



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This Element provides guidance for the logical and efficient expansion and/or upgrading of services and facilities in Merced County. Development in the County is dependent on a complicated network of public facilities and services. Each type of service has a unique set of challenges and must adapt to growth and change differently. Several types of County-provided public facilities and services are experiencing limitations including libraries, jail facilities, road maintenance, and Sheriff and Fire Department staffing. Although there is generally an adequate distribution of libraries and fire stations, County fiscal problems have kept staffing and equipment at minimum levels. While the County has historically experienced high rates of population growth in some areas, it has not been able to increase staffing of libraries, fire stations, or Sheriff "beats" to maintain a constant per capita service level.

Goals and policies in this element are organized under the following headings:

- Public Facility and Service Funding
- Wastewater
- Storm Drainage and Flood Control
- Solid and Hazardous Waste
- Utilities
- Law Enforcement
- Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
- Schools and Libraries
- Childcare

Note: Policies related to the supply and delivery of water are contained in the Water Element.

PUBLIC FACILITY AND SERVICE FUNDING

Upgrading or replacing public facilities is typically funded by service fees, surcharge fees, assessments, grants, loans, bonds, or other financial instruments. However, in general,

expansion or development of facilities is the responsibility of private developers. While public entities are responsible for the operation and maintenance of facilities, property owners within the service area are responsible for the costs of operation and maintenance of facilities and services, which is funded through assessments, charges, and fees for service.

Policies in this section seek to ensure that new development pays its share of the cost of providing new facilities and services. Policies also address the location and capacity of existing and future public facilities, as well as the funding necessary to provide these services.

Goal PFS-1

Ensure adequate funding for new, expanded, and upgraded public facilities and services. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-1.1: Funding Essential Services (FB)

Determine the acceptable minimum level for the efficient delivery and funding of essential County services. *[Source: Existing GP Policy LU.10.1]*

Policy PFS-1.2: Facilities Funding Mechanisms (FB)

Use a wide range of funding mechanisms to adequately fund capital improvements, maintenance, and on-going operations of publicly-owned and/or operated facilities, including:

- a. Establishing appropriate development impact fees;
- b. Establishing assessment districts; and
- c. Pursuing grant funding. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-1.3: Funding for Required Infrastructure Facilities (MPSP/FB)

Require new infrastructure facilities to be fully funded and that development contributes its proportionate share of costs by:

- a. Increasing public-private partnership opportunities for capital improvements as well as ongoing operations and service delivery costs;
- b. Requiring developers to fully fund their proportionate share of public infrastructure through a combination of impact fees, community facility districts, or through private funding sources; and
- c. Identifying and using existing financing mechanisms to fund capital facility expansion and ongoing maintenance costs. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-1.a]*

Policy PFS-1.4: Regional Coordination (IGC)

Support efforts to coordinate with regional and local agencies to

- a. Identify potential funding mechanisms;

- b. Pursue regional grant opportunities;
- c. Encourage consolidation of services;
- d. Create efficiencies between service districts; and
- e. Promote joint use facilities. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-2.d]*

Policy PFS-1.5: Public Facility Master Plans (MPSP)

Require regular updates of County Facility Master Plans to:

- a. Ensure that future public facilities are designed to meet projected long-term capacity needs in order to avoid unplanned expansion costs;
- b. Support and pioneer infrastructure master plans and facilities that further sustainable practices, including the following: pursue water reuse (i.e., greywater), encourage joint drainage and park facilities, and change drainage standards to allow for joint use;
- c. Coordinate with local service districts to ensure that sufficient water/wastewater treatment is available for unincorporated communities prior to directing additional growth to them;
- d. Evaluate levels of service on roadway maintenance;
- e. Consider establishment of a County water and wastewater system to serve unincorporated community development projects; and
- f. Encourage joint use facilities between the County and the cities, special districts, and other public agencies. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-2.b, BOS/PC Comment]*

Policy PFS-1.6: Maintenance and Operation Funding (FB)

Investigate additional funding mechanisms for future maintenance and operations including sheriff and fire facilities and storm drainage systems. These funding mechanisms could include the following:

- a. Sales tax increases for construction and facility replacement;
- b. Homeowners associations with enforceable covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs);
- c. Community Facilities Districts (CFDs);
- d. Landscape and lighting districts through the County Service Areas (CSAs); and/or
- e. Other assessment districts. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-2.c]*

Policy PFS-1.7: Infrastructure Investment Prioritization (FB)

Require infrastructure investments to be prioritized based on the following characteristics:

- a. Communities with the greatest need based on future growth or deficiencies in existing services; and/or
- b. Communities with the greatest economic potential. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-2.e, BOS/PC Comment]*

Policy PFS-1.8: New Development Financing (FB)

Require new development to provide adequate financing, where a nexus can be shown, that meets all identified public facility costs. *[Source: New Policy, PI Focus Group comment letter 9/9/08]*

Policy PFS-1.9: Public Safety Services (MPSP/FB)

Coordinate with cities and special districts to ensure adequate public safety services are provided countywide, and develop mechanisms to ensure financial resources are allocated for fire protection and sheriff patrol. *[Source: Existing GP Policy LU12.9]*

WASTEWATER

Several special districts, including community service districts, water districts, and sanitary districts provide sanitary sewer service within the unincorporated communities in the County. Unincorporated communities that lack sanitary sewer infrastructure are serviced by septic systems.

Merced County is facing several issues related to wastewater. The primary issue is that many communities have wastewater facilities that are near capacity and cannot provide additional sewage treatment services without being expanded/upgraded. Additionally, the improper location and/or operation of septic tanks and other individual wastewater systems in the County can affect the quality of groundwater and impair the use of water for domestic, recreation, and wildlife habitat purposes. The policies in this section support adequate wastewater capacity for development in unincorporated urban areas, promote the phasing of wastewater facilities in areas designated for growth, and encourage public education and monitoring for areas using septic systems.

Goal W-2

Ensure the adequate wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal within the County. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-2.1: Water and Sewer Expansion (MPSP/SO)

Encourage public sewer system operators to maintain and expand their systems to meet the development needs of the County. *[Source: Existing GP Policy CIR.4.1, Revised]*

Policy PFS-2.2: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Capacity (RDR/MPSP)

Require applicants for discretionary projects located within special district boundaries to provide a “Can and Will Serve” letter or other documentation from the appropriate sewer and/or water district demonstrating the commitment of capacity prior to acceptance of the discretionary application as complete. Discretionary applications generally include: general plan amendments, zone changes, conditional use, location

and development, tentative subdivision and administrative permit applications. *(Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-4.b, BOS/PC Comment)*

Policy PFS-2.3: Sewer and Water District Requirement (RDR)

Require at the final map or building permit stage for permitted developments proof of approved service from a local sewer and/or water district or approval from the County Health Department for on-site systems outside districts outside urban special districts service boundaries. For discretionary applications, a "Can and Will Serve" letter from the local sewer and/or water district shall be required as part of the application materials. For discretionary applications outside a district, initial clearance for processing must be obtained from the County Health Department for projects utilizing on-site systems. *[Source: Existing GP Implementation LU.1.3]*

Policy PFS-2.4: Intensive Processing Activities (RDR)

Discourage the development of intensive processing activities that have heavy wastewater discharge characteristics in areas identified as having high groundwater or drainage problems unless effective mitigation measures are available. *[Source: Existing Merced County GP Revised Policy OS.2.9]*

Policy PFS-2.5: Ground or Surface Water Contamination (RDR)

Prohibit wastewater disposal facilities that are determined to have the potential to contaminate the groundwater or surface water, on either a site-specific or cumulative basis. *[Source: Existing Merced County GP Revised Policy OS.2.8]*

Policy PFS-2.6: Septic System Standards (RDR/MPSP)

Require adequate standards for private septic systems to protect water quality and public health. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-2.7: Septic System Care Education (SO/JP)

Encourage and support programs to educate homeowners on the care and maintenance of private sewage disposal systems. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-2.8: Grant Application Assistance (FB)

Support communities and special districts in applying for State and Federal grants for major wastewater related expansions or upgrades when such plans promote the efficient solution to wastewater treatment needs for the area and County, and are consistent with adopted County General Plan and Community Plans. *[Source: Existing GP Implementation CIR.4.1, Revised]*

Policy PFS-2.9: Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrading (MPSP)

Encourage, where appropriate, upgrades to existing centralized or regional wastewater treatment plants to produce reclaimed water suitable for unrestricted reuse. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-4.a]*

STORM DRAINAGE AND FLOOD CONTROL

Some areas of Merced County are exposed to flooding due to periodic heavy rainfall, snowmelt, dam failures, and inadequate storm drainage systems. To prevent flooding in

Merced County, the County enforces stormwater and floodplain management practices. Developers are required to provide their own storm drainage systems within subdivisions in most unincorporated communities of the County unless there is a community system in place. With the exception of Hilmar, the County maintains these storm drainage systems. The policies in this section address storm drainage facility design and flood control for Merced County.

Goal PFS-3

Ensure the management of stormwater in a safe and environmentally sensitive manner through the provision of adequate storm drainage facilities that protect people, property, and the environment. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-3.1: Stormwater Management Plans (MPSP)

Require stormwater management plans for all Urban Communities to reduce flood risk, protect soils from erosion, control stormwater runoff, and minimize impacts on existing drainage facilities. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-3.2: Stormwater Facilities in New Development (RDR/MPSP)

Require that new development in unincorporated communities includes adequate stormwater drainage systems. This includes adequate capture, transport, and detention/retention of stormwater. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-3.3: Community Drainage Systems (MPSP/SO)

Encourage development of community drainage systems rather than individual project-level systems, in order to use land more efficiently and protect people, property and the environment in a more comprehensive manner. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.2.11]*

Policy PFS-3.4: Agency Coordination (IGC)

Coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other appropriate agencies to develop stormwater detention/retention facilities and recharge facilities that enhance flood protection and improve groundwater recharge. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-3.5: Pre-Development Storm Flows (MPSP)

Require on-site detention/retention facilities and velocity reducers when necessary to maintain pre-development storm flows and velocities in natural drainage systems. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-3.6: Retention/Detention Facility (RDR/MPSP)

Encourage stormwater detention/retention project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage, avoid floodplain areas, are visually unobtrusive and, where feasible, provide a natural watercourse appearance and a secondary use, such as recreation. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

Merced County does not operate solid or hazardous waste hauling operations. No transfer stations exist in the County, so most waste is collected through drop boxes and curbside collection. Within the County there are two active solid waste disposal/landfill facilities owned and operated by the Merced County Regional Waste Management Authority (MCRWMA): the SR 59 Landfill and the Billy Wright Landfill (BWL). The Department of Public Works operates a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility at the SR 59 Landfill that collects waste oil, batteries, household pesticides, antifreeze, e-wastes, and other household hazardous waste. The policies in this section focus on the collection and safe disposal of solid and hazardous waste generated in Merced County, as well as the recycling, composting, and overall reduction of waste.

Goal PFS-4

Ensure the safe and efficient disposal and recycling of solid and hazardous waste generated in the County. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-4.1: Landfill Buffers (RDR/MPSP)

Locate appropriate land uses and encourage larger parcel sizes around existing and abandoned (i.e., un-reclaimed) solid waste landfill sites. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.3.14; BOS/PC Study Session]*

Policy PFS-4.2: Landfill Location (RDR)

Require landfills to be located in areas that avoid health and safety risks and ensure that future adjacent land uses do not restrict landfill operations. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.3.15]*

Policy PFS-4.3: Spill Site Development (RDR)

Prohibit development on sites identified by Federal, State, or local agencies as spill sites or hazardous waste areas unless approved cleanup occurs prior to development. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.3.16]*

Policy PFS-4.4: Land Use Compatibility with Solid Waste Facilities (RDR)

Require solid waste facility sites and landfills are protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses, such as schools and homes. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-4.5: Solid Waste Service Availability (RDR)

Require all new development to adequately provide solid waste storage, handling, and collection through the development review and permitting process. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-4.6: Solid Waste Reduction (SO)

Support and promote feasible waste reduction, recycling, and composting efforts. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-4.7: Composting and Green Waste Facilities (SO)

Encourage the proper siting and operation of composting and green waste facilities in rural areas of the County. *[Source: New Policy, County staff]*

UTILITIES

Utilities are important service providers that support the expansion of the region's economic base, serve available developable land, and maintain and increase infrastructure capacity. Electric services in the County are provided by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Merced Irrigation District (MID), and Turlock Irrigation District (TID). PG&E provides all the natural gas services within Merced County. Telecommunication services are primarily provided by SBC/AT&T, with a wide range of other service providers in the market for wireless and long distance services. The policies in this section address the provision of utilities in Merced County, including natural gas, electric services, and communication systems.

Goal PFS-5

Ensure the provision of adequate utilities to the residents of Merced County. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-5.1: Adequate Utility Facilities and Services (SO)

Encourage the provision of adequate gas and electric, communications, and telecommunications service and facilities to serve the needs of existing and future residents and businesses. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-5.2: Utility Easements (RDR)

Require utility easements to be obtained on individual parcels at the subdivision map approval stage to provide adequate area for installation of improvements, including sewer, water, cable-television, and telephone lines. *[Source: Existing GP Implementation CIR.3.4]*

Policy PFS-5.3: New Transmission and Distribution Lines (RDR/MPSP)

Encourage new transmission and distribution lines within existing utility easements and right-of-ways, joint-use of easements among different utilities. *[Source: Existing GP Policy CIR.3.2; Existing GP Implementation CIR.3.1]*

Policy PFS-5.4: Electrical Interference (MPSP/SO)

Require mitigation of electrical interference to adjacent land uses in the placement of electrical and other transmission facilities. *[Source: Existing GP Policy CIR.3.3]*

Policy PFS-5.5: Contingency Plans (JP)

Require utility and pipeline companies and districts maintain contingency plans for responding to potentially hazardous situations such as pipeline breaks and fallen power lines. *[Source: Existing GP Implementation CIR.3.2]*

Policy PFS-5.6: Underground Power Transmission (RDR)

Require power transmission and distribution facilities to be located underground within urban communities and residential centers. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.3.10]*

Policy PFS-5.7: Utility System Expansion (RDR/JP)

Coordinate with local gas and electric utility companies in the design and location, and appropriate expansion of gas and electric systems, while minimizing impacts to agriculture and minimizing noise, electromagnetic, visual, and other impacts on residents. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-5.8: Communication Towers (RDR/SO)

Require compliance with the Wireless Communications Guidelines for siting of communication towers in unincorporated areas of the County. *[Source: Existing GP Implementation CIR.3.3, and GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-5.9: Communication Tower Design (RDR/SO)

Require new telecommunication infrastructure to be screened, camouflaged, or designed in such a way as to be nearly invisible from public areas. *[Source: New Policy, County Staff]*

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Sheriff's Department has the primary responsibility for protecting the life and property of the residents living in the unincorporated areas of Merced County. The Sheriff's Department is also responsible for investigation of all criminal activities occurring in unincorporated areas and apprehension of individuals who have violated the law. The policies in this section address the general characteristics of law enforcement facilities and services provided within Merced County by the Sheriff's Office and the divisions for which it is responsible.

Goal PFS-6	Ensure the provision of timely and adequate law enforcement through proper management and staffing of the Sheriff Department in Merced County. <i>[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]</i>
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Policy PFS-6.1: Staffing Levels (SO)

Encourage optimum staffing levels for both sworn Sheriff Deputies and civilian support staff in order to provide quality law enforcement services in Merced County. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-6.2: Sheriff Department Response Time Standards (SO)

Strive to achieve and maintain appropriate Sheriff Department response times for all call priority levels to provide adequate law enforcement services for all County residents. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-6.3: Pursue Grant Funding (FB)

Continue to pursue grants to fund additional staff positions, new law enforcement equipment and technology, educational programs for children and the public on the

dangers of drugs, and for other law enforcement activities that enhance the safety and welfare of Merced County residents. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-6.4: Fair Share (RDR)

Require new development to pay its fair share of the costs for providing law enforcement service facilities and equipment to new residents. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-6.5: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (RDR)

Include the Sheriff Department in the review of development projects, specifically for residential subdivision and commercial development, to adequately address crime and safety, and promote implementation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Merced County Fire Department provides a range of services and programs aimed at protecting the lives and property of the people of Merced County from the adverse effects of fire, medical emergencies, exposure to hazardous materials, or other dangerous conditions. The Policies in this section address the standards, equipment, and funding for providing coordinated fire protection and emergency services for Merced County. The policies ensure safety for existing and future County residents through the expansion of fire facilities commensurate with population growth.

Goal PFS-7

Provide adequate fire and emergency medical facilities and services to protect County residents from injury and loss of life, and to protect property from fire. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.1: Fire Staffing and Response Time Standards (SO)

Strive to maintain fire department staffing levels and response times consistent with National Fire Protection Association standards. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.2: Fire Protection Service Expansion (SO)

Strive to expand fire protection service in areas that are currently underserved or areas that experience growth in order to maintain adequate levels of service. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.3: Water Service Standards (RDR)

Require all development within unincorporated communities to be served by water supplies, storage, and conveyance facilities supplying adequate volume, pressure, and capacity for fire protection. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.4: Visible Signage (SO)

Ensure that all roads and buildings are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs in order to promote faster response times. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.5: Cooperative Service Agreements (SO/IGC)

Promote cooperative fire protection agreements with municipal and State and Federal forest agencies, and adjacent County fire departments to provide added fire protection on a year-round basis. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.6: Emergency Medical Service Staffing and Response Time Standards (SO)

Strive to achieve and maintain optimum staffing levels and appropriate response times to provide adequate emergency medical services for all County residents. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.7: Fire Facility Fees (RDR/JP/FB)

Require new development to pay its fair share of public facility fees for new fire station facilities, equipment, and staffing necessary to maintain the County's service standards in that area. New development may also be required to create or join a special assessment district or other funding mechanism, to pay the costs associated with the operation of a fire station. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.8: Fire Station Locations (SO)

Strive to locate new fire stations in areas that ensure the minimum response times to service calls. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.9: Fire Safety Standard Compliance (RDR)

Ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with fire safety standards by responsible local fire agencies per the Uniform Fire Code and other State and local ordinances. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-7.10: Adequate Fire Flows for Agricultural Facilities (RDR)

Require all agricultural commercial facilities to have adequate water supply and fire flows to meet the Uniform Fire Code and other State and local ordinances. *[Source: New Policy, County Staff]*

SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

There are a total of 20 school districts with 90 schools, one community college district with two campuses, and one public university in Merced County. Public primary education is overseen by the Merced County Office of Education, a regional agency whose mission is to provide educational leadership, resources, and service to assist school districts to be effective facilitators of learning for all pupils. In addition to the core programs offered, these districts provide many other social, health, and education-related programs and services for children, parents, and educators. New growth will also bring demand for new or expanded library facilities in the County. The policies in this section seek to maintain acceptable levels of service and ensure adequate funding for school and library facilities in Merced County.

Goal PFS-8

Coordinate with school districts, colleges, and universities to provide for the educational and literary needs of Merced County residents. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-8.1: Coordination with School Districts (IGC/SO)

Collaborate with school districts related to school facility planning issues by:

- a. Identifying trends in school enrollment and development to identify future changes in enrollment and ensure that school locations and attendance boundaries enhance communities;
- b. Encouraging policies to promote logical school district boundaries within a community; and
- c. Working with school districts during local planning processes and review of development proposals in regards to alternative funding needed for school facilities. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-5.a]*

Policy PFS-8.2: New School Location (RDR/SO)

Encourage school districts to site new schools in locations that are consistent with current and future land uses, safe for students to walk or bicycle to from their homes, and incorporated into larger neighborhoods that can serve multiple purposes. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-8.3: Adequate Transportation to School (IGC/SO)

Coordinate with school districts to ensure that circulation and transportation systems in unincorporated communities provide for the safe movement of students from home to schools, including considerations for pedestrian, bicycle, and overall safe routes to school. *[Source: New Policy, PI Focus Group]*

Policy PFS-8.4: School Overcrowding Solutions (SO)

Work with local school districts to develop solutions for overcrowded schools and financial constraints of constructing new facilities. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-8.5: Multiple-Use School Facilities (SO)

Encourage multiple-use school facilities, including opportunities for civic and cultural uses, recreation facilities, and service programs to efficiently provide for education, recreation, and community meeting space. *[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-5.b]*

Policy PFS-8.6: School Impact Fees (FB)

Support the efforts of school districts to obtain appropriate funding methods, including school impact fees. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-8.7: Incompatible Land Uses near Schools (RDR/IGC)

Coordinate with school districts to reduce the effects of incompatible land uses and noise adjacent to school facilities. *[Source: New Policy, PI Focus Group comment letter 9/9/08]*

Policy PFS-8.8: Library Facilities and Services (SO)

Encourage expansion of library facilities and services as necessary to meet the needs of future growth. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-8.9: University and College Expansions (SO)

Work cooperatively with the University of California, Merced Community College, and Merced Community College Westside Campus to support the expansion of curriculum, enrollment, and facilities at the University of California, Merced. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants, County staff]*

Policy PFS-8.10: School District Consultants (IGC)

Encourage early consultation between school districts and the County when proposing new, or modifying existing, school site locations. *[Source: New Policy, BOS/PC Study Session]*

CHILDCARE

Childcare facilities are an essential part of any community. Through supporting the provision of affordable childcare, the County can support working families, ensuring a more viable local economy and labor market. The policies in this section address the need for childcare facilities.

Goal PFS-9

Encourage the development of quality childcare services and facilities throughout the County. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-9.1: Zoning (RDR/SO)

Support childcare centers in business parks and other appropriate locations in the County with adequate safeguards in order to provide a needed service for working parents and a benefit to the community. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-9.2: Permit Streamlining (RDR)

Streamline the permit process to the extent practical to promote and support the development of family childcare homes and childcare centers. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-9.3: Childcare Facilities at Major Job Centers and Facilities (RDR)

Encourage the inclusion of childcare centers at major job centers and facilities to serve the employees of those centers, as well as those to whom the location provides convenient access. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants; BOS/PC Study Session]*

Policy PFS-9.4: Childcare Facility (SO)

Provide incentives or requirements for childcare facilities to be included in new employment centers. *[Source: Merced County Alternatives Report/Policy Options Summary Report, revised Policy Option ED-3.e]*

Policy PFS-9.5: Public Facilities Use (SO)

Encourage and support the use of public and faith-based facilities for childcare, in particular at those facilities where the connection with childcare is significant, such as schools and community and recreation centers. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-9.6: Location near Park and Recreational Facilities (SO)

Maximize the use and productivity of parks and recreation facilities by encouraging childcare facilities to be located adjacent to or nearby to allow children who are under care and supervision to use the public space. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

Policy PFS-9.7: Childcare Facility Compatibility (RDR)

Ensure that proposed childcare facilities will be compatible with surrounding land uses and review proposed land uses adjacent to these facilities for their compatibility with childcare operations. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Public Facilities and Services Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
Program PFS-A: Infrastructure Improvements and Funding Mechanisms (MPSP, FB, IGC) Prepare and adopt capital improvement programs for all County-owned and operated facilities and services to ensure consistency with the General Plan in order to maintain an adequate level-of-service. Coordinate with cities and special districts to identify and find solutions to key infrastructure deficiencies in existing communities. Require new development to fund infrastructure improvements necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development. <i>[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option ED-4.a and GPU Consultants]</i>		✓				✓
Implements Which Policies	PFS-1.1 through PFS-1.10					
Responsible Department	Public Works					
Supporting Department	Planning and Community Development, Sheriff, Parks and Recreation, Public Health, Library					
Program PFS-B: Alternative Rural Wastewater Systems (PSR) Prepare a study to evaluate alternatives for rural wastewater systems. Alternatives that could be evaluated include elevated leach fields, sand filtration systems, evapotranspiration beds, osmosis units, and holding tanks. For larger generators or group of users, alternative systems include communal septic tank/leach field systems, package treatment plants, lagoon systems, and land treatment. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>		✓				
Implements Which Policies	PFS-1.5, PFS-2.1 through PFS-2.10					
Responsible Department	Environmental Health					
Supporting Department	Planning and Community Development					
Program PFS-C: Wastewater System Standards (MPSP) Update onsite wastewater system standards consistent with guidelines proposed by the State Water Resources Control Board under Assembly Bill 885. <i>[Source: MCGPU Alternatives Report, Policy Option PIS-4.c]</i>		✓				
Implements Which Policies	PFS-2.1 through PFS-2.9					
Responsible Department	Environmental Health					
Supporting Department	Planning and Community Development					

Public Facilities and Services Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
Program PFS-D: Private Sewage Disposal Standards (PI) Prepare and distribute information on the care and maintenance of private sewage disposal systems. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>						
Implements Which Policies	PFS-1.5, PFS-2.1 through PFS-2.10		✓			
Responsible Department	Environmental Health					
Supporting Department	Planning and Community Development					
Program PFS-E: Integrated Waste Management Plan (MPSP, IGC) Coordinate with local agencies to prepare an update to the County’s Integrated Waste Management Plan to determine existing and projected waste disposal needs, methods of disposable land characteristics suited for disposable sites, and anticipated locations. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>						✓
Implements Which Policies	PFS-4.1 through PFS-4.6					
Responsible Department	Public Works					
Supporting Department	Environmental Health					
Program PFS-F: Capital Improvement Plan (MPSP) Regularly update and implement a Capital Improvement Plan that identifies impacts to County services and facilities from new development at both cumulative and project levels. The plan shall include, at a minimum, maintaining current (2010) fee structure for fire and Sheriff stations and equipment, road improvements, parks, libraries, and court facilities. Other possible funding sources for ongoing staffing and maintenance costs of these facilities will be investigated, including special benefit assessment districts, Mello-Roos or Marks-Roos community facility districts, and development agreements. <i>[Sources: Existing GP Implementation LU.10.2, GPU Consultants]</i>						
Implements Which Policies	PFS-1.1 through PFS-1.10		✓			
Responsible Department	County Administration					
Supporting Department	Public Works					

Public Facilities and Services Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
Program PFS-G: Childcare Facility Incentives (MPSP) Develop a formula for granting a bonus in density or intensity of use for commercial, industrial, and residential projects that provide child care facilities. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>			✓			
Implements Which Policies	PFS-9.3, PFS-9.4, PFS-9.5, PFS-9.6					
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Child Support Services					