



Environmental Justice

4.1 INTRODUCTION

What is an Environmental Justice Element?

The Environmental Justice Element is a mandatory element required by Senate Bill 1000, (amending Government Code Section 65302 (a)) for cities that contain disadvantaged communities, and Guadalupe has been identified as a disadvantaged community.¹ The element addresses environmental justice, which the CalEPA defines as: “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”²

Those in neighborhoods of lower income are more likely to be at a disadvantage when it comes to equal access to programs and places that make and keep us healthy. This disadvantage gave way to the notion of environmental justice, which arose out of the social and environmental movements of the 1960s and 1970s based on the fact that polluting facilities were being located in neighborhoods that were mostly minority or low income. According to the SB1000 Implementation Toolkit, “Planning for Healthy Communities,” low-income residents, communities of color, tribal nations, and immigrant communities have disproportionately experienced some of the greatest environmental burdens and related health problems throughout the history of the United States. This inequity is the result of many factors: inappropriate zoning and negligent land use planning, structural inequities, failure to enforce proper zoning, discriminatory housing and lending practices, limited political and economic power, the prioritization of business interests over public health and development patterns that tend to concentrate pollution, and environmental hazards, in certain communities. These factors can lead to communities having a less healthy environment, with the balance of economic and environmental benefits based outside of these communities. Environmental justice seeks to remedy this imbalance, based on the democratic values of fairness and equity.

¹ The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), using the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, or CalEnvironScreen, is the responsible State agency for identifying “disadvantaged communities,” or DACs. A DAC is defined as “an area identified by the CalEPA pursuant to the Health and Safety Code that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation” (Source: <https://calepa.ca.gov/envjustice/ghginvest/>).

² Source: Through SB 1000 Toolkit -California Environmental Protection Agency. (n.d.). Environmental justice program. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <https://calepa.ca.gov/envjustice/>

This element has been included in the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* to promote positive, community-oriented investments, give the community the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs that may affect them, and create a healthy and vibrant community while preventing harmful outcomes that can be costly. Planning for environmental justice can position the City to leverage additional federal, state, and philanthropic resources for planning and implementation projects. This could include grants from the State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, for projects in the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program, and Transformative Climate Communities program.

This Environmental Justice Element, in an effort to balance the scales of environmental justice, will set out general health and wellness goals for the city at large, in order to reduce unique and compounded health risks in the disadvantaged community. Refer to Appendix B for definitions of and identifying disadvantaged communities.

Public Outreach

This Environmental Justice Element is based on extensive community outreach that has taken place over the last five years. This public outreach has been documented in two recent planning documents: *City of Guadalupe 2040 Draft General Plan* (2018) and the *Guadalupe Mobility + Revitalization Plan* (2019).

In 2016, the Cal Poly Team conducted community outreach for this element in the form of community meetings. During these meetings strategies were outlined by identifying existing conditions, developing priorities for future growth, and policy priorities, as well as creating a framework for selecting priorities in the future.

The community meetings were broken down into three phases. Phase 1 of the planning process occurred between September 2017 and December 2017, during which the team gathered information through a land use survey, secondary data research, and primary data from the Guadalupe community and City staff.

Phase 2 of the planning process engaged community members at Community Meetings #1 and #2 to express their preferences and desires for future development regarding each general plan element. It also involved the development of growth targets for population, housing, and employment. Phase 3 of the planning process occurred between January 2018 and March 2018. This phase utilized information gathered from Phase 1 and 2 to create three development alternatives to present to the community at Community Meeting #3.

In 2019, the City undertook the development of the *Guadalupe Mobility + Revitalization Plan* (2019), which was made possible with the support of a 2018 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant. The plan was drafted with the intent of enhancing connectivity and mobility options within and between neighborhoods, between neighborhoods and the historic town center, and between the city and regional destinations.

The development of this plan included a robust public participatory planning process during which time the community provided insight into current issues and direction for change.

Public participation events for this planning process included:

- Advisory Group Meetings;
- Business Interviews;
- Downtown Walk and Workshop;
- Focus Group Meetings; and
- Closing Meeting: Presentation of Concepts.

4.2 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Guadalupe is nestled around rural farmland at the crossroads of Highway 1 (Guadalupe Street), running north-south through the city, and Highway 166 (West Main Street), running east-west on the south side of the city. In addition, the Union Pacific Railroad runs north-south through the community, dividing the community further. Guadalupe's location, so close to two highways and a railroad corridor, and to surrounding agriculture lands, places a burden on the community. Coupled with unsafe street crossings, lack of outdoor recreation areas, little to no food shopping outlets, and lower income levels, Guadalupe is a model community for the environmental justice movement.

The community meetings held as part of the 2018 general plan update process focused on land use, circulation, environmental justice, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Some of the challenges that came out of the community meeting included poor air quality, road quality, reputation of the city, disinvestment in the downtown, circulation and connectivity, work opportunities, affordable/safe housing, no high school, access to a large grocery store, and amenities such as a hotel for visitors.

Most community members thought pesticide pollution was the biggest threat to health, while residents preferred that the city invest in an additional school to create a more equitable environment. Most residents preferred a new grocery store to bring healthy food options to the community. Most participants chose volunteering at community events to bridge the gap between the city and its residents. The revitalization scenario will go a long way in providing the community with the above-mentioned community meeting outcome.

The community meetings held as part of the *Guadalupe Mobility + Revitalization Plan* identified poor cross-town connectivity created by the presence of the Union Pacific Railroad line as an important issue for the community and one that bears on environmental justice.

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES

Reduce Pollution Exposure and Improve Air Quality

A fundamental part of achieving environmental justice is reducing pollution exposure in communities that are disproportionately burdened with pollution. Pollution exposure occurs daily in virtually every community when people come into direct contact with air, food, water, and soil contaminants that are often the result of incompatible land uses. However,



not all people react to contaminants or pollution in the same way. Sensitive populations and sensitive land uses are more vulnerable to the impacts of pollution exposure, and disadvantaged communities often experience multiple sources of pollution that make them more vulnerable. The identification of sources, types, and quantities of pollution is important and necessary to determining appropriate solutions.

The City's main source of air pollution originates from inhalable particles, with diameters of 10 micrometers and smaller. These particles come from both agriculture dust, such as tillage and harvesting, and the sand from the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve.

Results from the Community outreach clearly show pesticide application as a growing concern for the residence. The preferred choice, among those participating in the community outreach workshops, regarding limited exposure to polluted air is to re-route commercial trucks away from sensitive areas. A growth scenario that implements a complete street plan, which can make walking and cycling in Guadalupe safer and accessible may reduce single-occupancy driving, decreasing the likelihood of additional transportation related air pollutants due to an increase in population. Improve public transit, which may promote ridership and encourage residents to reduce driving, will also decrease air pollution. Mixed-use housing opportunities will increase the number of available jobs while also increasing housing, which may reduce the need to travel out of the City of Guadalupe for work and reduce air pollution from vehicle miles travelled.

Health in All Policies

Health in All Policies (HiAP) is a framework that places health and wellness considerations at the forefront of policy development and decision-making. The California Department of

Public Health defines it as “a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health, equity, and sustainability consideration into decision-making across sectors and policy areas”.³

Figure 4-1, *Health-in-All Topics*, below shows many of the “non-health” topics that have a strong influence on individual and community health. The City of Guadalupe strives to support the HiAP approach because the City staff understand that where one lives, works and plays has a profound impact on quality of life and that access to programs, services, and goods are factors contributing to a healthy community.

Figure 4-1 Health-in-All Topics



Source: healthycommunitiesbydesign.org

Item 2 in the above graphic indicates the importance of access to healthy food, the policies in this element will help achieve this important goal. To stay healthy, we need to eat well, and to make eating well easier, residents need convenient access to healthy food choices such as green markets, farmer’s markets, community supported agriculture (food co-ops), urban farming, and local grocery stores that offer affordable healthy food. When convenience

³ Source: California Department of Public Health, Health in All Policies. (2018) Retrieved March 2018 from <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OHE/Pages/HIAP.aspx>.

stores, gas stations, and fast-food outlets are the only food retailers in neighborhoods, residents often rely on these stores for their food purchases. The City of Guadalupe can help promote healthy eating by encouraging grocery stores to locate within the City so the residence can shop locally and not travel to Santa Maria for their groceries.

Promote Physical Activity

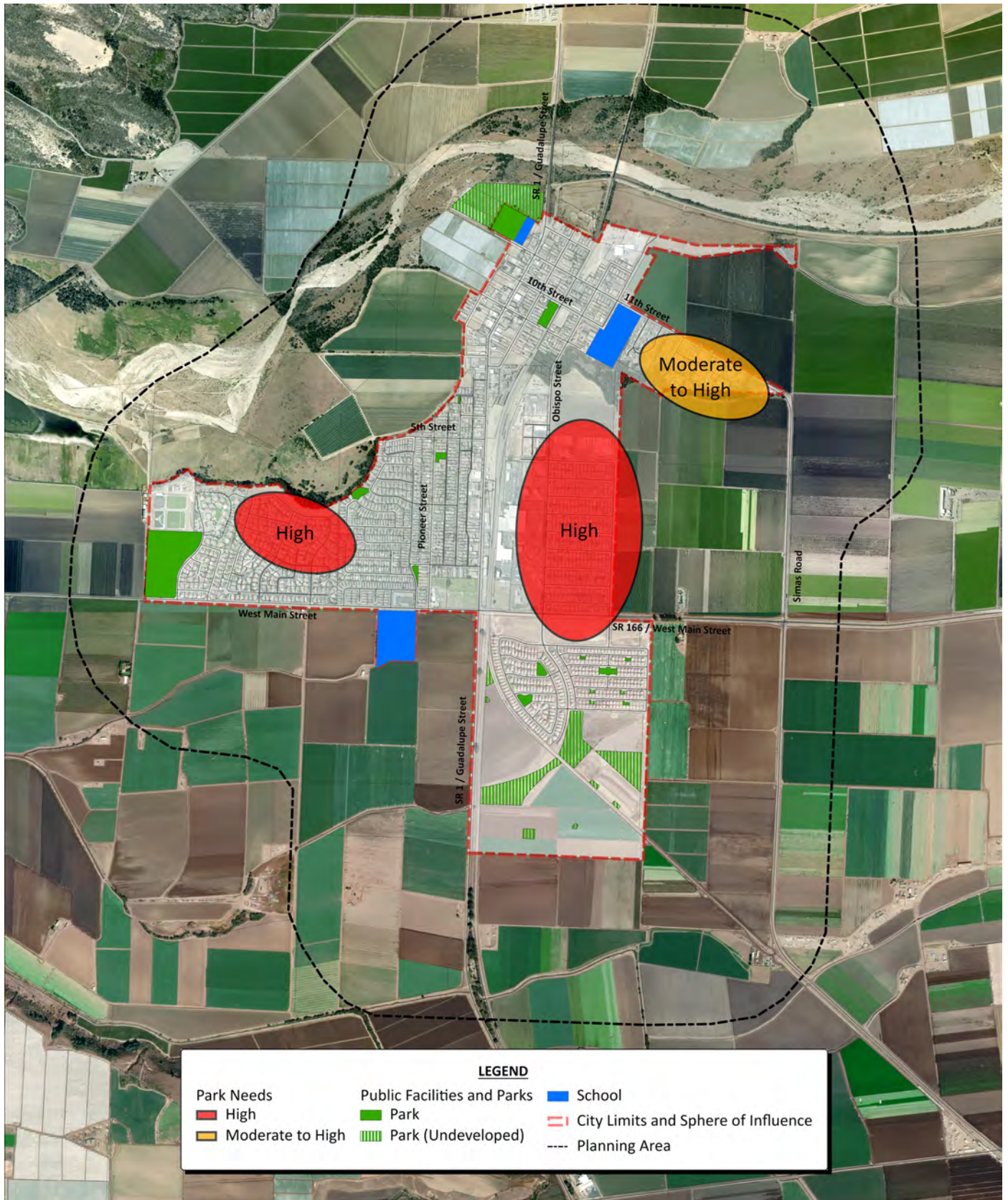
Safe access to parks and recreational facilities is directly correlated to an increase in the amount that people exercise. Residents need convenient access to parks that are well maintained, that are up-to-date, safe, and inviting. Regular exercise can also provide social and emotional benefits as residents greet each other, engage in activities together and share quality time together. The goals and policies in this element address improving parks, park facilities, and recreational facilities, expanding recreational programs, and ensuring access for all residents to all facilities and programs. The City of Guadalupe has 59 acres of parks for a population of 8,346 residents. Ten percent of the City of Guadalupe land area is used for parks and recreation, compared to the National medial of fifteen percent. Just over 67 percent or 5,601 of the total population are currently served by a park within 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk times from project access points defined for each project area and based upon the walkable network. [Figure 4-2, Park Needs in Guadalupe](#), shows the areas within the City limits in which parks are needed.

Walking can also be a very social activity, especially when families walk together, meeting other neighbors along the way, promoting neighborhood connectivity. Walking includes those who may need the assistance of a wheelchair or other walking device. This requires the City to be safe, the roads to be well-maintained, sidewalks to be well connected, and the land uses to be planned to promote convenient connections between the people and places. The City can focus growth efforts with a more connected approach that improves walkability of our streets. In addition, the city's support of the Santa Maria Levy Project, especially from Guadalupe to the public beach, will help promote walking in the community.

Promote Safe and Sanitary Homes

The City can conduct outreach to owners regarding maintenance requirements and to tenants so that they understand their rights for safe housing. The City can also focus on code compliance to reduce unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions.





Source: City of Guadalupe 2021

Figure 4-2
Park Needs in Guadalupe
 Guadalupe 2042 General Plan



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Large household size and overcrowding lead to unsafe and unsanitary living situations. Persons per household (2014-2018) in the City of Guadalupe were 3.65 persons compared to the rate in the state of California of 2.63 persons. The owner-occupied housing unit rate (2014-2018) is 51.0%, with 2,014 households existing in the City of Guadalupe (2014-2018).⁴

The Housing Element works to ensure access to housing, including affordable housing, and includes policies that promote safe and sanitary homes. These policies could be expanded in the General Plan or a future Housing Element update to address the following:

- Ensuring that affordable housing projects meet health and safety requirements that are consistent with market-rate housing.
- Expanding efforts to repair and rehabilitate substandard housing in disadvantaged communities.
- Remediating lead-based paint, mold, mildew, asbestos, and other contaminants.
- Enforcing public health-related codes in disadvantaged communities.

Reduce Health Risks

The City of Guadalupe is at a higher risk than the State of California for overweight and obesity rates, diabetes rates, poor air quality, low access to fresh produce, and low access to health care services (Source: *Community Health Needs Assessment, 2016*). Emerging directions suggest increasing physical fitness opportunities, expanding access to fresh produce, and increasing access and education to health care services and screenings.

Proposed changes to land use, circulation, recreational amenities, and public spaces provide new opportunities for active living and make use of the City of Guadalupe's walkable capacity. These changes can improve environmental health and elevate the quality of life for residents. Goals set forth in this Environmental Justice Element, including the facilitation of physical activity, recreation, and active transportation, as well as, an increased awareness of healthy eating and healthy food options will prove to reduce the unique and compounded health risks placed upon the city.

By limiting development of sensitive uses near agriculture fields and providing mixed-use residential development opportunities, the growth plan for the City of Guadalupe will provide new employment opportunities for residents and promote a healthy jobs-to-housing balance. The City has an opportunity to reduce future environmental impacts by embracing green building and solar technology in newly-constructed buildings and rehabilitating the existing housing stock. Incorporating green design into new or rehabilitated residences can contribute to a healthy future for both the City and the planet.

⁴ Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/guadalupecitycalifornia,US/POP060210>

Promote “Civil Engagement” in the Public Decision-Making

The City can implement actions and communication techniques to increase communication within the community and can empower the residents to speak up and get engaged in their local government. Making sure that residents know how to reach their city officials and staff and what programs are available to them are equally important. These actions can increase inclusiveness, transparency and participation in local affairs by those who can benefit the most.

Prioritize Disadvantaged Communities

For the City of Guadalupe to prioritize its improvements and programs, it must focus both its staff and fiscal resources in particular areas that support those living in the disadvantaged community. It is the overall goal of this element to ensure that improvements and programs that address the needs of the City’s most disadvantaged areas or failing infrastructure are given priority. While all of the goals and policies of this element apply to all residents, priority for actions shall be given to those projects and programs that would fulfill the needs of those residents living in the most disadvantaged portions of the community.

Promote Public Facilities

Public facilities and services in Guadalupe need expansion and improvement to accommodate future increases in population. The Public Facilities and Services element calls for additional potable water allocation, enhanced stormwater and wastewater facilities, new and expanded schools, increased presence of police, fire, and emergency services, and construction of new community gathering spaces. When surveyed, the residence of Guadalupe had a fairly equal split of public infrastructure or service that could use the most improvement. These services included police, fire and emergency services, water supply and quality of water, wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Education programs and facilities needed for the community were surveyed and school, after-school and extracurricular activities were recommended above a library. However, a library in the community is desired.

4.4 GOALS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Goals

- Goal EJ-1:** To create equitable and convenient access to fresh and healthy foods among all communities in the city so that all residents find it easy to make healthy food choices.
- Goal EJ-2:** To create equitable access to safe and sanitary homes among all communities in the city so that no resident has to live in an unsafe or unhealthy place.

- Goal EJ-3:** To create equitable access to safe recreational activities and parks among all communities in the city so that all residents are empowered to choose an active lifestyle that supports their health.
- Goal EJ-4:** To promote innovative community health best practices that improve the health of all residents in the City of Guadalupe.
- Goal EJ-5:** To promote the equitable engagement with all segments of the community so that all residents share an equal voice in decisions that affect their community.

Policies

Climate Change

- Policy EJ-1.1** The City will prepare a climate action plan to identify ways to reduce citywide greenhouse gas emissions and minimize the impacts of climate change on Guadalupe residents. The climate action plan will incorporate the goals of reducing emissions within the city to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.

Air Quality

- Policy EJ-1.2** The City will support enhanced cooperation, communication, and coordination between the city of Guadalupe and the Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District to address air quality issues that affect the community.
- Policy EJ-1.3** In reviewing development proposals, the City will condition projects to reduce the effects of pollution on site sensitive receptors, including residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, churches, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes.

Healthy Food Access

- Policy EJ-1.4** The City will support the development of a grocery store in Downtown Guadalupe that provides a wide range of healthy food.
- Policy EJ-1.5** The City will promote the availability of fresh fruit and produce so that all residences are within easy walking distance of a healthy food store.

Policy EJ-1.6 The City will support public education about food assistance programs and connect low-income households and people experiencing homelessness to food-assistance programs and local food banks.

Safe and Sanitary Homes

Policy EJ-1.7 The City will support organizations that advocate for tenant rights and work to protect tenants that report unsafe conditions and dilapidated buildings.

Policy EJ-1.8 The City will support water conservation efforts for households, businesses, and industries in the community.

Physical Activity

Policy EJ-1.9 The City will require the dedication of at least four (4) acres of park land per one thousand residents for future open space designated areas, and it will discourage fees in lieu of such dedications.

Policy EJ-1.10 The City will provide safe streets with well-lit crosswalks and sidewalks for pedestrians and maintain a continuous, accessible, and connected system of sidewalks and crosswalks.

Policy EJ-1.11 The City will prioritize funding to improve bicycle infrastructure.

Policy EJ-1.12 The City will support the Santa Maria Levee Project, especially from Guadalupe to the public beach, in order to promote walking in the community.

Civic Engagement

Policy EJ-1.13 The City will support ongoing student representation at City Council meeting for the purpose of engaging youth in civic matters and preparing them for possible positions on future City Councils.

Policy EJ-1.14 The City will support opportunities for youth and older adults to engage in community service and volunteerism that contributes to community health and improvement.

Policy EJ-1.15 The City will provide frequent updates to residents on the activities of City officials to ensure public transparency and accountability.

Policy EJ-1.16 The City will encourage the use of open spaces by hosting City-sponsored events and activities that involve the community from the planning phase through implementation.

Public Spaces

Policy EJ-1.17 The City will support efforts to purchase a building to provide a permanent library for the city residents.

Policy EJ-1.18 The City will ensure equitable provision of public amenities that improve the quality of life of the Guadalupe residents, including a public library.

Health Services

Policy EJ-1.19 The City will prioritize funding to upgrade public facilities, such as first responder equipment.

Programs

Program EJ-1.1.1 Within three years of adoption of the Guadalupe 2042 General Plan, the City Administrator will initiate a process with the City Council to include ongoing student representation at City Council meeting for the purpose of developing programming for civic engagement, safety and prevention, and others activities that support active living and healthy lifestyles.

Program EJ-1.1.2 Within three years of adoption of the Guadalupe 2042 General Plan, the City Administrator will initiate a process with the City Council to establish a program to host additional community clean-up days in disadvantaged areas within the community.

Program EJ-1.1.3 Within three years of adoption of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*, the City Administrator will initiate a process with the City Council to continue a program to host additional community clean-up days in disadvantaged areas within the community and in cooperation with the Public Works Department will begin a process with the State Regional Water

Quality Control Board to identify and adopt strategies to reduce pollutants in contaminated ground water and inform the residents of Guadalupe on filtration systems that can filter out contaminants present in their tap water.

Program EJ-1.1.4

Within three years of adoption, the City shall attempt to secure funding to purchase a building which can serve as a permanent library for city residents.