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## **APPENDIX C**

### **CITY OF PERRIS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT**

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# City of Perris

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

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# 1. INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN PERRIS

Government decisions regarding land use and the design of the built environment have a profound impact on the health of a community. The design of cities, neighborhoods, and even individual buildings impact levels of physical, social, and mental wellbeing. Poor planning decisions can impact how much we walk, ride a bicycle, drive a car, or take public transportation; the quality of the air we breathe; access to health services; and the types of food we eat. The decisions about where to place noxious uses and pollutant sources can also generate negative health impacts, particularly for lower-income and people of color who are more likely to live in or near these places.

The purpose of the Environmental Justice Element is to promote the health of Perris residents, improve the urban environment, and support a high quality of life. Land use strategies aimed at reducing dependency on cars, minimizing energy consumption, improving community air quality, and increasing access to health food are all examples of how the City can promote cleaner air, physical activity, and a healthier lifestyle for all. The City can play an important role in reducing environmental justice impacts, including actions to prevent incompatible land uses, requiring buffers from major roadways, and improving access to safe and affordable housing. Addressing environmental justice issues in a community can also lead to population health improvements, including reduced rates of asthma, heart disease, and cancer, in addition to improved living conditions for all.

## 1. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice aims to address the impacts of pollutants and hazards in a community, regardless of residents' income, ethnicity, or race. California Government Code (Section 65040.12(e)) defines environmental justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful participation of people of all races, cultures and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." Environmental justice also seeks to provide all members of a community an equal opportunity to participate in and influence the local decision-making process around land use and environmental policies.

In 2016, the State of California passed Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000), which requires all cities and counties that have disadvantaged communities to address environmental justice in their general plans, either in a separate Environmental Justice Element or integrated across various elements. Based on SB 1000, the Environmental Justice Element must:

- Reduce pollution and improve air quality in disadvantaged communities, improve public facilities, increase food access, promote safe and sanitary homes, and encourage physical activity to reduce the unique or compounded health risks associated with living in a disadvantaged or environmental justice area.



- Promote civil engagement in the public decision-making process.
- Prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

The City of Perris has elected to create a standalone Environmental Justice Element, which is closely integrated with the Health Element and other chapters of the general plan. In developing the Environmental Justice Element, the City of Perris is not only fulfilling a state requirement, but also documenting a commitment to planning practices that promote engagement in the public participation process and land use decisions that address issues of health equity and environmental justice. The policies and goals established in this Element are intended to serve as a guide for future land use development decisions in the City.

## 2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Understanding the emergence of environmental justice issues in present day Perris requires reviewing the City within a broader, historical context. While Perris is one of the fastest growing cities in the region today, the City was historically dominated by rural and agricultural uses. For thousands of years, indigenous populations hunted and gathered across the dry, hot region. The Cahuilla and Luiseño were the two largest population groups, sharing overlapping territories in the Perris Valley. The Luiseño range extended west to the coast, while the Cahuilla extended into the San Jacinto Mountains and Colorado Desert. From the late 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century, encounters with colonial settlers, battles over Mexican land grants and policies, and waves of Gold Rush migrants transformed the traditional territories, cultural identity, and way of life across the region.

In the late 1800s, the legacies of citrus, gold, and railroads shaped a new chapter of development for Perris and the broader region. Unlike neighboring towns experiencing a citrus boom, Perris had limited groundwater, which largely limited its agricultural production to dry grain farming. The completion of the western extension of the Santa Fe Railway in 1882 placed Perris as a railroad town along the route, commemorating the legacy of Fred Perris, an early pioneer. The railroads were built primarily by Chinese men, followed by Japanese and Mexican workers in the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.<sup>1</sup> During this period, the City experienced a wave of growth from settlers in search of agricultural land, and in some cases, even gold. While short-lived, a top producing gold mine opened in Perris around 1889, yielding at least \$2 million dollars over its lifetime.<sup>2</sup> However, flooding issues along the rail lines forced the Perris station to close in the 1890s. Additionally, the failure of the Bear Valley Water System resulted in the exodus of farmers and ranchers to other places in the region.<sup>3</sup>

In 1892, California's first off-reservation boarding school, the Sherman Indian School, was founded in the City of Perris. Students were separated from their parents and tribal lands with the purpose of forcing indigenous youth to assimilate an early age. Students also provided a pool of forced labor

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<sup>1</sup> Patterson, T. (2015). *From Acorns to Warehouses*. Left Coast Press.

<sup>2</sup> Ammenheuser, M. (2012). *PERRIS: City once had the top gold mine in Southern California*. *The Press Enterprise*. <https://www.pe.com/2012/06/15/perris-city-once-had-the-top-gold-mine-in-southern-california/>

<sup>3</sup> Lech, S. (2004). *Along the old roads: a history of the portion of Southern California that became Riverside County, 1772-1893*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

and were subjected long work hours, dangerous work conditions, and in some cases, corporal punishment.<sup>4</sup> Students ranged in age from 5 to 20, grades elementary through high school, and included children and youth from across California, the Pacific Northwest, southwest, and the Plains. In 1902, the school was moved to Riverside due to the lack of water in the City.<sup>5</sup>

The City of Perris was incorporated in 1911. In the 1920s, the Perris Valley was predicted to become a center for onion growing.<sup>6</sup> By 1926, the railroad town boasted a population of 700 people, with most of the City's development centered between San Jacinto Avenue to 8<sup>th</sup> and D Street to Perris Boulevard (east of the rail line).<sup>7</sup> The 1930s brought Dust Bowl refugees, migrating West on the heels of the Great Depression, in the pursuit of cheap and fertile agricultural land across Riverside County. Privacy and tranquility also drew many Black families to the less desirable neighboring Mead Valley, as early as the 1930s.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1950s, the Eastern Municipal Water district developed the infrastructure to bring water to the Perris Valley, making way for larger scale production of alfalfa, the King potato, sugar beets, and housing. The Bracero program also brought an additional source of cheap Mexican agricultural labor, but many of these workers were not welcomed in communities across the region. In 1958, Harry H. Ward, a Perris realtor and farmer, expressed opposition to low-cost housing in Riverside County, terming the housing 'temporary dwelling for transient labor' and raising concerns about its transformation into slum areas.<sup>9</sup>

Perris had a pattern of sleepy growth until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. In the late 1950s, Black families continued to buy vacant land in neighboring Mead Valley, while Perris experienced a population boom of largely White residents. While demand for housing in the 1940-1970s was high across the Inland Empire region, few housing projects were built until the postwar boom.<sup>10</sup> The City's population growth was small, but stable through each decade up to 1980. However, racism and segregation unequivocally shaped the development of cities across the Inland Empire. Many people left Los Angeles and Orange Counties in search of lower property taxes and the prospect of homeownership, resettling in areas that enabled access to homeownership for diverse groups,<sup>11</sup> yet perpetuating other patterns of segregation across the region.

In the 1970s, the Pomona-Riverside-San Bernardino region was already experiencing some of the highest levels of air pollution in the entire United States. The expansion of March Air Force Base in Riverside, Kaiser Steel in Fontana, and Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino during World War II had come to a screeching halt, along with the collapse of the Citrus industry in the postwar

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<sup>4</sup> Nelson, J. (2021). *Federal probe of American Indian boarding schools reflects dark chapter in U.S. history*. *The Press Enterprise*. <https://www.pe.com/2021/07/04/federal-probe-of-american-indian-boarding-schools-reflects-dark-chapter-in-u-s-history/>

<sup>5</sup> Sherman Indian Museum. (n.d.). *Sherman Indian High School Beginning to the Present*. [http://www.shermanindianmuseum.org/sherman\\_hist.htm](http://www.shermanindianmuseum.org/sherman_hist.htm)

<sup>6</sup> *California News Items in Brief*. (1920, January 9). *Del Norte Triplicate*. Vol IX (2). *California Digital Newspaper Collection*.

<sup>7</sup> *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Perris, Riverside County, California*. *Sanborn Map Company*, Jun, 1926. Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <[www.loc.gov/item/sanborn00754\\_006/](http://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn00754_006/)>.

<sup>8</sup> *Blacks migrating from LA to Riverside County*. (1987, October 9). *Black Voice News*. Vol 15 (39).

<sup>9</sup> *Low Rent Housing Issues Fail to Get on June 3 Ballot*. (1958, March 27). *The Desert Sun*.

<sup>10</sup> Patterson, T. (2015). *From Acorns to Warehouses*. Left Coast Press.

<sup>11</sup> Carpio, G. (2019). *Collisions at the Crossroads*. University of California Press.

period.<sup>12</sup> A recession resulted in the decline of economic growth and widespread and enduring unemployment.<sup>13</sup>

Perris experienced major suburban growth during the 1980s, when the total population grew more than three-fold, from 6,800 to 21,500 residents.<sup>14</sup> For comparison, in the period between 1980 and 1990, the non-Latino population grew 185 percent, while the Latino population grew 284 percent.<sup>15</sup> In 1990, Whites represented the largest racial/ethnic group in the City (nearly 48 percent), and Hispanics represented the next largest at approximately 36 percent. By 2010, the proportion of Hispanic residents had doubled to 72 percent of the population, making them the predominant racial/ethnic group in Perris.<sup>16</sup> Distant suburbs, like Perris, were favored by Black and Latino communities that could afford the price of housing, occupying homes left by Whites moving out from the City.

A similar demographic shift took place among Black families that moved to the Inland Empire from the 1980s to 2000s. These families moved due to existing family in the Inland Empire, perceptions of getting more for less money, and a concern with growing Latino congestion in urban areas.<sup>17,18</sup> Concerns with safety, and particularly gang violence, were a primary reason for moving away from Los Angeles.<sup>19</sup>

The region would experience yet another wave of economic decline in the 2000s with the Great Recession of 2007. The subprime crisis resulted in a dramatic rise in foreclosures, disproportionately impacting places like Perris, with 1,870 foreclosed homes, or 10.36 percent of total housing.<sup>20</sup> Black and Latino households were disproportionately affected by subprime mortgage and foreclosures across the region, a trend that negatively impacted both poverty and housing tenure (e.g., loss in homeownership, increased number of renters).<sup>21</sup>

Most recently, the City has focused on attracting local businesses and jobs, as well as providing new food establishments for residents.<sup>22</sup> The commercial and industrial sectors introduced a new Home Depot and, Wayfair expanded existing operations to include additional warehouse space and TechStyle (JustFab.com). The addition of numerous sales tax producing businesses in the

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<sup>12</sup> Carpio, G. (2019). *Collisions at the Crossroads*. University of California Press.

<sup>13</sup> Patterson, T. (2015). *From Acorns to Warehouses*. Left Coast Press.

<sup>14</sup> City of Perris. (2019). *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*.

<sup>15</sup> Allenworth, E. and et. al. (1996). *White Exodus, Latino Repopulation, and Community Well-Being: Trends in California's Rural Communities*. Research Report. No. 13. Michigan State University.

<sup>16</sup> City of Perris. (2019). *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*.

<sup>17</sup> Pfeiffer, D. (2012). African Americans' search for "more for less" and "peace of mind" on the exurban frontier. *Urban Geography*, 2012, 33, 1, pp. 64–90.

<sup>18</sup> Allen, J. and et. Al. (2002). *Changing faces, changing places: mapping Southern Californians*. California State University, Northridge. Center for Geographical Studies.

<sup>19</sup> Pfeiffer, D. (2012). Moving to Opportunity: African Americans' Safety Outcomes in the Los Angeles Exurbs. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 33(1) 49–65

<sup>20</sup> Lefebvre, H. (2015). In the blind spot: the federal government's intervention in the housing crisis in suburban California. *UC Berkeley Journal of Politics and Policy*. <https://escholarship.org/content/qt6262b3wd/qt6262b3wd.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Mendiola Ross, A. (2020). *Governing Inequities Through Police in the Inland Empire*. UC Berkeley Previously Published Works. <https://escholarship.org/content/qt0dz2w4g2/qt0dz2w4g2.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> City of Perris. (2021). *Adopted Bi-Annual Operating and Capital Improvement Project Budget Fiscal Years 2021-2022 & 2022-2023*. <https://www.cityofperris.org/home/showpublisheddocument/14376/637637706545970000>

City, has resulted in the exponential increase of sales tax revenues. In fiscal year 2019-20, receipts of sales tax revenues increased from \$21.8M in fiscal year 18-19 to \$25.7M, an increase of 18%. Additionally, local retail sales, the primary source of sales tax revenues, continued to experience strong growth. However, the City's most recent economic recovery has manifested in rising inequality, pollution, and increasing number of low-wage jobs, primarily in the food and warehouse industries.

The City sits within a broader region known as a "Warehouse Empire," housing more than one-fifth of the largest warehouses across the country, alongside a predominantly blue-collar labor pool.<sup>23,24</sup> The region's strategic location, intersected by several major highways, relatively close proximity to the ports, and existing infrastructure make it a prime market for logistics and warehouse uses, which tends to rely on temporary workers and low-wage labor.<sup>25</sup> In Perris, fulfillment centers also provide important sales tax revenues that fund local services. The City's top employer is the Ross Distribution Center, followed by both school districts, the Lowe's Distribution Center and NFI Industries. The warehouse industry is an important source of jobs across the region, but concerns about pollution and environmental justice raise questions about the geographic concentration of toxic emissions in predominantly low-income communities like Perris.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING

California Government Code requires that local governments promote community engagement and public decision-making in developing the Environmental Justice Element. Residents in disadvantaged communities often face cultural and language barriers, lack of information, and even mistrust of local decisionmakers, in making their voice heard on issues that impact both the environment and their health. In some cases, City officials may not be aware or well informed on issues impacting the wellbeing of community members.

To ensure broad representation of environmental justice issues in Perris decision-making, a number of organizations and groups that work directly with low-income and people of color in the City were identified as critical stakeholders to understanding the specific issues, needs and barriers faced by these community members. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, community meetings were largely limited to virtual events. A summary of all engagement is provided in Table 1.

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<sup>23</sup> Katzanek, J. (2020). *Inland Empire leads nation in major warehouse deals — by a lot*. *The Press Enterprise*. <https://www.pe.com/2020/01/30/ie-leads-the-nation-in-major-warehouse-deals-by-a-lot/>

<sup>24</sup> Patterson, T. (2015). *From Acorns to Warehouses*. Left Coast Press.

<sup>25</sup> Ghori, I. (2015). *UCR: Study calls warehouse jobs low-paying*. *The Press Enterprise*. <https://www.pe.com/2015/07/31/ucr-study-calls-warehouse-jobs-low-paying/>

<sup>26</sup> Levin, S. (2021). *Amazon's warehouse boom linked to health hazards in America's most polluted region*. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/apr/15/amazon-warehouse-boom-inland-empire-pollution>

*Table 1 - Summary of Community Engagement*

| Group  | Date                    | Key Findings   |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Housing – Stakeholder Group</i>                   | 2/2/2021                | Representatives from Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley, SoCal Gas, Perris Communist Coalition, and the City Housing, Planning and Economic Development divisions. Environmental issues identified include: air pollution from the highway and traffic, low educational attainment, mobile home repair (repair and replacement, in some cases), need to streamline affordable housing development (e.g., cost of land, increase affordable housing spending, approval of projects), and public safety.                                   |
| <i>Inland Valley Habitat for Humanity</i>            | 2/5/2021                | Meeting focused on issues related to safe and healthy housing: need to remove barriers to housing production in the City, including streamlining the planning and permitting process to provide swift application reviews; potential for in-lie or inclusionary housing ordinance; creating a funding source for affordable housing within City. The biggest impediments to building entry-level housing remain land availability and funding opportunities for entry-level and/or subsidized homes.                                     |
| <i>City of Perris Youth Advisory Council (YAC)</i>   | 3/16/2021               | Youth documented concerns with air quality pollutants in communities near freeways or regional highways, warehouses, and industrial commercial businesses; need for street calming measures, street and sidewalk repairs, improvements to pedestrian safety.   |
| <i>Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce</i>             | 4/7/2021                | An online interactive poll was launched during the meeting with questions pulled from the City's survey to gauge feedback related to environmental quality in Perris. Some of the responses received indicated that vehicle traffic, street repairs, and access to healthy fresh produce were areas of concern for respondents.  |
| <i>Paragon Park</i>                                  | 6/24/2021-<br>6/26/2021 | A comment card was distributed to people at Paragon Park with questions on key issues and recommendations for improving the City. Many of the respondents identified safety issues in and around Paragon Park, including street races, drugs, and loiterers, and the need for quality spaces to walk and play. Housing resources and affordability were also an important issue. In general, responses aligned with the broader community survey that was submitted online. The majority of respondents to the comment card were Latino. |
| <i>TODEC, El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center</i> | N/A                     | Various attempts were made to connect with TODEC via phone, email, and in person. TODEC did not provide any potential dates to connect with a group of community-based leaders on environmental justice issues. El Neighborhood Educational Center was also contacted, but given limited capacity and prioritization of COVID-related work, they were not able to participate as stakeholders in the community engagement process.   |

Participants included people that live and/or work in Perris. In addition to stakeholder meetings, the community survey was distributed across various outlets (e.g, City website, City Social Media accounts, Riverside University Health System listserv), specifically targeting wider representation from the community. The survey was open for 9 weeks and received a total of 116 responses. Participants identified housing affordability, proximity of parks and amenities, and the diversity as positive attributes of the City, along with several issues that impact environmental justice and health:

#### Housing

- Need for affordable rental and housing ownership options
- More homeownership opportunities
- First time homebuyer programs (e.g., down payment assistance, buyer guide)
- Greater diversity of housing opportunities
- Shelters + programs to support the homeless
- Updates and repairs to housing that result in unhealthy conditions

#### Community Infrastructure

- Improvements in streets (e.g., lighting, sidewalks, bicycle lanes)
- Enforcement of building and community standards
- Community maintenance, including landscaping
- Community safety, including parks, pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Bus routes to shopping and employment centers + more frequent buses
- Dumping of trash (e.g., vacant lots, side of road, creeks and canyons)
- Beautification of both homes and rental apartments

#### Land Uses

- Less warehouses and industrial uses
- Related pollution and congestion
- Road repair costs due to truck traffic
- Air pollution (e.g., trucks, industrial uses, traffic)
- Fumes, noise, and/or chemicals from industrial uses

#### Engagement

- Concerns around how the City engages with residents and makes decisions that impact health
- More accessible public meetings (e.g., alternative languages, times of day, and options to participate via phone, video, or in person)
- Increased communication via social media

## 4. DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Based on state criteria, communities with high rates of pollution, specifically those that rank in the top 25 percentile of the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 tool, are considered disadvantaged communities. The factors or "indicators" that define the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 cumulative score are listed in Table 2. These indicators are important to understanding what factors shape the built environment, health of a community, and potential for disproportionate impacts to disadvantaged communities.

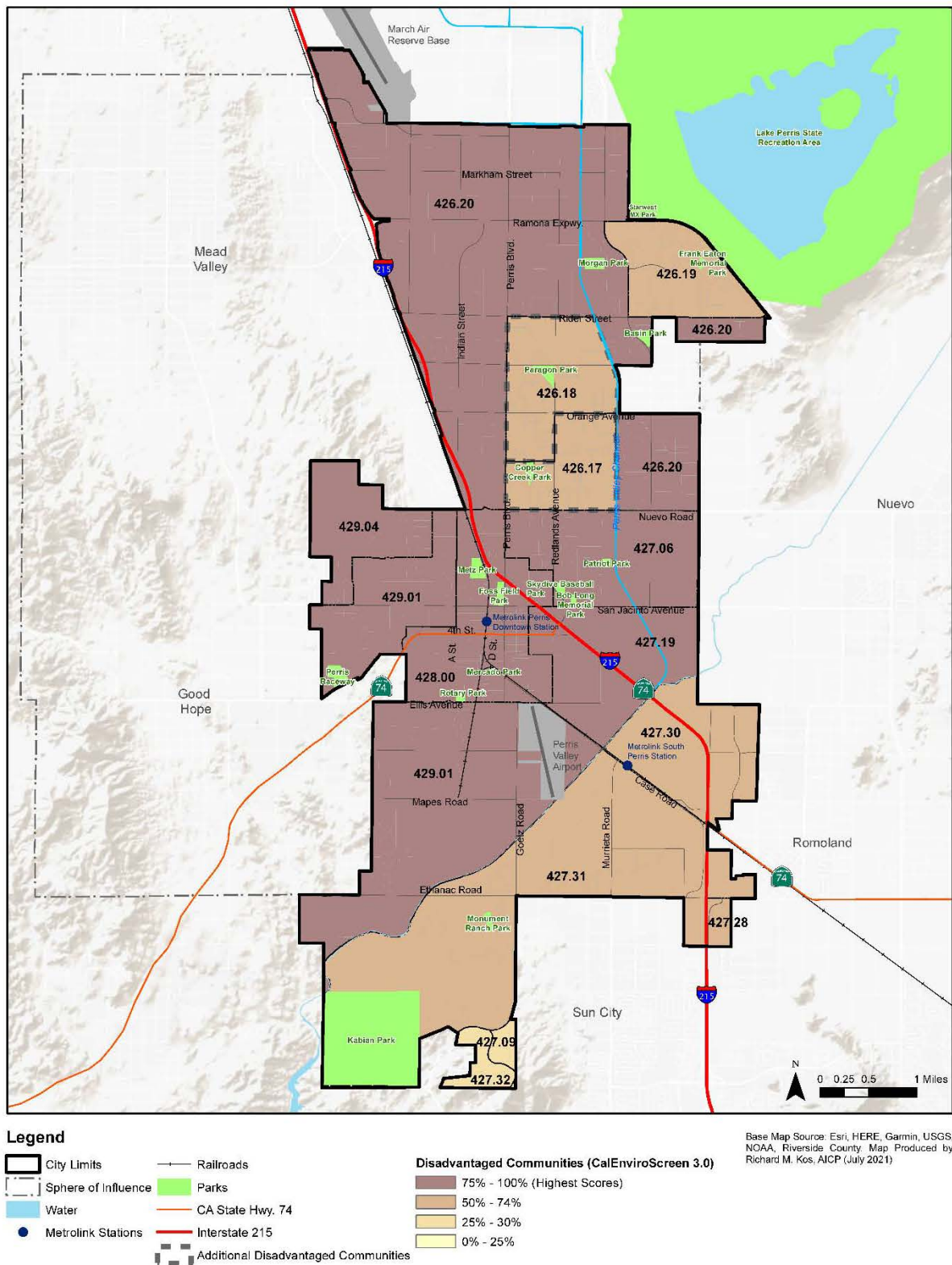
*Table 2 – CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Indicators*

| Type                       | Indicator   |  | Applicability   |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Pollution Burden           | Exposure  | Environmental Effect   | Measure pollution to determine heavily affected areas.  |
|                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ozone</li> <li>- Particulate Matter 2.5</li> <li>- Lead Risk from Housing</li> <li>- Diesel Particulate Matter</li> <li>- Drinking Water Contaminants</li> <li>- Pesticide Use</li> <li>- Toxic Releases from Facilities</li> <li>- Traffic Density</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleanup Sites</li> <li>- Groundwater Threats</li> <li>- Hazardous Waste Generators and Facilities</li> <li>- Impaired Water Bodies</li> <li>- Solid Waste Sites and Facilities</li> </ul> |   |
| Population Characteristics | Sensitive Populations   | Socioeconomic Factors  | Evaluate a community's vulnerability towards pollution and ability to participate in civic matters. |
|                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asthma</li> <li>- Cardiovascular Disease</li> <li>- Low Birth Weight in Infants</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational Attainment</li> <li>- Housing Burden</li> <li>- Linguistic Isolation</li> <li>- Poverty</li> <li>- Unemployment</li> </ul>  |   |

Source: CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 2020

As shown in Figure 1, areas in red represent the 25 percent highest scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 3.0, based on high levels of pollution and low-income populations. The City of Perris has various census tracts designated as disadvantaged communities. The value of identifying both pollution and population-based indicators is establishing a screening-level proxy for potential health risks. These are high-level indicators and are not intended to be used as precise data. Instead, the goal is understanding key trends in the City that can inform general plan policies and objectives that improve quality of life, public health, and economic opportunity in the most burdened communities.

Figure 1: Disadvantaged Communities in Perris



Source: CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 2020



Based on data collected during the environmental justice analysis, in addition to insight from community members, two additional census tracts (426.18 and 426.17), north of downtown, were identified as disadvantaged communities. While both of these census tracts have a lower composite CalEnviroScreen 3.0 percentile score, they share similar population trends (e.g., severe overcrowding, low levels of educational attainment) as other disadvantaged communities. A summary of the confluence of issues impacting each disadvantaged community is noted in Table 3. Additional data on each issue is documented in the sections that follow in this report.

*Table 3 - Issues in Disadvantaged Communities*

| Census Tract | Issues  |
|--------------|---|
| 426.17       | Lower than average median household income; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )   |
| 426.18       | Higher-than-average household size; concentration of general industrial zoning; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )   |
| 426.20       | Concentration of light and general industrial zoning; adjacent to March Reserve base; concentration of severe cost burden for renters; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )  |
| 427.06       | Concentration of children under 5 living in poverty; higher-than-average household size; lower average median household income; concentration of severe cost burden for renters; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )  |
| 427.19       | Lower than average median household income; concentration of light industrial zoning; airport; concentration of severe cost burden for renters; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )   |
| 428          | Concentration of children under 5 living in poverty; lowest median income in the City; concentration of severe cost burden for renters; concentration of housing stock built before 1980; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )   |
| 429.01       | Concentration of children under 5 living in poverty; lower than average median household income; concentration of general industrial zoning; proximity to clean up, hazardous waste, and solid waste sites; concentration of manufactured homes; concentration of severe cost burden for renters; concentration of housing stock built before 1980; very high fire hazard severity; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> )               |
| 429.04       | Concentration of children under 5 living in poverty; higher-than-average household size; lower than average median household income; proximity to hazardous waste sites; highest concentration of severe cost burden for renters; concentration of housing stock built before 1980; health professional shortage area for medical care to low-income populations; very high fire hazard severity; heightened pollution exposure (e.g., ozone, PM <sub>2.5</sub> ) |

## 2. POPULATION PROFILE

Residents of disadvantaged communities are often disproportionately burdened by the cumulative impacts of environmental health risks. According to the American Community Survey (2015-2019), the median household income in the City of Perris is \$63,829, lower than in Riverside County (\$67,005).<sup>27</sup> Census tract 428 has the lowest median income in the City (\$40,923). Table 4 identifies all census tracts identified as disadvantaged communities in Perris, compared to the City of Perris and County of Riverside. A high-level summary of trends identified in disadvantaged communities in Perris includes:

- More than a third of **children under 5 living in poverty** in census tracts 427.06 (35.3 percent), 428 (39.4 percent), 429.01 (39.4 percent), 429.04 (43 percent), compared to the City (24 percent) and the County (19.3 percent).
- A higher-than-average **household size** exists in census tracts 426.18 (4.87), 427.06 (4.52), and 429.04 (4.74), compared to the City (4.49) and County (3.28).
- The **median household income** in disadvantaged communities is lower than the median household income in Perris (\$63,829), except for census tracts 426.18 and 426.20,
- More than a third (33.9 percent) of all households in census tract 428 are facing either **overcrowding** (26.8 percent) or **severe overcrowding** (7.1 percent).
- At the City level, 66.5 percent of adults are **high school graduates**, compared to 82 percent in the County; followed by 9.20 percent who had a **bachelor's degree or higher**, compared to 22.3 percent in the County. Educational attainment is generally lower across all disadvantaged communities, except for census tracts 426.20 and 427.19.

Poverty, neighborhood environment, and education are important determinants of health that not only shape socioeconomic and political inequalities, but are also strongly associated with life expectancy, economic opportunity, and health outcomes. One of the goals of environmental justice is to correct these types of inequities by reducing the impacts of environmental pollution and health risks experienced by these communities, while ensuring their participation in planning processes and decision making that directly impacts their quality of life in the City.

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<sup>27</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Income in the Past 12 months, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5 year estimates*. Retrieved from: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S1901&tid=ACST5Y2019.S1901>

*Table 4 - Population Profile*

|                                       | 426.17 | 426.18 | 426.2  | 427.06 | 427.19 | 428    | 429.01 | 429.04 | City of<br>Perris | Riverside<br>County |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>POVERTY STATUS</b>                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                   |                     |
| Under 5 years                         | 23.50% | 5.20%  | 17.40% | 35.30% | 22.90% | 36.60% | 39.40% | 43.00% | 24.00%            | 19.30%              |
| 5-17 years                            | 29.40% | 17.40% | 27.10% | 26.90% | 27.10% | 27.10% | 24.90% | 38.60% | 25.20%            | 17.90%              |
| 18-64                                 | 16.00% | 13.10% | 8.80%  | 9.20%  | 17.90% | 16.10% | 17.40% | 23.10% | 13.00%            | 12.60%              |
| 65+                                   | 6.10%  | 25.20% | 5.30%  | 7.00%  | 19.40% | 19.50% | 15.60% | 12.70% | 13.50%            | 10.50%              |
| <b>HOUSEHOLD</b>                      |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                   |                     |
| Median Income                         | 61,298 | 64,682 | 75,853 | 59,683 | 59,500 | 40,923 | 48,047 | 50,568 | 63,829            | 67,005              |
| Average Household Size                | 4.48   | 4.87   | 4.46   | 4.52   | 3.71   | 4.18   | 4.16   | 4.74   | 4.49              | 3.28                |
| Speaks English Less than<br>very well | 24.30% | 26.00% | 22.40% | 20.70% | 19.10% | 24.20% | 25.50% | 30.00% | 22.30%            | 15.10%              |
| 65 + (living alone)                   | 0.60%  | 4.80%  | 1.60%  | 1.30%  | 6.90%  | 5.60%  | 9%     | 4%     | 2.90%             | 10.00%              |
| Disability (all ages)                 | 9.10%  | 8.20%  | 8.00%  | 8.70%  | 10.90% | 7.20%  | 11.40% | 15.00% | 8.60%             | 11.60%              |
| <b>HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS</b>        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                   |                     |
| Crowding (1.01-1.50)                  | 17.6%  | 19.6%  | 8.9%   | 12.8%  | 5.8%   | 26.8%  | 12.8%  | 16.8%  | 12.9%             | 5.10%               |
| Severe Crowding<br>(1.51 or more)     | 3.8%   | 6.0%   | 1.4%   | 5.3%   | 4.5%   | 7.1%   | 4.6%   | 5.9%   | 3.9%              | 1.8%                |
| Housing Tenure -<br>Owner Occupied    | 63.3%  | 64.3%  | 79.5%  | 54.0%  | 63.8%  | 49.5%  | 62.8%  | 71.3%  | 63.2%             | 66.3%               |
| Housing Tenure -<br>Renter Occupied   | 36.7%  | 35.7%  | 20.5%  | 46.0%  | 36.2%  | 50.5%  | 37.2%  | 28.7%  | 36.8%             | 33.7%               |
| Mobile Homes                          | 8.1%   | 10.2%  | 10.1%  | 0.0%   | 24.2%  | 6.0%   | 31.9%  | 45.9%  | 7.1%              | 8.8%                |
| <b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                   |                     |
| High School Graduate                  | 61.30% | 57%    | 74.20% | 69.20% | 73.60% | 55.90% | 63.90% | 55.50% | 66.50%            | 82%                 |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher           | 5.10%  | 6.70%  | 14.50% | 8.20%  | 13%    | 4%     | 4.40%  | 3.30%  | 9.20%             | 22.30%              |
| <b>HEALTH INSURANCE</b>               |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                   |                     |
| Uninsured                             | 15.30% | 13.70% | 5.40%  | 10.60% | 11.00% | 13.50% | 8.80%  | 15.40% | 10.20%            | 8.80%               |

Source: American Community Survey 2019 (5-year estimates)

## I. OVERALL HEALTH STATUS

Understanding health indicators can help communities define and prioritize preventive measures that improve quality of life and help people live longer and healthier lives. In the United States, heart disease and cancer have been the two leading causes of death across the country for over two decades. In Riverside County, heart disease and cancer accounted for nearly 40 percent of all deaths in 2019.<sup>28</sup> Age-adjusted mortality rates can provide a general sense of a community's health in comparison to other communities. Based on all deaths, the age-adjusted death rate is higher in Perris (783.3), compared to the County (681.48).<sup>29</sup> Additional data on the impacts of COVID-19 on mortality are documented in the section that follows below.

<sup>28</sup> California Department of Public Health. (2019). Riverside County's Health Status Profile. Retrieved from: [https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ICS\\_RIVERSIDE2019.pdf](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ICS_RIVERSIDE2019.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Riverside University Health System. (2018). SHAPE Riverside County Data Portal. Age-Adjusted Death Rate. Available at: <https://www.shaperivco.org/>

*Table 5 - Leading Causes of Death in Riverside County*

|                                   | 2015-2017 Deaths<br>(Average) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cancer (All Types)                | 3,676.0                       |
| Coronary Heart Disease            | 2,795.7                       |
| Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease | 1,052.7                       |
| All Causes <sup>30</sup>          | 16,402.7                      |

Another important indicator of health is premature death, which refers to deaths that occur before the age of 75 and are often considered preventable. Years of potential life lost (YPLL) is used to measure premature death. Cancer, unintentional injury and heart disease are the leading causes for YPLL for all race/ethnicities. However, Native Americans and Blacks in Riverside County are disproportionately impacted by YPLL and are dying at a younger age compared to other racial/ethnic groups.<sup>31</sup>

In the coming years, Perris and the broader region may experience an increase in the number of premature deaths due to environmental challenges, including extreme heat, food and water-borne illnesses, and natural disasters. Additionally, the combination of pollution burdens and extreme climate events can pose the greatest risk to health due to their adverse effects at even low exposures and long-term impacts across the entire population. The COVID-19 pandemic is one example of the types of public emergencies that can threaten the health of communities across the globe. The toll of COVID-19 in years of potential life lost, total deaths, and wide disparities between Whites and People of Color has magnified social and economic challenges across the country, even with "social distancing" measures in place. The pandemic resulted in the closure of businesses, loss of jobs, and missed housing payments, forcing a severe economic downturn.<sup>32</sup>

In 2020, Riverside County saw a pattern of excess mortality, compared to previous years, in part due to COVID-19. Overall, death rates were higher, even for heart disease and cancer, the two leading causes of death. Health disparities are also evident across race/ethnic groups – in 2020, the mortality rate was greater among the Latinx (28 percent) and Black/African American population (21 percent), compared to the 2015-2019 average rate across the County. There were no patterns of excess mortality observed among the White population.<sup>33</sup> These types of disparities are not new – the pandemic only magnified the social and economic inequalities that place many low-income and communities of color at a greater risk of dying.

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<sup>30</sup> While COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death in Riverside County in 2020, Table 4 identifies the leading causes of death based on a two-year average to better understand long term trends.

<sup>31</sup> Riverside University Health System. (2017). *Premature Death Report. Epidemiology and Program Evaluation*. Retrieved from [https://www.shaperivco.org/content/sites/riverside/reports/Deaths/Premature\\_Death\\_Report\\_112817.pdf](https://www.shaperivco.org/content/sites/riverside/reports/Deaths/Premature_Death_Report_112817.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Bauer, L. and et. al. (2020). *Ten facts about COVID-19 and the U.S. economy*. Brookings Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy/>

<sup>33</sup> Gardner, A. (2020). *Excess mortality in Riverside County during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Riverside University Health System Technical Report. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344521268\\_Excess\\_mortality\\_in\\_Riverside\\_County\\_during\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_pandemic](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344521268_Excess_mortality_in_Riverside_County_during_the_COVID-19_pandemic)

## *Obesity + Overweight*

Obesity is a leading cause of death across the country and impacts the cost of health care, economic development, and mortality. The prevalence of being overweight and obesity can increase a person's risk for many health issues – both are shared risk factors for the top four chronic diseases in Riverside County: heart disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes. In Riverside County, the rate of overweight or obese adults increased 7 percent from 2011 to 2015; the Riverside University Health System estimates that 1 in 5 children are overweight and that 2 of 3 adults are overweight or obese.<sup>34</sup> Promoting physical activity is an important component of active living aimed at curbing the staggering rates of obesity and related chronic diseases across the United States.

In Perris, 32.8 percent of adults are obese, which is higher than the County (28.8 percent). Adults should exercise at least 150 minutes per week; however, more than half of adults (62.3 percent) in the City walk less than 150 minutes a week.<sup>35</sup> Adults who are sedentary are at an increased risk for chronic diseases (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, cancer) and poor mental health.<sup>36</sup> More than a quarter of adults (27.4 percent) in the City identify not participating in any physical activity outside of work.

These trends signal opportunities for the City to promote physical activity, including active mobility. Ensuring safe and easy access to quality community resources, including parks, schools, health services and retail, can make active mobility an attractive option for all residents. In April 2013, the City of Perris adopted the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Campaign Resolution, which kicked off various efforts promoting physical fitness, healthy diet and nutrition, and planning principles that support healthy neighborhoods. The program also kicked off a variety of programming across the City, including free workout sessions, sports clinics for children, Health Fairs, Walk to School Day, sponsored hikes, and an Annual Health Fair. The City also adopted a Master Trail Plan to integrate active living and design principles in the built environment. A community's built environment can play a key role in improving wellbeing and encouraging an active lifestyle.

The City has taken important steps in promoting physical activity but given the rate of obesity and sedentarism in Perris, increasing physical activity is still a priority. Based on insight from the community, there is a need for additional investments in street infrastructure to improve access to parks and recreation opportunities in the City. Additionally, community members identify the need to improve road and park safety. Communities without the infrastructure to access community facilities, whether walking, biking, and using transit, can further decrease an area's quality of life and health outcomes.

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<sup>34</sup> Napier, R. and E. Curlee. (2018). *Community Health Profile Presentation*. Riverside University Health System. Retrieved from: [https://www.rivcohealthdata.org/Portals/14/Documents/PUBLICATIONS/COMMUNITY\\_HEALTH\\_PROFILE/CommunityHealthProfile\\_3\\_13\\_19.pdf](https://www.rivcohealthdata.org/Portals/14/Documents/PUBLICATIONS/COMMUNITY_HEALTH_PROFILE/CommunityHealthProfile_3_13_19.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> *California Health Interview Survey, Neighborhood Edition*. (2016). Walked at least 150 minutes (18+). Available at: <http://askchisne.ucla.edu/>

<sup>36</sup> *Riverside University Health System*. (2018). *SHAPE Riverside County Data Portal*. Adults who are sedentary. Available at: <https://www.shaperivco.org/>

### 3. PROMOTING A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

Environmental pollution can have many negative impacts on human health. Generally, toxic pollutants include any type of waste materials that contaminate fragile ecosystems, whether these are on land, air, and/or water. Air pollution, for instance, can cause respiratory problems in humans, and animals, and damage food crops and trees. Human exposure to pollutants, such as ozone and particulate matter (PM), can trigger allergies, asthma, eye and nose irritation, and in some cases, exacerbate lung infections, heart disease, and other health problems. The problem of pollution is especially concerning among vulnerable populations (e.g., children, elderly, and low-income residents) that live in areas with high levels of environmental pollution and that may be most susceptible to cumulative health impacts.

#### 1. POOR AIR QUALITY SOURCES

Concentrated air pollution in a particular area impacts community health and the wellness of residents. Automobiles, trucks, and buses, factories, power plants, and consumer products (e.g., spray paint, cleaning products, insecticides) when used, also emit volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), which react in the atmosphere on hot summer days to create smog. At the ground level, ozone is harmful to humans and can trigger asthma, reduced lung function, and increased use of health care services.

Research has consistently found a connection between living near busy roadways, railways, or heavy industrial warehousing/processing facilities and the prevalence of respiratory disease symptoms, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.<sup>37,38</sup> The City of Perris is intersected by sixteen (16) designated truck routes,<sup>39</sup> including the Ramona Expressway and State Highway 74 as noted below:

- (1) Ramona Expressway, from its westerly city limits to its easterly city limits.
- (2) State Highway 74 (Fourth Street), from its westerly city limits to its easterly city limits.
- (3) Ellis Avenue, from its westerly city limits to its easterly city limits.
- (4) Perris Boulevard, from its northerly city limits to its southerly terminus at Eleventh Street.
- (5) Goetz Road, from its southerly city limits to its northerly terminus at Case Road.
- (6) Evans Road, from Ramona Expressway to its southerly terminus at San Jacinto Avenue.
- (7) Interstate 215, from its northerly city limits to its southerly city limits.
- (8) Case Road, from Goetz Road to Perris Boulevard.

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<sup>37</sup> Kim, JJ and et. al. (2008). *Residential traffic and children's respiratory health*. *Environmental Health Perspectives* 116:1274–9.

<sup>38</sup> Boehmer, T. and et. al. (2013). *Residential Proximity to Major Highways*. Centers for Disease Control. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6203a8.htm>

<sup>39</sup> Truck route list includes most recent information (as of 9/20/2021) from the zoning code, which can be found on the City's website, and the Perris Valley Commerce Center Specific Plan.

- (9) Ethanac Road, from its westerly city limits to its easterly city limits.
- (10) Western Way from Harley Knox Boulevard to the northern City limits.
- (11) Harley Knox Boulevard from Interstate 215 to Redlands Avenue.
- (11) Indian Avenue from Harley Knox Boulevard to Placentia Avenue.
- (12) Redlands Avenue from Harley Knox Boulevard to Rider Street.
- (13) Morgan Street from Frontage Road to Redlands Avenue.
- (14) Rider Street from Frontage Road to Perris Boulevard.
- (15) Placentia Avenue from Interstate 215 to Perris Boulevard.
- (16) San Jacinto Avenue from Interstate 215 to the eastern City limits.

The City's industrial zoned land and several truck routes (e.g., Ramona Expressway, Evans Road, Perris Boulevard, and Ethanac Road) are along disadvantaged communities, areas with the concentration of housing in Perris. The City of Perris is in the process of evaluating where truck routes alongside residential uses can be removed, particularly along the northern end of the City, with completion of the Placentia Interchange estimated to complete construction in the summer of 2023.

Overall, 14.6 percent of Perris youth (ages 1-17) reported ever having asthma, compared to 13.6% of adults (18+).<sup>40,41</sup> In general, respiratory diseases may be under-diagnosed and under-reported due to lack of information on asthma prevention, exposure to triggers at work or in the home, and lack of access to preventative care in the City, especially among adults without health insurance. While air quality has improved in Southern California, the risk of contracting cancer due to air pollutants – including diesel, benzene, and others – remains high. Of all air quality pollutants, ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> have been shown to pose the greatest risk to health due to their adverse effects at even low exposures and long-term impacts across the population, regardless of their age, gender, or pre-existing conditions.

## 2. OZONE

Reducing ozone pollution is an important step toward improving air quality. In Perris, ozone pollution is made worse by idling truck traffic, operation of auxiliary engines to power refrigerated trailers and units, and travel through the City. Air quality in Perris is regulated by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The District monitors air quality in the City at one permanent location: Perris Valley, located at 237 1/2 N. D St. Perris, CA 92570. The station assesses PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels. Based on historical data from the South Coast Air Quality

<sup>40</sup> *California Health Interview Survey, Neighborhood Edition. (2018). Ever diagnosed with asthma (18+). Available at: <http://askchisne.ucla.edu/>*

<sup>41</sup> *California Health Interview Survey, Neighborhood Edition. (2018). Ever diagnosed with asthma (1-17). Available at: <http://askchisne.ucla.edu/>*

Management District, the Perris Valley Station exceeded the state and federal standard of 70 ppb 8-hour zone concentration during 64 days in 2019.<sup>42</sup> Inhaling ozone, even in small amounts, can irritate the lungs, increase the risk for respiratory infections, and trigger an asthma attack.

### 3. PARTICULATE MATTER 2.5

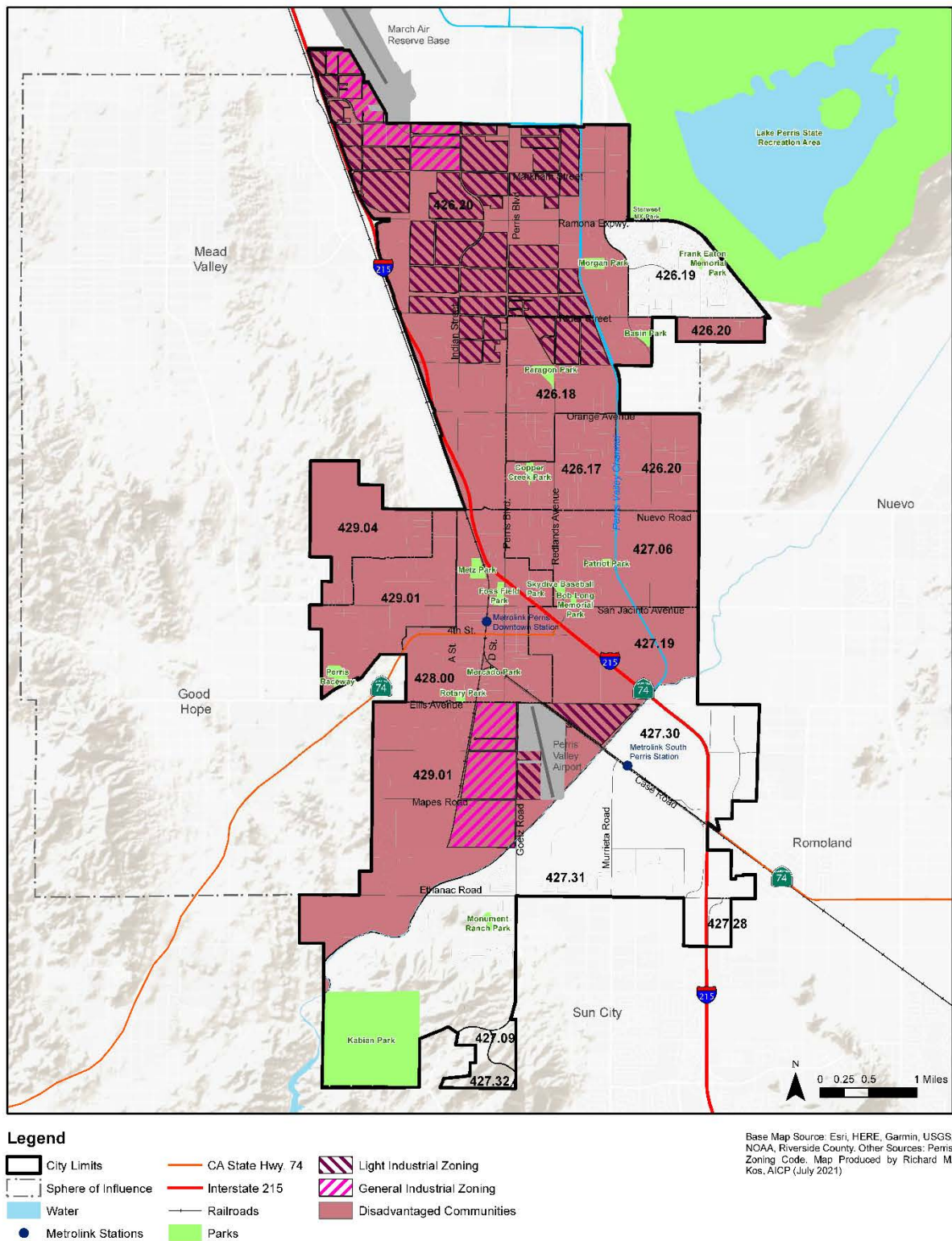
Particulate matter is also a significant environmental justice concern, as it poses an increased threat to low income and minority communities, where residents often experience greater exposure through proximity to major highways, factories and other industrial facilities. Particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) can be a mixture of solid or liquid particles in the air. While some particles such as dust, dirt, soot, or smoke can be seen with the naked eye, particulate matter often refers to finer inhalable particles that are 2.5 micrometers and smaller, which make them invisible to the naked eye. PM<sub>2.5</sub> particles can be made up of a host of microparticles. Some can be emitted directly from a source such as construction sites, unpaved roads, fields, or fires. Particulate matter contains solid or liquid droplets that are so small that when inhaled can result in serious health problems.

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<sup>42</sup> South Coast Air Quality Management District. (2019). 2019 Air Quality. <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/air-quality/historical-data-by-year/2019-air-quality-data-tables.pdf?sfvrsn=8>



Figure 2: Industrial Zoning



Various communities in Perris are impacted by elevated levels of fine PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Areas in northern Perris appear to have greater PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposure, likely due to existing industrial and neighboring airfield uses. For instance, census tracts 426.17 and 426.18 are comprised of mostly residential single-family uses, just south of commercial area land uses, and have a 93 percentile for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.<sup>43</sup> Census tract 429.04 is only partially within the City boundaries and also has a 93 percentile for PM<sub>2.5</sub>; this means that the community scores higher than 93 percent of census tracts in California for this substance. Residents living in this census tract or in northern areas of the City, where industrial uses are concentrated, are the most impacted by environmental pollutants generated by existing industries, contaminants, and heavy truck traffic. High concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub> pose a health risk to residents with pre-existing respiratory and/or cardiovascular diseases, especially children and seniors.

#### 4. DIESEL PARTICULATE MATTER

Roadways, highways, railways, and heavy industrial/processing facilities produce high levels of diesel particulate matter (DPM), a toxic air contaminant. Diesel engines emit a mixture of air pollutants, including both gaseous and solid material. The solid material in diesel exhaust is what is known as DPM. This is most easily identified as the black smoke that diesel engines emit. According to the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHHA), long-term exposure to DPM poses the highest cancer risk of any toxic air contaminant evaluated by OEHHHA.

High-volume roads, including interstates and truck routes, increase noise, DPM, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, particularly in disadvantaged communities in Perris. According to the Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study (MATES IV) released by SCAQMD, Riverside County has the lowest toxic risk (223 per million) in the Southern Coast Air Basin, compared to Orange County at 315 per billion and Los Angeles at 339 per billion.<sup>44</sup> However, these results vary widely across the region. An area that extends just north of the Perris Valley Airport has an air toxic cancer risk of 501 to 800 per million and much of the City has an air toxic cancer risk of 401 to 500 per million. According to MATES IV, diesel particulate matter accounts for 68 percent of risk across the entire basin. In general, areas near ports and transportation corridors, including freeways and major arterials, show the highest toxic risk.

Diesel exhaust can irritate the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs, and cause coughs, headaches, nausea, and lightheadedness. Additionally, diesel exhaust particles can heighten allergies, including dust and pollen, aggravate chronic respiratory symptoms, and increase the frequency or intensity of asthma attacks. The elderly and people with emphysema, asthma, and chronic heart and lung disease are especially sensitive to fine-particle pollution. Numerous studies have linked elevated

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<sup>43</sup> California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. (2012-2014). *CalEnviroScreen 3.0 PM 2.5 Map*. <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/indicator/air-quality-pm25>

<sup>44</sup> South Coast Air Quality Management District. (2015). *Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study in the South Coast Air Basin, Final Report*. <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/air-quality/air-toxic-studies/mates-iv/mates-iv-final-draft-report-4-1-15.pdf?sfvrsn=7>

particulate levels in the air to increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, asthma attacks, and premature deaths among those suffering from respiratory problems.<sup>45,46</sup>

## 5. DRINKING WATER

Drinking water in the City of Perris comes from both ground and surface water supplied by the Eastern Municipal Water District. Water supplied by the North Perris Water System to the Villages of Avalon comes from four ground water wells located within the community.

Perris's water service is provided by the City of Perris Public Works, the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), and the Western Municipal Water District (WMWD). Perris Public Works supplies water and sewer utilities within the area south of Nuevo Road, north of Mountain Avenue, west of Ruby Drive and east of Park Avenue. Water and sewer services outside of this area are provided by Eastern Municipal Water District. Water distributed by the City of Perris Public Works is purchased from the EMWD. The EMWD provides water, wastewater, and recycled water service to almost 800,000 people from Moreno Valley to Temecula and east to the San Jacinto Valley. It is one of 26 member agencies of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. EMWD's water supply sources include local groundwater (potable and desalinated), imported water from the Colorado River and State Water Project systems, and recycled water. EMWD also wholesales to seven water agencies within or adjacent to its service area boundaries.<sup>1</sup> Close coordination between the City and EMWD remains a priority to ensure adequate water supplies for daily water demands and fire suppression needs.

Based on Consumer Confidence Reports submitted by the City of Perris and Eastern Municipal District in 2019, tap water provided by these water utilities were in compliance with federal health-based drinking water standards. While drinking water (including bottled water) can be expected to include trace amounts of contaminants, the best way to ensure clean drinking water is identifying the contaminants that most seriously threaten human health, developing technology to remediate hazardous materials, and keeping pollution out of source water in the first place.

## 6. TOXIC WASTE

### Cleanup Sites

Cleanup sites are places polluted with toxic substances that may be undergoing cleanup by local government agencies or property owners. The extent of contamination can depend on the number of cleanup sites, types of hazardous substances, site status, and proximity to where people live. Attaining certification of these sites as clean can take years due to costs, litigation, and liability concerns. Additionally, contaminated sites can pose a risk to people who live in proximity or directly interact with the toxic substances, in addition to nearby wildlife habitats.

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<sup>45</sup> Susan C. Anenberg, Daven K. Henze, Veronica Tinney, Patrick L. Kinney, William Raich, Neal Fann, Chris S. Malley, Henry Roman, Lok Lamsal, Bryan Duncan, Randall V. Martin, Aaron van Donkelaar, Michael Brauer, Ruth Doherty, Jan Eiof Jonson, Yanko Davila, Kengo Sudo, Johan C.I. Kuylenstierna. *Estimates of the Global Burden of Ambient PM<sub>2.5</sub>, Ozone, and NO<sub>2</sub> on Asthma Incidence and Emergency Room Visits. Environmental Health Perspectives*, 2018; 126 (10): 107004

<sup>46</sup> Anderson, J.O. and et. al. (2012). *Clearing the Air: A Review of the Effects of Particulate Matter Air Pollution on Human Health. Journal of Medical Toxicology* 8:166–175.

As shown in Figure 3, communities in census tracts 428 and 429.01 are near (less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile) various cleanup sites, including an illegal dump site, the Perris Transfer Station, and Perris Maintenance Yard. Both census tracts are identified as disadvantaged communities by CalEnviroScreen 3.0.

While the illegal dump site is now closed, it was never permitted. The site is unlined and contains a mix of unknown substances, which can pose serious threats to the surrounding environment. In addition to a severe illegal dumping problem, the site has developed erosion channels that can pose risks to nearby pedestrian traffic. The site has been monitored annually by Riverside County since 2006. As of the last inspection (January 2021), no site enforcement actions were documented.<sup>47</sup>

## Hazardous Waste

Hazardous waste generators and facilities are sites that produce and/or transport hazardous waste. The potential impacts of these sites on human populations and the environment depends on the number of permitted waste facilities and hazardous waste generators in each census tract, and the distance from those sites to where people live. In Perris, there are two active hazardous waste sites that impact disadvantaged communities (Figure 3):<sup>48</sup>

- AOC LLC, 19991 Seaton Avenue – Generator, Transporter and TSDF (census tract: 429.04)
- Central Wire Inc, 2500 South A Street – Generator and TSDF (census tract: 429.01)

There are many types of hazardous wastes, including liquids, solids, and gases, that can negatively impact human health, wildlife habitat, and the environment. One of the main concerns with hazardous waste is the potential threat of a hazardous substance release. The severity of cases can range from minor ailments (e.g., eye or skin irritation, headaches, and nausea), property damage, environmental degradation, and severe health consequences (e.g., cancer, birth defects, death).

## Solid Waste

Solid waste sites collect, process, and/or store household garbage and other types of waste from industry or commercial sources, including landfills, recycling facilities, and composting facilities. Regulated solid waste facilities incorporate a variety of strategies to mitigate the negative impacts on nearby communities, including bad odors, increased pests, and increased truck traffic. Any site operating out of compliance (e.g., regulated or illegal) can negatively impact neighboring communities, habitat, and wildlife. Additionally, active and inactive sites can have negative impacts, including the release of toxic gases in the air, contaminated plumes in the water, and hazardous waste in the soil.

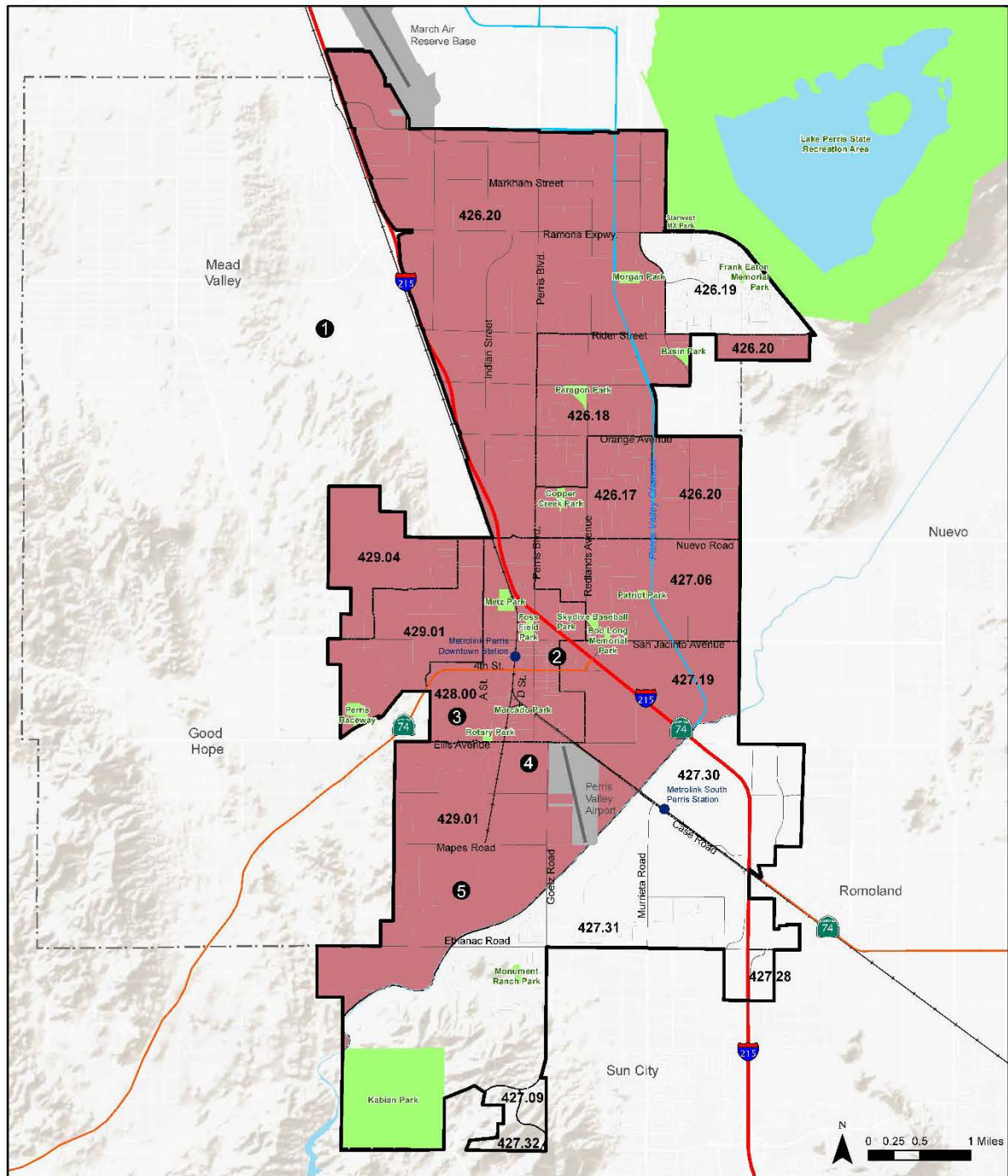
Based on CalEnviroScreen 3.0, there are two disadvantaged communities (census tracts: 428, 429.01) impacted by three public solid waste sites Perris Transfer Station, Perris Maintenance Yard, and the City of Perris illegal dump (Figure 3). Additionally, Global Plastics (PET reclaimer business) operates just north of the Perris Valley airport.

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<sup>47</sup> CalRecycle. (2019). SWIS Facility/Site Documents. Available at: <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search>

<sup>48</sup> Department of Toxic Substances Control. (2021). Hazardous Waste Tracking System. Available at: <https://hwts.dtsc.ca.gov/>

Figure 3: Toxic Waste Sites



**Legend**

- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- Water
- Metrolink Stations
- Parks
- Disadvantaged Communities
- CA State Hwy. 74
- Interstate 215
- Railroads

- Toxic Waste Sites
- 1. AOC LLC
- 2. Perris Maintenance Yard
- 3. Illegal Dump
- 4. Perris Transfer Station
- 5. Central Wire, Inc.

Base Map Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NOAA, Riverside County Map Produced by Richard M. Kos, AICP (July 2021)



## 4. PROMOTING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

A built environment that promotes health and safety improves quality of life for the entire community. The built environment refers to the physical components of a community, including homes, roads, sidewalks, parks, and buildings, in addition to the resources and services community members may access, from education and transportation to food and health care. The design of the built environment impacts how much people walk in a community, the types of pollutants they may be exposed to, and in some cases, contribute to premature death. Not all neighborhoods are designed to promote the health of the community. Engaging meaningfully with residents and supporting the community's vision for the future is an important step in ensuring access to a healthy neighborhood environment that cultivates a sense of neighborhood identity and ownership of the community.

### 1. HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

To ensure the health and well-being of a community, it is essential that everyone has access to healthy food. This means having food sources that offer affordable, nutritionally adequate, and culturally appropriate food. In Perris, many of the City's grocery stores are in close proximity to North Perris Boulevard, north of Interstate 215. Based on insights from the community engagement process, participants generally felt that healthy and affordable food was easily accessible in the City. This may be due in part to the City's extensive efforts to promote access to healthy food, including the CalFresh Healthy Living Program. Over three-quarters of households (80.5 percent) participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides benefits to purchase healthy food, compared to 66.6 percent across Riverside County.<sup>49</sup>

In April 2013, the City of Perris adopted the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Campaign Resolution, which kicked off the Live Well campaign, an effort to promote physical fitness, healthy diet and nutrition, and planning principles that support healthy neighborhoods. The program has expanded and now includes the following initiatives:

- **CalFresh Healthy Living:** worked with three local school districts to promote healthy eating and active living, including bilingual nutrition classes, development of gardens and promotion of physical activities, beginning in 2013. Currently, the work is focused on working with local food pantries and parks to implement policy, system and environmental changes to encourage individual choices of healthy foods, beverages, and physical activity.
- **Grow Perris:** collaborative partnership with public and private partners, including local school districts, faith-based organizations, and community based organizations, that has established and adopted 20+ gardens, in addition to creating a Farm to School Framework that cultivates fresh fruits and vegetables for district cafeterias.
- **Perris Green City Farm:** an urban community demonstration garden located on City Hall Campus, including environmentally friendly and water-wise landscaping elements. Free programming is offered at the garden that promotes nutrition education, horticultural

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<sup>49</sup> *Riverside University Health System. (2018). SHAPE Riverside County Data Portal. Households Receiving SNAP with Children. Available at: <https://www.shaperivco.org/>*

workshops, field trip opportunities to local schools, workforce development, and free produce to the community.

- **GEAR (Getting Everyone to Actively Ride):** educational campaign to reduce the carbon footprint of employees and residents in the City, in addition to the completion of class III bike lanes in downtown.
- **Empowering Your Mind:** programming and public awareness campaign to reduce mental health stigma.
- **Clearing the Air:** focused educational campaigns and policy change to increase awareness of the risks associated with tobacco usage through educational campaigns and introducing environmental policies that improve resident's access to clean air and protection from the risks of second-hand smoke exposure.
- **Children's Health Beverage Ordinance:** passed in 2017 and requires a healthy beverage (e.g., milk, water, or 100% juice) be offered as the default beverage with children's restaurant meals.

## 2. SAFE AND SANITARY HOUSING

A major principle of environmental justice is ensuring that people have a healthy home environment. Housing-related environmental hazards include exposure to indoor air pollution, lead-based paint, asbestos, mold and mildew. These toxins can cause developmental delays, asthma, allergies, and other health risks. Ensuring that all residents have access to healthy homes is an important step towards environmental justice.

### Housing Cost Burden

Housing cost burden generally refers to renters and homeowners that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs; those that spend 50 percent or more on housing costs are considered severely cost-burdened.<sup>50</sup> As shown in Figures 4 and 5, severe cost burden is more prevalent among renters than homeowners. Severely cost-burdened renter households are located throughout the City of Perris, with the highest concentration among owners in census tracts 429.04, which is only partially within the City, east of Interstate 215 and north of State Route 74.

Families struggling with housing costs are often faced with difficult decisions between paying for housing and reducing spending on other basic needs, including food, health care, car repair, and air conditioning/heat. For renters, there is also the threat of eviction, unexpected expenses, and limited funds to save towards homeownership. In 2019, the average cost of rent in the City of Perris was \$1,353, an 8.6 percent increase from the previous year.<sup>51</sup> Demand for housing is high across the Inland Empire for both renters and homeowners. Despite the relatively lower cost of homeownership in the region, compared to neighboring Los Angeles or Orange counties, the rental market provides a valuable option to securing housing for many households. However, for lower income households, cost-burden can trap families in the rental market over the long term.

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<sup>50</sup> For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

<sup>51</sup> UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development. (2019). *The House That Wasn't Built*. School of Business. Available at: [https://ucreeconomicforecast.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019\\_IE\\_Economic\\_Forecast\\_Book\\_Digital.pdf](https://ucreeconomicforecast.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019_IE_Economic_Forecast_Book_Digital.pdf)

## Manufactured Homes

Mobile homes, or manufactured housing, are an affordable homeownership option for many low-income households in the City. Approximately 7.1 percent of all housing in Perris consists of mobile homes. In census tract 429.01, mobile homes make up more than a third (31.9 percent) of the housing stock. During the community engagement process, some participants identified the need for both mobile home repair and replacement, given that some mobile homes are in severe disrepair. Additionally, quality manufactured homes, which are less expensive to produce than single family homes, could help alleviate housing supply shortages.<sup>52</sup>

## Homelessness

There are numerous factors that contribute to homelessness in Perris and Riverside County. Difficulties in obtaining employment, lack of education, mental illness, and substance abuse are a few of the more traditional factors. During the past 15-20 years, a growing shortage of affordable housing has also contributed to a rise in homelessness. Rising housing costs are also linked to housing instability and homelessness. Lower-income households with housing cost burden are more likely to become homeless.

In 2020, the Riverside County Homeless Point-in-Time County and Survey reported a total of 2,884 sheltered and unsheltered adults and children. Of the total unsheltered population (2,155) in the County, 52 people were in the City of Perris. While there are limitations to point in time surveys, including the potential for undercount, these estimates shed light on key trends in the region that are critical to policymaking. The City's Housing Authority has established a Homeless Sub-Committee and launched a Homeless Awareness Campaign called Perris Cares designed to reduce homelessness. The Perris Cares Campaign is a coordinated effort between the City, SWAG, code enforcement, and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department to help solve Perris' homelessness crisis.

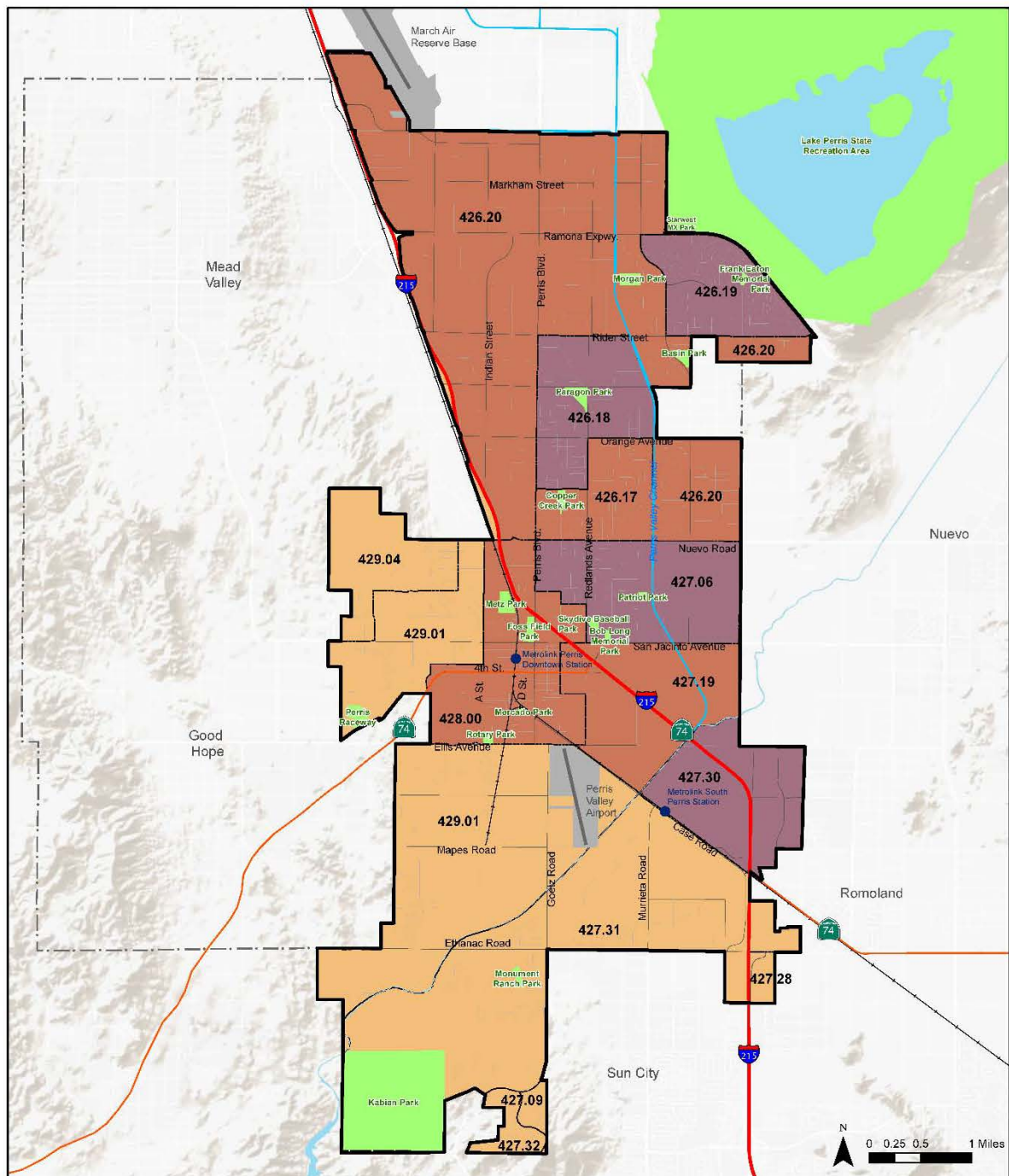
The City of Perris also partners with nonprofit organizations to provide case management, housing navigation services, and counseling to individuals experiencing homelessness. The City has an established referral system in place with the Social Work Action Group (SWAG) and the Riverside County Continuum of Care. Additionally, an emergency shelter in Hemet accommodates homeless persons from the Perris area. Providing affordable housing to people experiencing homelessness is a critical solution to homelessness. By connecting homeless populations to both housing and critical services, these members of the community have an opportunity to access resources that can improve their lives, including jobs, health care, and mental health prevention programs.

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<sup>52</sup> Goodman, L. and et. al. (2018). *Manufactured homes could ease the affordable housing crisis. So why are so few being made.* Urban Institute. Available at: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/manufactured-homes-could-ease-affordable-housing-crisis-so-why-are-so-few-being-made>

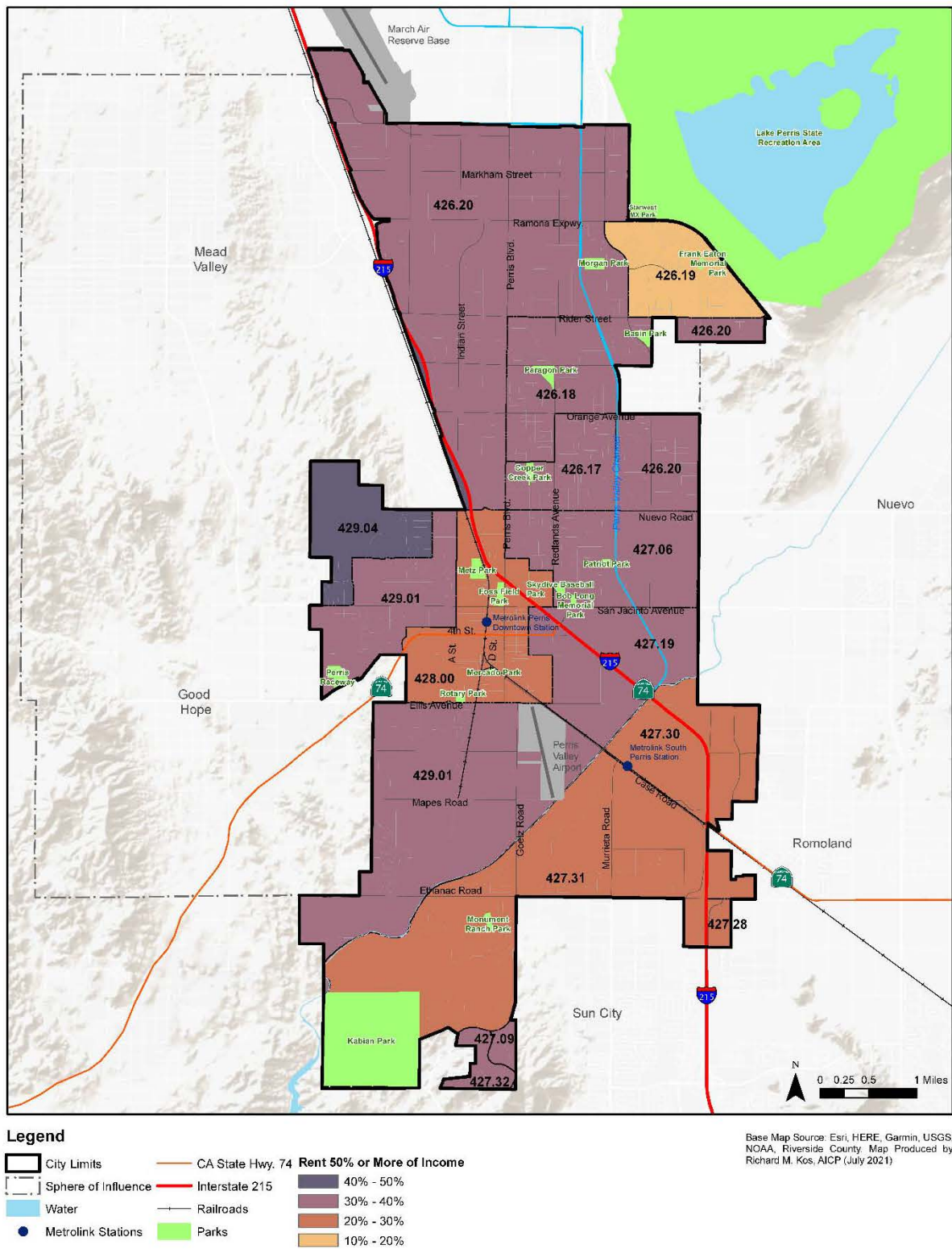


Figure 4: Severe Housing Cost Burden – Homeowners



Base Map Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NOAA, Riverside County. Map Produced by Richard M. Kos, AICP (July 2021)

Figure 5: Severe Housing Cost Burden – Renters



## Substandard Housing Conditions

The ability to access safe and quality housing impacts the health of individuals and families. Physical hazards and harmful exposures can impact and contribute to the onset of infectious and chronic diseases, injuries, and poor childhood development. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses four housing measures to identify substandard housing conditions: incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, and cost burden greater than 30 percent. Housing measures can be considered proxy indicators for other socioeconomic circumstances.

Based on US Census data, 0.9% of housing units in Perris lack complete plumbing facilities, more than double the County rate (0.3%). Additionally, 1.4% percent of housing in the City lacks complete kitchen facilities, compared to 0.7% in the County. The high cost of housing, combined with poor housing conditions, particularly in disadvantaged communities, is a quality of life issue that can impact community safety. Overcrowding can also compound the detrimental impacts of poor housing quality.

Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room in a dwelling unit. Severe overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 persons per room in a dwelling unit.<sup>53</sup> The rate of overcrowded households in Perris (16.8 percent) more than doubles that of the County (6.9 percent). Severe overcrowding is highest in the following census tracts: 428 (7.1 percent), 426.18 (6 percent), and 427.06 (5.3 percent). These type of housing problems can impact parking, noise, and crime in a neighborhood, alongside the physical and mental health of individuals, particularly for disadvantaged communities.

## Lead

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that more than 80 percent of homes built before 1978 contain lead-based paint. In homes built before 1950, the risk of lead exposure is greater due to paint that may contain higher concentrations of lead and other health-harming that can lead to a range of acute and chronic conditions, including asthma, lead poisoning, respiratory infections, and others. In some cases, the age of the housing can constrain potential repairs and maintenance. Approximately 13.2 percent of housing in Perris was built in 1979 or before (Housing Element 2021-2029). As shown in Figure 6, older residential neighborhoods are concentrated in disadvantaged communities south of Nuevo Road and west of Interstate 1-215. In many of these communities, children under age five make up more than a third of the population (Table 3). Children are particularly vulnerable to adverse environmental health outcomes, generating inequities that lead to disparities in adult health and well-being.<sup>54</sup>

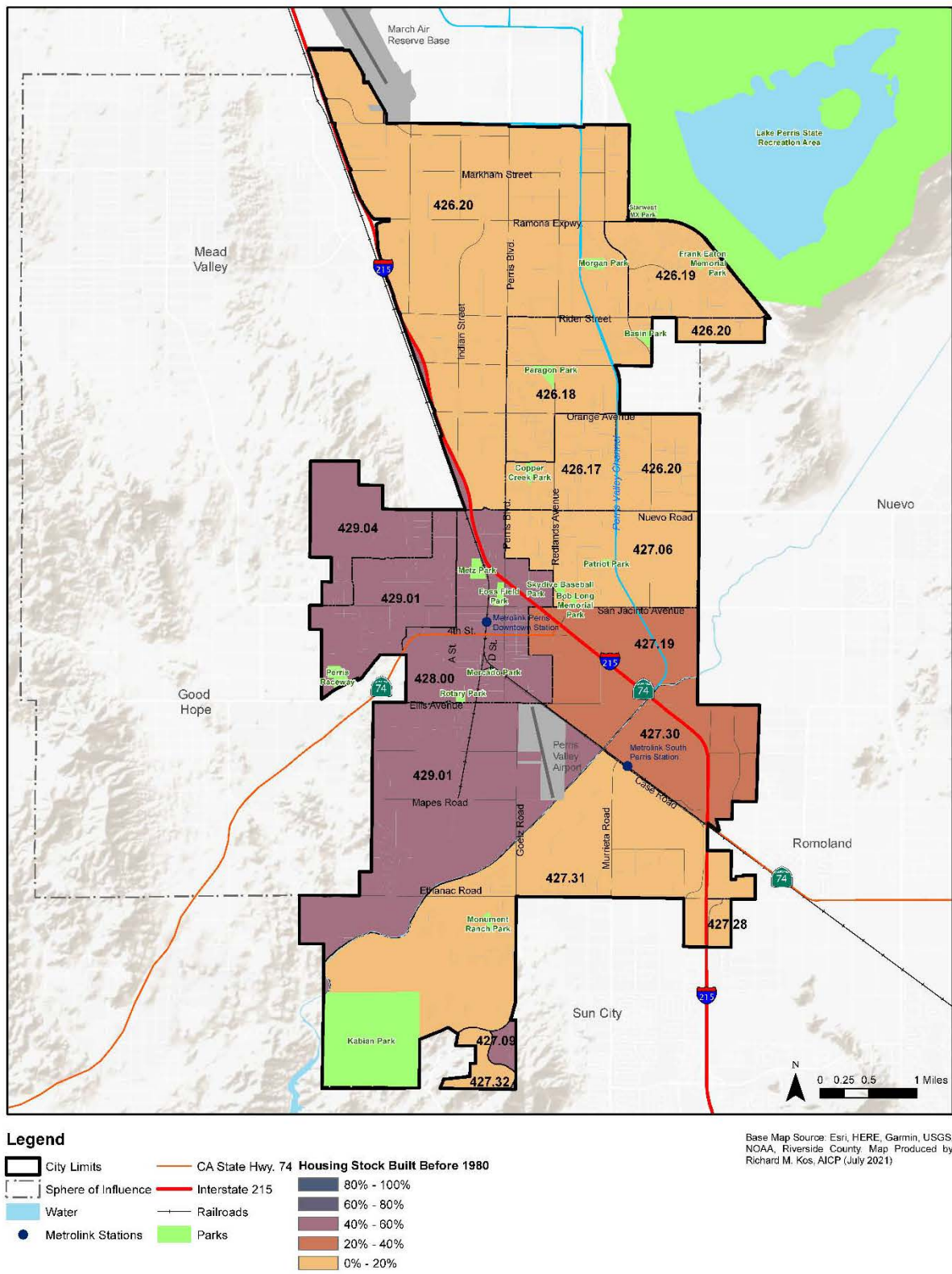
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<sup>53</sup> For the purpose of this report, overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room in a dwelling unit. Severe overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 persons per room in a dwelling unit.

<sup>54</sup> American Public Health Association. (2019). *Addressing Environmental Justice to Achieve Health Equity. Policy Statement.* Available at: <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2020/01/14/addressing-environmental-justice-to-achieve-health-equity>



Figure 6: Housing Stock Built Before 1980



### 3. ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Residents can face various challenges to accessing health care, including insurance, provider availability, and distance. In Perris, 19.1 percent of adults (18-64) are uninsured, compared to 14.9 percent in the County.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, 1 in 5 adults (21.6 percent) experienced a delay in accessing prescriptions or medical services.

Most of the City is designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary medical care to the Medicaid eligible population. There is a small area of census tract 429.04, located within city limits, that is also designated as an HPSA for primary care, but for low-income populations. To achieve the population to practitioner target ratio for the Medicaid population, the HPSA would need to add 14.81 full-time primary care providers. A shortage of medical practitioners, particularly in low-income communities, creates additional challenges for residents to access proper medical care in a timely manner, and can worsen existing health issues.

### 4. PUBLIC FACILITIES

State law defines "public facilities" as public improvements, services and community amenities that benefit a neighborhood. These may include streets and roads, government buildings, schools, and public open space. Public improvements and programs can also benefit the community, including new development projects, recreation programs and amenities, and streetscape improvements. SB 1000 calls for cities and counties to develop policies and programs that prioritize facilities that benefit disadvantaged communities. In evaluating a new public facility, the jurisdiction should ensure it has a measurable benefit to the community and address whether it is particularly advantageous to disadvantaged communities.

During the community engagement process, the lack of city infrastructure and facilities to support physical activity (e.g., sidewalks, bicycle lanes, parks, and recreation centers) was identified as one of the top issues that could be addressed to promote health in the community. Ensuring connectivity to parks, including safe routes for walking and biking, is also an important component of city infrastructure to support physical activity. While several parks are concentrated near downtown (Figure 7), community members indicated there are not enough community centers and active recreation centers. Residents also identified a need for better programming, including improved youth programs, affordable daycare and mentorship opportunities.

#### Active Mobility

Active mobility, including walking and cycling as single trips or in combination with public transport, can positively impact health outcomes. In Perris, most residents rely on vehicles to get to work. Nearly 1/3 of workers carpool to work, compared to 12.5 percent in the County; only 1.9 percent of workers (16 years and older) commute to work by transit or walking, lower than 2.8 percent in the County. There are no residents commuting to work by bike in Perris, compared to 0.3% of residents in the County.

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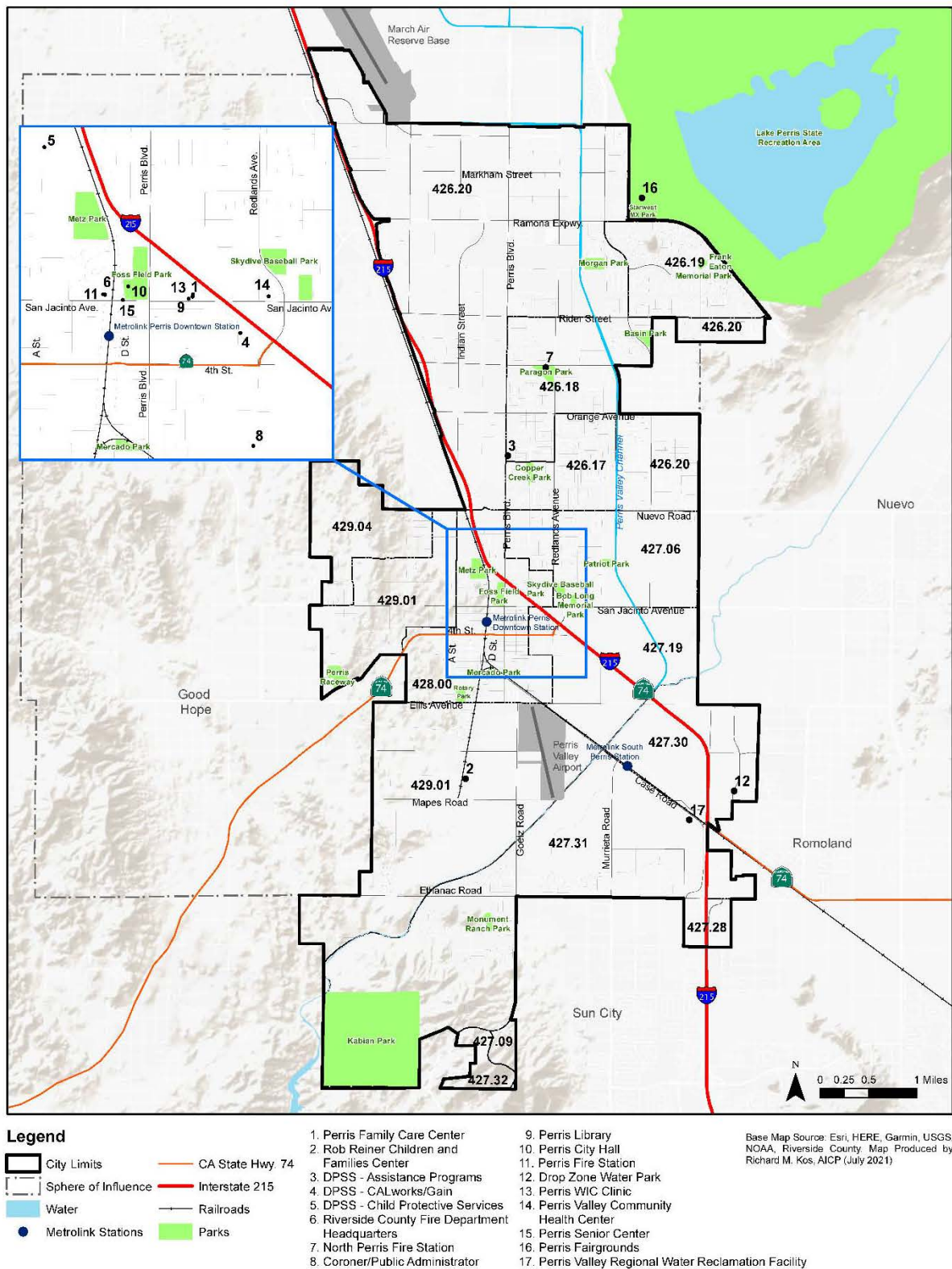
<sup>55</sup> *California Health Interview Survey, Neighborhood Edition. (2018). Currently Uninsured. Available at: <http://askchisne.ucla.edu/>*

Vehicular traffic is the greatest contributor to greenhouse gases and poor air quality, which can negatively impact health. Average commute times in Perris are slightly longer for residents living in the City (36.7 minutes), compared to the County (33.3 minutes). Replacing driving trips with biking or walking trips reduces emissions associated with mobility, translating into less carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, and other pollutants in the air. Additionally, an active lifestyle that includes physical activity, including walking and cycling to school or work, can improve health outcomes, reduce stress, and help control weight. Implementation of the City's Active Transportation Plan can provide a powerful framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while also increasing mobility options for vulnerable populations, enabling safe, affordable access to economic and social opportunities.

## 5. COMMUNITY SAFETY

Safety is a critical issue for community members that live and work in Perris. During the engagement process, residents expressed concerns related to pedestrian and bicycle safety, lack of infrastructure to support physical activity, crime, street lighting, and lax COVID-19 enforcement. Additionally, safety concerns and crime were identified in parks, specific neighborhoods, and other public spaces. Real and perceived crime can have health, economic, and emotional impacts on victims and their families. For example, someone afraid to walk through their neighborhood may choose to drive instead of walk to run errands or they might prefer their children to play inside instead of visiting the neighborhood park. Community design is one piece of improving the quality of the physical environment and a key component of building a healthy community.

Figure 7: Public Facilities



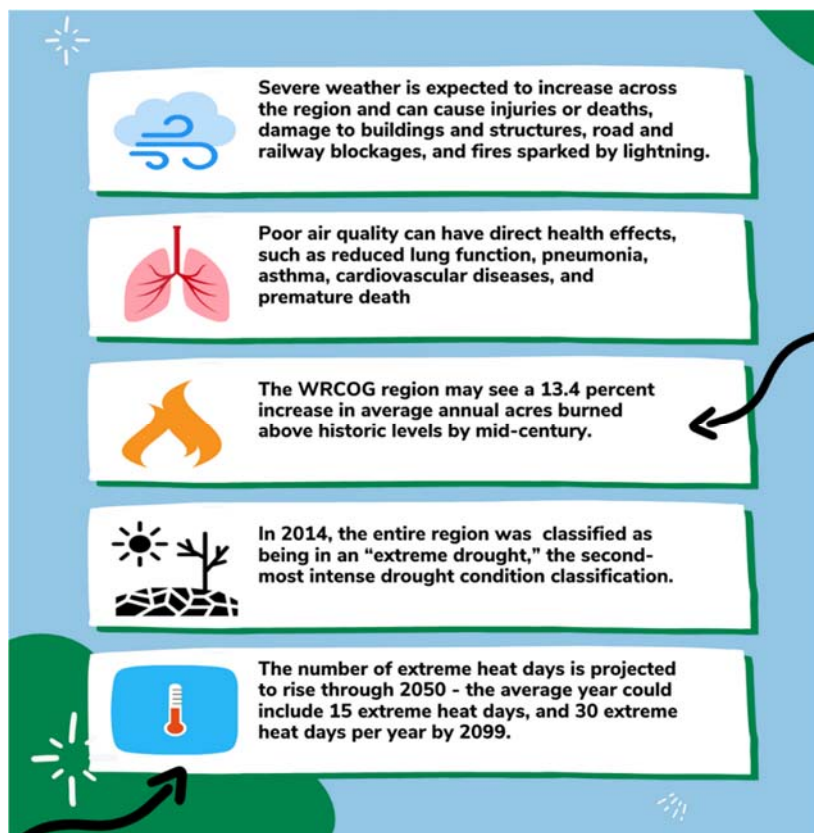


## 5. PREPARING FOR CLIMATE HAZARDS AND ADAPTATION

Climate change adaptation aims to enact practical actions to protect communities from the impacts of climate hazards. Ongoing changes to the Earth's climate create what is called the greenhouse effect. This is created by greenhouse gases (GHG), like carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides, in the atmosphere that trap heat around the earth's surface, increasing temperatures globally and resulting in warming oceanic temperature, shrinking ice caps, breaking glaciers, reductions in snowpack, sea level rise, and intensified weather events.

Communities across the world have been impacted by climate change. Climatic impacts can vary by geographic area and can include wildfires in areas not previously prone to wildfires, sea level rise across coastal areas, and flooding near waterways. In the greater Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) subregion, this has resulted in hotter days throughout the year and increased occurrences of wildfires, in addition to other detrimental climate hazards.<sup>56</sup>

Figure 8: Climate Hazard Risks



<sup>56</sup> Western Riverside County Council of Governments. (2020). *Western Riverside Adaptation and Resiliency Strategy: Part 1, Vulnerability Assessment*. Available at: [https://wrcog.us/DocumentCenter/View/7478/Western-Riverside-Adaptation-and-Resiliency-Strategy\\_Vulnerability-Assessment](https://wrcog.us/DocumentCenter/View/7478/Western-Riverside-Adaptation-and-Resiliency-Strategy_Vulnerability-Assessment)



Even if global concentrations of GHGs stopped increasing today, climate change would continue to impact the subregion for the foreseeable future. If GHG levels continue to rise, climate change effects will likely become more severe.<sup>57</sup> In the City of Perris, predicted climate-related hazards include:<sup>58</sup>

- **Agricultural Pests and Diseases** – Farms and ranches within the City of Perris face risks to pests and diseases that can cause plants and animals to grow slower, damage them so that their products are less appealing and harder to sell, or even die.
- **Air Quality** – The City of Perris may experience more frequent days of unsafe levels of atmospheric ozone by 2050, creating or exacerbating health risks for some individuals.
- **Drought** – Water sources will likely experience more frequent and intense droughts, which can cause water shortages.
- **Extreme Heat** – Extreme heat incidents can strain the City's power delivery networks, and can increase rates of heat-related illnesses, particularly in at-risk populations.
- **Flooding** – More intense 100-year and 500-year flooding is expected to occur along the San Jacinto River and the Perris Valley Storm Drain.
- **Human Health Hazards** – More frequent and severe wildfires near the City of Perris could worsen air quality, causing health impacts.
- **Landslides** – More frequent and intense rainfall could increase the chance that a landslide will likely occur in the City of Perris. Deep-seated landslides could occur on land in the southwestern portion of the City.
- **Severe Weather** – Strong winds and heavy rains are expected to become more intense around the City of Perris.

The environmental impacts of climate change affect everyone in a community, but disproportionately affect already burdened low-income communities and people of color. Very high fire hazard severity, for instance, impacts residential areas in two disadvantaged communities in the City (census tracts 429.01 and 429.04), south of the I-215 and north of SR-74.. Additionally, the threat of flooding impacts a large area of disadvantaged communities on the eastern side of the City, as noted in Figure S-3 of the Safety Element. Given that most census tracts in the City are identified as disadvantaged communities and that many of these areas are higher density residential, the likelihood of being impacted by more than one climate hazard is high.

In addition to physical vulnerability, some demographic groups tend to be more vulnerable to hazards than others, otherwise known as "social vulnerability." Social vulnerability is the susceptibility of different populations to be harmed from exposures to a hazard based on their ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from that hazard.<sup>59</sup> Types of factors that impact

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<sup>57</sup> IPCC. (2013). *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>58</sup> Climate related hazards are included from the community profiles included in the Resilient IE Toolkit. Each profile is organized with short descriptions of each hazard facing the community; identifying critical assets that could be threatened by certain hazards; listing vulnerable assets and populations by hazard type; and defining infrastructure vulnerabilities in the city's evacuation network.

<sup>59</sup> Cooley, H. (2012). *Social Vulnerability to Climate Change in California*. Pacific Institute. Available at: <https://pacinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/social-vulnerability-climate-change-ca.pdf>

social vulnerability include: age, education, English proficiency, poverty status, vehicular access, disability, type of work environment, age and overcrowding. The interaction of these variables identifies populations that would be more or less vulnerable to climate change effects (i.e., low-income elderly populations may be more vulnerable than high-income elderly populations). Table 6 shows which hazards may pose the greatest harm to vulnerable groups or assets in Perris.<sup>60</sup>

*Table 6 - Key Vulnerability by Hazard*

| Vulnerability                       | Hazards                         |             |         |              |          |                      |                          |                |          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|----------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------|
|                                     | Agricultural Pests and Diseases | Air Quality | Drought | Extreme Heat | Flooding | Human Health Hazards | Landslides and Mudslides | Severe Weather | Wildfire |
| Households in poverty               |                                 | ✓           | ✓       | ✓            | ✓        | ✓                    |                          | ✓              | ✓        |
| Chronically ill individuals         |                                 | ✓           |         | ✓            |          | ✓                    |                          | ✓              | ✓        |
| Outdoor or seasonal/migrant workers |                                 | ✓           | ✓       | ✓            |          |                      |                          |                | ✓        |
| Persons experiencing homelessness   |                                 | ✓           |         | ✓            | ✓        | ✓                    |                          | ✓              | ✓        |
| Residential structures              |                                 |             |         |              | ✓        |                      | ✓                        |                | ✓        |
| Airports                            |                                 |             |         |              | ✓        |                      |                          |                |          |
| Energy delivery systems             |                                 |             |         | ✓            |          |                      |                          | ✓              | ✓        |
| Water delivery systems              |                                 |             | ✓       |              |          |                      |                          |                | ✓        |
| Railways                            |                                 |             |         | ✓            |          |                      | ✓                        |                | ✓        |
| Agricultural Land                   | ✓                               |             | ✓       | ✓            |          |                      |                          |                |          |

Climate change will add further uncertainty or multiply the effect of a wide variety of shocks and stresses. Taking actions to prioritize climate adaptation and resilience in making planning decisions in the City can benefit vulnerable communities and the community at large. For instance, prioritizing green infrastructure and preservation of the natural environment can support a healthy, resilient environment. Taking actions to protect the City's diverse communities and existing infrastructure can help everyone be protected against climate risks.

<sup>60</sup> A full list of potential vulnerabilities is included in the Western Riverside County Vulnerability Assessment.

## 6. GOALS AND POLICIES

Environmental justice encompasses several interrelated topics. Issues addressed in this section are categorized under the broad headings of Community Engagement and Capacity Building; Land Use and the Environment; Healthy Food Access; Active Living and Mobility; Affordable Housing; and Public Infrastructure and Facilities. Goals and policies follow each section to direct and inform the City's long-term decision-making process regarding environmental justice.

### 1. TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

**Goal 1.1 A high degree of transparency and inclusion in the decision-making process.**

#### *Policies*

- Promote transparent governance by creating an open data portal that includes city budgets, engagement demographics, and tracking of equity metrics.
- Through the City budgeting process, discuss and set priorities at the City Council and management level to prioritize work programs and staffing needs.
- Continue to include general plan review as a capital improvement program to ensure funding allocations are consistent with the priorities set by the community and City Council.
- Encourage City staff and Boards and Commission members to participate in leadership and governance training programs.
- Prioritize decisions that provide long-term community benefit and discourage decisions that provide short-term community benefit but reduce long-term opportunities.
- Support training programs that teach community members about local government functions and encourages community participation in civic processes..
- Maintain record systems and utilize technology that promotes public access, including a modernized website.
- Maintain a full-service online citizens platform for permit issuance, electronic plan review, and payment process.

### 2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + CAPACITY BUILDING

**Goal 2.1: Culturally competent approaches to community engagement across all City departments.**

#### *Policies:*

- Provide the opportunity for multilingual interpretation and translation at all public meetings, including at least Spanish and additional languages, should a need be identified.
- Promote City meetings and activities through various channels to increase public awareness, including PerrisTV, email blasts, Channel 3 (local public channel), and social media announcements and posts.
- Ensure a variety of channels are provided for people to participate in public meetings, including live streaming and opportunities for online input and in person.

- Ensure all City circulated materials are culturally relevant and available in multiple languages, including Spanish.
- Ensure all City leaders and staff are trained on issues of environmental justice, equity, and culturally competent principles of public engagement as part of the City's regularly scheduled Ethics Training Program, approximately every two years.
- Continue to partner with community-based organizations (e.g., El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center, TODEC), to promote community capacity-building and community engagement among Spanish-speaking residents.
- Continue to affirmatively market CDBG and HOME funded programs, as outlined in the City's 2019 Analysis of Impediments and Fair Housing Action Plan, including advertising housing programs in local publications and ensuring outreach to all potential eligible households, especially those least likely to apply for housing assistance.
- Require that all new plans and programs related to resilience examine the potential effects of stresses, shocks, and recovery plans to minimize impacts on the most vulnerable community members, such as seniors, low income, children, the disabled, and homeless.

### 3. LAND USE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**Goal 3.1: A community that reduces the negative impacts of land use changes, environmental hazards and climate change on disadvantaged communities.**

*Policies:*

- Continue to ensure new development is compatible with the surrounding uses by co-locating compatible uses and using physical barriers, geographic features, roadways or other infrastructure to separate less compatible uses. When this is not possible, impacts may be mitigated using: noise barriers, building insulation, sound buffers, traffic diversion.
- Partner with local community-based organizations to implement a tree planting program.
- Continue to ensure developers provide plantings of native, non-invasive, drought tolerant landscaping and trees for new affordable housing development.
- Support identification, clean-up and remediation of local toxic sites through the development review process.
- Encourage smoke-free/vape-free workplaces, multi-family housing, parks, and other outdoor gathering places to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke.
- As part of the development review process, require conditions that promote Good Neighbor Policies for Industrial Development for industrial buildings larger than 100,000 square feet. The conditions shall be aimed at protecting nearby homes, churches, parks, day-care centers, schools, and nursing homes from air pollution, noise lighting, and traffic associated with large warehouses, making them a "good neighbor."

**Goal 3.2: A community that actively works to reduce the impacts of poor air quality.**

*Policies:*

- Provide educational information about air quality issues and their health effects, including best practices for reducing and/or eliminating sources of indoor air pollution.

- Participate in air quality planning efforts with local, regional, and State agencies that improve local air quality to protect human health, minimize the disproportionate impacts on sensitive population groups, and ensure that City concerns are resolved early in the process.
- Transition the City's existing car fleet to clean air vehicles.
- Discourage development of sensitive land uses, including schools, hospitals, homes, and elder and childcare facilities, in close proximity to air pollution sources that pose health risks (e.g., freeways, airports, flood zones, and pollutant industrial sites).
- Inform existing industries of the state 5-minute maximum idling limitation and condition new industrial projects to enforce the state's 5-minute maximum idling limitation for stationary diesel trucks.

#### 4. HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

**Goal 4.1: Universal access to healthy food for food insecure populations.**

*Policies:*

- Support efforts to promote pop-up farmer's market at rotating neighborhoods in the City. Coordinate these events in partnership community garden programming.
- Prioritize investments to expand the downtown bike network and promote safe access to parks, schools, and grocery stores.
- Partner with the City's Public Health Division to promote events that support healthy food access, including food pantries, pop-up farmer's markets, etc.
- Encourage cross-department participation in the health partnership committee define health agendas in the City, including opportunities to educate, provide programming, host events, develop policies, and make infrastructure improvements.
- Assess and advance the development of new community garden sites, including schools, community-based organizations, and parks.

#### 5. ACTIVE MOBILITY

**Goal 5.1: Neighborhoods designed to promote safe and accessible connectivity to neighborhood amenities for all residents.**

*Policies:*

- Implement the prioritization framework provided in the City's Active Transportation Plan to evaluate all proposed bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- Prioritize future infrastructure investments for disadvantaged communities based on community priorities identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan. Annually assess milestones based on metrics provided to measure progress.
- Partner with transit providers to promote increase active mobility among vulnerable community members, including low-income, children, and senior populations.

- Require developers to provide pedestrian and bike friendly infrastructure in alignment with the vision set in the City's Active Transportation plan or active transportation in-lieu fee to fund active mobility projects.
- Prioritize investments that increase safety for bicycle users and pedestrians in areas with high rates of traffic collisions (such as Perris Boulevard and West 4th Street), including traffic calming measures and signage.
- Partner with regional and state agencies, including WRCOG, Riverside County, SCAG, and Caltrans, to fund and implement active transportation projects outlined in the City's Active Transportation Plan.

## 6. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Goal 6.1: A diverse housing stock that preserves and enhances housing affordability in the community.**

*Policies:*

- Facilitate the development and provision of affordable housing through regulatory incentives, density bonuses, and other financial assistance (as funding permits).
- Prioritize net-zero energy affordable housing developments that do not adversely impact disadvantaged communities.
- Update the City's zoning code, development standards and procedures, subdivision regulations, and fire and building codes to identify potential constraints to the production, maintenance, and development of mixed use and affordable housing.
- Require that all developers of affordable housing partner with local community organizations to lead public engagement and prioritize potential community benefits.
- Position affordable housing near or within amenity-rich areas with shopping, transit, schools, parks and open space.
- Partner with nonprofit housing developers to acquire and maintain property as affordable housing, actively pursuing local, State, and federal funding programs or mechanisms for affordable housing.
- Evaluate the feasibility of launching an inclusionary zoning ordinance to increase funding for affordable housing, home improvements, and other housing programs.
- Promote the development of accessory dwelling units in existing single-family neighborhoods.
- Participate in the WRCOG housing trust, if it is created.

**Goal 6.2: Neighborhoods that enhance the safety and welfare of people of all ages, income levels, and cultural backgrounds.**

*Policies:*

- Provide a variety of housing types, sizes, and prices throughout the City to increase housing choice and ensure that households of all types and income levels have the opportunity to find suitable ownership or rental housing.

- Discourage development in proximity to sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, hospitals, homes, and long-term care facilities) near source point pollution sources that impact health, including freeways and hazardous waste sites.
- Promote the repair, improvement, and rehabilitation of the City's housing stock, including mobile homes, through grant and low-interest loan programs.
- Partner with the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County and local banks to provide workshops on financial literacy, credit counseling, and first-time homeownership. Collaborate with local community-based organizations to increase participation of low-income and people of color.
- Continue to provide a free community training program every other year to City staff, landlords, and tenants on crime-free housing, landlord tenant law, and fair housing regulations.
- Following adoption of the 2021 Housing, Safety and Environmental Justice Elements, review city zoning ordinance and map for compliance, and update as necessary.
- Integrate land use and transportation infrastructure to support higher-density development, promoting a balanced mix of residential and commercial uses and connected system of sidewalks, bikeways, and active transit.
- Support development of senior housing, assisted living facilities, and housing for persons with disabilities that have access to supportive services, community facilities, and public transportation.

## 7. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

**Goal 7.1: Quality community infrastructure and facilities that meet the needs of disadvantaged communities.**

*Policies:*

- Ensure the equal distribution, regular maintenance, and safety of public facilities and infrastructure that serve disadvantaged communities (e.g., youth, seniors, low-income)
- Encourage youth to participate in planning and programming efforts at community facilities, including libraries, schools, art galleries, parks, and other public spaces.
- Encourage the use of public art and support public art partnerships among City departments, private developers, arts and cultural organizations, schools and community members, including public murals.
- Support the use of public facilities by local artists, students, and cultural groups, including shared space and financial and program support for local organizations.
- Partner with community-based organizations to identify community-level priorities for public infrastructure and facilities projects.
- Continue to include in the capital improvement program a ranking of capital improvement projects to guide the City's applications for regional, state, federal, or other funds.
- Partner with school districts in the City to support afterschool programs and coordinate across agencies on other extra-curricular activities, resources, and programming offered to low-income communities.
- Consider creating a multi-disciplinary "Quality of Life" team to work jointly with Riverside County Sheriff staff, parks personnel, public works, housing and planning staff and respond to all calls

related to homeless clean-ups, cannabis enforcement, abandoned properties, and requests for "illegal casinos" sweeps.

## 8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Goal 8.1: A City with access to safe and improved pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular safety and reduced community crime.**

*Policies:*

- Collaborate with the County Department of Public Health, Western Riverside Council of Governments, and other partners to align City and County resources supporting Safe Routes to School.
- Develop programs to ensure that all multi-family properties meet City standards for lighting and landscaping.
- Partner with local schools to promote bicycle safety and active transportation education under the Getting Everyone to Actively Ride (GEAR) Program.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle crossings and pathways at key locations parks, and schools, to create safe access to the surrounding community
- Promote physical improvements that ensure safe access for aging adults, particularly routes to transit and shopping centers.
- Improve lighting and nighttime security across all City neighborhoods.
- Promote Business and Neighborhood Watch programs to support a sense of civic pride and maintain a clean and safe environment.
- Partner with the Southern California Railway Museum and other community organizations to sponsor bi-annual community cleanup days, where residents can take advantage of a free opportunity to discard household trash, large/bulk items, and personal document shredding.
- Promote regional law enforcement partnerships that support the coordination of public safety awareness and crime prevention in the community.
- Continue to support the City's graffiti prevention program to remove graffiti from public property or property adjacent to the public right-of-way.