

4 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES ANALYSIS

This chapter is an assessment of the relevant public services in the City of Grover Beach as they pertain to related California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) topics that will be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as part of the Land Use Element update. This analysis is focused on capacity and constraints of community services and utilities. It is the result of a review of existing policy documents and direct consultation with representatives of local agencies that provide fire, police and school services.

A. *Public Services*

The section discusses community services provided in the City of Grover Beach, including Grover Beach fire service, police service and schools.

1. **Fire Protection**¹

The Grover Beach Fire Department (GBFD) operates out of one fire station located at 701 Rockaway Avenue. According to GBFD staff, there are no current plans to upgrade the facility or relocate the Department. The Department's entire annual budget comes from the City's General Fund. The GBFD employs six paid firefighters, one Battalion Chief and one Fire Chief. The GBFD also has six active reserve firefighters to support the full-time staff.

The GBFD provides both fire and first responder services; advanced Life Support (paramedics) is provided by local ambulance company San Luis Ambulance. Fire crew respond to approximately 1,500 calls per year with two fire trucks and one rescue unit. The average response time within the City is three to four minutes. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) has rated the Department four on a scale of 1 to 10, with one being the best.

According to the Grover Beach Fire Chief, the GBFD's current equipment and physical facility are adequate and efficient. However, the City has historically had a fire suppression problem related to the inadequate spacing of

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all information in this section is from personal communication with Grover Beach Fire Chief Mike Hubert, March 12, 2008.

hydrants. There are 353 fire hydrants within the City of Grover Beach with fire flows from 800 to 1,500 gallons per minute (GPM).

The Grover Beach Fire Chief considers the number of paid firefighters on the force to be inadequate. The Fire Chief has identified 15 positions for reserve firefighters as vital to safe and efficient operation. The current roster includes six reserve firefighters.

2. Police Protection²

The Grover Beach Police Department (GBPD) is located at 711 Rockaway Avenue, adjacent to the fire station. There are no plans for upgrading or re-locating the facility. Funding for the Police Department comes from the City's General Fund. A Mutual Aid Agreement exists between the Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande Police Departments, enabling the jurisdictions to cooperatively serve residents of both cities.

The GBPD has 19 full-time sworn officers, four part-time sworn officers, and ten non-sworn officers. The number of staff has not increased for 13 years. This staffing level provides Grover Beach with a ratio of 1.7 officers per 1,000 residents. This is 20 percent less than that of similarly-sized cities nationwide in 2003.

The GBPD has identified the need for additional police officers and an additional patrol car to increase the fleet from five cars to six. Equipment upgrades and increased storage space are cited as increasingly necessary.

3. Schools³

Grover Beach is served by Lucia Mar Unified School District (LMUSD). LMUSD is San Luis Obispo County's largest school district, serving the com-

² Unless otherwise noted, all information in this section is from personal communication with Grover Beach Police Chief Mike Jim Copsey, March 11, 2008.

³ Unless otherwise noted, all information in this section is from personal communication with LMUSD Deputy Superintendent for Business Mary Stark, March 11, 2008.

munities of Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, Nipomo and Oceano. Enrollment in LMUSD has remained steady at approximately 10,500 pupils since 1997, although a slight increase in 2006 brought enrollment to the current level of just over 10,900 students.

LMUSD currently operates 11 elementary schools attended by approximately 5,600 students, three junior high schools attended by approximately 2,000 students and three high schools attended by approximately 3,300 students. The City of Grover Beach contains three elementary schools, all located in residential neighborhoods. This is consistent with local school board policy to promote “neighborhood schools” as opposed to distanced school sites.

Elementary schools in Grover Beach enroll approximately 1,500 students at the following facilities:

- ◆ Fairgrove Elementary, 2101 The Pike
- ◆ Grover Beach Elementary, 365 South 10th Street
- ◆ Grover Heights Elementary, 770 North 8th Street

There are no junior high schools or high schools located in Grover Beach. Instead, Grover Beach students attend one of the following LMUSD schools:

- ◆ Paulding Middle School, 600 Crown Hill, Arroyo Grande
- ◆ Judkins Middle School, 680 Wadsworth, Pismo Beach
- ◆ Arroyo Grande High School, 495 Valley Road, Arroyo Grande
- ◆ Lopez High School (alternative), 1055 Mesa View Drive, Arroyo Grande

School facilities in Grover Beach have capacity for existing and projected students. However, the LMUSD, like other districts across the Central Coast and State, faces layoffs, larger class sizes and a reduction in programs in the 2008/2009 school year, due to the 10 percent reduction in education spending proposed by the California Office of the Governor.

There are no current plans to expand school facilities in Grover Beach. However, LMUSD is seeking a three million dollar state matching grant to diver-

sify its curriculum by adding a culinary academy at either Arroyo Grande or Nipomo High School.

B. Utilities

This section discusses the current and future capacity of utilities provided to Grover Beach.

1. Water Supply

Grover Beach's current water supply of 2,328 acre-feet per year comes from a combination of approximately 65 percent ground water and 35 percent surface water. In 2005, the City's total water use was 2,036 acre-feet, of which 1,249 acre-feet of water was pumped from groundwater wells and 787 acre-feet was received from surface water.⁴ Table 4-1 shows the breakdown of the City's yearly allocated water supply sources.

a. Groundwater

The City's groundwater comes from the 184,000-acre Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin.⁵ This groundwater supply is shared with other South San Luis Obispo County communities under the terms of the "Arroyo Grande - Tri-Cities Mesa Groundwater Basin Gentlemen's Agreement." Groundwater is extracted from four wells, three of which are shallow wells that draw from the Paso Robles Formation. The fourth is a deep well that draws from the Careaga Formation. The City currently obtains approximately 1,198 acre-feet per year from these four wells under the Gentlemen's Agreement. According to the 2005 Grover Beach *Urban Water Management Plan*, the City's groundwater supply is projected to remain stable until 2025.

⁴ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 7.

⁵ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 5.

TABLE 4-1 **CITY OF GROVER BEACH WATER SUPPLY SOURCES**

Water Source	Current Yearly Allocation (Acre-Feet per Year)
Groundwater Sources	
Groundwater Basin Gentlemen’s Agreement	1,198
Agricultural Land Conversion Credit	230
Transfers	100
<i>Total Groundwater Allocation</i>	<i>1,528</i>
Surface Water Sources	
Lopez Reservoir	800
Total Allocation	2,328

Source: 2005 Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan.

Grover Beach’s groundwater supply is augmented by an agricultural land conversion water credit that has been in place since 1991 and a groundwater transfer agreement with the Oceano Community Services District. Under the agricultural land conversion water credit, any water that would have been used for irrigated agricultural land that has been converted to urban use is credited to the City. In 2005, this system resulted in conversion credits totaling 230 acre-feet per year.⁶ The groundwater transfer agreement with the Oceano Community Services District accounts for approximately 100 acre-feet of water per year.⁷

⁶ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 8.

⁷ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 10.

Grover Beach's total groundwater extraction allowance is set at 1,528 acre-feet per year, as identified in Table 4-1.

b. Surface Water

Surface water supply for Grover Beach comes from the Lopez Reservoir, constructed and operated by Zone 3 of the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The reservoir is considered 98 percent reliable: it operates at a safe yield of 8,730 acre-feet per year. Currently, Grover Beach and other contracting agencies have entitlements that total 4,530 acre-feet per year. Of this 4,530 acre-feet of water, Grover Beach has entitlements for 800 acre-feet per year.⁸ The difference between the availability and total usage of Lopez Reservoir water is intended to provide a sustainable supply and buffer during drought years.

c. Future Additional Water Supply

Although Grover Beach's water comes from reliable, diversified sources, projected water use in the City will likely exceed the current supply of 2,328 acre-feet per year in the near future. Based on population estimates of the current General Plan Land Use Element, the City's water demands will reach 2,409 acre-feet per year by 2011.⁹ However, this increase in demand will most likely be offset by a series of on-going improvements to Grover Beach's water supply and metering system. Most recently, the City has implemented the following programs and system upgrades designed to minimize water use and waste:¹⁰

- ◆ The installation of updated "low-flow" water meters.
- ◆ Drive-by water metering readings (to reduce the time necessary to take monthly water meter use).
- ◆ Tiered water rates (scale water rates according to amount of water use).

⁸ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 9.

⁹ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 11.

¹⁰ Jim Garing, City of Grover Beach Engineer. Personal communication with Chad Markell, DC&E, April 29, 2008.

In addition to these upgrades, there are current and future water service improvement projects identified in the City of Grover Beach Capital Improvement Program, 2008-2012:

◆ **Current Projects**

- 347: Seismic Retrofit of Water Reservoir #2. New foundation to reservoir at 1541 Hillcrest Drive. \$527,398 to complete.

◆ **Future Projects**

- Joint project with Arroyo Grande and Oceano Community Services District for desalinization plant or other long-term water source.

Additional supplemental water, in the form of a new alternate water supply, may be required in the future. The feasibility of three such alternate supply sources is currently being considered by the City:¹¹

- ◆ Recycled water from the South County Sanitation District. This existing supply could be used to recharge Arroyo Grande Creek and minimize reliance on potable water from Lopez Reservoir.
- ◆ Lake Nacimiento. Water from this source could be accessed via a traditional pipeline extension.
- ◆ Seawater desalinization plant. The development of such a facility at the South County Sanitation District Wastewater Treatment Plant site has been deemed the most cost-effective plan for an alternate water supply serving Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande and Oceano.

According to the *2005 Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan*, these water supply alternatives would allow Grover Beach to increase water supply by up to 800 acre-feet per year, bringing the City's total supply to 3,028 acre-feet per year.¹² This new water supply would support current growth projec-

¹¹ City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 6.

¹² City of Grover Beach, *Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan, 2005*, page 17.

tions and provide the City with a roughly additional 350 acre-feet of water that would serve as a buffer.¹³

2. Wastewater

South San Luis Obispo County Sanitation District (SSLOCSD) is responsible for the collection and treatment of sewage and wastewater in Grover Beach. Operation of the SSLOCSD is overseen by a Board of Directors that includes representatives from the City of Arroyo Grande, City of Grover Beach and the Oceano Community Services District.

The SSLOCSD's sewage treatment facility is located on a 7.6-acre site between the Oceano Airport and the Arroyo Grande Creek Channel, in unincorporated Oceano.¹⁴ The sewage collected by Grover Beach is transported through its own collection system to the plant, via trunk sewers that are owned and operated by SSLOCSD.

SSLOCSD wastewater facilities are capable of processing five million gallons of wastewater per day. In 2000, the average wastewater flow per day was 2.9 million gallons, or 81 gallons per person per day.¹⁵ Projected population growth for Arroyo Grande, Oceano, and Grover Beach indicate that at buildout of these three communities, the average flow per day will equal 75 percent of the capacity of the system.¹⁶

The City continues the process of upgrading and replacing sewer collection pipelines through the implementation of their Capital Improvement Plan.

¹³ City of Grover Beach, *2005 Grover Beach Urban Water Management Plan*, page 11.

¹⁴ San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Committee, *Sphere of Influence Update and Municipal Service Review*, November, 2002, page 6-1.

¹⁵ San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Committee, *Sphere of Influence Update and Municipal Service Review*, November, 2002, page 6-6.

¹⁶ San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Committee, *Sphere of Influence Update and Municipal Service Review*, November, 2002, page 6-7.

Wastewater improvement projects in the Grover Beach Capital Improvement Program 2008-2012 include:

◆ **Current Projects**

- Project No. 326: Sanitary Wastewater System Improvements. Expand service area of public sewer to industrial area south of Farroll Road. Unfunded. \$563,400 to complete.
- Project No. 336: Clean and Video Wastewater System. Repair key area of wastewater system between Highway 1 and Oceano treatment plant. \$562,777 to complete, Construction for Fiscal Year '09.
- Project No. 339: Lining of Wastewater Trunk System. Repair identified areas of wastewater system between Highway 1 and Oceano treatment plant. \$455,700 to complete.

◆ **Future Projects**

- Install Radio Control and Reporting Equipment on Seven Existing Wet Wells. \$63,000 to complete.

3. Stormwater

The City of Grover Beach manages its stormwater and drainage infrastructure. The system is characterized by small- to medium-sized retention basins on individual properties or common areas in planned neighborhoods throughout the City. In 2006, the City established named the update of the Storm Water Master Plan an official Community Goal. The City maintains a Storm Water Enterprise Fund that is separate from the General Fund. As explained in Chapter Three of this report, there are key areas of ineffective patterns of City storm drains that are currently prone to flooding.

The City has recently made regulatory efforts to improve stormwater management. On June 5, 2006, the City Council passed a resolution No. 06-41 “approving and adopting revisions and updates to the City standards and

specifications as related to stormwater management and drainage.”¹⁷ Other related Capital Improvement Projects include:

- ◆ Project No. 284: South 5th Street Storm Drain. New storm drain in flood-prone area. On hold until funding is identified. \$107,900 to complete.
- ◆ Project No. 296: Meadow Creek Bridge/Grand Avenue Storm Drain. Replace Grand Avenue Bridge over Meadow Creek, reconstruction of storm drain from bridge to 4th Street. Construction of bridge expected in Fiscal Year 2008.

4. Solid Waste

The collection and disposal of solid waste in Grover Beach is managed by the San Luis Obispo County Integrated Waste Management Association (IWMA). Garbage and recycling in Grover Beach is collected by South County Sanitary Service, an entity that also services Arroyo Grande, Avila Beach, Nipomo, Oceano, and Pismo Beach.

All of the City’s waste is taken to Cold Canyon Landfill, one of three landfills under IWMA jurisdiction. Cold Canyon Landfill is located approximately six miles northeast of Grover Beach on Highway 227. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, it has a total capacity of 10.9 million cubic yards. Currently, almost 75 percent of the capacity is filled.

¹⁷ City of Grover Beach: <http://www.grover.org/minutes/06-05-06.pdf>.