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Public Facilities and Services

The quality of public facilities and services offered in a community can enhance the livability and economic potential of a community. This Element focuses on the variety of public facilities and services that are necessary to sustain existing households and businesses and to accommodate future population and employment growth. Public facilities addressed include water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater collection and drainage, solid waste, and electric, gas, and communication infrastructure. This Element also contains policy guidance to support public services, which include law enforcement, fire protection, schools, and libraries.



8.1 General Public Facilities and Services

The City of Rohnert Park and other agencies and organizations maintain a variety of public facilities and provide a variety of services to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. This section outlines the goal and policies that guide the overall provision of public facilities and services. Subsequent sections provide additional detail that is specific to each type of facility or service.

8.2 Parks and Recreation

Rohnert Park's abundant parks and recreation facilities contribute to the connectivity, character, health, and culture of the community. Residents can walk, bike, and play in the city's extensive network of parks and trails. The policies in this section seek to build upon the success of Rohnert Park and its recreational opportunities by promoting adequate accessibility, siting, park standards, and recreation programs to ensure a robust and sustainable parks and recreation system for all residents and visitors.

8.3 Water Supply and Conservation

Rohnert Park's water supply comes from three sources: Sonoma County Water Agency, which diverts water from its Russian River system, local groundwater, and recycled water purchased from Santa Rosa Water. The City uses these supplies conjunctively, relying on the Sonoma Water supply during normal and wet years and using groundwater more heavily during drier periods and emergencies.

Rohnert Park's water supply is generally regulated by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's Division of Drinking Water, which promulgates regulations, issues permits, and requires testing of both the potable and recycled water supplies. In addition to the water quality regulations outlined by the Division of Drinking Water, Rohnert Park is member of the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), a Joint Powers Authority created to respond to the requirements of the State's Groundwater Sustainability Act. The GSA, which adopted its required Groundwater Sustainability Plan in late 2021, has broad authority for protecting the groundwater in the basin. The City pioneered groundwater management with its 2004 Water Supply Policy Resolution, that works to limit groundwater pumping by the City to scientifically documented, sustainable rates.

The City has an important role to play in the long-term protection of this valuable resource and works with regional water agencies and surrounding jurisdictions to ensure a reliable, high-quality supply for its customers, and the goals and policies of this section will guide the City's decisions with respect to water supply.

8.4 Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Rohnert Park's sanitary sewer system facilities include over 87 miles of gravity sewer lines, over 10 miles of sewer force mains, 16 inverted siphons, and three pump stations. The City's terminal pump station delivers wastewater to the Santa Rosa's Laguna Subregional Water Reclamation Plant for treatment, recycling, and disposal. Policies in this section ensure the continued wastewater collection and treatment service for all residents and businesses in Rohnert Park.

8.5 Stormwater Management

Stormwater management is essential for minimizing the discharge of pollutants into natural waterways and improving surface water quality in and around the city. The City's storm drainage system is regulated by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and is operated under a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit that applies to the city and county systems that drain to the Russian River system. The goal and policies for stormwater management support adequate drainage and stormwater capture as well as the City's long-term compliance with current and evolving requirements for municipal storm sewer systems as well.

8.6 Solid Waste, Recycling, and Organics

The City of Rohnert Park contracts with Recology to perform curbside refuse, recycling, and compost pickup from the residents and businesses of the city. Reducing waste and diverting waste from landfills can help decrease greenhouse gas emissions and helps to reduce pollution caused by waste. The policies in this section support the provision of adequate service, reduction, and diversion of waste from landfills, and expansion of recycling programs and awareness for residents and businesses.

8.7 Law Enforcement

The Rohnert Park Public Safety Department provides police and fire protection. The Police Services Division provides police services including general law enforcement activities, traffic enforcement, criminal activity response, crime scene investigation, and apprehension of criminals. The Division is committed to addressing community and neighborhood issues through a Problem-Oriented Policing and Community-Based approach. The goal and policies in this section are intended to guide the provision of police services, create stronger community partnerships, and improve transparency and accountability in law enforcement in Rohnert Park.

8.8 Fire and Emergency Services

The Fire Services Division functions as a typical municipal fire agency responsible for protecting life and property. The policies in this section address a variety of priorities, including staffing levels, emergency response times, training, facilities, and equipment. The Hazards and Safety Element contains policies related to reducing fire hazards as well as emergency preparedness and response. Policies support the education of residents and businesses on the potential risks and fire prevention techniques and require existing and new development to incorporate fire prevention and suppression measures.

8.9 Electric and Gas Utilities

As described in the Climate Change Element, power supply in the city comes from electric and natural gas services. The City's long-term strategy for managing its GHG emission reduction goals includes converting a clean, electric power supply and minimizing the use of the natural gas. The goal and policies in this section support the maintenance, expansion, and modernization of the electrical system while ensuring that gas service remains safe as the city transitions away from this supply.

8.10 Communication Infrastructure

Telecommunications and broadband access are essential components of community and business infrastructure. These technologies can be used to promote social and economic development as well as human and technological capacity building. Increasing accessibility to high-speed broadband will require public and private strategies to ensure that Rohnert Park can continue to prosper. Increasingly, cities need to be on the cutting edge of new telecommunications technologies to attract and retain new businesses. The policies in this section support expanded and enhanced communication infrastructure to provide modern telecommunication and broadband access to businesses and residents in the city.

8.11 Schools and Libraries

The Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District (CRPUSD) provides educational services to the residents of Cotati and Rohnert Park. CRPUSD operates 11 schools, 10 of which are located within Rohnert Park city limits. Rohnert Park is also home to Credo High School and Pathways, both of which are charter schools. A branch of the Sonoma County Library system, the Rohnert Park-Cotati Regional Library, is also located in Rohnert Park. Policies in this section support the continued partnership between the City and the CRPUSD, the consideration of new schools for future growth areas, and supporting the services and activities provided by the Rohnert Park-Cotati Regional Library to promote opportunities for lifelong learning and educational enrichment for Rohnert Park residents.