

## Utilities, Facilities & Services

### Aspiration

Foster equitable, efficient, accessible and resilient utilities, facilities and services networks that protect public health, sustain environmental quality, support economic development and facilitate new housing.

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### Goals, Strategies and Policies

#### **Goal 1. Maintain and modernize infrastructure, facilities and service systems through preventative maintenance, timely repair, rehabilitation and lifecycle asset management.**

##### **Strategies:**

- 1.1. Identify:
  - a) critical infrastructure and facilities in need of repairs or upgrades;
  - b) gaps in current utility, facility and service provision;
  - c) demographic trends that influence utility, facility and service needs;
  - d) infrastructure, facilities and equipment with deferred maintenance needs;
  - e) assets at high risk of failure or service disruption; and
  - f) aging systems where rehabilitation, modernization or replacement would significantly improve performance, safety or efficiency.
- 1.2. Employ monitoring systems, modeling tools, mapping and data analyses to evaluate system capacity and service quality and guide infrastructure expansion planning.
- 1.3. Promote:
  - a) preventative maintenance programs across all utility, facility and service systems;
  - b) design and maintenance standards that improve safety and accessibility
  - c) routine inspection, testing and condition monitoring;
  - d) rehabilitation and modernization before asset failure;
  - e) shared-service models to reduce administrative and operational burdens;
  - f) capital planning that funds ongoing upkeep as well as expansion; and
  - g) coordinated maintenance and upgrade schedules across multiple systems.
- 1.4. Promote regional coordination:
  - a) among system operators to share expertise and resources; and
  - b) on utility planning, asset management and emergency preparedness and response.
- 1.5. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
  - a) navigate state and federal permitting requirements and funding opportunities for utility and facility development and expansion;
  - b) implement asset inventory and condition assessment rating programs;
  - c) develop preventative maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement schedules and protocols;
  - d) establish maintenance and regulatory compliance tracking systems; and

- e) evaluate lifecycle costs when considering infrastructure replacement, upgrades or expansion;
- f) evaluate opportunities for utility system expansion in areas planned for compact, mixed-use development.
- 1.6. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to integrate:
  - a) utilities, facilities, equipment and services planning into municipal land use, housing, economic development and capital improvement plans; and
  - b) maintenance, rehabilitation, modernization, risk-based prioritization and climate resilience into capital improvement plans.
- 1.7. Prioritize:
  - a) investments that extend asset lifespan and reduce long-term operating costs;
  - b) upgrading or replacing unsafe utilities and facilities; and
  - c) modernization projects that improve safety, efficiency and resilience.
- 1.8. Align maintenance and modernization planning with climate resilience, hazard mitigation and energy efficiency goals.
- 1.9. Partner with utilities, agencies and service providers to coordinate rehabilitation and upgrade schedules to reduce disruption and cost.
- 1.10. Improve workforce capacity through training and shared-service models that support maintenance and asset management functions.
- 1.11. Discourage:
  - a) deferred maintenance that increases long-term costs, safety risks or service disruptions; and
  - b) facility expansion that exceeds community needs or compromises service quality.

**Policies:**

- 1.1. Support:
  - a) municipal applications for state and federal funding for utility, facility and service improvements that improve rural access, equitable delivery and reliability;
  - b) the routine inspection and evaluation of facility conditions to identify deferred maintenance and modernization needs;
  - c) preventative maintenance programs that extend the lifespan and reliability of utilities, facilities and service infrastructure;
  - d) municipal asset-management planning, condition assessments and lifecycle cost evaluation;
  - e) workforce training, shared staffing models and technical partnerships that strengthen maintenance capacity in smaller municipalities;
  - f) investments in rehabilitation and modernization projects that improve accessibility, reliability, safety, operational efficiency and climate resilience; and
  - g) the integration of hazard mitigation and climate resilience in utilities, facilities and services planning;
  - h) regional coordination among system operators to share expertise, resources and emergency support; and

- i) coordinated maintenance and upgrade schedules across multiple infrastructure systems to reduce disruption and cost.
- 1.2. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
  - a) proposals demonstrate alignment with local plans, environmental and accessibility standards, equitable service criteria and community need;
  - b) municipal plans to integrate utilities, facilities and services planning with land use, hazard mitigation and capital planning;
  - c) new or proposed expansions to municipal utilities and facilities to incorporate long-term maintenance and modernization priorities into hazard mitigation, climate resilience and energy efficiency planning;
  - d) capital improvement plans to incorporate municipal facilities planning, asset inventories, condition ratings and lifecycle cost analysis; and
  - e) consideration of rehabilitation and modernization options before full infrastructure replacement when feasible.
- 1.3. Employ:
  - a) public engagement to ensure facilities reflect community needs and cultural relevance;
  - b) data-driven asset management tools and performance metrics to identify service gaps and guide maintenance and investment decisions;
  - c) coordinated inspection, testing and monitoring practices to identify risks before system failure;
  - d) routine inspection, scheduled rehabilitation and proactive capital planning to prevent infrastructure deterioration; and
  - e) equity-based criteria for evaluating communication infrastructure proposals.
- 1.4. Oppose infrastructure expansion:
  - a) where existing systems can be rehabilitated or modernized to meet projected demand;
  - b) that is inconsistent with long-term community needs; and
  - c) that exceeds existing capacity without funded improvements.
- 1.5. Oppose:
  - a) utility and facility development in locations that reduce or undermine environmental resilience;
  - b) investment practices that prioritize short-term savings over long-term performance and lifecycle cost efficiency;
  - c) deferred maintenance practices that increase safety risks, service disruptions or long-term public costs; and
  - d) funding or project proposals that neglect asset management responsibilities or shift disproportionate long-term maintenance burdens onto future budgets.

## **Goal 2. Maintain reliable public water and wastewater systems that protect public health and support compact, planned growth.**

### **Strategies:**

- 2.1. Promote:
  - a) partnerships with state agencies and utilities to leverage funding for system maintenance and improvements;

- b) water conservation measures, water-efficient technologies and green infrastructure that extend system capacity and reduce demand, environmental impacts and operating costs;
  - c) public access to information about service status, disruptions and improvement plans; and
  - d) upgrades in areas with underserved or high-growth populations.
- 2.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
- a) evaluate the suitability of alternative technologies, including decentralized systems and green infrastructure solutions, for system upgrades and expansion;
  - b) prioritize investments with environmental protection goals, including water quality and habitat protection; and
  - c) plan infrastructure improvements and expansion that align with regional land use goals, state regulations and public health requirements.
- 2.3. Discourage:
- a) system expansion that exceeds existing capacity without corresponding infrastructure improvements; and
  - b) practices that degrade water resources or compromise system reliability.

## **Policies:**

- 2.1. Support:
- a) conservation, efficiency and green infrastructure that reduce demand and environmental impacts;
  - b) public access to information on system capacity, disruptions and planned improvements;
  - c) expansion of service in areas with high public health or housing needs;
  - d) system upgrades where they reinforce compact development, infill housing and planned growth patterns; and
  - e) decentralized or innovative wastewater systems when they meet public health, environmental and long-term maintenance standards.
- 2.2. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted require development proposals demonstrate adequate system capacity or planned improvements aligned with municipal and regional plans.
- 2.3. Oppose:
- a) practices that compromise water quality or long-term system reliability;
  - b) development in areas lacking safe and reliable water or wastewater service;
  - c) new water withdrawals or infrastructure expansions that degrade water resources or conflict with regional land use goals; and
  - d) subdivision or development proposals that increase system risk or overburden aging infrastructure.
- 2.4. Employ water demand forecasting to support long-range housing, economic development and resilience planning.
- 2.5. Prevent contamination of water supplies through incompatible land uses or inadequate wastewater management.

### **Goal 3. Increase access to safe, affordable and efficient solid waste and materials management services.**

#### **Strategies:**

- 3.1. Identify emerging technologies that support waste reduction and diversion.
- 3.2. Evaluate opportunities to integrate circular economy principles into regional solid waste systems.
- 3.3. Promote:
  - a) proper disposal practices and waste- and contaminant-reduction strategies through education, outreach and coordinated enforcement programs;
  - b) the maintenance and expansion of access to universal recycling, composting, diversion programs and reuse options across all municipalities;
  - c) sustainable waste management practices through innovation in recycling, composting and hazardous waste management;
  - d) regional transfer stations and shared facilities to lower disposal costs and increase service delivery efficiency;
  - e) collaboration between municipalities and private providers to improve service efficiency; and
  - f) partnerships with private haulers to maintain service in rural areas.
- 3.4. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
  - a) for planning and permitting cost-effective collection, disposal and recycling services;
  - b) to align waste management investments with public health and environmental protection goals;
  - c) to evaluate opportunities to expand service access to underserved areas;
  - d) to prioritize programs that reduce costs and increase access for underserved populations; and
  - e) to integrate waste management planning into broader infrastructure and land use plans.
- 3.5. Discourage:
  - a) practices that increase waste, environmental harm or public health risks from waste disposal; and
  - b) illegal dumping and unmanaged waste disposal through regulatory enforcement and monitoring.

#### **Policies:**

- 3.1. Support:
  - a) universal recycling, composting, reuse and waste diversion programs;
  - b) sustainable waste management technologies that reduce landfill dependence;
  - c) regional transfer stations and shared-service facilities that improve efficiency;
  - d) partnerships between municipalities and private haulers to maintain rural service coverage;
  - e) integration of circular economy principles into regional and municipal planning;
  - f) co-location of recycling, composting and waste collection facilities when compatible with neighborhood context;

- g) the diversification of waste processing options, including organics, construction debris, and hazardous materials;
- h) collaboration between municipalities and private providers to improve service efficiency;
- i) municipal participation in state and regional waste planning initiatives;
- j) emerging waste management technologies when they meet strict environmental, safety and public health standards;
- k) regional coordination to reduce system costs and improve service efficiency; and
- l) public education and enforcement programs that reduce contamination and improper disposal.

3.2. Oppose:

- a) waste infrastructure decisions that disproportionately burden low-income or rural communities;
- b) reductions in recycling or waste services that increase inequities;
- c) expansions of facilities that pose environmental or public health risks;
- d) siting of solid waste infrastructure in sensitive natural areas or high-risk locations;
- e) development that increases waste production without adequate management strategies; and
- f) disposal practices that increase pollution or degrade natural resources.

3.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:

- a) proposals for new solid waste capacity to demonstrate alignment with state universal recycling laws, environmental protections and equitable service delivery; and
- b) municipal solid waste plans to incorporate access strategies for underserved or rural areas.

## **Goal 4. Expand modern, affordable communication networks to serve all communities.**

### **Strategies:**

- 4.1. Align regional communication planning with economic development, emergency management, education and telehealth initiatives.
- 4.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
  - a) to incorporate digital infrastructure into municipal plans;
  - b) to preserve rights-of-way and access corridors to facilitate future infrastructure deployment;
  - c) integrate connectivity considerations into local development plans; and
  - d) to upgrade connectivity to schools, libraries, health facilities, low-income households and municipal buildings.
- 4.3. Promote:
  - a) the diversification of connectivity solutions to include fixed, wireless and community-based networks;
  - b) affordable access for low-income households to limit digital inequities;

- c) equitable access to communication networks and technologies;
  - d) adoption of modern communication technologies for homes, businesses and public facilities;
  - e) equitable deployment practices that prioritize the expansion of high-speed internet access to underserved, rural and low-income communities;
  - f) innovative technologies such as fiber-optic, wireless or satellite-based solutions to close coverage gaps;
  - g) infrastructure investments that maximize coverage and community impact and align with planned growth areas; and
  - h) community-scale digital literacy programs.
- 4.4. Partner with utilities, telecom providers and state agencies to integrate communication network planning with land use planning, economic development and emergency response systems.
- 4.5. Evaluate:
- a) opportunities to co-locate fiber, conduit or towers with other infrastructure projects; and
  - b) strategies to reduce the digital divide.
- 4.6. Discourage:
- a) development practices that hinder broadband deployment; and
  - b) investments in the communication network that exacerbate access inequities.

**Policies:**

- 4.1. Support:
- a) universal access to high-speed broadband and reliable cellular service;
  - b) affordable service options for low-income households;
  - c) equitable deployment strategies that prioritize underserved rural and low-income areas;
  - d) satellite, wireless or hybrid systems when they improve service in hard-to-reach areas;
  - e) community-based or cooperative broadband models where traditional providers do not meet service needs;
  - f) preservation of rights-of-way to facilitate future communications infrastructure; and
  - g) digital literacy programs that reduce the digital divide.
- 4.2. Oppose:
- a) communication infrastructure decisions that widen inequities;
  - b) exclusion of underserved neighborhoods from broadband expansion;
  - c) development that obstructs future broadband deployment or co-location;
  - d) reliance on outdated or unreliable communication technologies;
  - e) siting of communication facilities in locations that pose safety, environmental or cultural conflicts when feasible alternatives exist;
  - f) siting of new towers in scenic or historic areas unless co-location is not feasible; and
  - g) barriers to installing modern infrastructure in public corridors.
- 4.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:

- a) equitable access to communication services in all public investment and development projects;
- b) municipal planning and permitting processes to integrate communications infrastructure planning;
- c) broadband and communications projects to align with municipal plans and regional connectivity priorities;
- d) utilities and providers to coordinate with municipalities during major deployments; and
- e) new development to be designed to accommodate broadband and communication needs.

## **Goal 5. Incentivize accessible, high-quality educational and childcare facilities that support community and economic needs.**

### **Strategies:**

- 5.1. Promote:
  - a) the expansion of access to high-quality early education, K-12 and post-secondary facilities; and
  - b) childcare facility siting in walkable and transit-connected areas.
- 5.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
  - a) integrate facilities planning with housing and economic development initiatives;
  - b) integrate transportation planning into facility siting decisions to ensure safe access to schools and childcare centers;
  - c) evaluate strategies for multi-use facilities that serve educational, childcare and community purposes; and
  - d) preserve historic or culturally significant educational facilities while upgrading functionality.
- 5.3. Partner with:
  - a) school districts, municipalities and state agencies to address capacity shortages and align facilities with municipal and regional growth areas; and
  - b) local organizations, businesses and educational institutions to encourage the provision of wraparound services.
- 5.4. Discourage:
  - a) closures or service reductions that exacerbate inequities; and
  - b) development of new facilities in areas without access to adequate transportation or utilities.

### **Policies:**

- 5.1. Support:
  - a) a diversity of programming to support early childhood, vocational training and lifelong learning;
  - b) expansion and modernization of early education, K-12 and childcare facilities;
  - c) public-private partnerships that increase childcare and educational availability;



- d) co-location of childcare in housing, employer campuses and community facilities;
- e) siting facilities in walkable, transit-connected areas;
- f) wraparound services and multi-service models that strengthen family and community well-being;
- g) adaptive reuse of historic or underutilized buildings for educational or childcare uses when compatible with neighborhoods.

5.2. Oppose:

- a) closures or consolidations that reduce access in underserved areas;
- b) siting facilities in areas without adequate transportation or utilities;
- c) facility proposals that compromise student or childcare safety;
- d) development that increases childcare or school access inequities; and
- e) new facilities outside growth areas unless needed to address service gaps.

5.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require school districts and municipalities to coordinate facilities planning with housing and transportation plans.

## **Goal 6. Diversify community-serving facilities to meet evolving community needs and ensure safe, efficient and accessible public services.**

### **Strategies:**

- 6.1. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to integrate community input and health-equity principles into facility planning and service expansion.
- 6.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
  - a) prioritize facility investments in underserved or remote communities;
  - b) preserve historically or culturally significant municipal structures while adapting them for modern use;
  - c) plan flexible, multi-use facility designs that reflect demographic trends and are adaptable to evolving needs; and
  - d) align facility development with regional housing, transportation and workforce needs.
- 6.3. Promote:
  - a) energy-efficient and climate-resilient facility design;
  - b) partnerships between municipalities, nonprofits and private providers to increase access to community-serving facilities;
  - c) partnerships with schools and service providers to broaden facility offerings;
  - d) coordination with workforce development and economic programs to align educational services with local needs; and
  - e) shared-use facilities that maximize public benefit, reduce capital costs and improve community access.
- 6.4. Discourage:
  - a) development of new facilities where existing buildings can be adaptively reused; and
  - b) facility consolidation or closures that reduce access for vulnerable populations.
- 6.5. Advance efforts to ensure equitable, culturally responsive community spaces.

**Policies:**

- 6.1. Support:
  - a) municipal investments in areas accessible by walking, bicycling and transit;
  - b) flexible, multi-use community facilities that serve diverse populations;
  - c) energy-efficient and climate-resilient upgrades to municipal buildings;
  - d) partnerships that expand access to community-serving spaces;
  - e) preservation and adaptive reuse of historic or culturally significant municipal structures;
  - f) temporary facilities in areas experiencing rapid change or post-disaster needs;
  - g) shared-use or co-location arrangements that maximize community benefit;
  - h) equitable distribution of public facilities across communities; and
  - i) coordinated facility planning aligned with housing, transportation and workforce needs.
- 6.2. Oppose:
  - a) consolidation or closures that reduce access for vulnerable communities;
  - b) incompatible land uses near essential community-serving facilities;
  - c) development patterns that increase burdens on municipal services without appropriate mitigation; and
  - d) facility development or expansion outside growth areas unless addressing critical service gaps.
- 6.3. Employ community engagement processes to ensure facility decisions address cultural relevance and health equity.

**Goal 7. Expand access to comprehensive health care, mental health services and public health infrastructure to support community well-being.****Strategies:**

- 7.1. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
  - a) integrate health-equity, public health and social service planning into community and economic development efforts;
  - b) evaluate opportunities for multi-service hubs or co-located facilities;
  - c) evaluate demographic and health data to guide public health investment;
  - d) prioritize investments that reduce barriers to care and improve community health; and
  - e) expand health and social services in underserved or high-need areas.
- 7.2. Promote:
  - a) regional collaboration to strengthen networks of care and improve service coordination;
  - b) cross-sector models that combine health, social services and community amenities;
  - c) the alignment of public health infrastructure improvements with emergency preparedness activities; and
  - d) partnerships with providers, neighboring municipalities and state and regional agencies to coordinate services and improve access.
- 7.3. Discourage:

- a) facility closures or consolidation that diminish community health access; and
- b) the development of new facilities in areas without adequate transportation, utilities or community support.

## **Policies:**

### **7.1. Support:**

- a) regional collaboration that strengthens networks of care and improves coordination among providers;
- b) investments in community health centers, mental health facilities and substance-use treatment resources in underserved areas;
- c) co-location of health, social services and community amenities to reduce barriers to care;
- d) local planning that integrates public health considerations into land use and infrastructure decisions;
- e) affordable, accessible transportation options that connect residents with essential health services;
- f) adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings for health and social service uses when compatible with surrounding neighborhoods;
- g) flexible zoning and permitting to facilitate the expansion of health and social services in village centers and growth areas;
- h) emergency preparedness and public health coordination between municipalities, hospitals, EMS providers and regional agencies; and
- i) partnerships that improve the efficiency and reach of public health systems.

### **7.2. Oppose:**

- a) facility closures that reduce access to primary care, mental health support or emergency medical services;
- b) development proposals that exacerbate inequities in access to essential health and human services;
- c) public health investments that fail to address inequities or that increase geographic disparities;
- d) development patterns that add population in areas without adequate access to essential health services;
- e) siting of health facilities in areas lacking adequate utilities or transportation access; and
- f) siting decisions that undermine long-term community health needs.

### **7.3. Prioritize expansion in communities with limited or inconsistent health service access.**

### **7.4. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:**

- a) alignment with health equity goals and infrastructure capacity; and
- b) major development proposals to evaluate impacts on local healthcare, emergency response and public health infrastructure.

## **Goal 8. Maintain and enhance emergency medical, fire and rescue services.**

## **Strategies:**

### **8.1. Identify:**

- a) risks and vulnerabilities in public safety infrastructure; and
  - b) opportunities for shared-service models, regional staffing strategies and mutual aid agreements to efficiently deliver emergency services.
- 8.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
- a) plan for emergency services and assess operational capacity;
  - b) site emergency facilities and resources to improve response times;
  - c) expand regional capacity for emergency response to meet evolving risks, including climate-related hazards;
  - d) align emergency medical and fire service planning with local hazard mitigation and climate resilience planning; and
  - e) prioritize investments that strengthen community resilience, life safety and response in high-risk or remote municipalities.
- 8.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to integrate:
- a) hazard and risk data into capital planning for emergency services; and
  - b) emergency response considerations into land use and transportation planning.
- 8.4. Promote the preservation of:
- a) existing emergency service facilities that are strategically located and maintain a functional capacity; and
  - b) local response capability through coordinated long-term planning.
- 8.5. Promote:
- a) sustainable staffing, training and volunteer recruitment strategies;
  - b) partnerships with state agencies, healthcare providers and mutual aid networks to coordinate training, resource sharing and emergency response preparedness;
  - c) the expansion of public safety infrastructure to address growing or changing community needs; and
  - d) community education and preparedness programs to reduce risk and support emergency response.
- 8.6. Discourage:
- a) development in areas where emergency services cannot be provided efficiently;
  - b) erosion of local response capacity by discouraging deferral of critical maintenance; and
  - c) development patterns that require unplanned service expansion.
- 8.7. Advance emergency management training and leadership development across the region.
- 8.8. Evaluate climate trends to guide updates to emergency response protocols.

## **Policies:**

- 8.1. Support:
- a) investments that reduce emergency response times and improve public safety coverage;
  - b) volunteer recruitment, training and long-term staffing development;
  - c) upgrades to equipment, communications and technology;
  - d) adaptive reuse of appropriate structures for emergency services when cost-effective and strategically located;

- e) collaboration with healthcare providers to enhance emergency medical response capacity;
  - f) temporary or mobile emergency facilities to address short-term coverage gaps or disaster recovery needs; and
  - g) public education and preparedness programs.
- 8.2. Oppose:
- a) development that increases demand for emergency services without supporting necessary infrastructure;
  - b) facility closures that reduce local emergency response capacity;
  - c) expansions of emergency facilities outside of designated growth areas unless necessary to meet critical safety needs;
  - d) development in high-risk hazard areas where emergency response is limited;
  - e) development patterns that create fragmented, inefficient emergency response zones; and
  - f) siting new residential or commercial development in areas where services cannot be delivered efficiently.
- 8.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
- a) large development proposals to provide impact assessments of emergency service needs and capacity;
  - b) emergency services projects to demonstrate alignment with municipal hazard mitigation and capital plans; and
  - c) emergency communication infrastructure improvements to be integrated into regional emergency planning.
- 8.4. Employ:
- a) hazard and climate trend data to guide emergency preparedness, staffing and facility location planning; and
  - b) regional risk assessments to prioritize public investment in emergency service infrastructure.

## **Goal 9. Maintain stormwater and drainage infrastructure to protect water quality, reduce flooding risks and support climate-resilient development.**

### **Strategies:**

- 9.1. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
  - a) to preserve natural drainage corridors, wetlands and riparian buffers;
  - b) to prioritize projects that reduce nutrient loading and improve water quality;
  - c) to prioritize stormwater infrastructure improvements in areas facing elevated flood or water-quality risks;
  - d) to integrate stormwater master planning into local hazard mitigation and capital improvement plans; and
  - e) to expand stormwater infrastructure to address increased precipitation and development pressures.
- 9.2. Partner with watershed groups, utilities and state agencies to coordinate stormwater management.
- 9.3. Prioritize the implementation of stormwater improvements in areas with recurrent flooding or impaired waters.

- 9.4. Promote:
  - a) public education on stormwater management and best practices; and
  - b) nature-based solutions that enhance infiltration, storage and flood mitigation.
- 9.5. Discourage development in flood-prone areas.

**Policies:**

- 9.1. Support:
  - a) the implementation of stormwater master plans and drainage improvements;
  - b) nature-based solutions that enhance infiltration and reduce runoff;
  - c) preservation of natural drainage features, wetlands and riparian buffers;
  - d) investments that address nutrient loading and improve impaired waters;
  - e) green infrastructure retrofits and low-impact development practices in existing built areas;
  - f) innovative stormwater technologies where shown to improve performance and reduce costs;
  - g) coordination between municipalities, watershed groups and state agencies to align stormwater priorities and leverage funding; and
  - h) culvert and drainage upgrades aligned with climate resilience standards.
- 9.2. Oppose:
  - a) development that increases impervious surface coverage without adequate stormwater management;
  - b) construction in high-risk flood hazard or drainage-compromised areas;
  - c) the loss or fragmentation of natural drainage corridors and floodplain storage;
  - d) stormwater designs that fail to account for projected increases in extreme precipitation;
  - e) redevelopment projects that fail to integrate enhanced stormwater controls;
  - f) the extension of stormwater infrastructure to areas where development is discouraged by regional or municipal plans; and
  - g) practices that degrade water quality or overwhelm downstream systems.
- 9.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
  - a) development proposals to demonstrate compliance with stormwater regulations, water quality goals and climate-resilient design standards;
  - b) projects in impaired watersheds to incorporate enhanced stormwater controls and long-term maintenance plans;
  - c) stormwater designs that align with climate projections and modern performance standards; and
  - d) capital projects to incorporate stormwater management components consistent with water quality goals.
- 9.4. Employ public education efforts to improve compliance with best management practices.

**Goal 10. Expand parks and recreation facilities to promote public health, environmental resilience and quality of life.**

**Strategies:**

- 10.1. Identify opportunities for accessible and inclusive recreation design.
- 10.2. Promote:

- a) the expansion of recreational assets in areas with growing populations or unmet community needs;
  - b) regional coordination to develop interconnected trail networks and shared recreation resources;
  - c) recreational investments where they strengthen village centers and planned growth areas;
  - d) universal design principles that improve access for all ages and abilities; and
  - e) multi-use designs that support public health, safety and year-round access.
- 10.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
- a) to integrate recreation planning with land use, transportation and environmental protection goals;
  - b) preserve natural areas, scenic views and ecological corridors in recreation planning; and
  - c) prioritize investments that promote health, environmental resilience and community belonging.
- 10.4. Partner with municipalities, nonprofits and landowners to support recreation development and conservation.
- 10.5. Discourage recreational development that damages natural resources or increases maintenance burdens.

**Policies:**

- 10.1. Support:
- a) recreation investments in areas with unmet community needs;
  - b) interconnected regional trail networks;
  - c) multi-use, accessible recreation design;
  - d) preservation of scenic, ecological and natural areas within recreation systems;
  - e) partnerships with municipalities, nonprofits and landowners for conservation and recreation development;
  - f) adaptive reuse of underutilized municipal or school properties for recreation purposes; and
  - g) seasonal and temporary recreation amenities where consistent with natural resource protection.
- 10.2. Oppose:
- a) recreation development that damages natural resources;
  - b) projects that increase long-term maintenance burdens without clear community benefit;
  - c) conversion of high-quality natural areas to recreational use where ecological impacts are significant;
  - d) projects that fragment wildlife corridors or reduce ecological connectivity;
  - e) recreation uses that increase erosion or degrade water quality;
  - f) new facilities until existing infrastructure maintenance is adequately funded.
- 10.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require utility and facility upgrades and investments to incorporate stormwater, habitat protection and climate resilience strategies.