in a wide range of building construction materials and manufactured goods, including products like shingles, floor tiles, heat-resistant fabrics, and automobile parts.[29] Primarily, exposure occurs only after disturbance or damage releases the asbestos fibers into the air. While asbestos is not banned, legislation has granted the EPA greater oversight of products that contain the fiber and the ability to partially ban asbestos in certain products.[30] Asbestos causes three major health effects: lung cancer; mesothelioma; and asbestosis, a long-term, non-cancer lung disease.[31] Homes in a state of disrepair can put residents at greater risk for asbestos exposure. This is especially true for older homes, as regulation of asbestos has increased over time.

While mold is not usually a problem indoors, excessive moisture combined with poor ventilation can increase the possibility of mold in homes. Molds can produce allergens and irritants that can cause health problems, especially for more sensitive populations such as those with mold allergies or asthma. Mold can also cause allergy symptoms for people who are not allergic.[32] Older housing stock with poor ventilation tends to experience excessive moisture build-up and conditions conducive to mold growth.

While there are not specific dates used to determine the risk of exposure to asbestos and mold, 1980 is typically used to determine the risk of exposure to lead-based paint. As such, this analysis uses 1980 as the date for all three toxic substances. According to the Porterville Housing Element, updated in 2016, 7,773 units in Porterville were built prior to 1980, representing approximately 48% of housing units in the City at that time. It should be noted that the City is currently updating its Housing Element and the percentage of housing units built prior to that year may have changed.

Rodents and Pests

Rodents and other pests, aside from being a nuisance, can also contribute to unsafe housing conditions. While rodents may carry viruses or bacteria that cause diseases in humans, other pests like insects and cockroaches can carry allergens and trigger asthma attacks. Pest invasion is more likely to occur in older or run-down homes that are more susceptible to such an invasion. There are no known problem areas for rodents or pests in Porterville.

Overcrowding

Overcrowded housing units increase health and safety concerns for the community. Additionally, highly overcrowded areas put increased stress on the condition of housing stock and infrastructure. The California Department of Housing and Community Development defines overcrowding as a unit occupied by more than 1.01 persons per room, not limited to bedrooms but excluding bathrooms and kitchens. Severely overcrowded units are occupied by more than 1.5 persons per room.[33] Overcrowding tends to result from

[29] (Learn about Asbestos 2023)
[30] (EPA Actions to Protect the Public from Exposure to Asbestos 2023)
[31] (Learn about Asbestos 2023)
[32] (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2023)
[33] (California Department of Housing and Community Development 2023)

a lack of affordable housing or units of adequate size and can impact both owners and renters, though renters tend to be impacted more significantly. The 2016 Housing Element assessed overcrowding in Porterville and indicated that 895 households in the City were overcrowded, representing approximately 2% of units. 81% of overcrowded households had incomes at or below 80% Area Median Income.

Housing Affordability

When households are cost-burdened they have fewer resources to put towards other living expenses such as transportation, education, or healthcare. Additionally, a restricted budget also restricts housing choice, meaning cost-burdened households are also more likely to be subjected to unsafe housing conditions and overcrowding. Housing farther from commercial and employment centers that is more affordable may also increase transportation costs. Lower-income households and renters tend to be more affected by high housing costs.

The 2016 Housing Element indicated that more than 50% (3,515) of renters and 36% (3,350) of homeowners were considered cost-burdened (paying more than 30% of income on housing costs including rent or mortgage as well as utilities). In total, 43% of City households (6,865) were cost-burdened and 19% (3,040) were severely cost-burdened (paying more than 50% of income on housing costs including rent or mortgage as well as utilities).

The Housing and Transportation Affordability Index determines the percentage of income spent on both housing and transportation. The Index maintains the 30% standard for housing affordability and assumes 15% of income spent on transportation as affordable, resulting in a 45% affordability standard. According to the Housing and Transportation Affordability Index, Porterville residents spend more than half of their income on housing and transportation. Specifically, a region-typical household of 3.30 people making approximately $50,000 a year spends 58% of income on housing costs and transportation: 26% on housing and 31% on transportation.

Housing affordability and accessibility are major components of the Housing Element, which is currently being updated as a separate effort. The updated element will contain additional and updated analysis of housing affordability in Porterville, as well as programs and policies intended to address affordability concerns in the City.

Summary and Recommendations

Table 4 summarizes the recommendations for the Environmental Justice Element based on the analysis completed above. The table summarizes the analysis of each factor and recommended inclusions, if necessary.

Table 4: Safe and Sanitary Homes Summary and Recommendations

Factor	Summary	Recommendation
Toxic Substances	There is likely some occurrence of toxic substances, including lead, asbestos, and mold in Porterville's housing stock, based on its age. When these homes are in a state of disrepair, exposure to these toxic substances tends to increase, also increasing the associated health risks.	Increase awareness of warning signs for presence of toxic substances.
Rodents and Pests	There are no known problems with rodents or pests in the City of Porterville.	No action needed.
Overcrowding	There is some occurrence of overcrowding in Porterville, especially among low-income and renting households.	Encourage construction of affordable housing units and housing that can accommodate larger and multi-generational households.
Affordability	Approximately 43% of households in Porterville are cost-burdened and spending more than 30% of their income on housing.	Increase awareness of and participation in affordable housing programs and programs that assist in off-setting other living costs such as food and transportation. Encourage construction of affordable housing units.

Physical Activity

City design impacts a community's ability to engage in physical activity. A city's open space and transportation network shapes its access to formal and informal recreation opportunities, which in turn impacts public health. In addition, because low-income communities are more likely to depend on transit, walking, and bicycling for their transportation methods, promoting physical activity through active transportation policies not only provides health benefits but contributes to social equity as well. Therefore, an environmental justice framework on physical activity analyzes both the reach of active transportation networks and the distribution of parks and open space.[34] Additional information related to parks, a component of the physical activity analysis, can be found in the **Public Facilities** section above.

Methodology

In order to evaluate Porterville's level of access to physical activity, it is necessary to establish the location of parks and recreation facilities and the quality of its active transportation system. Best practices for

[34] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)

environmental justice planning suggest utilizing several indicators to assess active transportation facilities and access to parks and open space, including:[35]

- Accessibility per Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and sidewalk hazards related to path of travel, crosswalks, and curb ramps.
- Bicycle and pedestrian collision locations and other traffic hazards.
- Public realm amenities including trash receptacles, benches, shade and shade structures, and lighting.
- Landscaping including trees and shading along pedestrian routes.
- Bicycle and pedestrian routes, facilities, infrastructure, and connectivity.
- Playing fields and spaces allowing for activities that are reflective of local community preferences.
- Accessibility to parks, open space, and/or recreation facilities by walking within half-mile distance, bicycling, driving, and transit.
- Available amenities at each existing park, open space, and recreation facility.
- Park acres per 1,000 residents.

Fully analyzing all of these components requires an in-depth visual assessment, which is not part of the scope of this policy paper. However, a general assessment of physical activity opportunities that coincides with these aspects has been completed in the analysis below.

Analysis

Recreation Facilities, Parks, Open Space, and Trails

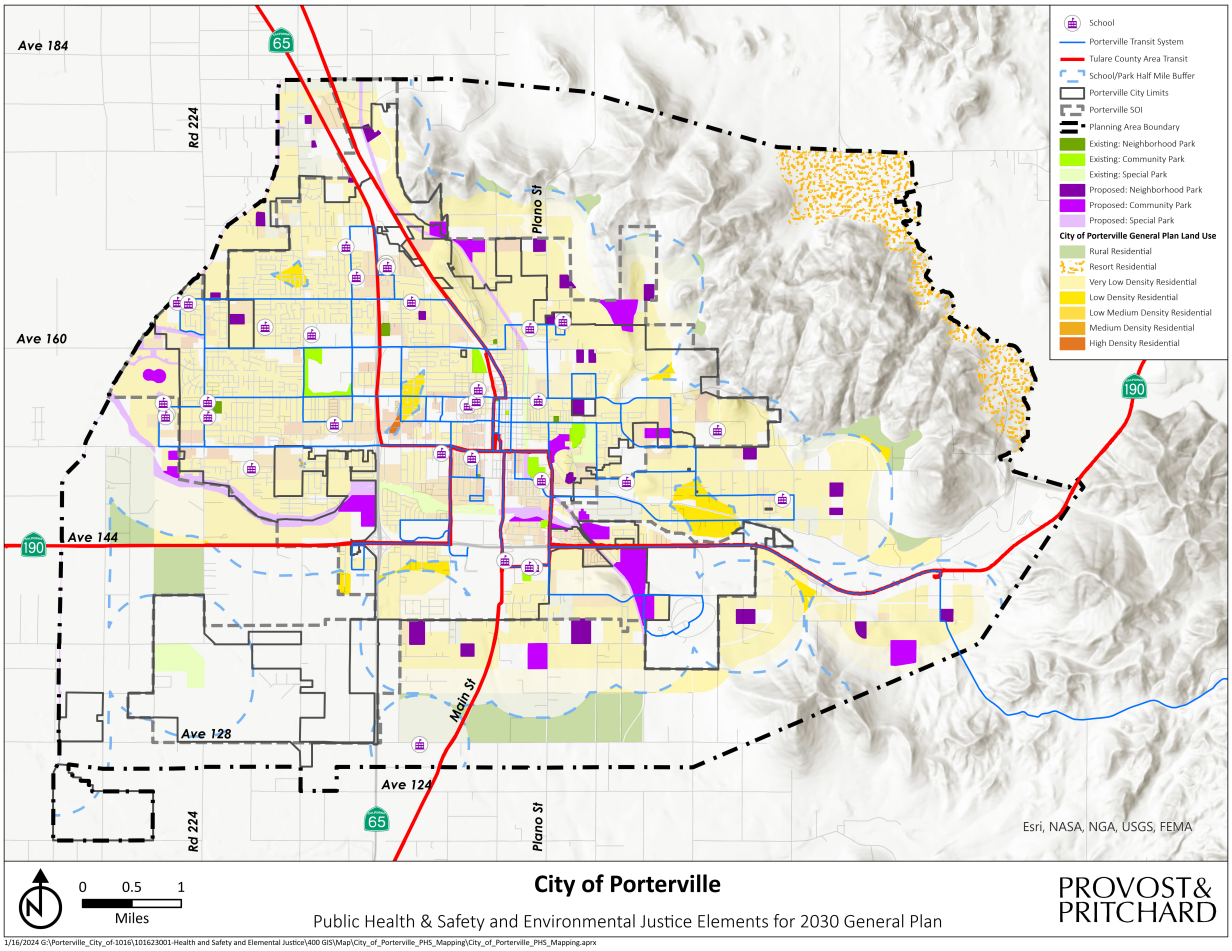
The City of Porterville has 14 parks totaling nearly 281 acres of park space, among other community facilities that are conducive to physical activity. These park facilities include a 95-acre sports complex with various athletic fields, as well as a 36-acre community park with a public pool, picnic areas, playgrounds, and restrooms. The City also has a bike and walking trail along the Tule River and various community facilities that are maintained by the Parks Department.

The General Plan outlines a goal of 5 acres of neighborhood and community parks per 1,000 residents. When considering specialized facilities such as the community center and trails, the City maintains a goal of 10 acres of facilities per 1,000 residents. Currently, there are approximately 4.46 acres of park space per 1,000 residents. Existing parks are not enough to meet this goal at full buildout of the General Plan, so additional parks are being planned as part of the ongoing Parks Master Plan effort.

The General Plan also outlines a policy to cooperate with the school districts to promote joint use of school facilities after hours for additional physical activity opportunities. While a broad joint use agreement has not been adopted, the schools do permit after-school use of their facilities through a system of communication, facility use forms, and proof of insurance. The various park and school facilities are mapped in **Figure 11**, below. Much of the City is within ½ mile of school and/or park facilities that provide physical activity opportunities.

[35] (California Environmental Justice Alliance, Placeworks 2018)

Figure 11: Porterville Physical Activity Spaces



Transit and Active Transportation Facilities

The City of Porterville has completed a sidewalk condition analysis, found in **Figure 12**. This analysis is used to determine necessary upkeep and improvement activities. Although there are many segments of sidewalk in need of repair in order to maintain good working condition for Porterville residents, the map also demonstrates the prevalence of sidewalks within the community. Much of the City has sidewalk available on at least one side of the street, which helps promote the use of active transportation methods.

Figure 13 demonstrates additional transportation facilities within the City of Porterville. A series of bike lanes, predominantly located in the center of the City, further promotes the use of active transportation methods. Although the use of public transit itself may not be considered an active transportation method, the prevalence of transit throughout the City also encourages the use of active transportation modes as walking and/or

Bike Lane Classifications

Class I: Completely separated right of way for exclusive use of cyclists and pedestrians.

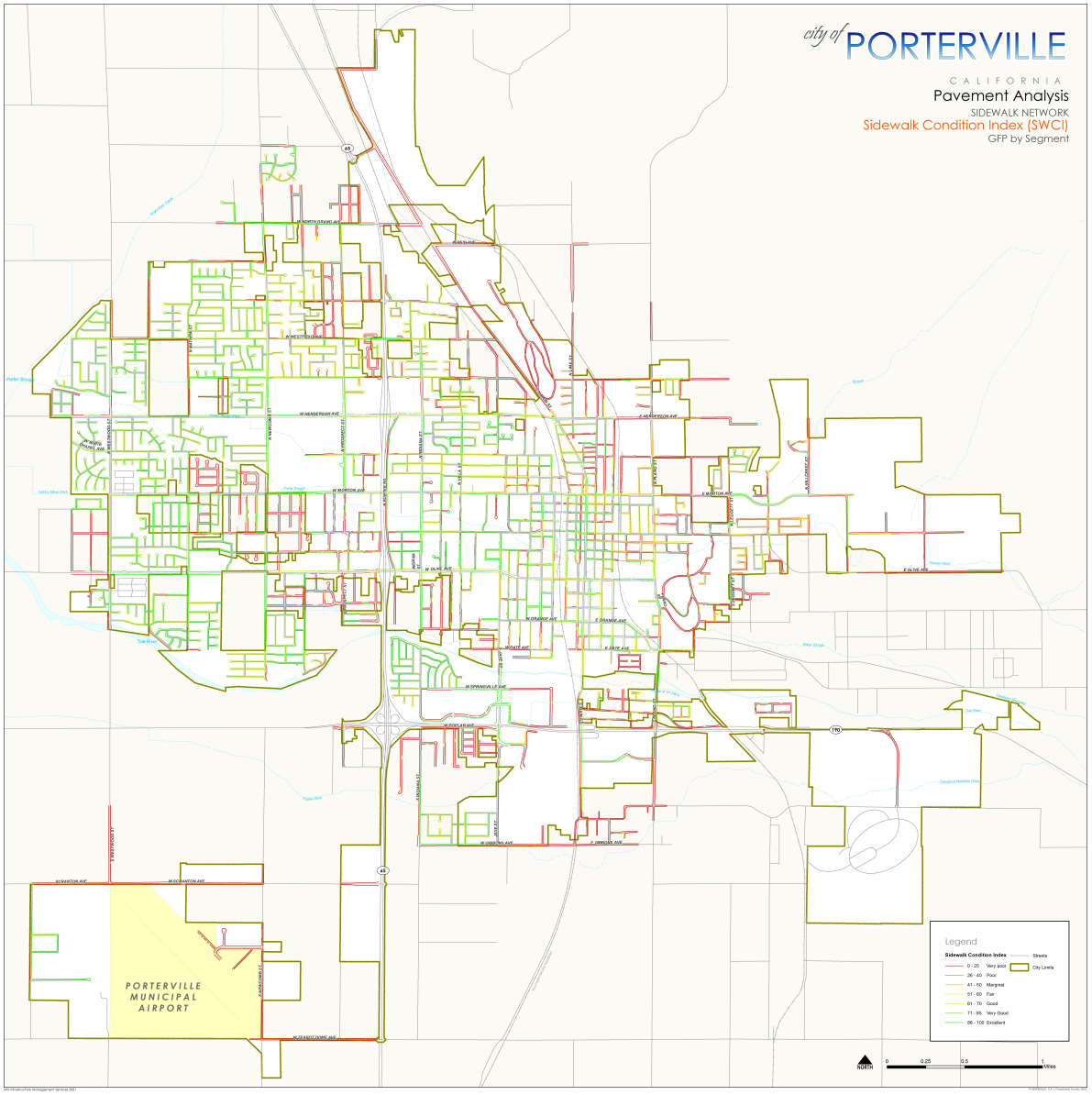
Class II: On-street striped lane for one-way bike travel.

Class III: Shared on-street facility, commonly identified by pavement markings or signage.

Class IV Separated Bikeway: Physically separated bicycle facilities that are distinct from the sidewalk and designed for exclusive sue by bicyclists. Also commonly known as cycle tracks.

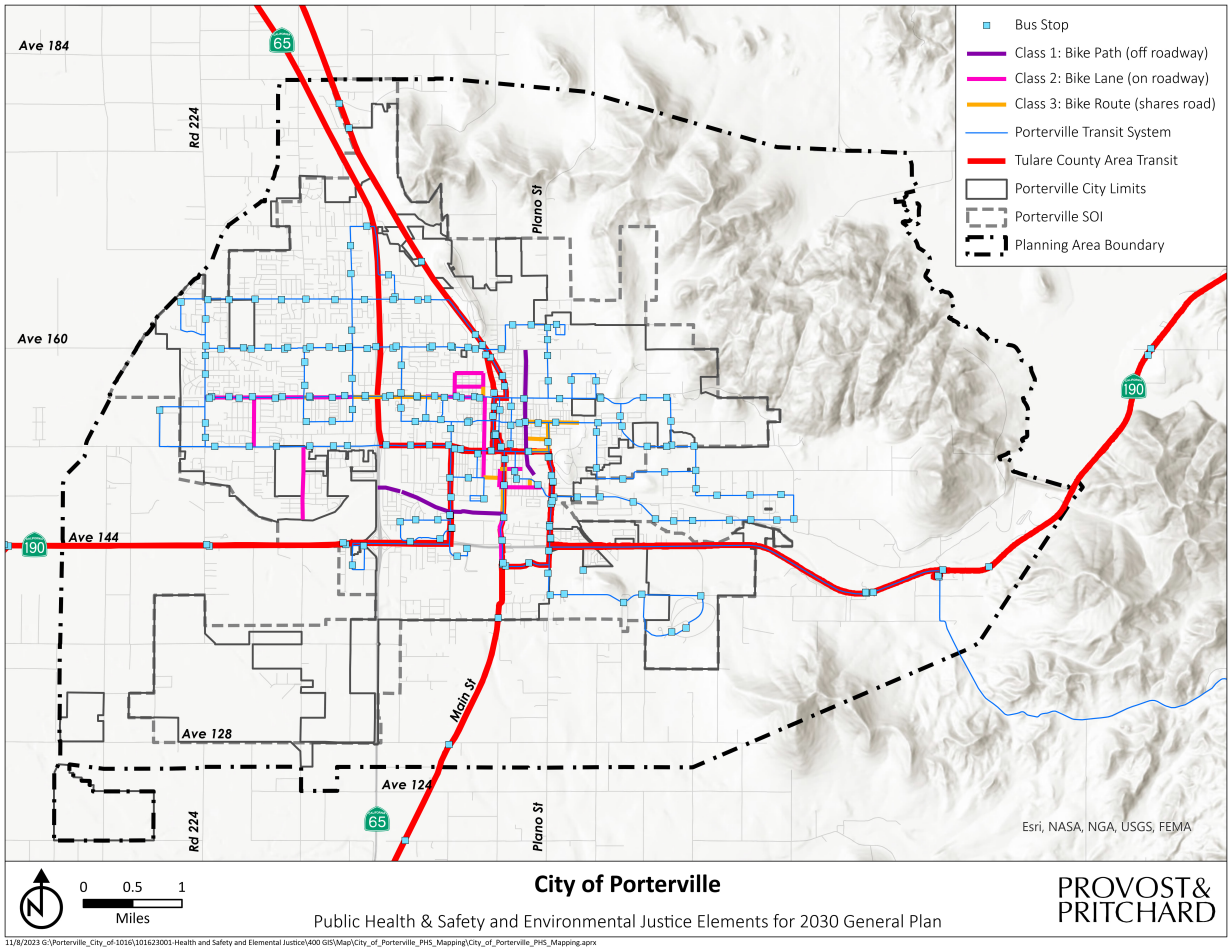
bicycling is often used to augment transit routes and serves as the first/last mile solution for many individuals who use transit.

Figure 12: Porterville Sidewalk Pavement Analysis



Map provided by the City of Porterville

Figure 13: Porterville Transportation Facilities



Summary and Recommendations

Although a good portion of the City has access to alternative transportation facilities and physical activity infrastructure, some recommended actions can further improve access in Porterville.

1. Bicycle and pedestrian friendly infrastructure is limited within the planning area. Prioritize the construction of this infrastructure in locations that will close key gaps and link residential uses with schools, shopping, entertainment, recreational and employment centers within the planning area.
2. While the physical activity mapping effort identified the location of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, it does not reflect quality assessments or identify whether these facilities incorporate design elements which make walking or biking a comfortable or viable mode of travel, nor does it assess adherence to current ADA standards. In order to determine the efficacy of existing active transportation improvements, a visual quality assessment of bike and pedestrian facilities should be conducted.

Civic Engagement

A core part of environmental justice is listening to the people who are most impacted. The most effective community engagement strategies represent all stakeholders, including those who are directly impacted and the public at large.

The City of Porterville has regular City Council meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month starting at 6:30 pm and located at the City Hall Council Chambers. The City may also host special community meetings if projects warrant additional public outreach. Spanish translation services for meetings are also provided. City Hall is centrally located in Porterville, which is conducive to public participation. Meeting materials are made available on the website prior to the meeting. Public meetings can be joined in person or via Zoom, and recordings of the meetings are also posted to the City's official YouTube channel. Zoom attendees are able to fully interact during the meeting, with a designated time after in-person comments for online attendees to comment.

Summary and Recommendations

Civic engagement opportunities in Porterville are generally easy to access for community members, although best practices for community engagement continue to be refined. Implementing the following recommendations may make engagement opportunities in Porterville even more convenient for community members.

1. Ensure meeting times and locations continue to be conducive to public participation. Reassess meeting times and locations to ensure the majority of stakeholders are able to attend. Provide online access to meetings when possible.
2. Language barriers and childcare needs may prevent residents from participating in public meetings. Provide childcare and bilingual services at meetings so parents and individuals with limited English skills are able to participate. Spanish language services in particular should be considered.
3. Provide an alternative way to provide feedback, such as an online form, email, or phone number.