



CHAPTER 12 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



Aerial view of the City of Hemet

Quality of life in Hemet is influenced, in part, by the sense of inclusion, justice, and community perceived by City residents and businesses. The Environmental Justice Element demonstrates the breadth of preparations undertaken by the City to address issues such as unhealthy pollution exposure; healthy food access; safe and sanitary homes; and increased civic engagement.

The City of Hemet strives to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for its residents. "Environmental Justice" is defined 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.¹ Low-income residents, communities of color, tribal nations, and immigrant communities may be disproportionately affected by environmental burdens and health problems.

The Environmental Justice (EJ) Element of the Hemet General Plan includes policies addressing potential environmental inequities caused by pollution exposure in identified disadvantaged communities. The Element provides broad policies addressing disproportionate impacts to residents caused by environmental pollution.

¹ Cal. Gov. Code, § 65040.12, subd. (e).



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The Environmental Justice Element addresses the following topics:

- ❖ pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality;
- ❖ promotion of public facilities;
- ❖ food access;
- ❖ safe and sanitary homes;
- ❖ physical activity;
- ❖ encourage civic engagement;
- ❖ education opportunities
- ❖ economic growth; and
- ❖ preservation of culture.

12.1 SCOPE AND CONTEXT

Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000) - *Environmental Justice in Local Land Use Planning (2015-2016)*, amended California's Planning and Zoning Law to require local governments to identify disadvantaged communities and incorporate environmental justice (EJ) into their general plans. SB 1000 requires a transparent public engagement process to identify potential pollutants posing a health risk in disadvantaged communities, and to promotes impact reduction and equitable access to health-inducing benefits.

SB 1000 requires the addition of an Environmental Justice Element, or related goals, policies, and objectives integrated into other Elements, identifying disadvantaged communities, within the city, county, or city and county. Cities and Counties are required, on or after January 1, 2018, upon the adoption or revision of two or more elements concurrently, to:

- ❖ adopt a separate Environmental Justice Element, or include goals, policies, and objectives integrated in other Elements,
- ❖ identify objectives and policies to reduce unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities, by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity,
- ❖ identify objectives and policies to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process, and
- ❖ prioritize improvements and programs for disadvantaged communities.



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12.1.1 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE GENERAL PLAN

State planning law requires the Environmental Justice Element to be consistent with other General Plan elements. The Land Use; Circulation; Housing; Public Safety; Recreation and Trails; Open Space and Conservation; and Community Services and Infrastructure Elements relate most closely to the Environmental Justice Element.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element provides a planned land use pattern, identifying residential, commercial, business park, professional office, and public land use designations. Public and private lands intended for public facilities, housing, and cultural preservation are identified using their respective land use designations. These areas are identified in the Environmental Justice Element and are preserved for such purposes.

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element identifies and ensures access to open spaces and recreational areas requiring access. The Circulation Element assigns the location of streets and trail systems for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians that provide access to open space areas.

Public Safety Element

The Public Safety Element addresses public health and safety within the Planning Area, including open space lands such as parks, trails, lakes, and wildland areas. Public health issues include natural and human-made hazards in open space.

Recreation and Trails Element

The Recreation and Trails Element identifies the parks, off-road trails, and open space recreational areas within the City and the Planning Area. The goals and policies for these recreational areas are consistent with the safety, access, and conservation goals and policies in the Environmental Justice Element.

Open Space and Conservation Element

The Open Space and Conservation Element identifies the natural, open space, and environmental resources areas and to address the issues and opportunities that enable a balance between resource conservation and long-term residential and economic growth within the City and the Planning Area. The goals and policies for these open space areas are consistent with the safety and access goals and policies in the Environmental Justice Element.

Community Services and Infrastructure Element

The Community Services and Infrastructure Element addresses provision of the City's utilities: water, sewer, drainage, solid waste, power, and



telecommunications. Conservation and affordability of these utilities is a key aspect of both elements and they include consistent goals and policies.

Sustainability Matrix

For ease of reference, Appendix A is a sustainability matrix that organizes the City's sustainability policies by General Plan element and category: Smart Growth – Land Use and Community Design, Transportation and Connectivity, Water Conservation, Air Quality, Energy and Resource Conservation, Waste Reduction, and Economic Sustainability.

12.2 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The City of Hemet is required to incorporate EJ in their General Plan for the four (4) identified disadvantaged communities within the City limits.

'Disadvantaged communities' means a physical area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code) or an area that is predominately low-income s may be disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and/or other hazards contributing to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation."²

State law defines a "low-income area" to mean "an area with household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median-income or with household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the Department of Housing and Community Development's list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093."³

The City followed OPR methodology for conducting the screening analysis for disadvantaged communities. The process recommends using the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool ("CalEnviroScreen") is a data tool developed by CalEPA's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). CalEnviroScreen is used by CalEPA to aid in administering environmental justice grants, promote compliance with environmental laws, prioritize site-cleanup activities and identify opportunities for sustainable economic development. It is also being used to identify disadvantaged communities in California, pursuant to SB 535 and AB 1550 and Health and Safety Code Section 39711.⁴

² Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(A)

³ Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(C). Based on the statutory language in Government Code section 65302(h)

⁴ For more information on CalEnviroScreen and OPR guidelines for developing Environmental Justice Elements, see <https://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/guidelines.html>



12.3 SETTING

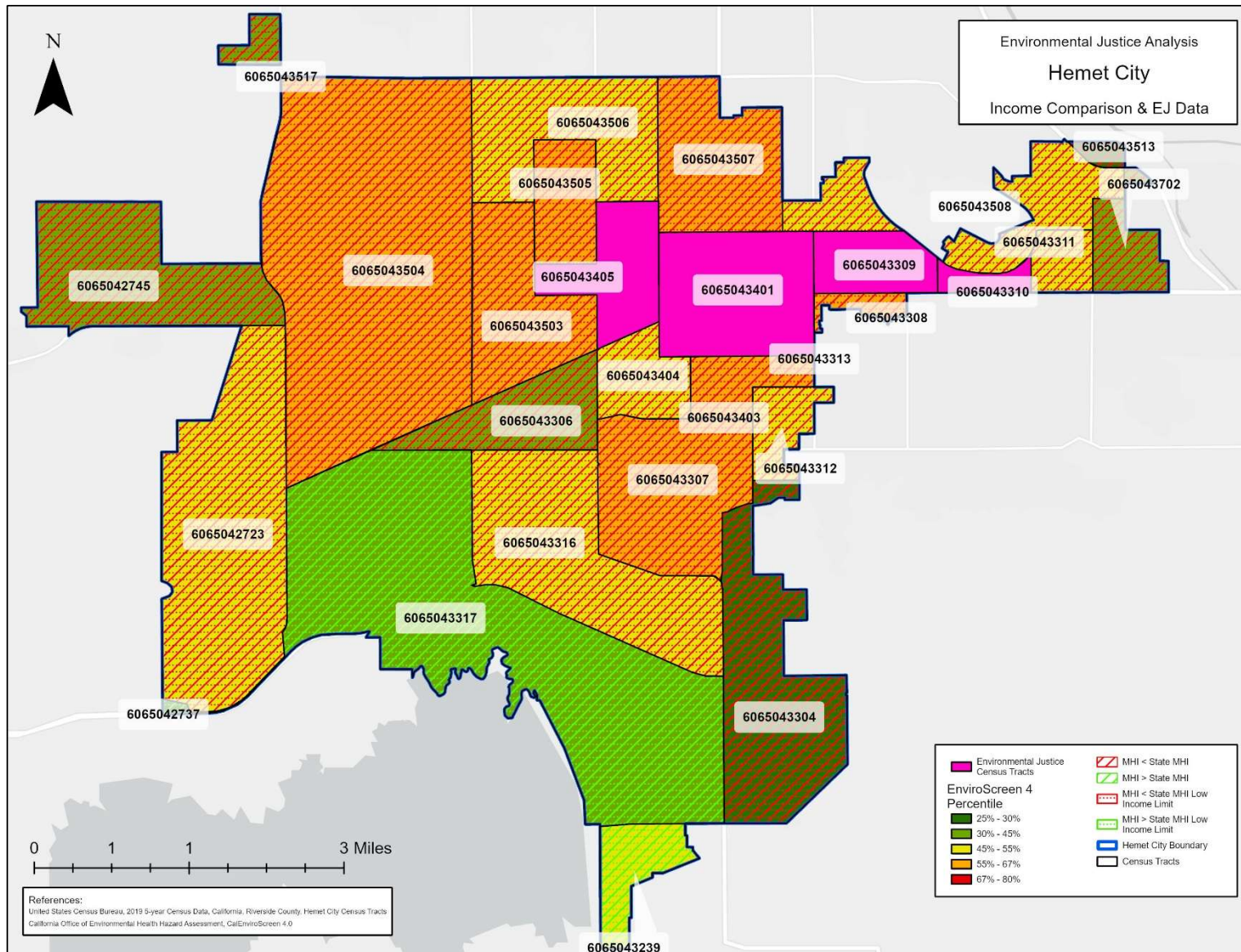
The City of Hemet is located in the San Jacinto Valley in western Riverside County, approximately 30 miles southeast of Riverside, 60 miles east of Anaheim, and 80 miles north of San Diego. Hemet is anchored by its natural setting in the San Jacinto Valley with the backdrop in the San Jacinto Mountains and built setting with architecturally and historically significant buildings in a traditional street grid pattern. Natural landforms in the Hemet–San Jacinto Valley play an important role in shaping the city. The City of Hemet covers a total area of 27.8 square miles, about half of the valley which it shares with the neighboring city of San Jacinto. Hemet is the regional focal point for the San Jacinto Valley area providing retail services, jobs, and housing opportunities for a wide variety of economic groups. Its scenic location in the San Jacinto Valley and proximity to the Temecula Wine Country, Idyllwild, and the San Jacinto Mountains, has made it an attractive destination for families throughout Southern California.

12.3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

As one of the oldest communities in Riverside County, Hemet grew from an agricultural town in the early 1900s, to a multi-faceted City today that is projected to be home to over 100,000 people in the next ten years. Hemet is a growing city with many new families and a younger demographic beginning to change the City's long-standing retirement orientation. According to the United Census Bureau for the year of 2021, the City of Hemet was estimated to have a population of 90,436. Hemet demographics comprise of 68.76% White, 10.53% other race, 9.31% Black or African Americans, and 7.65% two or more races. In 2021, the family median income in Hemet was approximately \$54,848.

12.3.2 IDENTIFIED DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Using CalEnviroScreen 4.0's census data and disadvantaged communities' identification process, four disadvantaged communities and census tracts were identified in the City of Hemet. These communities reside in East Hemet and are within close proximity to one another. To evaluate the demographic and community characteristics of these disadvantaged communities (DAC's) and identify potential causes of disadvantages, median household income, poverty levels, education levels, age, housing affordability, transportation access, neighborhood walkability, student engagement, race, unemployment rates, and climate risk data were analyzed. Further, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index Score uses 15 U.S. census variables to help local officials identify communities that may need support before, during, or after disasters. Social vulnerability refers to the potential negative effects on communities caused by external stresses such as natural or human-caused disasters that impact human health. Climate Check assesses climate risk scores using climate data from federal agencies, universities, and climate scientists to evaluate drought risk. These metrics will provide a better sense when addressing the environmental justice needs within DAC's in accordance with SB 1000 regulations. The 4 census tracts identified were 434.05, 434.01, 433.09, and 434.10 and are further analyzed below.



Hemet Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities Census Tracts

Census Tract 434.05

Census tract 434.05 is identified as a low-income community opportunity zone, with a population of 48,000 inhabiting an area of 0.7 square miles. Demographics within this census are described as 22% Hispanic or Latino, 54.3% White, 9.1% Black or African American, 11.7% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 1.4% Native American, and 1.4% Asian. The CDC Social Vulnerability Index Score for census tract 434.05 is rated 0.788 which indicates it is vulnerable community that is more susceptible to external stresses including natural or human caused disasters and disease outbreaks. According to Climate Check, census tract 434.05 has extreme drought risk. The percentage of available water used by census tract 434.05 is above 40% which labels this tract as highly water stressed. Presently, this census tract's water stress is approximately 85.20% with a projected water stress in 2050 to be about 99.20%. Furthermore, this census tract is projected to have a drought risk that is 28% higher than average for people in California. However, storm and fire risks are relatively low with flood and heat risks being moderate. The median household income is 25k per year which is 69% lower than the State of California median household income (MHI) of 80k. The percentage of households below the poverty line is 34%, which is 22% higher than the State of California rate of 12%. Within this census tract, 68% of community residents have a high school diploma which is 16% lower than the State of California's rate of 84%. The median age range in census tract 434.05 is 42 years of age which is 14% higher than the median age of 37 years of age according to the State of California. Four areas of need identified in this census tract include housing affordability, job opportunities, neighborhood walkability, and student engagement. Approximately 63.49% of Hemet residents spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage which is above the national average of 49.58% and the metro area average of 61.45%. Furthermore, only 30.80% of residents are employed which is below both the national average of 63.20% and the surrounding metro area average of 50.81%. According to the Healthy Places Index (HPI), this census tract is car dependent with a neighborhood walkability score of 15 where almost all errands require a car.

Census Tract 434.01

Census tract 434.01 is identified as a low-income community opportunity zone, with a population of 6,900 inhabiting an area of 1.3 square miles. Demographics within this census are described as 42.8% Hispanic or Latino, 32% White, 8.7% Black or African American, 13.6% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2.5% Native American, and 0.4% Asian. The (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index Score for census tract 434.01 is rated 0.977 which indicates it is vulnerable community that is more susceptible to external stresses including natural or human caused disasters and disease outbreaks. According to Climate Check, this census tract 434.01 has extreme drought risk. The percentage of available water used by census tract 434.01 is above 40% which labels this tract as highly water stressed. Presently, this census tract's water stress is approximately 85.20% with a projected water stress in 2050 to be about 99.20%. Furthermore, this census tract is projected to have a drought risk that is 28% higher than average for people in California. Heat risks is high in this census tract, as they experience about 8 hot days (over 106.8°F) per year. The median household income is 34k per year which is



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57% lower than the State of California median household income (MHI) of 80k. The percentage of households below the poverty line is 31%, which is 19% higher than the State of California rate of 12%. Within this census tract, 74% of community residents have a high school diploma which is 10% lower than the State of California's rate of 84%. The median age range in census tract 434.01 is 28 years of age which is 24% higher than the median age for the State of California of 37 years. Four areas of need identified in this census tract include housing affordability, job opportunities, neighborhood walkability, and student engagement. Approximately 65.66% of Hemet residents spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage which is above the national average of 49.58% and the metro area average of 61.45%. Furthermore, only 51.97% of residents are employed which is below both the national average of 63.20% and the surrounding metro area average of 50.81%. According to the Healthy Places Index (HPI), this census tract is car dependent with a neighborhood walkability score of 15 where almost all errands require a car. Approximately 74.10% of high school students graduate from high school in this census tract, which is below both the national average of 82.98% and State of California average of 83.30%.

Census Tract 433.09

Census tract 433.09 is identified as a low-income community opportunity zone, with a population of 2,800 inhabiting an area of 0.3 square miles. Demographics within this census are described as 30.6% Hispanic or Latino, 34.9% White, 8.6% Black or African American, 18.5% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 5.1% Native American, and 2.2% Asian. The (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index Score for census tract 433.09 is rated 1 which indicates it is vulnerable community that is more susceptible to external stresses including natural or human caused disasters and disease outbreaks. According to Climate Check, this census tract has extreme drought risk. The percentage of available water used by census tract 433.09 is above 40% which labels this tract as highly water stressed. Presently, this census tract's water stress is approximately 85.20% with a projected water stress in 2050 to be about 99.20%. Furthermore, this census tract is projected to have a drought risk that is 28% higher than average for people in California. Heat risks is high in this census tract, as they experience about 8 hot days (over 106.8°F) per year. This tract's temperature risk is also 15% higher than average for people in California. However, storm, flood, and fire risks are all low. The median household income is 41k per year which is 51% lower than the State of California MHI of 80k. The percentage of households below the poverty line is 29.3%, which is 17.3% higher than the State of California rate of 12%. Within this census tract, 71% of community residents have a high school diploma which is 16% lower than the State of California's rate of 84%. The median age range in census tract 433.09 is 32 years of age which is 13% higher than the median age for the State of California of 37 years. Three areas of need identified in this census tract include housing affordability, job opportunities, and student engagement. Approximately 63.56% of Hemet residents spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage which is above the national average of 49.58% and the metro area average of 61.45%. Furthermore, only 56.69% of residents are employed which is below both the national average of 63.20% and the surrounding metro area average of 50.81%. About 71.0% of high school students graduate from high school



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in this census tract, which is below both the national average of 82.98% and State of California average of 83.30%.

Census Tract 434.10

Census tract 434.10 is identified as a low-income community opportunity zone, with a population of 3,500 inhabiting an area of 0.6 square miles. Demographics within this census are described as 38.2% Hispanic or Latino, 26.1% White, 11.3% Black or African American, 20.8% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2.0% Native American, and 1.6% Asian. The (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index Score for census tract 433.09 is rated 0.968 which indicates it is vulnerable community that is more susceptible to external stresses including natural or human caused disasters and disease outbreaks. According to Climate Check, this census tract has extreme drought risk. The percentage of available water used by census tract 434.10 is above 40% which labels this tract as highly water stressed. Presently, this census tract's water stress is approximately 85.20% with a projected water stress in 2050 to be about 99.20%. Furthermore, this census tract is projected to have a drought risk that is 28% higher than average for people in California. Heat risks is high in this census tract, as they experience about 8 hot days (over 105.4°F) per year. The forecast in 2050 is about 36 hot days per year. This tract's flood risk is rated very high, with about 60.61% of its buildings having significant flood risk, with about 12% chance of floods of 9.9 feet deep before 2050; however, storm and fire risks are low. The median household income is 38k per year which is 52% lower than the State of California MHI of 80k. The percentage of households below the poverty line is 35%, which is 23% higher than the State of California rate of 12%. Within this census tract, 63% of community residents have a high school diploma which is 21% lower than the State of California's rate of 84%. The median age range in census tract 434.10 is 29 years of age which is 22% lower than the median age for the State of California of 37 years. Three areas of need identified in this census tract include housing affordability, job opportunities, and student engagement. Approximately 52.75% of Hemet residents spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage which is above the national average of 49.58% and the metro area average of 61.45%. Furthermore, only 57.98% of residents are employed which is below both the national average of 63.20% and the surrounding metro area average of 50.81%.

Land use and zoning of census tracts have specific land use designations that include rural residential, hillside residential, low density residential, low medium density residential, medium density residential, high density residential, very high density residential, neighborhood commercial, community commercial, regional commercial, and mixed-use areas. Hemet's land use plan also includes environmental management areas that consider airports, office professional, business parks, industrial facilities, public facilities, schools, open space, etc.



12.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a foundational component to the Environmental Justice process. Community engagement allows community members to provide their input and feedback which helps to inform the development of the Environmental Justice's goals, policies, and programs. Meaningful community engagement ensures that a variety of stakeholders and community members are offered a platform to engage in the City's planning process. The City of Hemet has conducted public outreach activities and provided materials in both English and Spanish. The City identified a list of interested parties and stakeholders to be regularly engaged throughout the update of the Environmental Justice Element and to aid in soliciting participation from DAC's. Those specifically targeted for the EJ element may include Nonprofits/NGOs and Advocacy groups, faith-based organizations/Churches, Local organizations (Senior centers, youth centers, homeless shelters, etc.) and social services organizations. Community outreach efforts began in April of 2022 and will continue through City Council approval of submittal of the Environmental Justice Element. The public will have opportunities to obtain information and provide input in a variety of ways, including:

- Project Website
- Community Workshop for EJ Element Informational Handouts
- Environmental Justice Stakeholder Meetings
- Environmental Justice Public Review Draft
- Planning Commission and City Council Study Sessions

In accordance with state law, the City's included meaningful engagement with organizations and individuals who could provide information as to the presence of disadvantaged communities within the City, and the needs of any identified disadvantaged community, including, but not limited to the following topics:

- Environmental issues, such as air quality, water quality, industrial waste and releases
- Zoning and code enforcement,
- Housing, including the quality and quantity of affordable and safe housing option
- Transportation,
- Fire and flood safety concerns,
- Effects of a changing climate



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- Adaptation strategies,
- Resiliency planning, and
- Other quality of life concerns

Outreach events include two rounds of outreach and community workshops. The first round of outreach commenced with a virtual workshop and informational fact sheets were provided. The community was provided with information about the Project process and initial discussions about the community's quality of life, housing, transportation, and environmental justice related issues and opportunities within Hemet. The second round of outreach further engaged the community, stakeholder groups, and elected and appointed officials in conjunction with or prior to the release of the Draft EJ Element. Community Workshops educated community members (students, residents, stakeholders, etc.) about the 2021-2030 EJ Element updates, as well as provide an opportunity for public input on the contents of the documents.

Appendix A contains a summary of all public comments regarding the Environmental Justice element received by the City during the process.

[NOTE TO CITY: This section will be updated when additional community engagement (i.e., previewing the plan at a second workshop, or similar) is performed.]

12.5 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ISSUES

This EJ element serves to highlight new policies relevant to environmental justice within the priority areas identified above. Priority areas pursuant to SB 1000 were to reduce pollutants associated with health risk in environmental justice communities, and to promote equitable access to health-inducing benefits such as healthy food options, housing, public facilities, and recreation. In addition to these priority areas, the City of Hemet chose to include areas of nurturing educational opportunities, fostering economic growth, and preserving culture. Each priority area is further detailed below.

12.5.1 POLLUTION EXPOSURE

Pollution exposure occurs when people come into direct contact with air, food, water, and soil contaminants and is often the result of incompatible land uses sited adjacent to each other. Sensitive populations (such as children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems) are the most susceptible to pollution exposure. Pollution can come from many sources including, agricultural land uses applying pesticides, by-products of industrial wastewater, mobile sources such as vehicles emitting exhaust, stationary sources such as diesel generator exhaust, and storage tanks leaking hazardous chemicals into soil and groundwater. Additionally, current landscape ordinances can be improved upon by providing amenities in centralized hubs, incentives for electric vehicle (EV) charging and compressed natural gas (CNG) powered city-run trolleys.



12.5.2 IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES ACCESS

The adequate provision of public facilities is a critical component to the current and future prosperity of a community. Under state law (SB 1000), “public facilities” is an umbrella term that encompasses “public improvements, public services, and community amenities”. This covers a wide spectrum of publicly provided uses and services including infrastructure, school facilities, parks and recreation, transportation, and emergency services. These amenities and services strive to improve the health, safety, and well-being of a community by enhancing community life and providing services accessible to all residents.

12.5.3 FOOD ACCESS

Healthy food plays a critical role in the livelihood of a community. As such, it is imperative that all residents have access to food that is healthy and affordable. Disadvantaged communities may face constraints related to nutritional food access; consequently, this lack of accessibility has a direct impact on a community’s prosperity. Food access is related to food security which is defined as access to adequate food for an active, healthy life for all people. Food security entails the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods as well as the accessibility to food.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US students receive less than eight hours of required nutrition education each school year; which is much less than the 40 to 50 hours that children are estimated to need to result in a shift in habits and behavior.

Diet plays an important role in preventing chronic diseases and supporting good health, so schools would ideally provide students with more hours of nutrition education instruction and engage teachers and parents in nutrition education activities. Nutrition education can teach students to recognize how a healthy diet influences emotional well-being and how emotions may influence eating habits. However, because schools face many demands, school staff can consider ways to add nutrition education into the existing schedule.

Educating vulnerable communities on existing resources will also be crucial to the success of promoting accessibility to healthy food.

12.5.4 PROMOTE SAFE AND SANITARY HOMES

Hemet’s geographic location within a valley and proximity to several significant bodies of water contribute to the significant flood risk within the City. The greatest flood hazard is present in the southern parts of the City. To prepare for and mitigate flood hazards, the City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP provides federal flood insurance subsidies and federally financed loans for property owners in flood-prone areas. Flood Insurance Rate Maps are an important part of the NFIP and are prepared by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA maps show potential flood zones for the 100-year and 500-year floods. These are floods that, respectively, have a 1 percent and 0.2 percent chance of occurring every year (in other words, an average of once every 100 and once every 500 years). Flood risk information presented on FEMA maps is based on historic, meteorologic, hydrologic, and hydraulic data, as well as



open-space conditions, flood control works, and development. New development is not permitted in a flood zone until properly engineered drainage systems are approved. Figure 12.2, “Flood Zones,” shows the 100-year and 500-year flood zones in the Planning Area.

12.5.5 PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Research by the CDC shows that physically active people tend to live longer and have lower risk for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers. Physical activity is promoted by the built environment through providing places that encourage walking, biking, and other forms of exercise. Historically, disadvantaged communities have had less access to built environments that enable them to become physically active, to acquire healthy dietary habits, and to maintain a healthy weight. These places include parks, open space, trails, urban green spaces, areas with robust tree canopies, and active transportation networks. If a community has facilities that promote physical activity, community members are more likely to be physically active within that community. Some examples include utilizing vacant properties for city activities and partnering with mobile health clinics.

12.5.6 ENCOURAGE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic engagement is an important goal across all local planning and decision-making processes. It can help promote a strong sense of place within a neighborhood and can deepen stakeholder investments working toward neighborhood improvements. Environmental justice issues can be more effectively identified and resolved if accessible opportunities to engage in local decision-making are created for historically marginalized and under-represented communities. Effective civic engagement provides the City with the opportunity for a strengthened community and provides for sound investment in better decision-making by ensuring decisions are informed by community needs and goals.

12.5.7 NURTURE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Disadvantaged communities often suffer the harshest consequences of pollution and climate change. Environmental justice is about making sure everyone has access to healthy food, clean air and water, and safe homes. While traditional environmental education programs give “people a deeper understanding of the environment, inspiring them to take personal responsibility for its preservation and restoration”⁵, environmental justice education fosters a critical understanding of the environment within the context of human political and social actions. Additionally, nurturing diverse educational opportunities can not only enhance community understanding of the environment, but provide foundation and opportunities more effective identification and resolving of environmental issues. These different educational opportunities include higher education, apprenticeship pathways, volunteer opportunities, vocational programs, and cadet programs. These opportunities will encourage communities to non-traditional education programs through job resources and mentorship programs.

⁵ Environmental Protection Agency, 2007b, para. 1



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12.5.8 FOSTER ECONOMIC GROWTH

Economic growth and development are consistently cited as a major concern in improving the well-being of disadvantaged communities. Such growth and development help nurture and promote a thriving city. Further, economic growth increases tax revenue, job availability, and opportunities for citizens. Additionally, cities with more resources are better equipped to provide for their communities. Factors to create economic growth include more capital, more labor, and better use of existing capital or labor. Effective actions towards fostering economic growth provides the City with the opportunity for a well-driven community and provides for better investments and resources for the current and future residents of the City.

12.5.9 PRESERVE CULTURE

Culture and its heritage reflect and shape values, beliefs, and aspirations, thereby defining a people's national and local identity. It is important to preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of all community members, especially of those within disadvantaged communities, because it maintains the integrity and well-being of those specific communities. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge Hemet's proud and unique history; describe historical resources; establish goals and objectives for preserving historic resources and promoting an appreciation of Hemet's history.



GOALS AND POLICIES

POLLUTION EXPOSURE

GOAL EJ-1	Enhance air quality and reduce emissions of GHG's and other regulated air pollutants.
EJ-1.1	Tree Surveys Develop guidance to encourage selection of trees with an emphasis on improving air quality, sequestering greenhouse gases (GHGs), and reducing the urban heat island effect.
EJ-1.2	Housing Hazards Raise community awareness about the risks associated with lead-based paint and other indoor air quality hazards, including by distributing information about remediation of lead and best practices to reduce and eliminate other housing hazards. This policy also supports EJ Goal 4.

PUBLIC FACILITIES ACCESS

GOAL EJ-2	Create equitable access to public facilities and services.
EJ-2.1	Transit Routes Encourage transit providers to establish and maintain routes to jobs, shopping, schools, parks and healthcare facilities that are convenient to disadvantaged communities.
EJ-2.2	Library Services Consider expansion of services offered at the Hemet Library such as increasing the provision of free internet services, educational resources, and safe quiet zones for residents. This policy also supports EJ Goal 8.
EJ-2.3	Senior Housing Encourage the development of senior housing in neighborhoods that are accessible to public transit, commercial services, health care, and community facilities.



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FOOD ACCESS

GOAL EJ-3	Improve access to healthy and nutritional food and education and outreach of health improvement information on nutrition.
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- EJ-3.1 Neighborhood Markets** Collaborate with Riverside County Department of Public Health, Hemet or Menifee Global Medical Center and other non-profit health sector groups to encourage existing neighborhood markets or convenience stores in nutrient deficient neighborhoods to offer more fresh and healthy food options, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.
- EJ-3.2 Local Markets** Support neighborhood-oriented, specific sources of fresh and healthy foods such as farmers' markets and local outlets.
- EJ-3.3 Partnerships** Encourage establishment of private/public partnerships that encourage and support healthy food options, such as Farm-Box Foods.
- EJ-3.4 Nutritional Education** Collaborate with local public schools to develop programs that teach the importance of healthy food options, nutrition and health, and provides hands-on opportunities such as gardening and healthy meal preparation.
- EJ-3.5 Community Gardens** Support the conversion of vacant land to be used as community gardens to promote knowledge of local, healthy food options and encourage civic cooperation.

SAFE AND SANITARY HOMES

GOAL EJ-4	Ensure healthy structures and living conditions are available to all community members.
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Also see Policy EJ-1.2

- EJ-4.1 Waste Disposal** Reduce illegal dumping of trash & other items
- EJ-4.2 Neighborhood Programs** Encourage a strategy focused on targeted initiatives addressing specific neighborhood quality of life issues, including but not limited to building code violations, vacant buildings, disorder and drug calls for Police service and drug arrests, as well as incidence of graffiti, junk autos, litter, and weeds.



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- EJ-4.3 Health & Safety Public Outreach.** Encourage public participation in identifying areas in need of enhanced health and safety code enforcement, including promoting the use of Hemet’s “See, Click, Fix” on-line portal to report potential health and safety issues and incidents.
- EJ-4.4 Health & Safety Education** Raise awareness through public education, including age-appropriate material for school-aged kids, as to the importance of a “safe and sanitary home”.
- EJ-4.5 Older Housing Stock** housing stock is free from in-door pollutants such as lead and asbestos. Educate property owners about potential problems related to older housing stock, including, but not limited to, poor ventilation and overcrowding.

EQUITY IN HOUSING ACCESS

GOAL EJ-5	Address root-cause issues of inequitable housing access.
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- EJ-5.1 Homeownership** Support programs to provide rental and homeownership assistance to lower-income persons. This policy also supports Goal 9.
- EJ-5.2 Responsible Property Ownership** Explore incentives and regulations that encourage active engagement in property maintenance and community improvement.

PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

GOAL EJ-6	Improve physical activity and health through urban design.
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- EJ-6.1 Physical Health** Promote physical activity and active transportation to address the negative health outcomes of sedentary lifestyle, with an emphasis on improvements needed in disadvantaged communities.
- EJ-6.1 Infrastructure Improvements** Encourage infrastructure improvements to facilitate non-vehicular modes of transportation with a focus on improvements needed in disadvantaged communities.



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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

GOAL EJ-7	Expand inclusive opportunities to engage in the decision-making process.
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- EJ-7.1** **Open Meetings** Promote community trust through conducting of open meetings available to any community member to attend and participate. The City will proactively and meaningfully engage residents in planning decisions that impact their housing and neighborhoods through these public meetings.
- EJ-7.2** **Communication** Encourage communication methods that convey complex or technical information in an easily understandable manner.
- EJ-7.3** **EJ Principle Education** Educate decision makers and the general public on the principles of environmental justice.

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL EJ-8	Expand flexible education opportunities available to community members.
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Also see Policy EJ-2.2

- EJ-8.1** **Educational Facilities** Encourage flexible education opportunities for the citizens of Hemet. Address hurdles to accessing different levels and types of education locally and outside the City, including: colleges/universities with an emphasis on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), community colleges, and vocational programs. Support and enhance mentor opportunities, apprenticeship pathways, volunteer opportunities, cadet programs, and resources for job training.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

GOAL EJ-9	Foster sustainable economic growth and opportunities.
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Also see Policy EJ-5.1

- EJ-9.1** **Access to Facilities** Increase access to shopping, jobs, and healthcare facilities in disadvantaged communities.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- EJ-9.2** **Childcare Services** Encourage locating safe, high quality, and affordable childcare services for residents and workers in or near housing, transportation, and employment centers.

PRESERVATION OF CULTURE

GOAL EJ-10	Preserve and celebrate the cultures of the region.
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- EJ-10.1** **Historic & Cultural Resources** Encourage the identification and preservation of historic and cultural resources associated with communities whose histories and historical contributions are not well documented.
- EJ-10.2** **Culture Celebration** Encourage celebration of the many cultures that have historically shaped or currently influence the City.
- EJ-10.3** **Historical Education** Foster education of local architectural history and historic resources. Encourage the development of local registries of potentially historic resources. Reach out to local community members for inclusion and support of the local registries.