

# CITY OF SAN JOAQUIN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

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## A. INTRODUCTION

### Scope of Environmental Justice Element

The Environmental Justice Element is a required element of the General Plan in cities and counties where disadvantaged communities are present. These communities are identified through a comprehensive process that assesses areas of low income disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution and other health hazards. For the City of San Joaquin, its entire jurisdiction is recognized as a disadvantaged community, underscoring the importance of this element in its planning framework.

This element aims to amplify the role and influence of historically underserved communities, striving to reduce their exposure to environmental and health risks. It opens with a discussion of environmental justice principles and the approach used to identify disadvantaged communities, then summarizes the city's baseline environmental conditions of pollution exposure, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity and health, food access, and public facilities. The Environmental Justice Element concludes with an environmental justice planning framework that provides actionable goals, policies and programs designed to weave environmental justice considerations into decision making and support positive outcomes for the city's residents.

### Environmental Justice Background

Environmental justice aims to address the unequal environmental burdens faced by disadvantaged communities. Environmental justice efforts strive to enhance the health and environmental conditions of these communities through informed planning and policy decisions. In California, the enactment of Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000) was an important step towards integrating environmental justice in local and regional planning practice. This bill requires jurisdictions to identify disadvantaged communities within their boundaries and develop strategies to address environmental health concerns in their general plans, thereby embedding environmental justice principles into planning frameworks.

The City of San Joaquin is committed to promoting environmental justice through the implementation of its Environmental Justice Element. This framework focuses on six key environmental areas that influence a person's health status, referred to as the environmental determinants of health (California Government Code Section 65302). The environmental determinants of health are:

- Pollution Exposure and Air Quality
- Public Facilities
- Safe and Sanitary Homes
- Physical Activity and Public Health
- Food Access
- Civic and Community Engagement

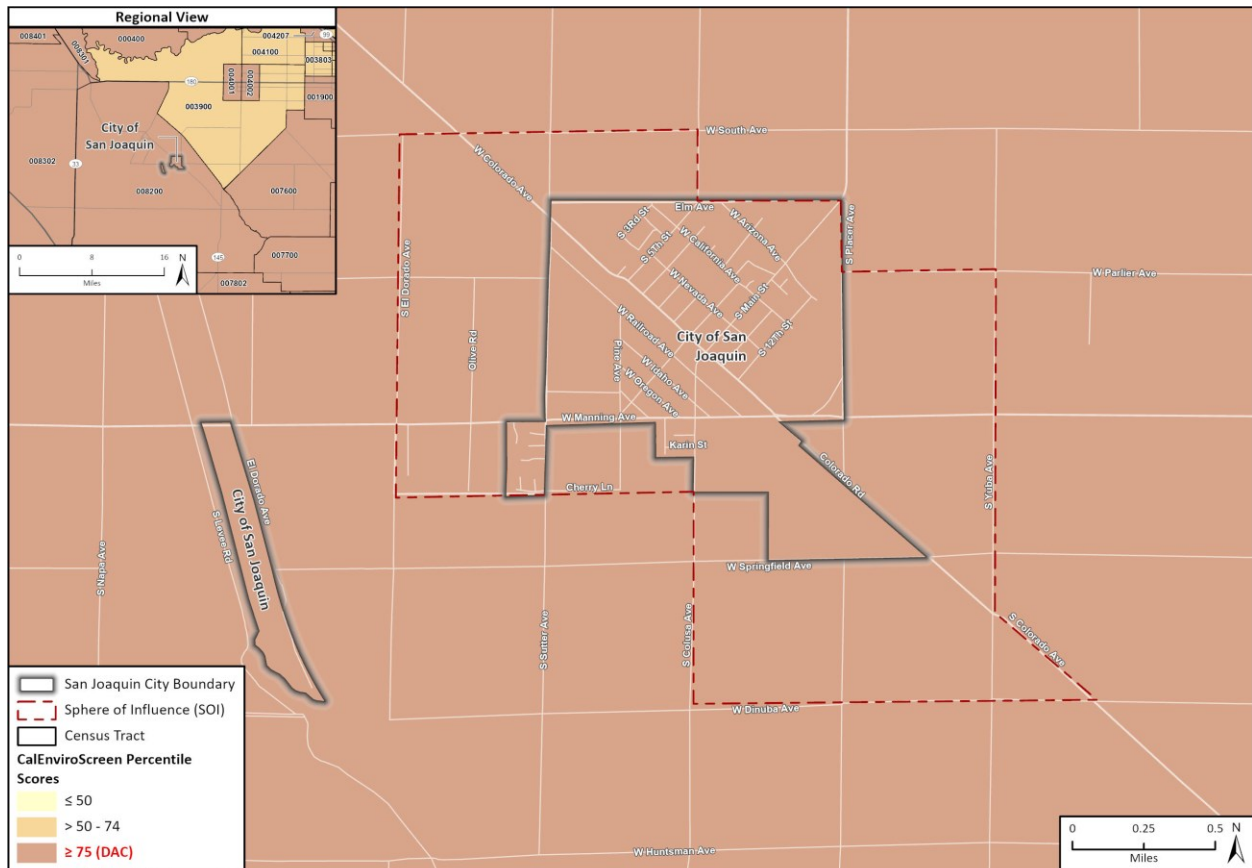
By focusing on these key areas, the City of San Joaquin aims to foster a healthier, more equitable environment for all its residents.

## Environmental Justice Communities

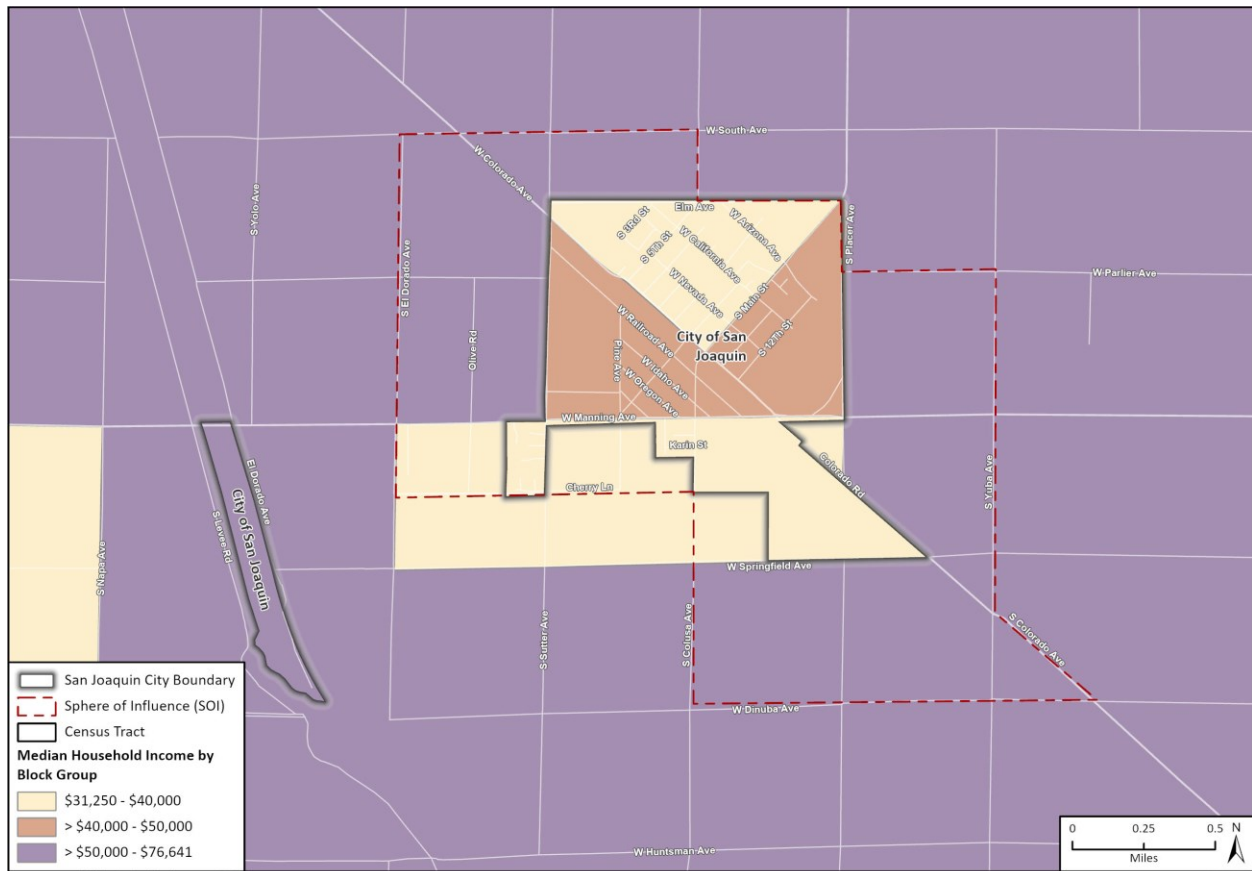
California legislation defines “disadvantaged communities” as an area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) tool CalEnviroScreen, or an area that is a low-income area and disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. CalEnviroScreen identifies disadvantaged communities at the census tract level by assessing and quantifying environmental conditions and vulnerabilities across the state. This tool was utilized as a baseline for identifying disadvantaged communities in the City of San Joaquin. In addition to the CalEPA designated disadvantaged communities, a localized analysis was performed to confirm the CalEnviroScreen findings.

While some cities may include small pockets of disadvantaged communities that are disproportionately burdened by environmental and population impacts, the City of San Joaquin has a significant number of pollution burdened and low-income residents across the entirety of its jurisdiction. Consequently, the entire census tract encompassing the City of San Joaquin recognized as a disadvantaged community (Figure EJ-1). However, there are moderate financial differences between block groups within the city. While all census block groups are considered low-income, the census block groups in the northern and southern central portions of the city had a median income between \$31,250 and \$40,000, significantly lower than the census block group surrounding the city boundary (Figure EJ-2).

**Figure EJ-1 Identified Disadvantaged Communities in the City of San Joaquin Planning Area**



**Figure EJ-2 Median Household Income by Census Block Group in the City of San Joaquin Planning Area**



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2023.  
 Additional data provided by U.S. Census Bureau, 2021.

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 Fig 5 Median Household Income by Block Group

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INDICATORS

The widespread presence of disadvantaged communities in the city is largely attributed to significant air pollution levels and the prevalence of lower-income households present in much of the community. CalEnviroScreen also identified other health concerns for the City of San Joaquin, including Threats to Groundwater, Lead in Housing, and Drinking Water Contaminants, which may contribute to poorer health outcomes for the city’s residents.

### Pollution Burden

Air and water pollution exposure can lead to adverse health outcomes such as an increased risk of respiratory infections, heart disease, and cancer. Because the environmental and population impacts on disadvantaged communities are often interrelated and compounding, the City of San Joaquin is committed to addressing environmental justice with a comprehensive and holistic approach. Air pollution in the city is largely a result of regional sources and is a pervasive issue for cities within the San Joaquin Valley. Residents who work outdoors or are economically disadvantaged may be disproportionately burdened by this, and the risk is exacerbated by the high number of outdoor workers and limited access to health facilities or financial means for home upgrades.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is responsible for establishing air quality standards and assessing regional attainment of these standards. CARB has distinguished geographic areas of California



## Public Facilities

Access to public facilities, services, and amenities is important to environmental justice because it influences the health, well-being, and quality of life to community members. Such facilities may include cultural centers, streets and roads, effective utilities, schools, public transit, and public open space. According to the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), disadvantaged communities have historically had fewer public investments in their neighborhood and less access to critical public resources. To promote environmental justice in the City of San Joaquin, it is necessary to understand the context of public facility accessibility across the planning area.

### Parks, Schools, and Cultural Centers

The availability of publicly accessible greenspace such as parks and natural open space in proximity to housing can create opportunities for physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social interaction (WHO 2016). Both physical activity and social interaction have been linked to improved health outcomes. Similarly, public schools and cultural centers provide opportunities for recreation and community engagement that are necessary to supplement the mental and physical health of residents.

The City of San Joaquin is home to one public school, San Joaquin Elementary School, operated by the Golden Plains Unified School District. There are a total of four elementary schools and two high schools within the Golden Plains School District. However, to access these other schools students and parents must travel to other communities such as Tranquility approximately four miles north of the city, or Cantua Creek located 10 miles southeast of the city.

The City of San Joaquin is small and rural, so although there are some undeveloped plots of land located within the city, limited space and financial barriers present a challenge to constructing recreational facilities. However, all residents live in areas with three acres or more of parks or open space per 1,000 residents, and is therefore not considered “critically underserved” according to the California Statewide Park Program. The City of San Joaquin has one park, Peter Rusconi Park, in the central portion of the city. Peter Rusconi Park hosts the Leo Cantu Community Center and provides a skate park, basketball court, and picnic area with oversized barbecue pits. Additional undeveloped land is available in the northern portion of the city and is designated open space but does not have any facilities.



## Food Access

Low-income communities are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as being often disproportionately impacted by lack of healthy food access due to factors such as a lack of transportation resources and a lack of local affordable and nutritious food sources. Food access can be measured by food insecurity and the presence of food deserts.

### Food Insecurity

The USDA defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. It is a measure of a population's ability to afford nutritious and health-sustaining food. Specific data on food insecurity for the City of San Joaquin is not available, and the most recent data on food insecurity in Fresno County is from the year 2021. Feeding America reported a food insecurity rate in Fresno County of approximately 13.6 percent for the year 2021, which is more than three percent higher than the statewide statistic and indicates that food insecurity among the households of Fresno County is a significant concern. This issue is prevalent for the families in the city due largely to the high number of low-income households within the city. Low-income communities often face a reduced ability to afford adequate and healthy food supply due to limited financial resources.

### Food Deserts

Limited access to supermarkets, grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other sources of healthy and affordable food make it harder for many residents to eat a healthy diet. Food deserts are areas where it is difficult to access affordable or good-quality fresh food due to a lack of available options. The USDA maintains a Food Access Research Atlas that identifies food deserts in the United States by census tract. The USDA defines food deserts as low-income census tracts with a substantial number or share of residents with low levels of access to retail outlets selling healthy and affordable foods. The census tract the City of San Joaquin lies within is identified as a food desert, as it is both low-income and low-access (to healthy food). The neighborhoods located in the central portion of the City of San Joaquin are the most impacted, with an access distance of more than one mile from the nearest supermarket or grocery store.

### Existing Programs and Assistance

The high rate of food insecurity coupled with the presence of food deserts in the City of San Joaquin indicate that food access issues in the city are a combination of income-related resource restrictions and lack of available food sourcing options. Public benefit programs such as food banks, food pantries, and free community gardens can serve to address food access concerns as a result of income-related food insecurity. The only existing food bank in the City of San Joaquin is operated by the Salvation Army San Joaquin. There are currently no free community gardens within the city. Expanding free and affordable food services in the City of San Joaquin can help to address existing food access issues.

## Safe and Sanitary Homes

According to the WHO, poor housing conditions such as poor air filtration and substandard building quality can result in detrimental health environments, including homes with exposure to mold, asbestos or lead, and exposure to extreme weather conditions. In addition, landlord neglect, maintenance costs for homeowners, and overcrowding in housing can exacerbate poor housing conditions and result in impacted health. Substandard housing conditions, housing cost burden, overcrowding, and affordability are discussed in detail in the General Plan's Housing Element, along with policies and programs to

address substandard housing conditions, the preservation of the existing housing stock, and the development of new housing.

## Age of Housing Stock

The age of housing stock can contribute to unsafe living conditions for families living in an older home, particularly if the necessary maintenance is not kept up. Many older homes were also often built using harmful home construction materials that are now associated with increased risk of disease. According to the Census 2021 ACS 5-year estimates, approximately 1.4 percent of the city's housing stock was built before the year 1950. However, approximately 19 percent of homes were built after the year 2000, indicating that a large portion of homes are relatively new and not as likely to be impacted by the effects of aging as older structures. As housing stock in the city ages however, it may require maintenance, upgrades and retrofitting to improve the safety of living conditions within.

## Housing Cost Burden

Low-income communities with limited opportunity to remove themselves from unsafe conditions may be forced to bear the health burden associated with an unsafe home. Households with lower incomes may also spend a larger proportion of their income on housing and may suffer from housing-induced poverty, which can lead to adverse health effects. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households spending a minimum of 30 percent of their total gross income on housing costs are considered cost burdened, whereas households spending over 50 percent on housing costs are considered severely cost burdened. According to CalEnviroScreen, the City of San Joaquin planning area scored in the 32<sup>nd</sup> percentile, meaning the percent housing burden is higher than 32 percent of the rest of the State. There are approximately 1,800 housing units in the census tract containing the City of San Joaquin. Of those 1,800 units, 1,240 are considered low income. Of these low-income households, 249 are considered housing burdened.

About 10 percent of low-income homeowners in the City of San Joaquin are considered severely housing cost burdened. While this number is lower than the State average, it is higher than the percentage of low-income, homeowner housing burden in Fresno County overall. The percentage of low-income renters who are considered severely housing burdened is 17 percent, which is 11 percent lower than Fresno County (28.4 percent) and 10 percent lower than the State (26.2 percent). While this value is lower than the County and State averages, severely housing burdened low-income renters and homeowners still make up approximately a third of all residents in the City of San Joaquin.

## Overcrowding

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines an overcrowded home as one occupied by 1.01 persons or more per room (excluding bathrooms and kitchens). According to the 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 25 percent of all occupied housing units in the City of San Joaquin were considered overcrowded. This is significantly higher than for Fresno County at 11 percent, and higher than the average for cities adjacent to the city. In the City of San Joaquin, overcrowding is more prevalent among renter-occupied homes in the city, which make up 59 percent of all occupied housing units.

## Physical Activity and Health

The natural and built environment of a community can promote or discourage physical activity for its residents. Communities with adequate access to open space and multimodal transportation are more hospitable to physical activity and are therefore more likely to have better health outcomes. In addition, improving active transportation methods can help connect residents with healthier food retailers while



providing exercise simultaneously. Recreation facilities and health programs available through the city can also contribute to increased physical activity.

## Physical Fitness

The Health Element of the General Plan was adapted from the Fresno County Department of Public Health's *Health Language Recommendations for Fresno County Community Plan*. The Health Element includes policies and programs for the provision of bike lanes, a complete sidewalk network, increased safety at intersections, and shorter pedestrian friendly blocks to encourage active transportation and physical fitness in the city. The Health Element also provides community health information and shows that residents in the City of San Joaquin are at high risk for developing health issues such as diabetes and obesity. The San Joaquin Department of Parks and Recreation provides programs and facilities to support physical fitness in the community that can be expanded to bolster physical activity beyond existing levels.

## Notable Health Concerns

According to CalEnviroScreen, the rate of cardiovascular disease (measured by the number of heart attacks per 10,000 people) is moderately high in the City of San Joaquin. Heart attack-related emergency room visits occurred more frequently than three-quarters of the state, with an estimated 16 people out of every 10,000 visiting the emergency department due to a heart attack between the years 2015 and 2017. The rate of asthma emergency room visits in the City of San Joaquin planning area is also moderate. According to CalEnviroScreen, 45 of every 10,000 people experience asthma-related health emergencies. This is consistent with the State average, but higher than the County average of 34 per every 10,000 people.

## Civic Engagement and Demographics

Equitable planning for a community involves a comprehensive approach to community engagement that enables all residents to participate in the local decision-making process. SB 1000 guidance affirms that public agencies should develop future community engagement programs that involve disadvantaged communities and other underrepresented residents. By involving and engaging these groups in decision-making processes, policymakers can effectively meet the needs of all residents within their jurisdiction.

Disadvantaged communities also often have culturally or demographically specific needs that must be considered within local outreach strategy to ensure community success. These needs include, but are not limited to, language requirements, location requirements, and timing requirements. Public agencies are encouraged by the State of California to accommodate the needs of all subgroups within their local community as a strategy for creating an equitable and environmentally just document. According to the U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates for 2020, nearly half (45 percent) of the city's residents are immigrants, of which 99 percent were born in Latin America. The Latin American foreign-born community characterizes a distinct demographic context for the city that must be taken into consideration when developing outreach strategies for community engagement. The culture and logistical needs of these residents, including communication, location, and timing needs, must be taken into consideration when developing outreach strategies for community engagement. For instance, according to CalEnviroScreen the primary language spoken besides English in the City of San Joaquin is Spanish, although a number of residents speak Arabic. Of these, approximately 41 percent of households do not speak English proficiently, so providing information and discussions in their preferred language is needed to involve these linguistically isolated households in decision-making.

## C. GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies were created to promote environmental justice considerations in decision-making for the City of San Joaquin and address the unique needs of disadvantaged communities in the planning area. These policies serve to apply a refined environmental justice lens to build upon policies in other General Plan elements that contain more focused polices relevant to individual topic areas.

### AIR AND WATER QUALITY

#### GOAL EJ-1

**Pesticide and particulate matter exposure in the City of San Joaquin is identified and mitigated to the greatest extent feasible to protect residents.**

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#### POLICY

**Policy EJ-1.1 Develop a five-year plan to evaluate and implement safe pesticide use on City-owned spaces, such as public parks and along City-owned roadways and properties.**

- **Program EJ-1.1.1:** Identify and secure funding sources, such as U.S. EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Grants, USDA Organic Market Development Grants, or the Transition to Organic Partnership Program, to utilize for replacing current non-organic pesticides with organic options.
- **Program EJ-1.1.2:** Perform a study on existing pesticide use and the chemical makeup of each. Through this study, identify areas where potential pesticide use reduction or replacement is feasible.

**Policy EJ-1.2 Collaborate with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District through bi-annual meetings to collectively address pesticide exposure in the city.**

- **Program EJ-1.2.1:** Encourage residents to participate in community meetings regarding pesticide use and explore options for joining or supporting the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Citizen Advisory Committee.

**Policy EJ-1.3 Work with the CA Department of Pesticide Regulation and adjacent jurisdictions to encourage reductions in pesticide use by agricultural operations.**

- **Program EJ-1.3.1:** Coordinate with Fresno County to implement Policy EJ-A.2 of the Fresno County General Plan, requiring mitigation for sensitive land uses near environmental concerns, with an emphasis on mitigation of pesticide spread and exposure.

**Policy EJ-1.4 Monitor environmental health impacts on populations in the city by participating in a community health workers collaborative partnership such as Promotores de Salud.**

- **Program EJ-1.4.1:** Establish a partnership between City and County healthcare workers to identify individuals to create a Promotores de Salud Program with the goals of:
  - Creating a bridge between the community and healthcare providers;
  - Providing healthcare education and information in a culturally appropriate and relevant manner;
  - Assisting community members in accessing and maintaining health services;
  - Counseling and supporting individuals; and
  - Advocating for the basic needs of the community.
- **Program EJ-1.4.2:** Identify and pursue funding to develop the Promotores de Salud Program and reimburse community healthcare workers for their involvement in the program.
- **Program EJ-1.4.2:** Through the Promotores de Salud Program, track current and future health conditions, including chronic health conditions, of community members to identify if air quality and health improvement policies are showing signs of success for residents.
- **Program EJ-1.4.3:** Using the results of the health conditions tracking, audit policies for their effectiveness at reducing health impacts for residents and update policies as applicable.
- **Program EJ-1.4.4:** If policy improvements are identified, involve public healthcare workers and community health workers in the policy development process to better understand the direct needs of community members and ensure healthcare providers have access to various treatment options for residents, as needed.

**Policy EJ-1.5 Increase urban greening across the city, prioritizing plans for areas where major roadways are located adjacent to sensitive land uses (parks, residential, schools).**

- **Program EJ-1.5.1:** Develop an urban greening task force consisting of City staff and the Fresno County Community Development Department and Public Works Department to lead the development of an urban greening plan for the City of San Joaquin, including the identification and prioritization of greening projects and potential funding sources such as the California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening grant.
- **Program EJ-1.5.2:** Identify and partner with a qualified arborist to develop guidelines on tree planting that include guidance on which species are native, water resilient, and drought-resistant to ensure that future tree planting is appropriate for the city and its climate.
- **Program EJ-1.5.3:** Partner with local environmental advocacy organizations to develop a focused tree-planting initiative by 2030 in the City of San Joaquin, with the goal of increasing the tree canopy across the city using appropriate, drought-resistant species.

- **Program EJ-1.5.4:** Conduct an inventory of street rights-of-way (ROW) locations within the city and prepare a strategic plan for tree/biofilter planting compatible with overarching railway safety, operation, and maintenance regulations.

## GOAL EJ-2

Residents of the City of San Joaquin are able to effectively protect themselves at home through pollution exposure education and in-home remediation.

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### POLICY

**Policy EJ-2.1. Explore funding and outreach opportunities to develop an At-Home Pollution Retrofit program to assist low-income homeowners and renters in acquiring the necessary upgrades to protect against indoor air pollution and poor drinking water quality associated with pesticide pollution.**

- **Program EJ-2.1.1:** Encourage eligible households to apply for SJVAPCD Clean Air Rooms Program to receive High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration devices to improve their indoor air quality.
- **Program EJ-2.1.2:** Partner with community-based organizations to apply for Community Air Grants provided by the California Air Resources Board to secure funding for home retrofits.
- **Program EJ-2.1.3:** Explore opportunities to apply for grants, such as the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Grant: Small, Underserved and Disadvantaged Community Grant Program or WIIN Grant: Reducing Lead in Drinking Water, to secure funding for water quality improvement projects.

**Policy EJ-2.2 Raise awareness and provide information to residents about the health consequences of poor air quality and potential strategies for personal adaptation.**

- **Program EJ-2.2.1:** Create and encourage the use of a notification system that sends automated text messages to residents that subscribe to the service to alert when air quality is hazardous.
- **Program EJ-2.2.2:** Direct residents to utilize the directions provided on the SJVAPCD website for do-it-yourself temporary air purifiers.

## GOAL EJ-3

Water resources within San Joaquin are safe for household and community use.

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### POLICY

**Policy 3.1 Ensure that the City's water quality is safe for community consumption, meeting or exceeding federal drinking water standards.**

- **Program EJ-3.1.1:** Annually test the City’s potable water to identify attainment statuses for all notable contaminants.
- **Program EJ-3.1.2:** Identify and pursue grant funding, such as WIIN grants or the EPA’s Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability grant program, to fund improvement projects for the municipal water system.

**Policy 3.2**     **Seek to reduce contaminated runoff from the agricultural areas by connecting with and encouraging local growers to explore voluntary methods to improve local water quality such as transitioning to organic farming, utilizing reduced tilling methods, and implementing various soil management practices.**

- **Program EJ-3.2.1:** Develop and publish voluntary clean water guidance for agriculture to ensure information on options is readily available online.
- **Program EJ-3.2.2:** Direct interested growers to apply for funding sources, such as the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Organic Transition Pilot Program, to aid in clean water management strategies to improve agricultural runoff.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY

### GOAL EJ-4

Transportation options for the City’s residents are safe and equitable.

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#### POLICY

**Policy EJ-4.1**     **Explore opportunities to connect with FCRTA to develop a plan to expand in-city and inter-city services in the City of San Joaquin.**

- **Program EJ-4.1.1:** Work with FCRTA to explore the feasibility of extending hours of the existing bus line later into the evening to allow for greater intercity travel and transportation flexibility for residents.
- **Program EJ-4.1.2:** Apply for and secure funding to subsidize transportation passes for bus and shuttle services for the City’s residents.
- **Program EJ-4.1.3:** Organize transportation priorities and identify where funding should be prioritized, for example, for the extension of bus lines for workers, people seeking medical care, students, or the elderly, and secure funding to provide additional services to the identified group(s).

**Policy EJ-4.2**     **Identify funding sources and areas of the city lacking complete streets in order to develop a plan to improve connectivity within the city.**

**Policy EJ-4.3**     **Create a Street Safety Plan that addresses potential barriers to safe travel such as adequate lighting, street visibility, defensible space, and public transit.**

- **Program EJ-4.3.1:** Identify and pursue funding sources to initiate a study and subsequent implementation to identify areas in the city in need of safety

improvements. Update this study bi-annually so areas of improvement can be identified and mitigated as needed.

## FOOD ACCESS

### GOAL EJ-5

Residents of the City of San Joaquin have adequate access to healthy and affordable food options.

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#### POLICY

**Policy EJ-5.1 Provide information to residents of the City of San Joaquin about available state and federal food access services, including the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).**

- **Program EJ-5.1.1:** When working with community members through government assistance and bill pay programs, the City will direct residents to visit the Fresno County CalFresh website for information on applications, benefit uses, additional information on county foodbanks, and other frequently needed information regarding SNAP or CalFresh.
- **Program EJ-5.1.2:** Encourage all residents receiving CalFresh benefits to sign up for the Providers app in order to track their benefit totals, payment dates, and locations of accepting retailers.

**Policy EJ-5.2 Improve affordability food by hosting City and County-led application support sessions where residents may work directly with San Joaquin and/or Fresno County Department of Social Services to apply for SNAP benefits.**

- **Program EJ-5.2.1:** Identify program leads that are able to assist in at first English and Spanish, and are knowledgeable on the SNAP program, its uses, and restrictions.
- **Program EJ-5.2.2:** Identify funding sources to be used to compensate City/County staff that assist with the program.
- **Program EJ-5.2.3:** Identify at least two community organizations to partner with prior to engaging in outreach to develop an outreach strategy that will have the furthest reach.

**Policy EJ-5.3 Promote access to locally grown produce and reduce barriers to establishing urban agriculture.**

- **Program EJ-5.3.1:** Through the Department of Parks and Recreation, partner with a local non-profit organization to establish a community food swap in the city at Peter Rusconi Park by the year 2027.
- **Program EJ-5.3.2:** Encourage businesses at City farmer's markets to accept WIC and SNAP benefits as payment sources.

**Policy EJ-5.4 Partner with local food banks and related non-profit organizations to develop a food pantry program within the city by the year 2027.**

**Policy EJ-5.5 Develop a food resource landing page on the City’s website where residents can access a map and schedule of all food banks in the city and surrounding areas, links to County food resources, nutrition tips and other useful information.**

**Policy EJ-5.6 Collaborate with local public schools to develop “Edible School Yard” programs that support access to healthy produce and provide nutritional education.**

- **Program EJ-5.6.1:** The City shall coordinate with Golden Plains Unified School District and local schools directly to discuss the feasibility and funding of establishing an “Edible School Yards” program by the year 2030.
- **Program EJ-5.6.2:** Work with local school districts to develop school-based programs that integrate educational components about locally grown fresh produce and nutrition. Explore funding opportunities to create school gardens to encourage students to learn about nutrition and improve access to fresh foods.
- **Program EJ-5.6.3:** Expand nutritional education through the Food and Agriculture Service-Learning Program to increase student knowledge on agricultural science and improve the nutritional health of children by increasing the capacity for food, garden, and nutrition education while fostering higher levels of community engagement between farms and school systems by bringing these groups together.
- **Program EJ-5.6.4:** Partner with State and federal agencies, such as the American Heart Association’s Teaching Garden Network, to identify funding sources to establish school gardens and related programming throughout the Golden Plains Unified School District.

**Policy EJ-5.7 Broaden local programs related to nutrition and healthy food access through the Department of Parks and Recreation.**

- **Program EJ-5.7.1:** The Department of Parks and Recreation shall explore the feasibility of developing a Food Forest Program at local parks that offers a natural and publicly accessible regenerative food production source, with a particular focus on establishing a Food Forest in the northern portion of the city.

# SAFE AND SANITARY HOMES

## GOAL EJ-6

Residents of San Joaquin benefit from proactive measures designed to ensure safe, healthy, and supportive living conditions.

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### POLICY

**Policy EJ-6.1 Work with Fresno County to establish and actively enforce a Lead Paint Program to remediate resident homes.**

- **Program EJ-6.1.1:** Pursue funding through EPA Renovate Right Program to train local residential contractors for certification as lead renovators to promote safe work practices and prevent lead contamination.
- **Program EJ-6.1.2:** Explore the feasibility of requiring contractor training and/or certification for safe work practices to conduct residential renovations for pre-1980s structures that may contain lead paint.
- **Program EJ-6.1.3:** Create an easily accessible, multilingual application that allows residents to submit applications online and in-person. This will be the first step to have a professional identify whether there is lead in the paint of applicant homes.
- **Program EJ-6.1.4:** Direct renters and homeowners to visit and apply for local settlement funds or HUD lead hazard grant funds, such as the Fresno County Lead Hazard Control Program, to address lead hazards in their homes.
- **Program EJ-6.1.5:** Continue to encourage residents to utilize funds from the Fresno County Housing Assistance Rehabilitation Program (HARP), the Fresno County Rental Rehabilitation Program (RRP), and the Fresno County Homebuyer Assistance Program.
- **Program EJ-6.1.6:** Explore the opportunity to establish and operate the rehabilitation programs listed below. To begin program operation, the City will partner with the County to allocate Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to the Minor Home Repair Program and Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program, and will seek additional funding to assist more households.
  - The Lead Hazard Control Program: provides grants for lead hazard remediation.
  - The Minor Home Repair Program (owner-occupied properties): a CDBG-funded program allowing lower-income homeowners the opportunity to make repairs and improvements.
  - The HOME-funded Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program: offers grants to qualified low- to moderate-income homeowners.



- The CalHome Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program: provides loans for lower-income households for home repairs necessary to eliminate blight for critical Disadvantaged Communities.

**Policy EJ-6.2 Inform residents about the dangers of in-home toxic material and pollution exposure (including lead, air pollution, asbestos) and the city resources available to address these issues.**

- **Program EJ-6.2.1:** By 2030, develop a Home Safety Guidebook mailer that informs residents about common household exposures and the city resources available to help resolve these issues.

**Policy EJ-6.3 Protect renters from adverse living conditions by disseminating information and resources regarding tenants' rights and home safety.**

- **Program EJ-6.3.1:** Direct residents to utilize the California Department of Real Estate Guide to Residential Tenants' and Landlords' Rights and Responsibilities for additional information regarding housing law and potential rights violations.
- **Program EJ-6.3.2:** Partner with local housing-focused community-based organizations, law firms, or organizations, such as Central California Legal Services (CCLS), that offer support to disadvantaged communities to secure residents in need with legal protection if necessary.
- **Program EJ-6.3.3:** Direct residents to visit the California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. website for information on submitting administrative complaints to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), eviction and lockout rights, or foreclosure.

**Policy EJ-6.4 Educate property owners on best practices for property management and incentivize property improvements.**

- **Program 6.4.1:** Partner with local community-based organizations to develop a guide to responsible property ownership outlining the legal and recommended methods of ensuring property safety.
- **Program 6.4.2:** Identify and pursue funding opportunities to develop a home-repair incentive program, assisting homeowners with the purchasing of home improvements for their properties.

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

## GOAL EJ-7

San Joaquin has equitable health outcomes through improved preventative health measures and awareness of early signs and symptoms of environmental health issues.

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### POLICY

**Policy EJ-7.1 Raise awareness of local risks and reduction strategies for respiratory health concerns such as asthma.**

- **Program EJ-7.1.1:** Establish a partnership with the Golden Plains Unified School District and Fresno County Department of Public Health to develop a guide on early signs of asthma awareness and emergency procedures for severe respiratory attacks.
- **Program EJ-7.1.2:** Connect local clinics with the Fresno County Department of Health to ensure that up-to-date information on treatment and medical costs are maintained.

**Policy EJ-7.2 Mitigate the severity of health risks associated with undiagnosed asthma by partnering with local elementary schools to develop an in-school asthma screening program.**

- **Program EJ-7.2.1:** Coordinate with the Fresno County Department of Public Health and Golden Plains Unified School District to develop an in-school asthma screening program at local elementary schools.
- **Program EJ-7.2.2:** Partner with the Golden Plains Unified School District to identify nurses and other health providers in schools to be trained in the California Department of Public Health Asthma Management Academy (AsMA).
- **Program EJ-7.2.3:** Coordinate with the Fresno County Department of Public Health and Golden Plains Unified School District to develop a city-wide response system for handling school days with poor air quality.

## GOAL EJ-8

San Joaquin residents have ample opportunity for physical activity to improve health outcomes.

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### POLICY

**Policy EJ-8.1 Ensure that all city parks and open spaces are safe for resident use by assessing and retrofitting existing facilities with adequate lighting, playground equipment, bathroom amenities, and green space.**

- **Program EJ-8.1.1:** Starting in the year 2026, perform an annual audit of existing park facilities to identify specific improvements and upgrades to be prioritized over the next fiscal year.

**Policy EJ-8.2 Continue to promote and broaden the availability and accessibility of City-sponsored public recreation programs to ensure that there are opportunities for physical activity for all demographics in San Joaquin, including the youth, senior citizens, and disabled residents.**

- **Program EJ-8.2.1:** Annually assess the recreational program offerings and identify funding to add programs to meet specific needs of the community.
- **Program EJ-8.2.2:** Identify and pursue grant opportunities, such as the Outdoor Equity Grants Program (OEP), to increase the ability of residents to participate in outdoor experiences within the community, at state parks, and other public lands.
- **Program EJ-8.2.3:** Identify and pursue grant opportunities, such as the Recreational Infrastructure Revenue Enhancement (RIRE) Program, to improve and enhance local park infrastructure.

**Policy EJ-8.3 Collaborate with local schools to disseminate informational materials in a variety of languages that encourage the use of active transportation in school commutes.**

- **Program EJ-8.3.1:** Adopt a Safe Routes to School Resolution as recommended in the 2019 Safe Routes to School Launch Program.
- **Program EJ-8.3.2:** Partner with the Golden Plains Unified School District and local parent groups to identify opportunities and chaperones for walk-to-school or ride-to-school days.

# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

## GOAL EJ-9

San Joaquin cultivates equity and empowerment through broad and inclusive civic engagement.

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### POLICY

**Policy EJ-9.1 Establish an engagement strategy that focuses on equity and inclusion in city procedures and decision-making processes.**

- **Program EJ-9.1.1:** Develop a standard for outreach that establishes requirements for various notification methods and opportunities for public participation, ensuring that each demographic group is adequately considered, when applicable.
- **Program EJ-9.1.2:** Host a series of workshops and open tables to allow residents to share their voices and to learn about and better understand community priorities.
- **Program EJ-9.1.3:** Partner with local agencies and non-profits to conduct ongoing periodic workshops to effectively and equitably engage area residents regarding city programs and projects (health services, major infrastructure, financial services, etc.).

**Policy EJ-9.2 Provide materials, information, and meeting facilitation in the languages most comfortably spoken by the community.**

- **Program EJ-9.2.1:** Offer interpretation services at all public meetings and workshops upon request.
- **Program EJ-9.2.2:** Provide instructions for requesting translation services on the City's Meeting webpage and on all meeting notification documents.
- **Program EJ-9.2.3:** Work with Fresno County to identify funding sources to provide interpretation and translation services, assistance in accessing community services and programs, and direct engagement with specific demographic groups.
- **Program EJ-9.2.4:** Provide all outreach and public resource materials in English and Spanish.

**Policy EJ-9.3 Develop strategic partnerships with trusted community leaders and local non-profit organizations to ensure that community engagement reaches broad and diverse facets of the community.**

- **Program EJ-9.3.1:** Establish a guide for equitable inclusion of community organizations and non-profits, utilizing established guidance such as from the Center for Health Care Strategies and the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington.
- **Program EJ-9.3.2:** Identify funding sources to compensate non-profit organizations for their continual efforts and support with the City's public outreach procedures.

- **Program EJ-9.3.3:** Encourage residents to join existing regional meetings between interested community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and the City to ensure that all groups have the opportunity to offer guidance and collaborate on mutual goals.

**Policy EJ-9.4 Ensure that community meetings are held at times and in locations that are accessible to diverse community members in San Joaquin.**

- **Program EJ-9.4.1:** Develop and carry out a community survey to collect information on resident availability and needs to improve public engagement.
- **Program EJ-9.4.2:** Based on the results of the survey, design an engagement standard that outlines the best location, time, and resource options to ensure that public engagement is done in a manner that best suits the needs of residents.

**Policy EJ-9.5 Partner with local schools to disseminate engagement materials for City meetings and programs through student hand-outs.**

**Policy EJ-9.6 Establish quarterly roundtables where community members are able to discuss their experiences with one another, direct questions to City staff, and get to know each other in order to build trust and understanding amongst residents.**

**Policy EJ-9.7 Disseminate a bi-annual City newsletter to inform residents about current community projects and the latest updates in City operations.**

- **Program EJ-9.7.1:** Starting in 2026, develop a bi-annual newsletter to inform residents about City news and operations.