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**Responsible Agency:** Planning, Engineering, County Geologist

**Schedule:** On going.

**Program 8.C:** The City shall require geological studies of the less well-defined traces of the Garnet Hill and San Andreas faults shown on Exhibit S-4 for critical facilities proposed within this zone. The studies shall be conducted by State-certified engineering geologists.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning, Engineering

**Schedule:** On going.

**Policy 9:** Where development is proposed in areas identified as being subject to geotechnical hazards (including, but not limited to slope instability, soil collapse, liquefaction and seismically induced settlement), the City shall require the preparation of site-specific geotechnical investigations by the applicant prior to completion of CEQA studies and development approval. All such studies shall include mitigation measures that reduce associated hazards to insignificant levels.

**Policy 10:** To avoid and minimize soil erosion, all grading, earthwork, and construction activities shall be in accordance with applicable fugitive dust control ordinances and regulations, including those established by the City, CVAG, SCAQMD, and other appropriate agencies.

**Policy 11:** To minimize the potential impacts of subsidence due to the extraction of groundwater, the City shall actively support and participate in local and regional efforts at groundwater conservation and recharge.

**Policy 12:** Restrict development along the foothills to minimize the potential impacts of slope failure. In addition, minimize grading and modification to the natural topography to prevent potential for man-induced slope failures.

**Program 12.A:** The City shall discourage any grading beyond that necessary to create adequate and safe building pads. The Engineering and Consulting Geotechnical Engineer shall conduct regular inspection of grading operations to maximize site safety and compatibility with community character.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning, Engineering, Consulting Geologist

**Schedule:** On going.

**Program 12.B:** In the hillside or mountainous areas of Cathedral City, the City shall discourage excessive grading of slopes greater than 3:1 (horizontal:vertical), and shall encourage varied slope ratios on design slopes to reduce the visual impact of grading. Cut or fill slopes steeper than 2:1 shall not be permitted.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning, Engineering

**Schedule:** On going.

**Policy 13:** The City Shall ensure to the fullest extent possible that, in the event of a major geologic disaster, dependent care and high-occupancy facilities will remain safe.

**Policy 14:** The City's Fire Department, as part of their annual inspections of businesses and dependent care facilities and schools, shall encourage and educate the owners or operators about maintaining accessibility following and earthquake, emergency backup power, and securely anchored shelves, computers and other equipment, and other non-structural elements.

# Hazards and Hazardous Materials Sub-Element

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hazards and Hazardous Materials Sub-Element is to identify, assess threats and protect the general public from hazards and hazardous materials within the community. It also provides guidance and methods to safely manage these hazards. As a part of the Safety Element, it is related to Emergency Preparedness Element and others. Primary issues addressed in this sub-element include hazards management and the transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste, and the release of hazardous materials during construction and manufacturing. Hazards may also include exposure to safety and high noise levels associated with aircraft operations at nearby airports. Management of the hazardous materials is important and necessary to protect the community and the environment. As urban growth continues in the City, it becomes increasingly important to safely manage hazardous materials.

## BACKGROUND

One of the principal objectives of the General Plan is to protect the community from exposure to environmental hazards, including hazardous materials, by minimizing associated health risks and ensuring that use of hazardous materials does not adversely affect environmental resources. The policies and programs set forth in this sub-element are intended to assure effective and safe use, storage, and transport of hazardous and toxic substances in the City.



Government Code Section 65302(g) requires that General Plans include policies and programs that minimize the exposure of the community to hazardous materials. Responsibility for regulating and monitoring the management, disposal, labeling, and use of toxic and hazardous materials lies with a variety of federal, state, county and local agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Office of Health Planning and Development, and the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health Certified Unified Program Agencies. AB 2948 (Chapter 1504, Statutes of 1986), commonly known as the Tanner Bill, authorizes counties to prepare Hazardous Waste Management Plans (HWMP) in response to the need for better management of hazardous materials and waste products. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB), as well as DWA and CVWD, maintains information concerning contaminated water wells and groundwater.

### Hazardous Materials Defined

Under Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the term hazardous substance refers to both hazardous materials and hazardous wastes that are classified according to four properties: toxicity, ignitability, corrosiveness, and reactivity (CCR Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 3). According to Title 22, "A hazardous material is defined as a substance or combination of substances that may cause or significantly contribute to an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating illness or may pose a substantial presence or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of, or otherwise managed." Products as diverse as gasoline, paint solvents, film solvents, chemicals associated with cannabis products manufacturing, pool chemicals, household cleaning products, refrigerants, and radioactive substances are categorized as hazardous materials.

State and federal agencies regulate hazardous materials. The Hazardous Waste Control law (Chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code) and Title 26 of the California Code of Regulations list more than 800 potentially hazardous materials and establish criteria for identifying, packaging, and disposing of such wastes. Under these regulations, the generator of hazardous waste material must complete a manifest that accompanies the material from the point of generation to transportation to the ultimate disposal location, with copies of the manifest filed with State Department of Toxic Substance Control.

### **Hazardous Materials Management and Transport**

One of the City's primary concerns is that businesses are housed in buildings which are properly rated for their level of hazardous material use. Proper housing of hazardous materials is enforced through the Hazardous Material Disclosure Program<sup>17</sup>, which is administered by the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health. Under this program, businesses are required to identify the type and quantity of the hazardous materials they handle. This information is updated each year and Environmental Health carries out site inspections to determine compliance with the company's business plan and applicable regulations. The City Emergency Manager maintains a copy of the list of these businesses. In 2018, there are 36 locations in the Cathedral City that are categorized as LUST Cleanup Site, Land Disposal Site, or Permitted Underground Storage Tank (UST). These sites are regulated by the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health.

Hazardous materials are transported on the City's roads and freeways, as well as on UPRR lines. Both the East Palm Canyon Drive/Highway 111 and Interstate-10 and Union Pacific Railroad corridors cross through the City and are used for transporting chemicals, flammable fuels, wastes and other potentially hazardous materials. East Palm Canyon Drive and Interstate-10 are principal east-west thoroughfares where trucks carry these materials. Date Palm Drive, Landau Boulevard, Dinah Shore Drive, Ramon Road, and Vista Chino are on truck routes that could be used for hazardous materials transportation.

The City's Fire Department and the Riverside County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Response Team respond to all hazardous material incidents within Cathedral City. The California Highway Patrol responds to spills on Interstate-10 and works in conjunction with local authorities to manage traffic diversion and any off-highway effects.

### **Hazardous Waste and Sewage Disposal**

Over the past several decades, an area of concern in the Coachella Valley and the Cathedral City area has been the impact of long-term septic tank use on groundwater resources. Contamination problems have not been particularly evident, although impacts on the lower portions of alluvial cones with extensive upslope residential development are areas where septic tank effluents have affected groundwater. Monitor wells in the Cathedral Cove area have shown elevated levels of nitrate and other contaminants; however, the recent extension of sewage collection system throughout the Cove has reduced the effects of on-lot septic systems on local groundwater.

## **HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANS**

### **Riverside County Hazardous Waste Management Plan**

AB 2948 (Chapter 1504, Statutes of 1986), commonly known as the Tanner Bill, authorizes counties to prepare Hazardous Waste Management Plans (HWMP) in response to the need for safe management of hazardous materials and waste products. Originally adopted by the County and approved by the state in 1990, the County HWMP was established to identify the types and amounts of wastes generated in the County and enact programs for managing these wastes. The HWMP identifies the type and quantity of hazardous waste generated in the County. It projects future quantities likely to be generated, and includes goals, policies, and standards for the management of hazardous waste. Also, the HWMP establishes procedures for the siting of new hazardous materials treatment, storage, and disposal facilities.

<sup>17</sup> Riverside County Department of Environmental Health.

HWMP policies require the County to coordinate its efforts with state and federal agencies in the identification and establishment of programs for managing these wastes. As an integral part of the County HWMP, the City hazardous waste management policies of the General Plan are basically extensions of the County Plan and are hereby incorporated by reference.

### **Countywide Integrated Waste Management**

The Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) was prepared in accordance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, Chapter 1095 (AB 939). AB 939 redefined solid waste management in terms of objectives and planning responsibilities for local jurisdictions and the state. AB 939 requires each of the cities and unincorporated portions of counties throughout the state to divert a minimum of 25% of the waste stream by 1995 and 50% of the solid waste landfilled by the year 2000. To attain these goals for reductions in disposal, AB 939 established a planning hierarchy utilizing new integrated solid waste management practices.<sup>18</sup> The Riverside County revises the CIWMP every five years and publish a Five-Year Review Report to assure that the County's waste management practices remain consistent with the hierarchy of waste management practices. The City has developed a *Refuse and Recycling Guide* to further waste diversion.

### **Cathedral City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Cathedral City coordinates with appropriate county, state and federal agencies in the identification of hazardous material sites, and the active regulation of their timely cleanup. Management strategies include establishing and maintaining information on impact sites, and periodic monitoring of facilities and operations that produce, utilize or store hazardous materials in the city. Involvement in multi-agency monitoring of illegal dumping in the City, conferring in the regulation of underground storage tanks and septic systems, and regulating the transport of hazardous materials through the community is coordinated by the Engineering and Public Works Department.

In compliance with AB 2140, the City prepared its first Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) in 2012. The purpose of the LHMP is to integrate hazard mitigation strategies into the City's daily activities and programs. The LHMP assesses risk from earthquakes, transportation accidents, transportation system loss, wild land/urban interface fires, terrorism, nuclear accidents, utility loss or disruption, water and wastewater disruption, hazardous materials incidents, information technology loss or disruption, severe weather, explosions, economic disruption, floods, drought, dam failure, and special events. The LHMP for the City of Cathedral City planning area was developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and followed FEMA's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan guidance. The LHMP incorporates a process where hazards are identified and profiled. The people and facilities at risk are analysed, and mitigation actions are developed to reduce or eliminate hazard risk. The implementation of these mitigation actions, which include both short and long-term strategies, involving planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other activities, is hereby incorporated into the General Plan Safety Element and the 2040 Hazards and Hazardous Materials Sub-Element (<http://www.cathedralcity.gov/home/showdocument?id=6670>).

### **Household Hazardous Waste**

Residential use of household chemicals, automobile batteries and used oil, paint and similar materials result in hazardous waste and the need for its safe and responsible disposal. The County offers a number of services for the disposal of residential hazardous wastes. These include the "ABOP" (Antifreeze, Batteries, Oil and Latex Paint) site, located at the Palm Springs Fire Department Training Center in Palm Springs, which will dispose of these materials for residential users. The facilities will take up to 5 gallons or 50 pounds of materials per trip, and all materials must be clearly marked and sealed. The site is open every Saturday, and will only take materials from individuals. No business wastes are accepted.

<sup>18</sup> Riverside County Department of Waste Resources.

### **Hazardous Materials Emergency Response**

Pursuant to the Emergency Services Act, California has developed an Emergency Response Plan to coordinate emergency services provided by Federal, State, and Local governmental agencies and private persons. Response to hazardous materials incidents is one part of this plan, which is administered by the State Office of Emergency Services (OES). The OES coordinates the responses of other agencies, including the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB), the local air quality management districts (in this case, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)), and local agencies.

As a part of its emergency mitigation and outreach program, Cathedral City maintains fire safety programs in schools and throughout the year at special community events. The City Fire Department maintains Mutual Aid Agreements for fire and emergency medical services with the Riverside County Fire Department and the Palm Springs Fire Department. (see Riverside County OA MJHMP). The Fire Department hosts Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) and Teen CERT to the public, regardless of their residency status in Cathedral City.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Cathedral City will continue to coordinate with the appropriate agencies in the identification of hazardous material sites, and the active regulation of their timely cleanup. A long-term goal of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is to assimilate mitigation strategies into the City's day-to-day functions, and to periodically update the plan as needs, regulations and capabilities evolve. This element sets forth general goals, policies and programs that extend and reference the LHMP and other emergency coordination programs addressing community hazards and hazardous materials.

### **GOAL, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

**Goal 1:** A community and environment that is safe from the threat of hazardous conditions and hazardous and toxic materials.

**Policy 1:** Utilizing the resources available through the County of Riverside and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, maintain current data on hazardous materials users within the planning area.

**Program 1.A:** Update the City's data on hazardous materials users quarterly, by regularly contacting the County Department of Environmental Health and the Regional Water Quality Control Board and reviewing online databases or lists.

**Responsible Agencies:** Fire Department; County Environmental Health Department; Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Program 1.B:** Coordinate with responsible agencies to assure enforcement of state and federal regulations for the testing and monitoring of underground fuel storage tanks for leakage.

**Responsible Agencies:** Public Works Department; Planning; Fire Department; State and US EPA; County Health Department

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Program 1.C:** A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) shall be required for all new development that generates, transports, or stores hazardous materials and shall be so reflected in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

**Responsible Agencies:** Planning and Fire Department

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Policy 2:** Encourage and facilitate the adequate and timely cleanup of existing and future contaminated sites within the City and its sphere-of-influence.

**Program 2.A:** Coordinate with responsible county, state and federal agencies to activate cleanup procedures, and monitor the status of cleanup efforts on an ongoing basis.

**Responsible Agencies:** Fire Department; State and federal EPA; County Health Department; CRWQCB

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Policy 3:** The City shall thoroughly evaluate development proposals for lands directly adjacent or in proximity to sites know to be contaminated with hazardous or toxic materials.

**Policy 4:** The City shall designate appropriate access routes to facilitate the transport of hazardous and toxic materials and wastes.

**Program 4.A:** Coordinate with the Fire Department, Police Department, neighboring jurisdictions, and other appropriate agencies to identify segments of highway or local roads that shall be restricted from transporting hazardous and toxic materials.

**Responsible Agencies:** Planning; Fire Department; Police Department

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Program 4.B:** Enforce roadway access restrictions and consider the implementation of fines or penalties for violations.

**Responsible Agencies:** Public Works; Fire Department; Police Department

**Schedule:** Continuous

**Policy 5:** The Fire Department shall maintain a citywide Emergency Operations Plan, which provides for emergency services in the event of a hazardous spill or airborne release.

**Policy 6:** Encourage households and small businesses to dispose of hazardous and toxic wastes in accordance with county, state, and federal regulations.

**Program 6.A:** Continue to distribute information materials provided by the County and the Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding proper management and disposal of household hazardous and toxic wastes, and also post information on the City web site.

**Responsible Agencies:** Environmental Conservation Manager, County Environmental Health

**Schedule:** Immediate; Continuous

**Program 6.B:** Implement the Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE) as prepared by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and its member cities.

**Responsible Agencies:** Engineering, Public Works

**Schedule:** Immediate; Continuous

**Policy 7:** The City shall actively oppose plans for hazardous or toxic waste dumps, landfills, or industrial processes that may potentially adversely affect the City and its Sphere-of-Influence, and shall participate in the identification of alternative sites.

**Policy 8:** Confer and coordinate with the CVWD, DWA, and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board in the regulation, monitoring, and phased removal of subsurface sewage disposal systems.



# Emergency Preparedness Sub-Element

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Emergency Preparedness Sub-Element is to provide information on emergency response services and plans currently (2018) in effect. It outlines critical facilities and services necessary to respond adequately to emergencies, and discusses potential impacts of natural and man-made threats which could significantly affect the City. Finally, the Sub-Element sets forth the goals, policies and programs that have been developed by the City to ensure adequate preparation for and response to such emergencies, and to minimize human and economic losses.

## BACKGROUND

This Sub-Element is included as part of the overall discussion and planning regarding general environmental hazards and is in accordance with Government Code Section 65302(g), which mandates that General Plans address hazards such as seismic disturbances and their effects, and “other geologic hazards ... flooding; and wildland and urban fires.” As an integral part of the Safety Element and its other sub-elements, the Emergency Preparedness Sub-Element is related to other elements, including Circulation and Mobility, and Public Services and Facilities.

As discussed throughout the Safety Element, the City and its planning area are subject to a variety of environmental conditions and hazards that can precipitate a local, city-wide or region-wide emergency. These conditions include high seismicity and associated hazards, local and regional flooding, high and erosive winds, major rail and highway facilities and associated accident potential, and other land uses and activities that could prompt an emergency response.

### Emergency Scenarios

Portions of the City are crossed by the San Andreas Fault Zone and are vulnerable to seismically-induced ground shaking, ground rupture, slope failure, rockfalls and landslides, ground subsidence and soils liquefaction. These seismic hazards and related structure damage, as well as urban wildfires, flooding, and hazardous materials releases all require emergency planning. The potential for man-made emergencies, such as power outages, major accidents involving trains, motor vehicles or aircraft, also exists. More current concern over urban terrorism and increasing incidents of school shootings and other forms of violence, may also necessitate an emergency response.

### Inter-Agency Coordination

On a regular and ongoing basis, Cathedral City consults and coordinates with the Riverside County Emergency Management Department (EMD), which tasked with developing and implementing new and better ways to solve issues and adapt to future changes in the fields of emergency management and emergency medical services in the City and regionally.<sup>19</sup> Riverside County EMD works alongside the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), and is a part of Cal OES Region VI,<sup>20</sup> which consists of the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, Inyo, Mono, and San Diego. The Operational Area (OA) is the intermediate level of the State's emergency services organization and is made up of County government, local (city) governments, school districts, and special districts located within the Riverside County area.

*“By failing to prepare we are preparing to fail.”*

*“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”*  
Benjamin Franklin

*“There is no harm in hoping for the best as long as you're prepared for the worst.”*  
Stephen King

<sup>19</sup> County of Riverside Emergency Management Department Annual Report (2016).

<sup>20</sup> California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Fire and Rescue Division – Regional Assistant Chief Map (2018).









## CRITICAL FACILITIES

Critical facilities such as hospitals, police and fire stations, governmental operations, communications centers and utility facilities form a vital network implementing emergency preparedness plans in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency. Support facilities, such as fire and police communications, auxiliary personnel and commercial radio stations, can support the primary critical facilities by providing information and direction to the public during a crisis. The City also relies on the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) organization for amateur radio communications county-wide during a disaster, which is a protocol created by the FEMA and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC Part 97, Section 407).



Emergency access, including evacuation routes and routes for the transport of the injured, peak-load water supply and delivery, and airport services must also be considered. It is important to take into account transportation system constraints, which may hinder ground-based access or delivery of supplies and emergency services to the affected areas.

Number of the critical facilities and infrastructure within the Cathedral City is given below:

**Table S-3**  
**Critical Facilities in the City**

<b>Critical Facilities Type</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
Public Safety Dispatch	1
Emergency Operations Center	2
City Hall	1
Fire Stations	3
Water Reservoirs	6
Water Treatment Plants	0
Waste Water Treatment Plants	0
Health Care Facilities	4
Police facility	1
Maintenance Yards	1
Senior Community Centers	3
Schools	10
Radio Repeaters	2
Source: Cathedral City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2017)	

## EMERGENCY ACCESSIBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

Immediate access to impacted areas by emergency personnel and supplies is essential after a disaster. East Palm Canyon Drive, Dinah Shore Drive (Mid-Valley Parkway), Ramon Road, Date Palm Drive and US Interstate-10 are major intercity and regional access routes serving Cathedral City. These arteries, including their bridges and overpasses, could be blocked or damaged in the event of a major disaster, including major earthquakes or floods, urban wildfires, major truck or rail accidents, or by other natural or manmade disasters. The loss of freeway overpasses, bridges over the Whitewater River, or the closing of roads due to rockfalls or landslides would each impede the delivery of emergency services and supplies.

The City is generally well protected from major flooding by extensive drainage facilities, including levees and channels adjacent to the Santa Rosa Mountains and passing through the City. All-weather crossings over the Whitewater River currently exist at Date Palm Drive, Ramon Road and Dinah Shore Drive. and East Palm Canyon Drive crosses the East and West Cathedral Canyon Washes. Planned all-weather crossings include the Cathedral Canyon Drive and Vista Chino bridges, which will provide additional all-weather crossings of the Whitewater River. Other parts of the City are susceptible to major flooding and possible isolation from major transportation links and the rest of the community. Lands at the west end of the City, and north and south of East Palm Canyon Drive, are located in an AO flood zone with possible inundation depths of one to three feet. In the northern portion of the City, lands north and south of I-10 are also susceptible to major flooding, which could affect access and isolate these lands from emergency services.

The City shall continue to coordinate with Caltrans, the Federal Highway Administration, CVAG, adjoining cities and Riverside County, as well as Sunline Transit Authority, to provide the highest functional reliability of major roadways and the public transportation system serving the City and the region. The City shall also continue to coordinate with Riverside County Flood Control, the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to address continuing flooding hazards that threaten people and property, and which may isolate portions of the community during disasters. Programs shall be developed to identify and address weak links in the circulation system, in conjunction with the efforts of other Coachella Valley jurisdictions.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### City Fire Department and EMS

Emergency medical services are provided by the City Fire Department and include paramedic services on-site and during emergency transport. Backup services are provided by the private provider American Medical Response (AMR) in the City and valley. AMR maintains a ring-down communication line with City Fire Department dispatchers and has ambulances staffed with Emergency Medical Service personnel (paramedics). AMR can link with California Highway Patrol to provide airlift capabilities based out of the Thermal Airport, and with Mercy Air, which operates out of Banning. The Palm Springs International Airport is located within 5 miles of most portions of Cathedral City and provides an important access point for helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft.

### Local Hospitals

There are three valley hospitals (Eisenhower Medical Center, Hospital and Desert Regional Medical Center) and John F. Kennedy Memorial that can provide care and personnel in the event of an emergency in the Cathedral City. These are located at:

#### Eisenhower Medical Center

39000 Bob Hope Drive  
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

#### Desert Regional Medical Center

1150 N Indian Canyon Drive  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

#### John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital

47111 Monroe St  
Indio, CA 92201



These three hospitals provide emergency medical services with 24-hour emergency rooms but differing levels of service.

Eisenhower Medical Center and Desert Regional Medical Center have 550 and 369 beds, respectively. Only Desert Regional Medical Center has a trauma care center, a Level II Trauma Center certified by California Emergency Medical Services. John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital currently has 145 beds Also see the *Public Services and Facilities Element*.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Cathedral City's emergency responders, including Fire and Police services, cooperate and coordinate closely with other valley cities and the County on an on-going basis. In the event of a local or valley-wide emergency, agency cooperation, coordination and joint emergency simulations are essential to providing continuity of basic services and to manage large-scale emergency operations.

The City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP, 2015) is based on the functions and principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is based on the FIRE SCOPE Incident Command System (ICS). SEMS is the cornerstone of California's emergency response system and the fundamental structure for the response phase of emergency management. The system unifies all elements of California's emergency management community into a single integrated system and standardizes key elements. The City's Emergency Operations Plan addresses emergency planning, organization, and response policies and procedures. It also addresses the integration and coordination of the City with other governmental levels when required.

State and national organizations, such as the American Red Cross and the National Guard, have specific roles in emergency management. American Red Cross provides emergency assistance to families and communities in disasters, such as earthquake, fire, or flood, providing assistance with shelter, clothing, medical supplies, mental health counseling, and other emergency needs. It also provides disaster and first aid supplies.

The National Guard provides supporting emergency response to battle fires and help communities deal with floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms or other emergencies. The Guard also provides emergency services during the times of civil unrest within communities, state or nation. The State National Guard will primarily serve as a peace-keeping or security force, unless required to function otherwise by an emergency declaration by the President of the United States. Should a large-scale regional or state-wide emergency require airlifting of stable injured individuals out of the State to make room for more severely injured, less mobile persons, the National Guard has the capability to provide that service.

### Emergency Operations Center

The City of Cathedral City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located at Fire Station 412 at 32100 Desert Vista Road, just south of Ramon Road. It provides a location, facilities and staffing that allows a coordinated central command and control of the emergency response. The EOC is responsible for strategic direction and operational decisions, and does not typically directly control field assets, instead leaving tactical decisions to lower commands. Common EOCs functions include data and information collection and analyze; making decisions that protect life and property, maintaining continuity of the response. Professional staff and communications assets are the primary components of the EOC.

### City Emergency Response Programs

The City's *Fire Suppression Program* is designed to reduce injuries, deaths, environmental damage, and property losses due to medical emergencies, fires, hazardous materials incidents, and physical and natural disasters within the City. Fire suppression personnel perform public education programs, company fire prevention inspections, and cause and originate investigations to prepare the City and community for emergencies and/or disasters. They also maintain all emergency response apparatus, equipment and facilities on a daily basis. The City's *Paramedic Services Program* provides advanced life support and emergency ambulance transport services. The City's *Disaster Preparedness Program* provides for the needs of the community before, during and after a disaster, including the CERT program, EOC equipment and supplies, and staff training.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Cathedral City has devoted substantial resources to its disaster preparedness efforts and is ensuring that response plans and systems are maintained and upgraded to keep pace with population growth, new construction, business development, and growth-induced circulation issues. The City must also consider that the expansion of its planning area requires extension of emergency services to areas north of US I-10, which could be cut off from the rest of the City in a major flood or earthquake.

The City's emergency management efforts must continue to include educating residents about their need to prepare household emergency plans and to stockpile supplies, which will render them self-sufficient for a period of at least 72 hours during an emergency. The City must remind homeowners of this challenging task, as other daily priorities and concerns quickly overtake the initial sense of urgency immediately following an emergency. This initiative is a part of the City's planning and the City should continue to develop and implement this program.

The City shall continue to work with neighborhood and homeowner associations to assist in their establishment and use of the CERT structure, and provide pre-appraisal of the development's facilities, on-site triage and first aid training, and education about initial responses to emergencies and supplies needed. The City may also want to explore offering incentives to increase the number of residents and neighborhoods participating in CERT, as such participation would effectively reduce immediate strain on City resources during an emergency.

Nursing homes, licensed day care facilities and private schools, all of which serve potentially vulnerable populations, are required to develop disaster plans. However, since these are non-public agencies, they may not be part of established communications networks or back-up systems. Following an earthquake, the City will conduct basic damage assessments of nursing home facilities, but resources may not allow more than a preliminary status check. A more established planning system, which would incorporate skilled nursing facilities into the CERT program, should be explored. It is also critical that the staff at such facilities is fully educated regarding what resources and chain of communication they can access in the event of emergencies.

Private schools and licensed day care facilities should also be included in a comprehensive education and information program, which trains them regarding available resources and also encourages them to adequately prepare for potential disasters. The City shall also coordinate department heads and other staff to ensure that disaster planning for City facilities is current, workable and that appropriate personnel are adequately informed regarding coordination of disaster planning and appropriate responses to emergencies affecting City facilities. The City shall ensure adequate resources are dedicated to identifying and cross-training additional staff to strengthen the City's in-house emergency response and allow for expansion of services to improve contingency planning with all sectors of the community.

## GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

**Goal 1:** A detailed, integrated and effective emergency preparedness plan for the City ensuring a high level of readiness and responsiveness to man-made and natural disasters of any scope, and which maximizes response capabilities of the City, County, State and Federal governments.

**Policy 1:** The City shall give priority to maintaining and updating of all hazard summaries and responses of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan.

**Program 1.A:** The City shall periodically review and update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan, including but not limited to fire protection, law enforcement, communications, alternative access, public health services, damage assessment and other emergency response parameters of Emergency Operations Plan.

**Responsible Agency:** Fire Department, Police Department, All Other City Departments

**Schedule:** On-going; Comprehensive update minimum once every five years











# Noise Sub-Element

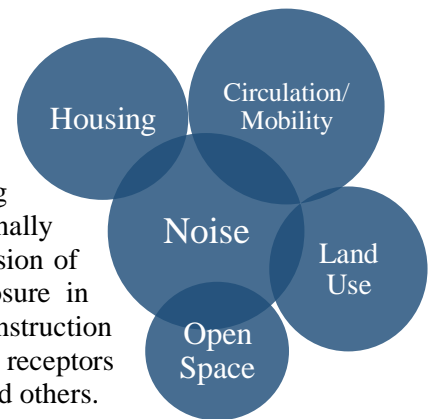
## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Noise Sub-Element is to limit the exposure of sensitive lands, residents, students and visitors to excessive noise levels and that noise-sensitive land uses are protected at all times but especially during the most sensitive times of day. It is also meant to coordinate the community’s land uses with the existing and future noise environment, and to design measures that minimize or avoid community exposure to excessive noise levels. As the City grows, so does the potential for land use conflicts which can result in an unacceptable and even harmful noise environment. This sub-element addresses potential adverse noise impacts associated with vehicular traffic, railroads and airports, industrial operations and other mobile or stationary noise sources. Through the implementation of the policies and programs in this sub-element, current and future noise impacts can be greatly reduced or avoided entirely.

## BACKGROUND

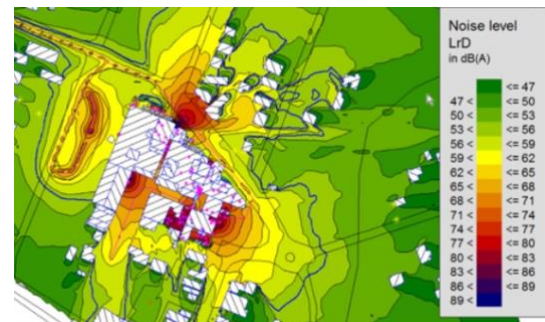
The Noise Sub-Element is directly related to the Land Use, Housing, and Circulation/Mobility Elements. It also has a direct relationship with the Parks and Recreation and the Economic and Fiscal Health Elements, low noise levels being a fundamental characteristic of a quality residential and resort community. The City’s relatively quiet, peaceful atmosphere should be considered a major community asset. The noise environment can have a significant influence on the health and comfort of the community. In general, the noise levels in Cathedral City’s residential neighborhoods are average, typical of quiet suburban and rural areas.

Motor vehicles are the major source of continuous, excessive noise in the City. Primary noise generators include traffic on Interstate-10, East Palm Canyon Drive, Date Palm Drive, Vista Chino, Palm Drive, DaVall Drive, and Ramon Road. Freight rail traffic along the Union Pacific Railroad is also responsible for generating excessive noise and ground vibration. High noise levels resulting from aircraft operations at the Palm Springs International Airport also occasionally have an intrusive impact on the community’s noise environment. The extension of airport runways to the northwest have reduced future airport noise exposure in Cathedral City to acceptable levels. Other noise generators include construction activities, industrial operations, HVAC and other stationary sources. Sensitive receptors within the planning area include homes, schools, congregate care facilities, and others.



## Noise Regulations

Issues addressed in the Noise Sub-Element are identified in Government Code Section 65032(f), which requires that the Noise Sub-Element identify, quantify where possible and evaluate the community’s noise environment and issue areas. Section 21083.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the adherence to the State Guidelines and allows cities to determine whether a development project will have a “significant effect on the environment,” ranging from traffic noise in a residential neighborhood to unacceptable noise generated by the equipment at a commercial shopping center or industrial operation. The State requires the adoption of a noise control ordinance for the resolution of local noise complaints.

























## Mitigating Noise Impacts

Preserving a quiet noise environment can be accomplished through thoughtful land use and transportation planning, project and building design and orientation, project-specific mitigation, simple and sophisticated technology, and acoustical barriers. Site planning and design standards should provide direct noise impact mitigation for areas particularly impacted by noise. The use of buffer zones consisting of earthen berms, walls and landscaping between sensitive land uses and roadways and other noise sources is an effective tool for noise mitigation. Building orientation, particularly the placement of windows, can significantly mitigate impacts on residential land uses. A number of materials are also available which can baffle noise sources, and result in effective outdoor and interior noise mitigation. When development proposals include sensitive receptors planned next to high-noise roadways (see Table S-5) they should be required to complete noise analysis, which will provide project-specific mitigation measures to ensure that the buildout of the project will not result in unacceptable noise impacts.

Section 2.12 of the General Plan EIR (and EIR Appendix D) sets forth specific mitigation measures for a variety of potential noise impacts. When applied where appropriate, they will effectively reduce noise impacts to levels that are less than significant. These include measures that address traffic and railroad noise and vibration, HVAC, commercial and industrial noise sources, construction and other noise sources. Areas of greatest concern include the UPRR/US I-10 corridor and arterial roadway corridors. While aircraft noise will be an occasional nuisance, on a CNEL-basis these impacts will be less than significant.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Consistent with its character as a resort residential community, Cathedral City benefits from an essentially quiet noise environment. However, highway and major roadway and railroad noise sources clearly impact the City. Future efforts to manage the community's noise environment should focus on the preservation of the peaceful and quiet atmosphere presently enjoyed by residents and visitors to the community. The Land Use Element, and particularly the assignment of land use designations, will play a critical role in the City's ability to control noise for sensitive receptors. Another level of land use control is provided by zoning designations and the City Noise Ordinance, which provide development standards that reduce impacts and enhance compatibility. The Circulation and Mobility Element has also been designed, where possible, to protect the City's residential areas from excessive traffic noise and to assure appropriate noise levels. The ongoing coordination of these two elements of the General Plan must play a key role in the City's consideration of development projects, and public works construction.

## GOAL, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

**Goal: A community noise environment that complements the City's low density, resort residential character and its various land uses.**

**Policy 1:** Protect noise sensitive land uses, including residential neighborhoods, schools, hospitals and assisted living facilities, libraries, churches, resorts and community open space, from high noise levels generated along major transportation corridors.

**Program 1.A:** Develop and maintain an inventory of existing and future noise sources and areas of incompatibility and establish procedures, methods and standards to reduce the noise levels in these areas to acceptable levels.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning; Public Works

**Schedule:** Immediate; Ongoing

**Program 1.B:** Prior to development plan approvals for new noise-sensitive development projects, require submittal of noise impact and mitigation analyses to the Planning Department identifying practicable noise mitigation measures ensuring compliance with City standards.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning, Public Works

**Schedule:** Immediate; Ongoing











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