RESILIENT PACOIMA

A Plan for Building a Strong Community
Introduction

Foreword

The Resiliency Plan for Pacoima is a result of a two-semester study of the Pacoima community, located in the City of Los Angeles. During the program, we participated in community events, distributed community surveys, and conducted expert interviews to gather necessary information about the existing conditions of Pacoima, in order to make recommendations for the neighborhood to ensure its resiliency and to align with goals and objectives of the City of Los Angeles. The research team is comprised of 10 graduate students in the Master of Urban Planning, Fall 2018 Cohort at the Department of Urban Planning at California State University, Northridge. The research team had two advisors: Zeynep Toker, Ph.D. (Fall 2019) and Henrik Minassians, Ph.D. (Spring 2020), and our Departmental Chair, Dr. Robert Kent. The team of researchers was Allison Beauregard; Kimberly Bernal, Christian Candelaria, Abby Coyle-Richards, Michael Levi, Suray Nathan; Douglas Nguyen; Alan Sims; Daniel Vazquez and Maxfield Vermy.

During the Spring 2020 semester, the County of Los Angeles issued stay-at-home orders to prevent the spread of COVID-19, resulting in the research team and advisor to complete the neighborhood plan—virtually. This consisted of each team member using Zoom weekly to collaborate on the final project deliverable: Resilient Pacoima: A Plan for Building a Strong Community.

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Aligning with Resilient Los Angeles

“Recent catastrophes around the world—hurricanes in the U.S. and the Caribbean, earthquakes in Mexico, fires in the western U.S., flooding in Nepal and Bangladesh—are serious reminders that every community needs focused resilience strategies.” - Mayor Eric Garcetti, 2018 Resilient Los Angeles

What is Resiliency?
Resiliency has been a growing Urban Planning topic in recent years. Resiliency is what helps communities adapt and transform in the face of challenges to be prepared for the expected and unexpected. Resilience can often be defined as the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. A resiliency plan utilizes historical and archival research, expert input, community workshops, and geographic information systems data to understand indicators and formulate recommendations for residents.

Incorporating Components of Resilient Los Angeles
This resiliency plan for Pacoima serves as a focal point for direct community involvement. Existing conditions for employment, food quality, housing, crime, open space, energy, community gardens, traffic safety, public transit, emergency preparedness, and community connections were studied to analyze current issues residents face. Goals were generated between these topics to establish plans to address resiliency. Topics were grouped into four themes based on collective recommendations. Recommendations were generated from issues in the existing conditions voiced by residents.

Why Does Pacoima Need a Resiliency Plan?
This resiliency plan was prepared for the neighborhood of Pacoima and its residents to establish a data-driven foundation for preparedness in the community. There is one thing for certain in the future of Pacoima: change and unforeseen events will continue to happen. This certainty of the uncertain can be approached in one of two ways, surprised and therefore reactive, or prepared and resilient. A crucial strategy to creating a stronger Pacoima is to work toward a state of resilience. Throughout history, as cataloged on page (8), Pacoima has faced a number of adversities and challenges. At the beginning of this study in Fall 2019, researchers and Pacoima community members envisioned a resilient Pacoima moving into 2020, anticipating issues such as the ongoing housing crisis, wildfire season, and traffic congestion. Yet 2020 unfolded with the unprecedented global pandemic, and Pacoima residents have had to immediately adapt. Currently, Pacoima’s very own Hansen Dam is serving as a COVID-19 drive-up testing center for the County of Los Angeles.

Having resiliency means having a greater ability to respond effectively, rather than being forced to react. The residents have long shown a determination and optimism that clearly exhibits their resilient character. Combining Resilient Pacoima: A Plan for Building a Strong Community with these community traits will continue to assist in residents’ ability to unite and problem solve at a community-wide level that is interwoven and supported by the larger Los Angeles community as a whole.
Community Background

by Daniel Vazquez

Pacoima, which was once known as Pacoinga Village, has a history that dates back 1500 years. Pacoima, or Pacoinga Village, was home to the Tataviam Tribal system until European invasion. The California colonization had a great impact on the Tataviam Tribe. The colonization brought missions all along the coast in an effort to convert natives to Christianity. One of these missions was the San Fernando Mission, where Rogerio Rocha, a Tataviam Tribal captain, lived. Rogerio acquired some of this land until he was forced out by Senator Charles Maclay when he purchased 56,000 acres of the northern part of the San Fernando Valley. In 1887, Jouette Allen purchased 1000 acres from Maclay and named it Pacoima which translates to “the entrance”.

In 1915 Pacoima became a part of the City of Los Angeles and was initially founded to keep up with the newly added Southern Pacific Railroad and expectation of high traffic passing through and from it. The newly founded Pacoima had one main street, present day Van Nuys Boulevard and home to the well-known Mural Mile. Mural Mile is a community staple and a landmark. It includes many murals of Rock n’ Roll hall of famer Ritchie Valens, born and raised in Pacoima. In the early 1920’s Pacoima began to see a large immigration into the community of Mexicans and soon after in the 1930’s the first wave of African Americans began migrating to Pacoima. Since then Pacoima has been a home to a large population made of primarily Blacks and Latinos. Pacoima proved its susceptibility to flooding in 1938 when it was hit by a huge flood. As a result, in the year 1940 a ranch owned by Homer and Marie Hansen was acquired through eminent domain to build Hansen Dam. Hansen Dam remains the community’s largest park, and is used widely by the residents today. Pacoima is a 7.14 square mile neighborhood in Los Angeles and is located in the North East portion of the San Fernando Valley. Pacoima is bordered on the North by the City of San Fernando and the Sylmar neighborhood. On the East it is bordered by the Lake View Terrace neighborhood. To the West, Pacoima is bordered by Arleta and Mission Hills neighborhoods and to the south is the Sun Valley neighborhood. Pacoima traverses into two City Council Districts, District 6 and 7, and is operated by the Pacoima Neighborhood Council in Pacoima’s City Hall. The Council’s mission is to “improve quality of life by promoting participation in City governance, facilitating delivery of City services, and empowering stakeholders by sharing information and education. Whereby, Pacoima will ultimately become a greater community.” The Pacoima Neighborhood council aims to meet their mission through its ten committees: Arts and Cultural Enrichment, Budget and Finance Committee, Community Outreach and Communications, Education and Youth Development, Election, Executive, Grievance, Housing/Economic Development/Land Use, Public Safety, and Senior Advocacy. The committees that serve community members are a reflection of what they value in their neighborhood.

While Pacoima continues to grow and strengthen as a community, many characteristics of the neighborhood pose challenges for residents now and in the near future.

As of 2020, Pacoima is home to 103,689 residents. Its housing tenure boasts a rate of 60 percent owner-occupied homes, 22 percent higher than the average neighborhood rate in Los Angeles. Data shows that high school graduation and employment rates as well as median household income continue to improve in Pacoima. Pacoima’s leading industries in employment come from a wide range of fields such as retail, healthcare, and hospitality. While Pacoima continues to grow and strengthen as a community, many characteristics of the neighborhood pose challenges for residents now and in the near future. Geographically, Pacoima is categorized as a flood, fire, and liquefaction zone, making the neighborhood vulnerable to natural disasters. Transit is limited and roadway infrastructure has proven to be a threat to both drivers and pedestrians. The community lacks open space and fresh foods options. The following study addresses these issues and provides recommendations for resilience.
Pacoima Through the Years

**1951**
- **New Housing Tract**: In 1951, a new housing tract was developed to bring African Americans into Pacoima. The new housing tract was named after Joe Louis, a famous African American boxer. This brought black buyers in droves, and unlike anywhere else in the United States, was the beginning of a black middle-class community.

**1953**
- **Pacoima Wash**: Pacoima Wash excavation was completed in 1953. The Pacoima Wash was created to reduce flooding in Pacoima and on the branches of the LA River. This photograph was taken in 1953 on Wingo Street in Arleta. The community of Arleta is part of the Pacoima zip code.

**1959**
- **The Day the Music Died**: This mural commemorates the deaths of Buddy Holly, JP the Big Bopper Richardson, and Pacoima native Ritchie Valens, who perished alongside their pilot Roger Peterson, in a Feb 3rd 1959 plane crash. This tragedy is referred to in the song "American Pie" by Don McLean as the "Day the Music Died". The Mural is located on Mural Mile.

**1978**
- **Severe Weather Emergency**: A heavy rainstorm with hurricane strength winds reaching 90 miles per hour descended upon Southern California on February 11, 1978. During the storm, Hansen Dam released water causing Pacoima and Etiwanda Wash to turn into a raging river, flooding the area. Homes on Tibbetts Street had their backyards damaged from the flooding. Other parts of the city had similar misfortunes such as escaped hogs, unearthed cemeteries, and loss of power to almost a half million customers. All major roadways were blocked by mud and tree debris.

**2010**
- **Gardens**: Curbed Los Angeles named Project Youth Green as one of the 10 best Community Gardens in Los Angeles County. The program involves encouraging young people to work with older community gardeners to provide Pacoima residents access to green space and healthy food. The garden contains 40 individual 8x20 feet raised beds for individual growth that ranges from herbs to fruits and vegetables.

**2016**
- **Traffic Safety**: On December 16, 2016 a celebration was held at the Pacoima Neighborhood City Hall, Pacoima Beautiful’s main office, for the opening of a newly redesigned segment of Van Nuys Blvd. Running from Laurel Canyon Blvd to San Fernando Rd through the heart of Pacoima. This included sidewalk and street repair, USB charging, Wi-Fi, real-time bus information in bus shelters, a new signalized intersection at El Dorado Ave, and a $20,000 challenge grant. Also added were street improvements for better rainwater capture, a layout redesign including 16 high-visibility crosswalks, and protected bicycle lanes.

**2018**
- **Community Clean Up**: On September 28, 2018, the Pacoima Neighborhood Council organized a cross-organization collaboration to clean up Pacoima’s streets. Residents, local schools, LAPD, and nonprofits were able to come together to beautify the community.

**2019**
- **Climate Strike Expo**: Youth from the environmentally focused non-profit, Pacoima Beautiful, participated in the nationwide youth climate strike rally. Members joined the nationwide strike because they are aware of how their community is facing environmental degradation and health hazards, especially from Pacoima’s gas fired power plant built in 1953.

**2019**
- **Rushing Waters**: Curbed Los Angeles named Project Youth Green as one of the 10 best Community Gardens in Los Angeles County. The program involves encouraging young people to work with older community gardeners to provide Pacoima residents access to green space and healthy food. The garden contains 40 individual 8x20 feet raised beds for individual growth that ranges from herbs to fruits and vegetables.

**2020**
- **COVID-19**: Pacoima, in unison with the rest of the world responded to COVID-19. Mitigation steps taken by the community included posting precautions in Community Gardens with guidelines to not share gloves, remain 6 feet apart, and to use hand washing stations. Other essential businesses practiced physical distancing and limited hours. Residents followed the Stay At Home orders and Hansen Dam was put to use as a COVID-19 Testing center.
Methodology

Introduction & Research Preparation

by Michael Levi

In the creation of this resiliency plan for Pacoima, researchers set out to prepare a mixed methods approach toward researching, identifying, and recommending solutions to problems. This approach began by identifying indicators pertaining to each subject of research. Indicators are a set of facts, data, or trends which indicate the state or condition of something, in this case different aspects of life in Pacoima. Indicators are identified using secondary data obtained through scholarly research. Once each subject of research has indicators identified through secondary data, a baseline of each indicator’s existing conditions and technical measures of success is created. From that baseline, primary data from expert interviews and community feedback is utilized in further understanding each indicator’s measurements for success. Additionally, primary data is used to help in understanding how the indicator can be made more successful based on both expert understanding and community experience. Our research team partnered with Pacoima Beautiful in order to plan, facilitate, and conduct community meetings and surveys.

In order to conduct the research needed to create this plan, our team of researchers completed the Human Subjects Research (HSR) Basic Course for Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers by the CITI Program. This is part of a California State University, Northridge Institutional Review Board (IRB) training requirement for any research conducted involving human subjects, as in this case the residents of Pacoima.

Document Analysis: Qualitative & Quantitative

A significant portion of the data was sourced from expert interviews and feedback from an initial community meeting, where interviewers and meeting facilitators recorded subject responses. These primary data sources served as the project’s qualitative data and required analysis accordingly. As the responses were not audio recorded but documented, data was transcribed using latent and manifest content analysis. These transcripts were then coded for repetitive themes – words and terms that shared common connotations and interpretations. Examples of such codes included “Safety,” “Employment,” and “Open Space.” Organized in tables, codes were counted, and the most repeated codes developed into research findings, which lead to more focused topics of discussion for the second community meeting. This process of transcribing and coding continued with the next set of transcripts, from which conclusive findings emerged.

Using these codes from the qualitative data along with the quantitative data from the survey, the community’s highest priorities within each topic were identified. Recommendations were then drafted using this combined form of data and its resulting findings.

Qualitative Study — An inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting.

Quantitative Study — An inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true.

A Mixed Methods Data Collection

Mixed Methods — Incorporation of multiple methods, such as qualitative and quantitative, into a research study.

Secondary Data

Research of secondary data was conducted in order to identify indicators. For our research, indicators pertained to the subjects of employment, food resources, housing, crime, open space, energy use, transportation and transit, emergency preparedness, and community connection. Each indicators’ existing conditions within the neighborhood of Pacoima were identified. The indicators for each subject within Pacoima were then compared to the rest of the City of Los Angeles. Further secondary data was then utilized to begin identifying measurements of success for each set of research subject indicators. Secondary data was also utilized in order to help synthesize clear and practical recommendations aimed at improving the resilience of the Pacoima community.

Expert Interviews

During the months of October and November 2019, researchers contacted experts within their subjects. The purpose of the expert interviews was to have primary data that bolsters the understanding of an indicator’s measurements for success as well as help in understanding how the indicator can be made more successful. Experts from Pacoima and around the Los Angeles area were interviewed by researchers on the phone in a structured setting. Questions for the interviews were prepared in advance and reviewed before being finalized.

The one-on-one interviews lasted approximately twenty minutes and notes were taken by each researcher as their interview occurred. These notes were then qualitatively analyzed in order to extrapolate clear data pertaining to each indicator.

Community Meetings & Surveys

All presentations and surveys given at each of the community events were translated into Spanish via translators provided by California State University, Northridge. These translators helped researchers hold the events in Spanish as well as record and translate community feedback responses. Community partner, Pacoima Beautiful, hosted each of the community events at their main office on Van Nuys Blvd. Following the information gained by the research of secondary data, expert interviews, community comments, and community survey responses, researchers compiled findings for each subject identifying one to three issues.
State of the Neighborhood Community Meeting, October 28, 2019

The purpose of October 28, 2019, State of the Neighborhood meeting was to gauge community feedback about each of the eleven plan subjects. Community feedback is an important part of primary data collection. Residents of the community face realities that may not be clear or fully understood through the research of secondary data or expert interviews. In order to further strengthen the indicators of success for each issue identified by our researchers, community feedback plays a vital role. At the event participants who were broken into two feedback groups for the presentation. The presentation included information on the existing conditions and measurements of success. Each subject compared the neighborhood of Pacoima to the City of Los Angeles in order to gauge the similarities and differences between the city and the neighborhood. Each of the eleven areas of research were paired with closely related subjects. After each group of research areas were presented to the community, they were asked how they felt about the information. Researchers then analyzed the response data.

Pacoima Beautiful Community Survey, November 21, 2019

Once community response data was qualitatively analyzed by researchers following community meeting, a survey was prepared to gain further community feedback. The survey consisted of twenty questions for each of the eleven research areas, for a total of twenty survey questions. Responses to each question were ranked on a Likert scale, from one to five. Some questions were positive, while others were negative in nature. When a question was positive a score of five was good, when it was negative a score of five was bad. Paper surveys were completed November 21, 2019, with more completed online through Pacoima Beautiful’s email list over the next week. The scores were analyzed by researchers in order to identify how the community felt about the issues raised.

State of the Neighborhood Issue Ranking Meeting, March 9, 2020

The purpose of the March 9, 2020, Issue Ranking presentation was to present the findings to the community and have Pacoima community members identify the most important findings for them as part of a corresponding survey. At the event participants were broken down into two feedback groups. The presentation included information on up to three issues identified as findings for each area of research. After each group of subjects was presented to the community they were asked to rank the most important issue for each finding presented. A discussion for further community comments about the top ranked issues for each finding was held at the end of the presentation. Researchers then qualitatively analyzed the response data in order to create recommendations to help resolve the most pressing issues according to the community.

State of the Neighborhood Issue Ranking Survey, March 9, 2020

A survey was given along with the March 9, 2020, State of the Neighborhood Issue Ranking presentation in order identify the most important issue for each finding presented to the community. The survey was conducted in-person during the presentation and released online the following week through Pacoima Beautiful’s email list. During the presentation ranking cards were given to each of the community members for the groups of findings presented. Researchers handed out and collected these ranking cards, asking respondents to identify the most important issue to them for each research subject’s findings. Researchers than quantified the responses and began to distribute the next group of ranking cards. This was done four times as the presentation was given. At the end of the presentation, the community members were able to discuss what they had ranked most important in each of the research subjects.

State of the Neighborhood Issue Ranking Survey, March 9, 2020

Ranking Issues #1: Employment
- Not enough available jobs
- Lack of quality employment
- Lack of jobs for older residents

Ranking Issues #2: Food Quality
- Too many fast food restaurants
- Low local ownership of food businesses
- Lack of fresh food options

Ranking Issues #3: Housing
- Impacts of homelessness on community
- Complicated ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) permitting process

Ranking Issues #4: Public Safety
- Community police presence
- Crime rates within the neighborhood
- Perception of safety in the neighborhood

Ranking Issues #5: Transportation
- Lack of public transportation options
- Traffic congestion within the neighborhood
- Accessibility to key destinations

A page of the paper version of the issue ranking survey distributed on March 09, 2020.
Guiding Goals Toward Resiliency

A critical approach to creating a stronger community is to work toward a state of resiliency. In planning, resilience implies that the conditions of a community will not only remain unaffected in the face of gradual or spontaneous change, but will emerge from enduring such a change with the resources to continue building and growing. Building a resilient Pacoima encompasses four comprehensive elements: Quality of Life, Natural Environment, Mobility, and Community Empowerment.

Each of the maps below depicts a cartography view of Pacoima’s current resources related to the guiding goals toward resiliency.

Legend
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park & Recreation
- Public Facilities
- Metro Local Line
- Metro Rapid Line
- Library
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- Medical Centers

Maps by Christian Candelaria
How to Read a Recommendation

Resilient Pacoima: A Plan For Building A Strong Community, includes eleven recommendations for the neighborhood of Pacoima to adopt in order to create a more resilient community. Recommendations are on the right side of their existing conditions in their corresponding themes (Quality of Life, Natural Environment, Mobility, Community Empowerment). Each recommendation has a title and description, measurements of success and resiliency, identifies shocks and stresses, as well as partners for implementation.

Understanding Shocks & Stresses

A component of the overall larger city system, alignment of the City’s goals and efforts with this plan’s objectives and recommendations was imperative. Two indicators for the institution of these recommendations are shocks and stresses. In terms of resiliency, shocks are sudden or acute events that impact or imperil the well-being of Los Angeles. Shocks can include cyber crime and terrorism, extreme heat, landslides, or public health emergencies. Daily or continuous stresses that weaken built or natural resources are disparities in employment, crime and violence, traffic, or disparities in access to transit. Vulnerable populations are put at greater risk when stresses magnify the effects of shocks. Recommendations for Pacoima are associated with shocks or stresses of Resilient Los Angeles.

Shocks & Stresses in this Plan

- Shocks: Extreme Cold, Extreme Heat, Fires
- Stresses: Disparities in Access to Public Transit, Food Insecurity, Education, Homelessness, Air Quality/ Pollution

Introduction to Shocks and Stresses in the 2018 Los Angeles Resiliency Plan.
Quality of Life

Improving Lives for All Pacoima Residents
Employment Activity

by Abby Coyle-Richards

Community members expressed concerns about various types of issues with their community and some of those concerns regarding problematic types of employment and businesses. There are many aspects in the Pacoima neighborhood that have remained the same for years, despite change and adaptation being essential for the resiliency of the community. Community members within the Pacoima area are not informed about the complete breakdown of the business environment, regarding, the type of job industries that are currently present in the community. Though illegal business operations can be problematic, it seems like the only option for some Pacoima residents. Primary data has shown that the Pacoima community has had a significant increase in success of these home businesses and local street vending. Street vending has been an occurrence within the Pacoima community, mostly not permitted. With the recent City of Los Angeles legislation, the permitting process for street vending has become easier for residents and resulted in more monitoring. The increase in street vending regulation and monitoring protects the vendors and community members.

“There are not enough jobs available in the Pacoima neighborhood to sustain the existing population and prevent residents from having to commute to other neighborhoods and nearby cities.”

From data collection – survey results, community feedback, Census Data, and the available types of industries and jobs within the Pacoima neighborhood there are three very important issues that should be addressed to help provide Pacoima residents with the opportunity for economic growth. There are not enough jobs available in the Pacoima neighborhood to sustain the existing population and prevent residents from having to commute to other neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles and nearby cities. The jobs that are available in the neighborhood are not of high quality. Those jobs that are available, that would provide an increased income and would ensure a better quality of life, are occupied by non-Pacoima residents. The better paying jobs, that are available, require specialized training that a majority of the residents have been unable to attain. In 2017, only 14.6 percent of the Pacoima population both lived and worked in the immediate area. Pacoima residents have a high school graduation rate of 53 percent, with 8.3 percent of those graduates going on to hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. With such a low graduation rate, many of the residents do not qualify for quality employment because they lack the training and higher education to compete with Non-Residents who do have the training and knowledge, specifically in the health care industry, which accounts for 21.7 percent of business in the Pacoima neighborhood. Residents have also expressed a concern with the growing number of elderly populations that has aged out of their careers and have found it extremely difficult to find alternative jobs.

Achieving Equity Through Employment Opportunities

Pacoima residents are most concerned with the inadequacy in the number of jobs that are available in the area. Advertising and enhancing vocational training programs to equip residents with the necessary knowledge and training to qualify for the current jobs that are available within the health care industry in Pacoima that they may not have known were available. The Pacoima neighborhood survey supports enhancing and increasing the number of jobs in the area. This solution can be achieved by ensuring local businesses and community members have communication between each other which can be facilitated by the Pacoima Chamber of Commerce. This will help Pacoima residents are aware of local jobs that are available in the area. We recommend the Chamber of Commerce starts and sponsors a program that will allow local residents to access local jobs, that ICON, CDC and LAUSD partner to create job training programs, and connect high school students to the community to increase high school graduation rates. The Pacoima Chamber of Commerce would offer free or discounted membership within the organization for businesses that hire local residents for their available jobs. These solutions would enable Pacoima residents to have access to more jobs and promote local businesses, through additional training and education programs. Community members would have access to resources for gainful employment in the neighborhood and will have a way to communicate with local businesses, Los Angeles City Council, the Pacoima Chamber of Commerce, LAUSD, and ICON CDC.

To Monitor Implementation Success

Proposing that the Pacoima Chamber of Commerce starts, sponsors, and monitors a new program that would spread awareness for job opportunities for residents with local businesses who belong to the Chamber of Commerce. LAUSD partnering with ICON, CDC and the Chamber of Commerce would provide the community with the ability to create a workforce skill center, that would provide job training and placement assistance for Pacoima residents. Connecting high school students to people and businesses within the community will help to promote high school graduation, which will equip recent graduates with more opportunities for educational and career advancements.

To Measure Resiliency Increase

A well-coordinated program and relationship between local business and the residents in Pacoima helps reduce both the unemployment in the area and the necessity for residents to commute to other neighborhoods within Los Angeles or nearby cities.

Partners

Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Chamber of Commerce | LACC – 7th District | Pacoima Beautiful

Stresses & Shocks
Food Quality

by Suray Nathan

Pacoima is a food desert and a food swamp. It is a food desert because it lacks adequate outlets that provide fresh produce or healthier prepared food in a sit-down restaurant setting. It is a food swamp because it has plenty of food establishments that sell high calorie, low nutritious food that ranges from pre-packaged processed food to fast food. Pacoima has far more convenience stores than it has full-service greengrocers, where 45 percent of all places that sell food are convenience stores. A large portion of the fast-food establishment tends to be franchise food outlets that including the well-known ones as McDonald’s, KFC, Pizza Hut to less well known such as Yummy Donut and Popeyes Chicken.

Adding to the complexity is an economic component where a large percentage of franchise fast food siphons a significant share of the economic output of the low-income neighborhood to owners and shareholders of the big corporations that own and operate them. The 14.6 percent of the residents that work in Pacoima tend to work in low wage jobs in service industries like franchise fast-food restaurants. The Pacoima residents at the community meeting pointed out that Pacoima has a large concentration of fast food, and that it is difficult for the residents of the neighborhood to start their own business as it is hard to compete with the marketing and promotional capabilities of major franchises.

Pacoima, as experienced by many low income highly diverse neighborhoods around the country, has a significant proportion of franchise fast food establishments to population ratio. The USDA categorizes Pacoima as a low food access neighborhood with a poverty rate of 20 percent or higher and a median family income of less than 80 percent of the metropolitan area. A highly diverse low-income neighborhood like Pacoima, where 69 percent of the residents make around $3,300 or less per month, is the ideal demographic for the franchise food business model. In Pacoima, there are 116 restaurants, and 92 of them are fast food, and 32 of the 92 are franchise fast food. That means there are eight franchise fast-food restaurants but only one full-service greengrocer for every 26,000 residents in Pacoima. The data points to a condition that tips Pacoima towards an unhealthy food environment.

Healthy Food Quality Through the Reduction of Major Franchise Fast Food

Connecting Pacoima residents to nonprofit organizations in order to curtail and reduce franchise fast-food restaurants in the neighborhood.

Fast food establishments over-serve the small community Pacoima, and a significant percentage of the fast-food establishments are franchise fast food. The survey strongly agreed that the proliferation of fast-food restaurants is a detriment to the well-being of Pacoima. We recommend a coalition of the local organization as Pacoima Beautiful and MEND to form a Citizens Group to lobby for the reduction or to halt new permits to major franchise fast-food restaurants and the ease of the permit process for sit-down restaurants. It is also essential to educate and promote healthy eating to Pacoima residents. This can be accomplished by creating bilingual PSA posters and social-media infomercials targeting local schools, businesses, and social organizations.

Additionally, organizations ranging from Pacoima Beautiful to the Chamber of Commerce to the Boys & Girls Club of America can create educational in-class bilingual programs to promote healthy eating. A further recommendation is for the Citizen Group to work with Los Angeles City Planning to create a Specific Plan for the Van Nuys Boulevard between the 1-5 freeway and Foothill Boulevard. The Specific Plan gives the community great leeway as to how that area should be developed. This will allow the community to add special provisions as no drive-through franchise establishments, and signage to mute the enticement of eating unhealthy food. A partnering of Pacoima Beautiful, MEND, Pacoima Neighborhood Council, along with the LACC 7th District, and Los Angeles Food Policy Council, could create policies that will make Pacoima an unappealing ground for the growth of major franchise fast-food establishments.

Partners

Pacoima Beautiful | MEND | LACC – 7th District | Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Chamber of Commerce | Los Angeles Food Policy Council | Boys & Girls Club | Los Angeles City Planning

To Monitor Implementation Success

The monitoring of the success of the organization would require the newly formed Citizen Group’s ability to galvanize the residents by having monthly meetings to reinforce the importance of lobbying local and state governments into action. This will also entail educating neighborhood residents on healthy eating habits and healthier options in the neighborhood.

To Measure Resiliency Increase

The reduction or halting of new major franchise fast-food establishments in Pacoima will reduce unhealthy eating habits and obesity that leads to many health issues. A healthier community will be more productive and more resilient in times of distress.
Quality of Life | Existing Conditions

Housing Conditions

by Alan Sims

Per American Fact Finder 2017 housing characteristics, there were 23,775 housing units in Pacoima compared to 1,457,762 units in the City of Los Angeles. As of 2017, the occupancy rate was 97 percent in Pacoima. 17,403 units in the area were single family detached with most units built between 1950 and 1959. Twenty-nine percent of units have five rooms with 78 percent of units occupied with one or less persons per room. Sixty percent of residents own a home, with 63 percent of homes valued between $300k-$499.9k. There were 24 attached and 9 detached ADU’s legally converted in Pacoima compared to 116 attached and 145 detached ADU’s legally converted in the City of Los Angeles.

Addressing homelessness is a growing topic amongst planners and other local, state, and federal officials. Data collection from community feedback and surveys as well as secondary data sources indicate the rise of homelessness and its impact on Pacoima residents. Survey results show 57 percent of residents are negatively impacted daily from homelessness. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) 2019 homeless count showed a total 564 individuals experiencing homelessness in Pacoima. Services provided include emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. The same count found the City of Los Angeles has 36,165 homeless individuals. Having a larger homeless and overall population, the City of Los Angeles offers all service types as Pacoima as well as rapid re-housing and other permanent housing.

Only nine percent of homeless individuals in Pacoima live in transitional housing, leaving ninety-one percent in emergency shelters. Increased involvement from residents to implore local officials to enact policies that invest more in not only transitional housing, but also permanent supportive housing and rapid re housing will allow for maximum efforts to house homeless populations and address the crisis. Creating a council or non-profit designed to generate funding and made up of residents, business leaders, and local officials will create unity to combat homelessness. Funding backed by local businesses led by policy initiatives from residents and local officials for more housing opportunities for homeless individuals increases the likelihood of reducing the number of homeless populations on streets.

"[We] feel loans need to be made more accessible for people to build ADU's. Currently, there are many barriers for people to access these loans." - Community Respondent

Involvement Through Allyship & Policy

Making the connection between Pacoima businesses, residents, and homeless populations to create unity and combat homelessness.

To Monitor Implementation Success
Through the council or non-profit, homeless individuals must register to take part in housing, which includes job training and other supportive services. Each registered homeless individual would count towards additional funding and would remove that individual from either the streets or overcrowded emergency shelters, and spark awareness for the necessity of affordable housing. In addition, a 311 service through the City Council District Seven can be established to clean areas around homeless sites. This process requires community involvement and generates a network between businesses and residents to register homeless individuals to improve Pacoima’s resiliency.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
A policy driven community led council will help reduce the shocks and stresses as it creates accountability for the community. The community will understand what type of problems homeless individuals are facing with funding backed by local businesses and organizations. Including job training opportunities for homeless individuals gives them the necessary tools to get a job and move into permanent housing.

Partners

Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Beautiful | MEND | LAHSA | HACLA | LACC – 7th District

Stresses & Shocks

Figure 1. The number of units built over the decades from 1930s to present.
Crime in the Neighborhood

by Allison Beauregard

As with many neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Pacoima is considered to be much safer than it was in the past, especially since the 1980s. Pacoima Neighborhood Council President Elisa Avalos recalls the gangland of that time, where certain areas – the David Gonzalez Park across from the San Fernando Garden Housing Project, for example – were considered off limits due to frequent shootings. But in 2019, the community hosted the National Night Out in that same park, where over 300 families, community organizations, and the Los Angeles Police Department came together to celebrate and further improve the neighborhood. While progress is welcome, high crime persists in Pacoima. It is vital to explore what types of crimes occur and how crime impacts residents’ perception of safety in order to move toward a state of resilience.

Crime is categorized in two major parts, the first of which represents the highest offenses. Part I Property Crimes include arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Data from the University of Southern California reports Part I Property Crimes in Pacoima at a rate of 17 crimes per 1,000 people. By the same data, Part I Violent Crimes, which cover aggravated assault, forcible rape, murder, and robbery, occur at a rate of 5 crimes per 1,000 people. Part II Crimes are typically more common and less violent and cover offenses such as loitering, drug offenses, simple assault, and vandalism. These crimes occur at a rate of 19 per 1,000 people in Pacoima. Crime mapping tools enable researchers to pinpoint the time and location of reported crimes. Using this resource, during a six month period in 2019, 189 crimes were reported in Pacoima; 46 percent were motor vehicle thefts, 31 percent were assaults, 12 percent were burglaries, 8 percent were robberies, and 1 percent were homicides. Presently, Pacoima is ranked the 65th most dangerous neighborhood in Los Angeles out of 209 neighborhoods.

When considering crime rate, it is crucial to account for other existing conditions that could have a causal relationship. For instance, as the crime rates in Pacoima have decreased in recent years, it should be noted that high school graduation rate, employment rate, and median household income simultaneously increased, as shown in Table 1. When considering the types of crimes committed (mostly Part II), these socioeconomic indicators may help explain crime rate: could there be a connection between the homelessness epidemic and higher rates of Part II crimes compared to Part I? It could be beneficial to take a closer look at what types of crimes are committed in which locations, in relation to land use and other activities in that location. In order to fully understand and prevent crime and increase sense of security among residents, it is crucial to involve local actors and residents, for crime prevention relies on total community cooperation.

Table 1. Pacoima Crime and Socioeconomic Data 2012-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>HS Graduation Rate</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Part 2 Crimes Per 1,000 People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>$46,282</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
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<td>$46,490</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>$47,293</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>$47,655</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Building Trust & Community Bonds for a Safer Neighborhood

Continue support and funding for the LAPD’s Community Safety Partnership; coordinate routine community events, crime safety education, and outreach with the Partnership.

Research shows the presence of crime in Pacoima is not lost on residents, and that crime rate is a prioritized concern. Where the disconnect lies is in the reporting of crimes and the underutilization of community programs. Survey results indicate residents are at best indifferent to police presence in Pacoima; this apprehension deters them from seeking help. A newly launched 10-officer task force, the Community Safety Partnership, shows promise in a neighborhood understaffed with police. The Partnership plans to work with residents to address community-specific needs and provide recreational opportunities for youths; officers will assume a mediator role rather than one of authority, creating a network of familiarity and good faith.

It is recommended that the City of Los Angeles be attentive to the progress of the Partnership and dutifully monitor its success; if the Partnership proves to be a positive update for Pacoima, then it is crucial that funding continues for the Partnership. Collaboration with organizations that aim to help prevent crime and protect victims, in order to educate residents about this available aid, will be instrumental for the Partnership.

To Measure Resiliency Increase

With a decrease in crime, awareness of police and program aid, and stronger bonds between the residents and police, Pacoima will strengthen its sense of community and sense of safety. In response to any shocks or stresses, a community built on trust and security will be more resilient.
Natural Environment

Stewardship for Improving the Local Environment
There are nine publicly accessible parks within Pacoima which represent two types as defined by the Los Angeles County of Parks and Recreation: Local Park and Regional Recreation Park. Data sources demonstrate that Pacoima is lacking available open space with an allotment of only 206.3 square feet of open space per resident as compared to the whole City of Los Angeles with 533.2 square feet per resident\(^1\). Compared to the national average of 15 percent dedicated parkland in a community, Pacoima stands at 9 percent from the nine existing parks\(^2\). Pacoima has a lack of high quality publicly accessible open space. The community is fortunate to have Hansen Dam Park in its vicinity, however with the majority of the park outside Pacoima’s boundaries, quick and easy access to the park is not possible for most. More than half of the existing parks within Pacoima were measured in 2016 by Parks and Recreation Department as in “fair” and not “good” condition\(^3\). Community comments during the community events reflected the lack of safety in existing parks and has even prevented daily use for some. The community survey indicated 32 percent of residents avoid visiting Pacoima’s parks daily and another 32 percent of residents avoid visiting at least once a week. This demonstrates that the fear of crime has rendered the existing parks in Pacoima as mostly unusable spaces by a majority of residents. This finding in combination with the low percentage of park space in the vicinity further exasperates the disparity in access to public open space for the community of Pacoima. Another critical element of the quality of the open space environment is the quality of existing trees, both on the streetscape and community canopy. Pacoima has 4.5 percent tree canopy coverage compared to 6.6 percent in Northridge and 19.3 percent in Bel Air\(^4\). Forty-four percent of residents from the community survey believe that the street tree coverage in Pacoima is not adequate. As David Rodriguez, the Office and Grants Manager at Pacoima Beautiful explained, Pacoima has a large population of young trees that have not matured into shade-providing canopies. Community Organizations such as Pacoima Beautiful have helped establish new trees in the community, but funding to nurture the trees into full maturity is not always available and often result in hand watering when resources permit.

Table 2 Breakdown of the parks and their sizes\(^5\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Type of Park</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amistad Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Branford Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
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<td>David M. Gonzales Recreation Center</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
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<td>Devonshire Arleta Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hansen Dam Park</td>
<td>Regional Recreation Park</td>
<td>491.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubert H. Humphrey Memorial Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paxton Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richie Valens Park</td>
<td>Local Park</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identifying problem parks and developing a clean-up protocol and crime prevention program to enhance the quality and usability of Pacoima’s existing park spaces.

Pacoima is an urbanized neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles and expanding park acreage, although not impossible, would be a challenging and expensive prospect. Old public facilities being phased out, such as the Department of Water and Power’s utility plant, could be an ideal location for park expansion but the toxicity of the land from previous industrial use and being located at the edge of Pacoima away from the majority of residents makes this location less than ideal. Pacoima has park space including 420 acres in Hansen Dam Park and increasing the quality of those parks would increase usability by the community. The concern of safety in Pacoima’s parks is at the forefront of resident’s minds when it comes to park usage. Developing a Neighborhood Watch Program in partnership with LAPD with a focus on Pacoima’s parks would increase the perception of safety and ease the community’s fear on visiting the public parks. The Department of Parks and Recreation should establish police sub-stations for LAPD in high concern parks as another layer for increasing park security. To proceed with a rehabilitation program Pacoima Beautiful should partner with California State University Northridge, Institute for Sustainability to create an inventory of parks that indicates a list of action items to improve each park. This inventory should improve upon the 2016 Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment report. These improved action items should be creative physical park improvements such as trash clean-up days, building new picnic tables, or planting new trees and vegetation. Not included in the 2016 Countywide report, this rehabilitation program should also include conceptual actions such as creating a security protocol plan or developing a park site plan centered on improvements that create “defensible space”. This would allow the park users themselves the opportunity to become key agents in ensuring park security\(^6\). This inventory should also identify other potential partnerships that can help implement each action item such as providing services, maintenance, or funding.

To Monitor Implementation Success
Pacoima Beautiful should create a task force to help with environmental designs and submit community feedback on CSUN’s involvement efforts. The Pacoima Neighborhood Watch should partner with Pacoima Beautiful and CSUN to oversee the implementation plan and offer insight into security concerns.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
A community survey should be implemented after actions taken to see if the effects have reduced the community’s fear of using parks or what implementation measures still need improvement.

Partners
Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Beautiful | Los Angeles Parks & Recreation | LAPD | Pacoima Neighborhood Watch | CSUN

\(^1\) by Maxfield Vermy

\(^2\) Data sources

\(^3\) Community survey

\(^4\) Los Angeles County

\(^5\) Table 2 Breakdown of the parks and their sizes

\(^6\) Ecological Design
Energy Consumption and Heat

by Kimberly Bernal

Energy consumption is examined due to low consumption rates compared to Central Los Angeles. Data shows the neighborhood of Pacoima has a higher population than the neighborhood of Central Los Angeles, yet Pacoima consumes much less energy. The residential usage for Central Los Angeles was 179 M kWh, whereas Pacoima’s residential usage was 87.1 M kWh\(^2\). Income is an indicator for the low consumption rates. Pacoima is considered to be a future urban heat island due to its location; this should cause energy rates to increase over time but with income indicating energy usage Pacoima has a problem.

Many have the privilege of not having to worry about paying the utilities while other people do not. Low-income populations often shoulder the burden of having to find ways to lessen their energy consumption in order to lower their energy bill. Although the consumption can be mitigated in several different ways, energy usage still occurs. Energy consumption is important mainly due to its unaffordability. The general idea is that electricity is needed but it’s important to find ways to alleviate the consumption to keep costs low. Surveys were also used to better understand how the residents of Pacoima feel regarding energy usage and cost. The respondents were asked "given that electricity rates are lower between 8PM and 10PM, how likely are you to adjust your energy use?" Results show that approximately 55 percentage of the community respondents are likely to adjust their energy consumption schedule for lower electricity rates.

Rising temperatures are a growing concern all around the county, however certain areas like Pacoima are under more stress due to the setting of the land. Over time as Pacoima has more extreme heat days there will be an increase in cooling loads, in order to have livable conditions under more stress due to the setting of the land. Over time as Pacoima has more extreme heat days there will be an increase in cooling loads, in order to have livable conditions under more stress due to the setting of the land. Over time as Pacoima has more extreme heat days will have a negative effect in cooling loads\(^2\). The rising heat will mean air conditioning will be a preconditioned necessity to live. A high demand on energy will cause an increase in electricity rates.

Table 3. Extreme heat days predicted for the future based on a warm and dry simulation model\(^{25}\).

![Extreme Heat Days Predicted for Future](chart.png)

Community Energy Efficient Solutions

Connecting Pacoima residents to different Los Angeles departmental programs that offer resources to reduce their energy consumption costs.

When addressing the issue of energy consumption, the concern is cost. Data shows that energy consumption in the neighborhood of Pacoima is low, regardless of the increasing temperatures. Different forms of community feedback show residents are concerned with this issue. Enhancing community outreach to ensure residents are aware of the different programs available to low-income residents for energy consumption is necessary. We recommend ensuring Pacoima residents are aware of all the opportunities they are able to apply to in order to lower their energy consumption costs. This connection can be facilitated by a partnership with Pacoima Beautiful and the Institute for Sustainability at California State University Northridge (CSUN). This partnership can ensure success for grant writing and helping neighborhood residents apply to all applicable energy efficient programs. Some of these programs are facilitated by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), California Climate Investments (CCI) and funding provided by Transformative Climate Communities (TCC).

To Monitor Implementation Success

Proposing the partnership between Pacoima Beautiful and CSUN Institute for Sustainability in order to educate residents about LADWP, DOE, and CCI programs residents qualify for and the application processes. This partnership can be funded from the DOE Weatherization Assistance Program or the TCC grant, this funding will give Pacoima residents the assistance they need in order to be energy efficient.

To Measure Resiliency Increase

An educational relationship between the residents of Pacoima and CSUN Institute for Sustainability to ensure resiliency. Residents of Pacoima will have access to resources and knowledge to create everyday small changes as well as implement bigger permanent changes in their homes. The partnership can track costs before during and after a period of time to show residents how their energy efficient solutions are reducing their costs.

Partners

Pacoima Neighborhood Council | LACC – 7th District
Pacoima Beautiful | LADWP | U.S. Department of Energy
Transformative Climate Communities | California Climate Investments | Institute for Sustainability at CSUN
Community Gardens

by Suray Nathan

In times of economic uncertainty and natural disaster, food accessibility becomes of paramount importance to community resilience. Building a resilient neighborhood becomes a challenge when the neighborhood has inadequate access to fresh produce. Pacoima falls into this category. There are only four full-service greengrocers in Pacoima - two Food 4 Less, one Vallarta supermarket, and one Smart & Final - that serve a population of 103,689 residents. Hence, each store serves about 26,000 Pacoima residents. Further, Pacoima lacks any farmer’s markets and has only one community garden.

For Pacoima to be more sustainable and food sufficient, it has to explore the expansion of community gardens and encourage edible backyard gardening. Homeownership is high in Pacoima, where 60 percent of the residents own their homes26. This lends itself to the residents growing more of their fresh produce. Pacoima also has a Mediterranean-type climate that will extend the growth period allowing for greater access to fresh produce throughout most of the year. The program manager of the Los Angeles Community Garden Council (LACGC) that sponsors the Community garden in Pacoima and the Pacoima community garden leader spoke about community gardens and backyard gardening as a road to food sufficiency. They also shed light on the challenges a community garden could face.

As difficult as it has been with funding, LACGC and Pacoima Beautiful promote greater participation in the community garden and teach more residents to utilize their backyard for growing more fresh food.

The biggest challenge for the Pacoima community garden is the lack of funding that has reduced its outreach and educational programs. Increasing costs of public irrigation water27 has also increased the membership fees that has further put a strain on members in the low-income areas like Pacoima. However, as difficult as it has been to receive funding, the LACGC and Pacoima Beautiful do promote greater participation in the community garden and teach more residents to utilize their backyard for growing more fresh food. They also point out that the presence of the community garden has brought about greater awareness to the residents about healthy eating and living habits. It has also taught many to supplement their groceries by growing some of their own foods and selling their excess produce at the community food market.

Pacoima is a dynamic and diverse low-income community, and having a sustainable edible community and backyard gardens can fill the void left by the lack of access to fresh produce. The Pacoima survey showed that the lack of funding to create access, awareness, and education is the biggest hurdle to a more robust gardening program that will lead to food security. For Pacoima to achieve this goal, we recommend a multi-prong solution by partnering with corporate entities, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions. The funding can be achieved by appealing to better corporate citizenship with local nurseries and gardening businesses such as Home Depot and Lowe’s. These businesses can provide seeds, sand, fertilizers, and other gardening materials as well as in-store bilingual classes on best gardening practices and techniques. Local organizations like Pacoima Beautiful and LACGC can partner with the Los Angeles Food Policy Council, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Los Angeles City Council – 7th District to lobby for grants and policy changes to fund and expand community and backyard gardens. Local organizations working to improve parks and open spaces can partner with CSUN’s Sustainable Garden Education Center to improve the educational outreach where weekly bilingual classes can be conducted to inform residents on the most effective and efficient methods of gardening. These efforts can lead to Pacoima having a sustained community food system.

Food Sufficiency Through Community & Backyard Gardens

Connecting Pacoima residents to education and assistance to utilize common open space and their backyards for growing their food.

To Monitor Implementation Success
The recommended coalition should engage residents and have a monthly or bimonthly meeting to monitor and push forward with an agenda that calls for policies for granting more open spaces for gardening and funding for the promotion and education of community gardens and backyard gardens.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
The concerning issues of lack of funding, support, and education can be mitigated by a cooperative effort between a local organization, with corporate partners, and educational institutions to increase the use of common spaces and backyards for food sufficiency. This will make Pacoima resilient in times of economic or natural disturbances.

Partners
LACGC | Pacoima Beautiful | MEND | Valley Food Bank
| LACG – 7th District | Los Angeles Neighborhood Land
Trust | Department of Neighborhood Empowerment | Los Angeles Food Policy Council

Stresses & Shocks
Pacoima’s street network is arranged in a complete super-grid that is approximately 45 degrees skewed from the north-south grid of the valley. Major arterial streets run from the northwest to the southeast and from the southwest to the northeast. There are cycling routes along San Fernando Rd, Glenoaks Blvd, and Van Nuys Blvd. The neighborhood is located between three major freeways: The I-5 runs from the northwest to the south, the SR-118 runs from the west to the northeast, and the I-210 runs from the northeast to the southeast of the community.

Traffic volume on Pacoima arterial streets is 37.4 percent higher than the average for the City of Los Angeles according to the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, from data published in 2014 and updated in 2017.28. Both the city of Los Angeles and the neighborhood of Pacoima have seen a general increase in collisions over a five-year time frame from 2014 to 2018, where Los Angeles saw an injury collision fatality rate of 0.006 percent verses Pacoima’s 0.011 percent fatality rate.29 Data from the Transportation Injury Mapping System was gathered from several datasets for individual years from 2014 to 2018 for total collisions. Over that five-year period, Pacoima saw a total of 172 pedestrian collisions and 132 bicycle collisions. Van Nuys Blvd. is designated by Vision Zero, an LADOT Traffic Safety Program to eliminate traffic deaths, as well as improvement to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Traffic volume has been identified as the most pressing community concern according to feedback from the community meetings. Traffic count data from LADOT shows that major roads within Pacoima see higher traffic volume than City of Los Angeles streets overall. The concern over traffic volume from a traffic perspective is the increased likelihood of conflicts between all road users. According to surveys and community comments, the key issues raised relating to traffic volume were largely linked to the 2016 redesign of Van Nuys Blvd. This resulted in a loss of the northbound lane from Laurel Canyon Blvd to San Fernando Rd. and includes conflicts between transportation modes such as pedestrians, cyclists, cars, delivery vehicles, and buses. Further, residents feel unsafe using crosswalks, especially at Van Nuys Blvd and San Fernando Rd. The coming East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor along Van Nuys Blvd. and San Fernando Rd. presents an opportunity for the community to work with the LADOT and Metro as well as elected officials and nonprofits to address traffic safety issues related to vehicle. With the addition of an at-grade light-rail line on Van Nuys Blvd. and the north side of San Fernando Rd. there will be an opportunity to redesign those streets. Redesigns should consider the need for better transportation mode separation on the street, enhanced intersections with improved signaling, crosswalks and lighting, and improved stop placement for transit and delivery vehicles. Bike lanes should be continuous and protected along secondary streets to improve mode separation and cyclist protection based on community concerns. Pacoima residents tend to have a strong relationship with public transportation. With ground breaking set for 2022, residents should take advantage of the improved transportation options and traffic safety.

To Monitor Implementation Success
A reduction in fatalities and injuries along the street once the design is implemented can be monitored via collision counts reported through the Los Angeles Police Department, the California Highway Patrol, and the California Office of Traffic Safety.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
In addressing the effects of traffic volume as it relates to traffic safety there will be a replacement of aging infrastructure with new street enhancements. Further, a reduction in pollution will result from the implementation of a light-rail line improving air quality for Pacoima. With a reduction in conflicts and increased safety on the roads, the neighborhood will be more walkable, transit-oriented, and able to withstand future shocks and stresses.

Partners
LADOT | Metro | LAPD | Pacoima Neighborhood Council | CHP | CA Office of Traffic Safety | LACC – 7th District | Pacoima Beautiful

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Road Map to Traffic Safety Solutions

Easing the impacts of traffic volume on Pacoima residents.

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Partners
LADOT | Metro | LAPD | Pacoima Neighborhood Council | CHP | CA Office of Traffic Safety | LACC – 7th District | Pacoima Beautiful
Pacoima Transit
by Doug Nguyen

Pacoima is served by Metro bus lines for transit and is an integral part of the Van Nuys Corridor, and has the seventh-highest transit ridership in the county. The community has 10 bus lines crossing through it, including 2 rapid bus lines. Being a community within the City of Los Angeles, how the transit connects Pacoima to the city is an indication of the usefulness the transit offers to the community. Four main groups including Job Centers, Colleges, Hospitals, and Airports were initially studied to better understand the time and the transfers required to reach a selection of destinations. The San Fernando Valley has transit projects rolling in throughout the next decade. Van Nuys Boulevard, which is already heavily used by lines that cross through Pacoima has a Light Rail planned for completion by 2027. This train will enable the residents of Pacoima and over 60,000 northeast Valley residents to connect with the Orange Line and Metrolink as well as the future Sepulveda Pass train improvements, also completion by 2027. This train will enable the residents of Pacoima and over 60,000 northeast Valley residents.

An analysis performed on an expert interview with Metro found five main topics about Pacoima included Community (35 percent), Infrastructure (17 percent), Morals (11 percent), City Plans (20 percent), and Transit (17 percent). Beyond the finding that Community was a main topic and a high priority, the analysis aligned the five groups into a working model where each part was tied to the others. This constant flowing circle is key to maintaining the level of attention from decision makers needed when compared to other communities of Los Angeles. High ridership, strong community involvement (that includes Pacoima’s history of strong support for transit projects, not solely opposition), can lead the City of Los Angeles in the direction that they wish their neighborhood to go while still allowing the City to fulfill its expectation of a certain level of service to all of its communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip Time to Job Centers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys / Sherman Oaks</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warner Center / Pierce</td>
<td>63 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown LA / Pierce</td>
<td>71 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westwood</td>
<td>77 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Various travel times from Pacoima.

Pacoima, Pacoima Beautiful, and LADOT stresses & shocks

Access Through Transportation Opportunities

Safely connecting Pacoima residents to citywide destinations with efficient transit.

Findings supported earlier secondary data in showing the need for a transit system that serves the community through efficient trips. Findings also indicated the need for increased safety between the varying modes of transportation. These modal choices that come into conflict with persistent regularity with one another includes buses, transportation network vehicles, bicycles, private vehicles, and pedestrians. During the expert interview with Metro a strong focus was placed on equity and doing the right thing for the residents of Pacoima with current and future transit projects. It was discussed that the community has a history of positive and effective communication with Metro and the City of Los Angeles.

It is recommended that the community of Pacoima work with Metro, transportation network providers, and other mode sharing options to create a pedestrian-to-transit friendly environment. This walkable community should ensure that the future transit is accessible to the residents. Steps need to be taken to ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety from other modes of transportation. Specifically, a traffic signal priority system and dedicated busways are recommended. Implementing these measures will help reduce trip time for Pacoima residents as well as increase intersection safety and increase the separation of the different transportation modes.

The community of Pacoima has a strong tie to transit. This shows in the high ridership and willingness to work and support the local transit options and growth plans. Using the communication channels already established with Metro, the community can influence the future of their streets, transit, and safety.

To Monitor Implementation Success
Proposing that the City of Los Angeles, Community of Pacoima, and Metro implement traffic signal priority and dedicated bus lane measures to accommodate buses and decrease trip times for riders. Monitoring of transit trip times and traffic congestion would track the programs’ progress. These programs and monitoring qualify for funding through the State of California and Metro’s Prop A program.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
Traffic signal priority for buses and dedicated lanes for varying modes of transportation in Pacoima can both decrease trip times as well as increase safety for Pacoima residents including vehicle operators, pedestrians and cyclists. Community members will be able to safely and easily access transit stops, cross intersections and navigate roadways. Communication with Metro’s East San Fernando Valley Transit Division regarding project progress and concerns should be available for residents.

Partners
Pacoima Neighborhood Council | LACC – 7th District | Metro | Pacoima Beautiful | LADOT

Stresses & Shocks

Metro bus 233 and LADOT DASH at Laurel Canyon and Van Nuys Blvd.

Community Empowerment

Collective Power to Shift Community Dynamics
Emergency Preparedness

by Christian Candelaria

Pacoima's topography puts its community at risk of potentially dangerous effects from natural disasters. The community could face devastating damage with the Verdugo Fault line running directly under the neighborhood, a fault line with an estimated maximum 6.7 magnitude earthquake. This earthquake could be the same size as the Northridge Quake in 1994, which caused a total of $49.3 billion dollars in economic loss. At the time, this was the largest economic impact of any natural disaster in the United States32. California faced the same size as the Northridge Quake in 1994, which caused a total of $49.3 billion dollars in economic loss. Since then there has been an increase in the number of wildfires as seen in 2019 as well as the 2020 pandemic.

Pacoima is a community that is 84 percent Latino36 and this would require bilingual resources for the community.

Pacoima’s socioeconomic status is a factor in understanding how the population is affected by natural disasters. People with fewer means have to live in at-risk areas and these locations have fewer funds to mitigate or plan for these phenomena. There is also a lack of quality-bilingual education on emergency preparedness and management in the community. The neighborhood is 84 percent Latino36 and this would require bilingual resources. According to the US Census35, 79.6 percent of Pacoima residents have Spanish spoken in their household, nearly double the California rate of 44.1 percent and more than double the national average of 21.5 percent. Public and private partnerships dedicated to Pacoima are not available to assist residents with understanding emergency planning and where to locate resources. An issue that arises is that many resources are also online and are unknown or unusable to community members. Pacoima is a low-income community where some residents have minimal or no access to the Internet. There is only one library in the community to provide Internet services. Pacoima is part of regional efforts for emergency preparedness and management, but there is nothing community-specific to ensure Pacoima’s resiliency. Pacoima last held an Emergency Preparedness Fair in 2018 that catered to the community’s needs. Since then there has been an increase in the number of wildfires as seen in 2019, as well as the 2020 pandemic.

Empowerment Through Crisis Education & Leadership Programs

Connecting Pacoima residents to bilingual emergency preparedness resources to empower them to initiate a Citizen Corp.

A n important step toward resiliency in Pacoima should be forming a Citizen Corp. Empowering a community to action means ensuring they are able to have access to the materials necessary to do so with bilingual resources for the large Spanish speaking population. It also means providing the community with the means to take their preparedness and management into their own hands. This includes formulating community networks with important organizations and officials such as local businesses, non-profits, elected officials, emergency managers, and first responders. Forming a Citizen Corp requires creating a new organization with members that are able to meet regularly, train themselves and others with emergency related skills, discuss issues, and create action plans. A Citizen Corp is registered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, which provides substantial resources to empower communities. A community with a Citizen Corp can respond quickly to a crisis, such as a pandemic or earthquake, with their own resources. They are able to provide necessary information to officials and first responders as well as assist them with handling the crisis. A Citizen Corp provides a platform with resources to train their members and others in the community for emergency related skills. Their meeting spaces should be available to the public to discuss issues and be a meeting ground to formulate action plans to become coordinated as a resilient community.

To Monitor Implementation Success
Starting and registering a FEMA Citizen Corp Council that meets monthly to discuss current issues, train community members, and develop action plans for emergency situations. This process requires the formation of a community network to promote emergency preparedness and pathways for streamlined communication to improve Pacoima’s resiliency.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
A well-coordinated Citizen Corp will help reduce the shocks and stresses a community faces during a crisis by empowering residents to take action. Community members will be trained in emergency preparedness and management and will have the skills necessary to assist local jurisdictions in the event of an emergency.

Partners
Pacoima Neighborhood Council | LAFD | LAPD | California’s 29th Congressional District | FEMA | Pacoima Beautiful | City of LA Office of Emergency Management | LACC - 7th District

Stresses & Shocks
Community Connections

by Daniel Vazquez

Community networks in Pacoima are essential. Through community cohesiveness and powerful community partnerships, community networks set the foundation in building resiliency and dealing with neighborhood issues. Community networks are made up of Nonprofit Organizations, the Pacoima Neighborhood Council, local Government Agencies, and most importantly, Community Members. They work with one another and help build Pacoima’s profile as a Los Angeles neighborhood and help build the community’s resilience when facing neighborhood issues. Community networks build the community’s resilience by navigating community members to services and resources when they are faced with obstacles affecting their quality of life.

According to the President of the Pacoima Neighborhood Council, Pacoima is facing issues with the illegal dumping of trash, neighbor-to-neighbor conflict and the utilization of nonprofit organizations is nearly absent.

There are a total of 71 nonprofit organizations in Pacoima while Los Angeles has 6,398 nonprofits. Table 5 compares the number of residents and nonprofits in Pacoima with the number of residents and nonprofits in the City of Los Angeles. Nonprofits that serve community members are split into service types such as education, environment, and public and social benefit. The organizations collaborate with organizations both within the neighborhood of Pacoima and with the rest of the City of Los Angeles. The nonprofit service types nearly mirror the community committees that make up the Pacoima Neighborhood Council: Arts & Cultural Enrichment Committee, The Budget & Finance Committee, Community Outreach & Communications Committee, Education & Youth Development Committee, Election Committee, Executive Committee, Grievance Committee, Housing/Economic Development & Land Use Committee, Public Safety Committee, Senior Advocacy Committee.

According to the President of the Pacoima Neighborhood Council, Pacoima is facing issues with the illegal dumping of trash, neighbor-to-neighbor conflict, and the utilization of nonprofit organizations is nearly absent. Illegal dumping can be categorized as the improper dumping of waste instead of utilizing an authorized method, it is a punishable offense by law and is detrimental to the conditions of a community and its ability to continue building and growing because of its lasting effects. Conflict between community members affects the community’s resilience by breaking and weakening community networks. These nonprofits help build resiliency in the neighborhood and resiliency cannot be built if community members are not utilizing the services at their disposal. All of the existing issues in Pacoima are detrimental to building a strong prepared community.

Navigating community members to appropriate services and building stronger community ties.

Community members in Pacoima are most concerned with the lack of utilization of services provided by nonprofit organizations and services provided at the county and city levels. Community networks only work if they are being used to their full potential. When they are not being used, community networks become weak and lose the ability to provide services. In order to combat the issue with the lack of utilization of community networks, Pacoima Neighborhood Council and partners should propose to hold a community event. At the event, many of the different organizations in Pacoima can come together to introduce and educate community members of their services provided. The Pacoima Neighborhood Council is made up of 10 committees, one of which is the Community Outreach & Communications Committee. This committee can create a website where they continuously review, and update listed nonprofit organizations and reiterate the services provided at little to no cost to community members. The nonprofit organizations listed on this site should display information on services provided as well as any fees associated. The website should be in both English and Spanish to serve the demographics of the community. CSUN should work with the Community Outreach & Communication Committee to keep their listed nonprofits up to date.

Table 5: Comparison of Nonprofits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonprofits in Pacoima v. City of Los Angeles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacoima</td>
<td>City of Los Angeles</td>
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<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>6,398</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.69 Per Capita</td>
<td>0.62 Per Capita</td>
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Pacoima Branch Library is the only branch serving the community, providing support for events & organizations. Photo by Daniel Vazquez, 2020

Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Beautiful | LAPD

To Monitor Implementation Success
Schedule an annual review of community networks in Pacoima. The review will be stored in a database and will include services provided, number of community members using services, and how often these services are utilized.

To Measure Resiliency Increase
Utilization of programs and organizations should increase annually. This increase reflects that community networks are strengthening and community members are aware of the programs and services.

Stresses & Shocks

Partners

Pacoima Neighborhood Council | Pacoima Beautiful | LAPD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Summary of Recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Achieving Equity Through Employment Opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Healthier Food Quality Through the Reduction of Major Franchise Fast Food</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Involvement Through Allyship &amp; Policy</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Building Trust &amp; Community Bonds for a Safer Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rehabilitate Existing Parks to Increase Usability</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Community Energy Efficient Solutions</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Food Sufficiency Through Community Gardens &amp; Backyard Gardens</td>
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<td>Road Map to Traffic Safety Solutions</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Access Through Transportation Opportunities</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Empowerment Through Crisis Education &amp; Leadership Programs</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Building Resiliency Through Stronger Community Networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Club</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>California Climate Investments</td>
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