

## 4. CITY OF PORTOLA

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The City of Portola provides general government services in the form of city administration, finance, building inspection, public works, and community development. In addition to these services, the City provides fire protection, Emergency Medical Service (EMS), water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, storm drainage, park and recreation, road maintenance and snow removal services. The City also has a community service officer that acts as an animal control officer, does parking enforcement and some code enforcement. The City provides some services outside corporate boundaries, including fire protection, water and wastewater, as detailed in the Extra-territorial Services section of this chapter. The City contracts with Plumas County for law enforcement and animal control services outside of the purview of the community service officer. Solid waste collection is provided by Intermountain Disposal by franchise agreement. The library is a branch of the Plumas County Library and is funded entirely by the County. Liberty Energy provides electric power to Portola. Currently, cable service is offered by New Day Broadband under a city franchise. An MSR of the City was completed in January 2003, and has not been updated since.

### AGENCY OVERVIEW

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#### Background

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The City of Portola, incorporated on May 14, 1946, was formed as a general law city. It is the only incorporated city in Plumas County. Since that time, there have been two efforts to disincorporate the City; neither has had LAFCo approval.

The City is located along SR 70, west of the Sierra Valley, approximately 50 miles from Reno, Nevada. The City is surrounded by the Plumas National Forest, and lies east of the crest of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The Middle Fork Feather River, the Union Pacific Railroad, and SR 70 run parallel through the valley and divide the city in distinctly separate north and south sectors.

#### Boundaries

The City's existing boundaries, including annexed, undeveloped areas cover an area of 5.5 square miles or 3,490 acres.<sup>9</sup> As shown in Figure 4-2, the boundaries generally extend from the edge of the Woodbridge development to the south, including the Portola 192 development, then continuing north crossing the Feather River, Union Pacific rail lines along the western edge of the City, continuing north along Lake Davis Road, incorporating the Teanna Ranch annexation, then along Joy Way from Lake Davis Road to Meadow Way,

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<sup>9</sup> Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2011. The data is not considered survey quality.

continuing south through Riverwalk Park, crossing the Feather River and Union Pacific rail lines to the eastern edge of the Woodbridge development. The proposed Portola 192 subdivision (Final Map approved) has been dubbed as such since it has 192 acres and will have approximately 200 equivalent dwelling units. The Teanna Ranch annexation is 2,028-acre area is uninhabited and is presently Williamson Act land that cannot be developed. The Williamson Act contract on the land will expire in 2019.

Plumas LAFCo records date back to 1966, and the State Board of Equalization (BOE) maintains records of officially recorded boundary changes since 1948. Over this time frame, LAFCo and BOE records indicate there have been 11 modifications to the City’s boundaries—all of which were annexations. Three of the annexations (Reed Territory, Dayton Property and Joy Property) were not recorded by the Board of Equalization, and therefore the City and LAFCo should work together to determine whether these annexations were satisfactorily completed and submitted for recording by the State and ensure that the City’s Tax Rate Area is consistent with BOE records. Refer to Figure 4-1 for list of the boundary changes.

**Figure 4-1: City of Portola Boundary History**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Source</i>
Holsinger	Annexation	1979	LAFCo, BOE
Lake Davis Road	Annexation	1983	LAFCo, BOE
North Area, Lake Davis Road	Annexation	1984	LAFCo, BOE
Reed Territory	Annexation	1984	LAFCo
Joy Way	Annexation	1984	LAFCo, BOE
Francisco Territory	Annexation	1995	LAFCo, BOE
Portola 192	Annexation	1999	LAFCo, BOE
North Joy Way	Annexation	2003	LAFCo, BOE
Teanna Ranch	Annexation	2003	LAFCo, BOE
Dayton Property	Annexation	2007	LAFCo
Joy Property	Annexation	2008	LAFCo

*Sphere of Influence*

The City’s SOI is presently ten square miles or 6,438 acres, which is approximately twice the area within the City’s boundary. The SOI encompasses the City’s boundaries in their entirety and extends beyond the boundaries to the east and west.

The SOI was first adopted in 1982 and last updated in 2003.<sup>10</sup> During the 2003 update, the SOI was amended by LAFCo to indicate the anticipated five-year annexable area of the City.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> LAFCo Resolution 2003-09.

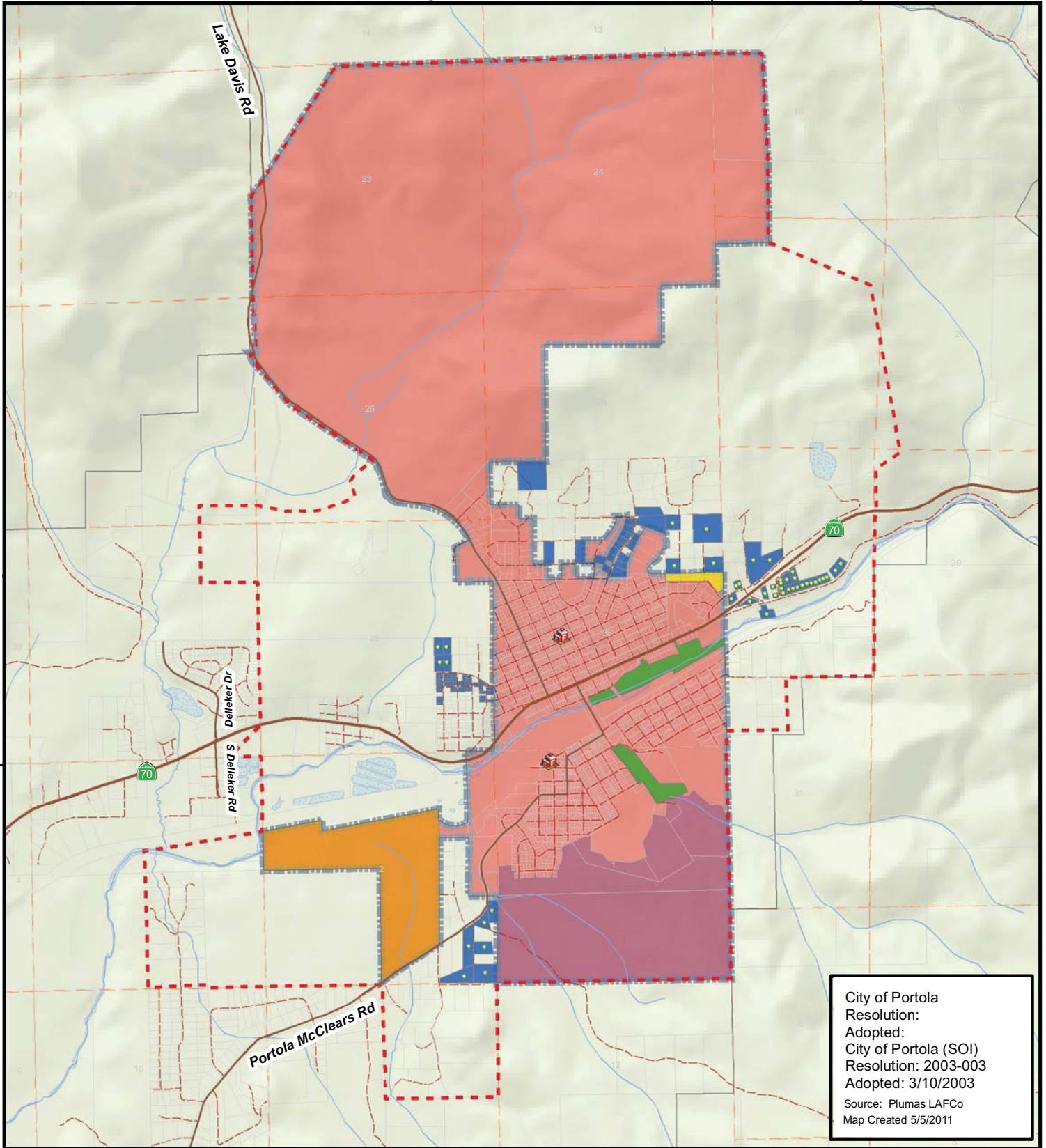
<sup>11</sup> Plumas LAFCo, City of Portola MSR 2003-2008, p. 3.

Range 13 East

Range 14 East

Township 23 North

Township 22 North



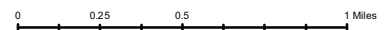
City of Portola  
 Resolution:  
 Adopted:  
 City of Portola (SOI)  
 Resolution: 2003-003  
 Adopted: 3/10/2003  
 Source: Plumas LAFCo  
 Map Created 5/5/2011

**Legend**

- Major Roads
- CA State Highway
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- City of Portola
- Water Service Outside of City Limits
- Sewer Served Outside City Limits

- City of Portola Parks
- City of Portola (SOI)
- Fire Stations
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)

- Portola Planned Developments**
- Mountain View Estates
  - Portola 192
  - Woodbridge



### Extra-territorial Services

The City provides services outside of its boundaries to the Gold Mountain CSD for fire suppression services and 113 water and sewer connections.

The City began providing contract service to Gold Mountain CSD in 1996. The contract services include fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, and hazardous materials response. Gold Mountain CSD pays the greater of \$25,000 or an amount equal to the average fire suppression cost per parcel multiplied by the total number of parcels in Gold Mountain annually to the City for these services. In FY 10-11, GMCSO anticipates paying approximately \$26,384 for these services. These services were previously approved by LAFCo through out-of-area service agreements (OASA). LAFCo's approval of the OASA for service to Gold Mountain CSD expired in 2010, and was not renewed, as a contract between public agencies is exempt from the requirement for LAFCo authorization under Section 56133 (e). The current agreement that both agencies have agreed to will expire on June 30, 2013. There are about 80 active structures in GMCSO's boundaries. Complete build-out of the area will include approximately 401 residential units, 25 time share parcels, 20 commercial units, the clubhouse, and 13 miscellaneous contingencies. GMCSO also has an 18 hole golf course, including water hazards. The Gold Mountain CSD is neither adjacent to the City boundary nor in the City's adopted Sphere of Influence. Gold Mountain is located approximately 2.5 miles southwest of Portola within Eastern Plumas Rural FPD's SOI. Eastern Plumas Rural FPD objects to the City providing these contract services, as EPRFPD has a station in closer proximity to GMCSO.

The City provides water services to 113 water connections, 68 of which are also sewer connections, just outside of the city limits.<sup>12</sup> These connections are located along Sagebrush Street, Otter Way, Plumas Avenue, Richard Avenue, Rocky Point Road, and Portola McLearys Road (County Road A 15). These connections began receiving services from the City between 1994 and 1999, according to LAFCo records. LAFCo records show that LAFCo approved eight of these extraterritorial connections. These areas are indicated on Figure 4-2. When the City approved services to these properties, the landowners were required to agree to annexation, should the City decide to start annexation procedures.

Additionally, the City receives pumped septage from Plumas Sanitation Company, from private septic systems outside the city limits.

### Areas of Interest

The Portola Planning Commission has identified several areas outside of the City limits and SOI as areas of mutual interest for Portola and Plumas County. The communities include Lake Davis to the north, Grizzly Ranch to the east, Iron Horse and Gold Mountain to the south, and Delleker to the west. The City reports that these areas impact the City and

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<sup>12</sup> APNs 125-460-008, 125-360-010, 125-118-006, 125-040-048, 125-460-001, 125-040-047, 125-080-036, 126-270-012

City services, particularly related to fire, safety, traffic, aesthetics, and the environment.<sup>13</sup> The City contends that it may not be appropriate to include these areas within the City's SOI, but that some form of cooperative planning may be a valuable approach for areas with development potential at a city/county boundary. The City has produced a white paper regarding options for joint planning in these areas of mutual interest and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

The Portola and Plumas County Planning Commissions have begun discussions to develop a joint planning area. In December 2010, the Portola Planning Commission was tasked with representing the areas in question on a map. These areas are shown on Figure 4-2 in the Background Section. As of the drafting of this report, Portola had not received feedback from the Plumas Planning Commission on the proposed joint planning areas. Plumas County is in the process of updating its General Plan. The County reported that a policy to promote joint planning will likely be incorporated into the General Plan Update; however, development of a joint planning area and process will be a long-term endeavor.<sup>14</sup>

A governance structure option that may afford the City the planning involvement it desires may be designating the area an Area of Concern. The Plumas LAFCo Policies, Standards and Procedures define an Area of Concern as a geographic area beyond the Sphere of Influence in which land use decisions or other governmental actions of one local agency impact directly or indirectly upon another local agency. Plumas LAFCo may designate, in its discretion, a geographic area beyond the Sphere of Influence as an Area of Concern to any local agency. LAFCo will notify any Concerned Agency when the Commission receives notice of a proposal of another agency in the Area of Concern to the Concerned Agency, and will give great weight to its comments. If requested, Plumas LAFCo will seek to obtain a Joint Powers Agreement or other commitment between the agencies so that the Acting Agency provides advance notice to the Concerned Agency of any actions, or projects being considered within the area of concern, and commits to considering any comments made by the Concerned Agency.<sup>15</sup>

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## Accountability and Governance

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The Portola City Council is composed of five Council members elected to staggered four-year terms. There is an election each November of even numbered years with either two or three seats up for election. In cases where a Councilmember is unable to complete a term the Council can appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of the term. The most recent contested election for a council member seat was held in 2010. Council members and their respective terms are listed in Figure 4-3. The Council selects a Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem from among its members to serve year-long terms. The mayor presides over the Council meetings.

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<sup>13</sup> Karen Downs, City of Portola Planner, Letter to the Plumas County Planning Commission, January 19, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Rebecca Herrin, Plumas County Planner, March 3, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Plumas LAFCo, Policies, Standards and Procedures, Section III Part 6, p. 19.

Meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Council meetings begin at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chamber, 35 Third Avenue. All City Council meetings are conducted in compliance with the Brown Act, affording the public the opportunity to participate in and observe the conduct of all business for the City. Meetings are televised on New Day Broadband Channel 37.

**Figure 4-3: City of Portola Governing Body**

<b>City of Portola</b>				
<b><i>District Contact Information</i></b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Administrative Assistant to the City Manager			
<b>Address:</b>	35 Third Avenue, Portola, CA 96122			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-832-4216			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:l.tigan@ci.portola.ca.us">l.tigan@ci.portola.ca.us</a>			
<b><i>Board of Directors</i></b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Dan Wilson	Mayor	November 2012	Elected	4 years
Juliana Mark	Mayor Pro Tem	November 2014	Elected	4 years
William Weaver	Council Member	November 2012	Elected	4 years
Curt McBride	Council Member	November 2014	Elected	4 years
John Larrieu	Council Member	November 2012	Elected	4 years
<b><i>Meetings</i></b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7 pm.			
<b>Location:</b>	City Hall			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Agendas are available on the City's website and are posted outside of City Hall.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Minutes are available on the City's website.			

In addition to the legally required agendas and minutes, other constituent outreach efforts by the City include a website where contact information, documents, and other pertinent information are made available. Informational notices are posted in the weekly newspaper and information is disseminated through the Portola Library and the post office, as well as posted on the city hall and post office bulletin boards.

With regard to customer satisfaction, complaints can be submitted in writing, in person, or on the telephone to the city manager. The city manager logs and tracks all complaints to ensure proper resolution of the issue, with the exception of those complaints regarding the city manager, which are handled directly by the City Council. If a constituent is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint, a formal complaint may be submitted at a city council meeting. Complaints are generally regarding blocking of vehicles, in driveways or on streets, after snow plowing. In 2010, the City reported that there were four formal complaints submitted.

The City demonstrated full accountability and disclosure during the MSR process by responding to questionnaire and interview requests and providing all necessary documentation.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The City of Portola has an elected council, appointed mayor form of local government that relies on paid professional staff to conduct the daily business and operations of the City. The City currently employs 11 full-time employees, and several part-time and seasonal employees to conduct the various functions and duties of city government, as well as a volunteer fire chief and 16 volunteer fire fighters. In order to cut costs on par with declining revenues, the FY 10-11 budget leaves 1.5 FTE authorized positions vacant—a community service officer position and a building inspector position. The City also relies on contractors and volunteers to provide services to the City residents. The City contracts with the following individuals or agencies for these services:

- ❖ Legal Services: City Attorney Steve Gross, a partner of Porter Simon, located in Truckee provides legal support to the City Council, City Manager and all departments in matters of law relating to the operation of the City.
- ❖ Engineering: Dan Bastian, of Bastian Engineering in Graeagle provides contract engineering services for the City.
- ❖ Financial: Susan Scarlett, located in Quincy, provides for management of the City's funds.

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council to operate the day-to-day functions of the City and to implement policy as directed by the City Council. The City Manager, Planning Commission, City Attorney, City Clerk and City Treasurer all report to the City Council. The Fire Chief, Community Services Officer, Administrative Services Manager, Public Works Building Manager, Planner, Animal Control personnel, Finance Officer and City Engineer all report to the City Manager. All other employees report to the department heads.

The overall management efficiency of the City in providing service to the residents and property owners is best reflected in the distribution of resources in the annual operating budget, and the willingness of the part of the City Council to maintain the staffing level in response to constituent demands. By relying on contractors, volunteers and part-time positions, the City has been able to minimize the long-term cost of salaries and benefits, especially in areas that do not require a full-time employee due to low service demand.

City staff are generally evaluated whenever they are due for a wage step increase. Evaluations are completed by the employees' immediate supervisor. Employee workload is monitored through timesheets. Specific tasks are tracked through logs at the water and wastewater treatment plants. Timesheets are used to evaluate whether budgeted amounts are appropriate for the time spent on a particular project or service.

The City reported that overall city performance was evaluated during the budget process. The City uses the annual budget process to evaluate if current programs should be continued, and if new service programs and functions can be initiated. The City does not perform any kind of benchmarking with similar service providers.

The City’s central planning document is its General Plan. The General Plan was last updated in 2000 with a planning horizon of 2020 and includes elements on housing, land use, community design, circulation, economic development, public services and facilities, safety, conservation and open space, noise, and air quality. The City is in the process of updating the General Plan. An updated housing element was adopted in 2010 with a planning horizon of 2014. Other City planning documents include Master Plans for water, wastewater and park and recreation services.

The City’s financial planning documents include annually adopted budgets and annual audits. The City provided a copy of its audited financial statement for FY 08-09 and 09-10 to LAFCo. In addition, the City is in the process of completing a rate study for water and wastewater services. The study was completed in March 2011. The City does not produce a separate capital improvement plan.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

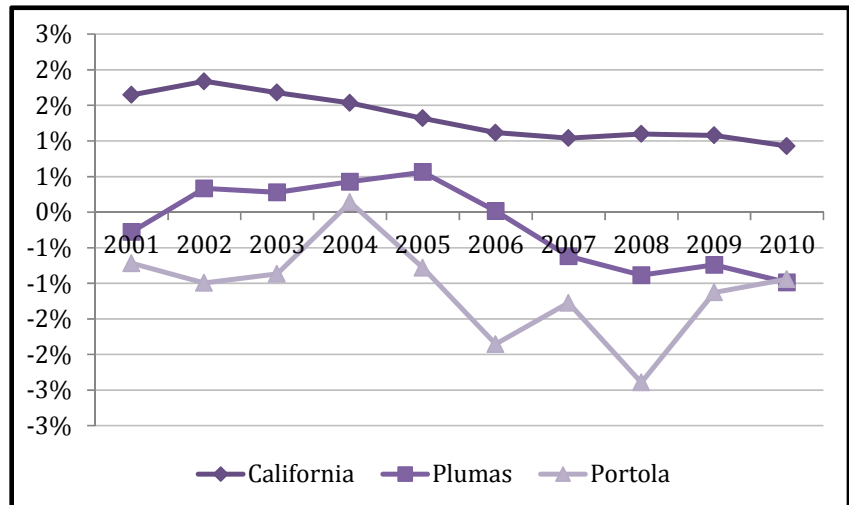
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Existing land uses within the city limits are primarily residential and retail services. The regional services and highway commercial uses are concentrated along SR 70. Businesses serve both the local population and the regional traffic drawn by recreation opportunities. The commercial strip includes regional services such as banking, restaurants and automobile services. South of the river, the Old Town commercial area along Commercial Street provides small scale, local services and retail. The primary institutional uses are clustered along Gulling Street. These include a hospital, City Hall, a library, City Park, a Sheriff substation, a post office, schools, and a courthouse.

### Population

**Figure 4-4: City of Portola Population Growth (2000-2010)**

Historically, the population in Portola has had periods of growth and other periods of decline. The population grew from 1910 to 1950, but declined from 1950 through 1970. Minimal growth was seen from 1970 through 2000, but did not recover to the 1950 level. The City experienced another decline in population between 2000 and 2010 with negative annual growth rates of between zero and two percent, as shown in Figure 4-4. As of January 1, 2010, the City had a population of 1,997, according to the DOF.





### Existing Demand

Periods of peak demand for municipal services depend on the service in question and the season. As the region enjoys a high level of recreation-oriented tourism, demand for public safety services area highest during the peak tourism season in the summer when people migrate to their vacation and retirement homes in the region. Conversely, during the winter, the City's snow removal services are in demand.

The City reported that in general the demand for municipal services has not changed over the last decade, as a result of the declining population.

### Projected Growth and Development

The City of Portola General Plan from 2000 discusses anticipated population growth in the Land Use Element. (There are no revised population projections in the updated version of the General Plan.) No specific predictions of future growth are made, although three possible growth scenarios are demonstrated. The General Plan demonstrates potential scenarios using two, three and five percent annual growth rates. The General Plan asserts that the basis for the uncertainty in the growth projections is that the cumulative effect of these factors is difficult to predict with such a small current population. A relatively small increase in population in the City of Portola has the potential to translate to a relatively high growth rate on a percentage basis. Since the General Plan provides no actual predictions for future growth in Portola, and prior growth rates have always been less than two percent, it is a challenge to predict growth over the next 10 to 20 years. The City's Water Master Plan from 2007 prepares for an aggressive growth pattern of five percent annual growth over the next 15 years, since the City anticipates a strong potential for significant development in the near future. The General Plan discusses the fact that population growth in Portola is likely to come from three primary sources described as follows:

(1) Population growth in California and northern Nevada will generate a spill over effect as people seek to relocate to small communities from increasing development in more urban areas.

(2) An aging population will generate an increase in retirees seeking small communities for second homes or a permanent retirement home.

(3) Economic development will generate new job growth in service and tourism industries, and growth in small businesses whose leaders can choose a location based primarily on quality of life considerations.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) and the Plumas County Transportation Commission both make countywide population projections, but no projections specific to Portola. According to the Plumas County Transportation Commission, Plumas County has experienced slow growth (population increases at less than 0.1 percent per year on the long-term average) in population and employment over the past two decades and is forecast to continue this trend through 2030. The Regional Transportation Plan projects an annual growth rate of 0.06 percent countywide through 2030.

The DOF projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent until 2020.

While the City's historical growth rates and countywide growth rate projections indicate minimal growth in the future, there are three planned developments within the city limits, which have the potential to add an additional 1,220 dwelling units to the City, or approximately 2,440 additional residents. This would be an increase over the 2010 city population of 122 percent. The Portola 192 development, comprised of 200 dwellings on 192 acres, is located in the very western part of the City of Portola. The final map for Portola 192 has been approved; however, the development is presently on hold until the economy recovers. The Woodbridge development consists of 1,005 dwelling units on 398 acres and extends from the Portola High School in the north to the southern boundary of the city. The City has approved a tentative map for the Woodbridge development and is working with the developer on final conditions. Mountain View Estates is an eight-acre development with 14 planned dwelling units. A tentative map for the subdivision was approved in 2008, but no progress toward a final map has been made since then.

While there are presently no plans for development of the Teanna Ranch territory, the area has the potential for significant growth after the Williamson Act contract on the land expires in 2019.

While the City generally has the capacity to provide adequate services to the existing level of demand, it is anticipated that if these planned developments come to fruition and build-out, the City will require significant facility capacity enhancements and additional staffing to meet dramatically increased demand. Given the amount of growth potential in the City based on planned developments, the City will need to plan for significant growth to meet future demand levels and meet urban service level expectations.

### Growth Strategies

Portola's existing planning area is larger than its SOI. The City's present land use designations extend beyond its SOI to the east and west along SR 70. The planning area in the City's General Plan update, which is currently being processed, is the same as the defined area in the General Plan from 2000.

The primary guiding goals for land use and development in the City of Portola are outlined in the Community Design Element of the 2000 General Plan. The Community Design Element defines the characteristics of the land use and provides guidelines and standards for development with the primary goal of developing a built environment that is compatible with the natural amenities. The fundamental goal for the Community Design Element is to encourage development that is 1) economically and environmentally sustainable; relates well to the natural setting; 2) sustainable because it is well constructed of durable, quality materials appropriate to the setting, and 3) offers memorable buildings and spaces. Specific standards include limiting removal of trees to construct a building and limiting modifications to the natural land form and natural flow of water through grading. The City hopes that compliance with these fundamentals will inherently protect the natural

character of the community. The companion priority is to develop the community in a manner that is compatible with and protective of the natural surroundings.

With regard to specific growth plans, the City did not propose any SOI expansion areas, but as mentioned in the Background Section, the City reported that it would like to be involved in joint planning with the County for areas such as Delleker where growth will affect the City and the services it provides, but which are not within its SOI. The City listed the following as reasons behind the need for joint planning:<sup>16</sup>

- ❖ The type and scale of development in Delleker could drain economic vitality from Portola’s unique downtown and the region as a whole, to the shared disadvantage of the City and County.
- ❖ The absence of a clearly defined, well thought out, border between rural and more “urbanized” development (at a scale appropriate for the setting) could damage the natural assets and other special characteristics of this unique location and its importance to local residents and visitors.
- ❖ Service provision that is not well coordinated by all relevant parties is likely to be inefficient and not cost effective. Infrastructure expansions should be considered in a shared vision of what the City and County see as the future for the area.

The City identified water and wastewater capacity as the most significant constraints to growth. The existing water supply and delivery system is adequate only for the existing community. Land use development anticipated in the Land Use Element will require an increase in the water supply and the expansion and upgrading of the water storage and distribution system.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, the wastewater system is adequate for the existing community, but expansion of the collection system will be needed to accommodate the development anticipated in the Land Use Element. In addition, improvements are required to make full use of the treatment plant. In addition to capital needs to extend services to new subdivisions, some older areas of the city were never fully developed and lack basic sewer, water, drainage and streets. Full development of the city will require extending the basic infrastructure to these “in-fill” areas. The City compiled Water and Wastewater Master Plans in 2007 and has adopted development impact fees for water and sewer services to address capital improvement needs for the growth of the community.

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## Financing

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The City reported that while financing levels were generally adequate to provide services, there had been a decline in revenues which had forced the City to find ways to trim expenditures, such as not filling 1.5 FTE authorized positions (a community service officer position and a building inspector position). Because of these cutbacks, the City has

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<sup>16</sup> City of Portola, Options for Cooperative Planning for the Delleker Area - Draft, March 2010, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> City of Portola, General Plan, 2000, p. 6-6.

considered sharing a building inspector with the County to reduce costs. In addition, capital projects in the past have generally been funded through interest income on investments; however, in the past two years interest earnings have fell to 0.5 percent. Consequently, project expenditures in recent years have started to exceed the City's interest income. Key fiscal challenges are a decline in sales tax revenues, a decline in assessed property values and a recent decrease in development activity and related fees.

The City tracks its financial activities separately through various funds. The general fund is the City's main operating fund. Other major governmental funds include special revenue funds such as gas taxes, which may only be used for certain services. Wastewater, water and solid waste finances are tracked through enterprise funds. Portola finances its general government, police, fire, parks and recreation, public works, and planning/community development operations primarily with vehicle license fees, sales taxes and property taxes. The City finances its street needs with gas tax and general revenue. The City finances its water and sewer operations with utility rates, and its water and sewer capital improvements primarily with connection fees and development impact fees and secondarily with rates.

**Figure 4-5: City of Portola General Fund Revenues & Expenditures (FYs 09-11)**

<i>Income/Expenses</i>	<i>FY 09-10 Budgeted</i>		<i>FY 09-10 Actual</i>		<i>FY 10-11 Budgeted</i>	
<b>Revenues</b>						
Taxes	\$554,500	38%	\$492,482	36%	\$510,600	53%
Licenses and permits	\$84,000	6%	\$67,153	5%	\$49,200	5%
Fines, forfeitures and penalties	\$2,000	0%	\$3,648	0%	\$2,000	0%
Use of money and property	\$52,000	4%	\$23,388	2%	\$22,000	2%
Intergovernmental	\$714,252	49%	\$723,482	52%	\$301,000	31%
Charges for services	\$52,100	4%	\$69,126	5%	\$72,384	8%
Other revenue	\$0	0%	\$1,801	0%	\$0	0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,458,852</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$1,381,080</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$957,184</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
General Government	\$328,779	21%	\$324,240	20%	\$336,544	40%
Planning and Community Development	\$292,984	18%	\$291,310	18%	\$117,675	14%
Public Safety	\$311,794	20%	\$303,586	19%	\$220,827	26%
Public Works	\$103,439	6%	\$103,473	7%	\$79,282	9%
Parks and Recreation	\$533,002	33%	\$537,493	34%	\$67,168	8%
Debt Service	\$26,089	2%	\$26,089	2%	\$26,089	3%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,596,087</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$1,586,191</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$847,585</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-\$137,235</b>		<b>-\$205,111</b>		<b>\$109,599</b>	

The primary revenue sources for the City's general fund in FY 09-10 were property taxes (21 percent), sales tax (17 percent) and vehicle in-lieu fees (14 percent). With regard to the water and wastewater enterprise funds, rates comprised 81 and 99 percent of the revenue sources for each fund, respectively.

The City charges an assessment on each lot based on the level of risk associated with the property use to finance fire services through the general fund. A single family residential unit is assessed \$12.51 annually and a commercial unit is assessed \$18.77 annually. The assessment was approved by voters in 1984. The assessment does not

adjust annually based on inflation. Approximately \$20,000 was collected in FY 09-10 through the assessment.

**Figure 4-6: City of Portola General Fund Expenditures (FY 09-10)**

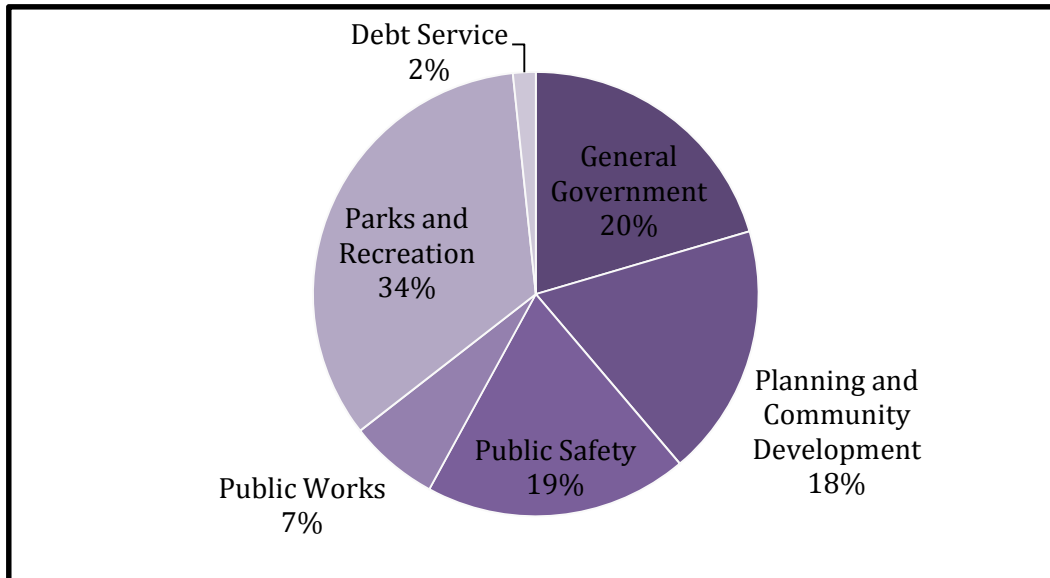


Figure 4-6 shows the City's expenditures in FY 09-10 from the general fund, and the portion attributed to significant expenses. General government (20 percent), planning and community development (18 percent), public safety (19 percent), and parks and recreation (34 percent) constituted a majority of the City's general fund expenditures.

The City does not have a citywide CIP, but has outlined infrastructure needs in its water, wastewater and parks and recreation master plans. Capital planning is also completed annually in the budget. The City reported that it generally finances capital improvements, other than water and wastewater related capital investments, with interest earnings and occasional grants. However, recently due to the decline in interest earnings, the City has had to dip into its reserve fund. The City does not presently have a sinking fund for repaying or purchasing outstanding loans and securities held against the City for water and wastewater services. The City planned to finance this through a Proposition 218 voting process in May 2011; however, due to public dissent, the City is searching for other alternatives.

As of June 30, 2010, the City had long-term outstanding debt of approximately \$1.5 million, of which two percent was a capital lease obligation for a fire truck to be paid off by the end of FY 10-11, 78 percent was related to water services (two notes payable for system improvements and an emergency drought relief note), 14 percent was attributed to sewer system improvements, and six percent was a note payable on a landfill closure.

At the end of FY 09-10, the City had an unreserved undesignated fund balance of \$3.23 million for the governmental funds, \$0.95 million in the water utility fund, approximately \$49,400 in the wastewater utility fund, and a negative balance of \$2.04 million in the solid waste fund due to liability for the closure of the City's landfill in 2005. The City maintains an emergency fund that had a balance of \$200,000 at the end of FY 09-10. The emergency

reserve, or reserve for economic uncertainty, is to be used to pay the cost of provide City services during poor economic times or in times when the cost of services rises dramatically. Based on the undesignated fund balance and the emergency reserve fund balance, the City maintains approximately 2 years of operating costs for the City based on expenses in FY 09-10.

The City maintains an investment in the State of California Local Agency Investment Fund, which is an investment pool consisting of funds held by the State and other participating agencies. The City also participates in joint powers agreements related to liability coverage through the Small Cities Organized Risk Effort and California Joint Powers Risk Management Authority.

## WASTEWATER SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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The City owns and operates the wastewater collection and treatment system that serves the City. All services are provided directly by city staff. There are two FTEs dedicated to wastewater services. As of 2011, the City provides sewer services to 1,005 connections.

Wastewater services are provided within the City's limits and to 68 connections just outside of the City's boundaries. Within the City's limits, Teanna Ranch is the only area where wastewater services are not available. There are no other lots that are unserved and rely on septic systems within the city limits. Additionally, the City receives pumped septage from Plumas Sanitation Company, from private septic systems outside the city limits.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The existing collection system is comprised of 15.8 miles of six to 15-inch diameter lines of varying materials. The sewage collection system includes a Northside Pumping Station and a Southside Pumping Station, both of which were constructed in the late 1940's. Prior to improvements completed in 1997 and 1999, leaky sewer mains and laterals contributed to significant inflow and infiltration during the wet weather season. Improvements to the pumping stations and the treatment plant were completed in the late 1990's as part of a State Revolving Loan Fund Project. These improvements addressed fundamental causes of past sewage surcharges by substantial reconstruction of the Northside and Southside pumping stations, as well as replacement of asbestos cement and clay lines to PVC pipes and enlargement of mains throughout the system. The collection system is generally considered in good condition by the City.

Sewage is collected and conveyed to the wastewater treatment plant where treatment consists of aeration and settling ponds. The ponds provide secondary treatment in a total of 17.3 acres. The last step of sewage treatment is the chlorination/dechlorination of pond discharge prior to flow into the 5.8-acre foot storage pond. Treated and disinfected effluent is discharged from the storage pond to 1.4 acres of constructed wetland adjacent to the Feather River. The City operates under an NPDES permit and Waste Discharge Requirements from 2009 (set to expire in 2014), which restricts surface water discharges to the river during the period from November 1st to April 31<sup>st</sup> and when river flows exceed 40 cfs. From May 1 to October 31, the storage pond is used for storage and disposal (through evaporation and percolation) and flow to the wetland is prevented, in accordance with the permit.

The treatment plant has permitted capacity to process a monthly average dry weather flow of 0.50 mgd. The permitted peak wet weather flow capacity is 0.74 mgd and the design capacity is 0.75 mgd. The ADWF in 2010 was 0.2 mgd or 40 percent of the City's

permitted capacity. While ADWF is well within the City's permitted capacity, PWWFs have on occasion exceeded the treatment system's permitted wet weather flow due to significant I/I. In 2010, the City's PWWF was almost double its permitted PWWF capacity.

At the average usage rate of 275 gallons per day per dwelling unit equivalent, the wastewater treatment plant has the capacity to serve a total of 1,818 dwelling unit equivalents, approximately double the current demand for wastewater treatment in the city. Assuming an aggressive annual growth rate of five percent, the existing system should have the capacity to serve growth in demand through 2028, based on the author's estimates.

The City estimates that there will be approximately 2,965 edu (6,368 residents) served by the City's wastewater system by year 2027 with an ADDWF wastewater production of approximately 0.644 mgd. At build-out, it is estimated that there will be 5,723 edu contributing to the City's wastewater collection system with a daily flow of 1.24 mgd.<sup>18</sup>

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## Infrastructure Needs

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Sewer collection and treatment systems in Portola have been constructed piece meal over a period of decades. The two issues that are currently threatening the wastewater system are: a) inflow and infiltration, and b) significantly diminished treatment pond capacity from sludge buildup and lack of regular maintenance.

Serious infiltration problems and inadequate treatment resulted in upgrading the collection system and improvements to the treatment plant during the 1990's. However, the system still suffers from a high peak wet weather flow which is mostly attributed to excessive inflow to the southern collection system during rain events.<sup>19</sup> Flows going through the southern lift station during storm events can reach flows almost nine times higher than average daily dry weather flows. These I/I rates need to be reduced to levels closer to those of the northern collection system (around three times regular flow) for rational planning of future infrastructure. The Wastewater Master Plan recommends a full I/I analysis be undertaken in the southern arms of the collection system including smoke testing and flow metering within suspect branches at the City's earliest opportunity in order to identify and prioritize necessary improvements to greatly reduce wet weather flows. The City has begun implementing this recommendation by smoke testing approximately 25 percent of the entire collection system annually. The City reported that it had experienced a little improvement in the system's I/I rate in the last few years.<sup>20</sup>

Though there is more than adequate dry weather capacity for the existing and currently planned developments of Portola, wet weather flows are already exceeding pump

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<sup>18</sup> City of Portola, *Wastewater Master Plan*, 2007, p. v.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 3-2.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Todd Roberts, City of Portola Public Works Director, March, 14, 2011.



capacities in the southern lift station during heavy rains. Additionally, two critical sewer sections were identified. In the south, the line from MH4A to the lift station has some critically shallow slopes that could surcharge under extremely high flows. In the north, MH85 to MH75 showed similar limitations due to pipe sizing. Upgrades to these two sections are recommended by 2017.<sup>21</sup>

The City has addressed the treatment pond infrastructure needs that were identified in the Wastewater Master Plan, which included sludge removal and monitoring and reestablishment of the 1.2-acre pond as the primary treatment unit. Sludge removal is no longer considered a deficiency and is now more of a regular operational component that is addressed on a regular basis. The City has hired an engineering firm to complete an analysis of the entire treatment system to identify ways in which performance and operations efficiencies can be improved. The firm is in the data collection portion of the project, which is anticipated to be completed sometime in 2011. Options that are being analyzed as part of the project include rock filtration for pH control, spray irrigation to reduce discharge to the river, and onsite bio-solids spreading.<sup>22</sup> There were no cost estimates for these projects as of the drafting of this report.

With regard to infrastructure needs related to future growth, the City's Wastewater Master Plan outlines specific capital improvement needs for the collection system, lift stations, and treatment facilities through 2027 based on the location and degree of anticipated development and subsequent increase in demand. These improvements are estimated to cost approximately \$1.95 million, all of which will be eligible for financing through facility fees. While the plan gives estimated timing for the improvements, scheduling for the projects will depend on the rate of growth in the City. Highlighted potential improvements to the wastewater system include:

- ❖ Expansion of the two existing lift stations and construction of an additional lift station.
- ❖ Revisions to NPDES permit to change the volume and time period in which discharges may be made to the river.
- ❖ Improvements to the system will be required to improve biological performance sometime before 2017. Expansion of the emergency pond is proposed at this time although other alternatives will be considered.
- ❖ Expansion of the chlorine contact basin will be required within the next couple of years to allow for higher flow rates to be discharged to Pond 6. Eventual expansion of the chlorine contact chamber or switching to UV disinfection could improve the disinfection process, providing more flexibility in the disposal options available.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 4-9.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Karen Nelson, City of Portola Contract Project Engineer, March 14, 2011.

Assuming no other limiting factors, the allowable river discharge combined with the evaporation and percolation inherent to a pond treatment system suggests that under the current permit limits, the Wastewater Treatment Plan reports that the plant may be able to operate without significant change until about the year 2017. As flows approach this limit, it is likely that permit modifications would allow for increased flow to the river during winter months as long as adequate treatment is achievable and background flows in the river provide for sufficient dilution.<sup>23</sup>

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## Challenges

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The City reports that it has had particular challenges in meeting required pH levels in the treatment ponds in the spring, as a result of algae blooms which drive up the pH. The City has been issued an Administrative Liability Order by RWQCB as result of pH levels in excess of permitted effluent requirements. In order to address this issue, the City can inhibit algae growth or lower discharges to surface water. Options identified thus far by a contract engineering firm include rock filtration and on-site reclamation improvements. The City will submit a plan for the proposed installation of spray irrigation facilities to the RWQCB in April 2011 and plans to begin implementation in summer 2011. The plans for rock filtration will be addressed as part of the Best Practical Treatment and Control report that is planned to be completed at the end of 2011. If approved by the RWQCB, rock filtration would be installed sometime in 2012 or 2013.<sup>24</sup>

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## Service Adequacy

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This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including regulatory compliance, treatment effectiveness, sewer overflows and collection system integrity.

The City has been issued two Administrative Civil Liability Orders between 2005 and 2010, and 33 recorded violations during the same time frame. In 2008, the City was fined \$15,000 for exceeding coliform levels in treated effluent on eight occasions in 2005. The City made improvements to its system in order to address the effluent coliform violations, so the penalty was waived. Also in 2008, the City was issued another Civil Liability Order and fined \$63,000 for violating effluent pH limitations on 24 occasions in 2004. In lieu of paying the fine, the City requested to complete a Compliance Project. The RWQCB waived the fine on the condition that the City conduct a full-scale pilot study to evaluate potential solutions to the pH issue. The City is in the process of completing this study, which is planned to be completed by the end of 2011. Of the City's 33 recorded violations, none were considered priority violations. Thirty-three violations equates to approximately 16 violations per 1,000 population served. By comparison, other wastewater providers in the eastern region of the County had a median of 38 violations per 1,000 population served.

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<sup>23</sup> City of Portola, Wastewater Master Plan, 2007, p. 6-5.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Karen Nelson, City of Portola Contract Project Engineer, March 14, 2011.

**Figure 4-7: City of Portola Wastewater Service Adequacy Indicators**

<b>Wastewater Service Adequacy and Efficiency</b>			
<b>Regulatory Compliance Record, 2005-10</b>			
Formal Enforcement Actions	1	Informal Enforcement Actions	15
<b>Formal Enforcement Action Type</b>		<b>Description of Violations</b>	
Administrative Civil Liability Order	3/17/2008	Order conditions (1), other effluent violation (11)	
Administrative Civil Liability Order	12/9/2008	Other effluent violation (24)	
<b>Total Violations, 2005-10</b>			
Total Violations	33	Priority Violations	0
<b>Service Adequacy Indicators</b>			
Treatment Effectiveness Rate <sup>2</sup>	89%	Sewer Overflows 2009 - 2010 <sup>3</sup>	0
Total Employees (FTEs)	2	Sewer Overflow Rate <sup>4</sup>	0
MGD Treated per FTE	0.13	Customer Complaints CY 10: Odor (2), spills (0), other (0)	
<b>Source Control and Pollution Prevention Practices</b>			
Through the City's building code, grease traps are required in all commercial connections. There are no industrial connections that are considered high-pollutant dischargers.			
<b>Collection System Inspection Practices</b>			
The City smoke tests approximately 25 percent of the system annually. In addition, the entire system is flushed and visually inspected annually.			
Notes:			
(1) Order or Code Violations include sanitary sewer overflow violations.			
(2) Total number of compliance days in 2010 per 365 days.			
(3) Total number of overflows experienced (excluding those caused by customers) from 2008 to 2010 as reported by the agency.			
(4) Sewer overflows from 2009 to 2010 (excluding those caused by customers) per 100 miles of collection piping.			
(5) Agency policy, guidelines or goals for response time between service call and clearing the blockage.			

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. The City reported that in 2010, it was out of compliance with effluent quality requirements for total suspended solids during the months of March, April and December, or a total of 39 days. Other wastewater providers in the eastern region of Plumas County were out of compliance on average nine days in 2010.

Wastewater agencies are required to report sewer system overflows (SSOs) to SWRCB. Overflows reflect the capacity and condition of collection system piping and the effectiveness of routine maintenance. The sewer overflow rate is calculated as the number of overflows per 100 miles of collection piping. The City reported no overflows during the period from 2008 thru 2010, and consequently the overflow rate is zero. Other providers in the region averaged an SSO rate of 3.8 per 100 miles of collection piping.

There are several measures of integrity of the wastewater collection system, including peaking factors, efforts to address infiltration and inflow (I/I), and inspection practices. As discussed previously, the City has a high peaking factor of 7.4 resulting from significant I/I. Other wastewater providers in the region have an average peaking factor of 4.3. In order to address the I/I, the City has initiated a regular smoke testing program, and has identified some mains in need of replacement.

**Figure 4-8: City of Portola Wastewater Profile**

<b>Wastewater Service Configuration and Demand</b>				
<b><i>Service Configuration</i></b>				
<b>Service Type</b>	<b>Service Provider(s)</b>			
Wastewater Collection	City			
Wastewater Treatment	City			
Wastewater Disposal	City			
Recycled Water	City (for use on a constructed wetland)			
<b><i>Service Area</i></b>				
Collection:	City boundaries and 68 extra-territorial connections			
Treatment:	City boundaries and 68 extra-territorial connections			
Recycled Water:	Constructed wetland adjacent to the river			
<b><i>Service Demand</i></b>				
<b>Type</b>	<b>Connections (2010) Total</b>	<b>Inside Bounds</b>	<b>Outside Bounds</b>	<b>Flow (mgd) Average</b>
Total	1,005	937	68	0.26
Residential	890	822	68	0.19
Commercial	115	115	0	0.05
Industrial	0	0	0	0
<b><i>Historical and Projected Demand (ADWF in millions of gallons per day) <sup>2</sup></i></b>				
<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>
0.24	0.20	0.26	0.33	0.42
Note:				
(1) NA: Not Applicable; NP: Not Provided.				
(2) Projections are based on the five percent annual average growth rate assumed in the City's Wastewater Master Plan and actual flows from 2010.				

**continued**

<b>Wastewater Infrastructure</b>			
<b>Wastewater Collection, Treatment &amp; Disposal Infrastructure</b>			
<b><i>System Overview</i></b>			
Treatment level: Secondary Disposal method: Stored in a storage pond and discharged to 1.8 acres of constructed wetland adjacent to the river from November 1st to August 15th.			
<b><i>Facility Name</i></b>	<b><i>Capacity</i></b>	<b><i>Condition</i></b>	<b><i>Year Built</i></b>
Portola WWTP	0.5 mgd (ADWF)	Good	NP
2 aeration ponds (1 emergency pond)	3.69 mg	Good	NP
5 stabilization ponds	23.15 mg	Good	NP
Storage pond	7.5 mg	Good	NP
North lift station	250 gpm	Good	NP
South lift station	400 gpm	Good	NP
<b><i>Collection &amp; Distribution Infrastructure</i></b>			
Sewer Pipe Miles	16	Sewage Lift Stations	2
<b><i>Treatment Plant Daily Flow (mgd)</i></b>			
<b><i>ADWF (mgd)</i></b>	<b><i>% of ADWF Capacity in Use</i></b>	<b><i>Peak Wet (mgd)</i></b>	<b><i>Peaking Factor</i></b>
0.2	40%	1.48	7.40
<b><i>Infiltration and Inflow</i></b>			
In the past, the City's collection system suffered from significant I/I, which resulted in improvements to the system in the late 90's. However, the system still suffers from a high peak wet weather flow which is mostly attributed to excessive inflow to the southern collection system during rain events.			
<b><i>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</i></b>			
The two issues that are currently threatening the wastewater system are: a)inflow and infiltration, and b)significantly diminished treatment pond capacity from sludge buildup and lack of regular maintenance.			
<b>Wastewater Facility Sharing</b>			
<b><i>Facility Sharing Practices</i></b>			
The City does not presently share wastewater facilities with other agencies or departments. Administration for the wastewater services are provided by the City's general government, which provides management efficiencies and cost minimization. In addition, the water and wastewater utilities operated by the City share employees.			
<b><i>Facility Sharing Opportunities</i></b>			
Regionalization of sewer services in the Delleker/Portola is a potential opportunity for facility sharing and regional collaboration. Joint efforts between the two agencies may maximize efficiencies, reduce costs, and aid the agency's to better leverage available resources.			

continued

<b>Wastewater Rates and Financing</b>			
<b>Wastewater Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 10-11<sup>1</sup></b>			
	<b>Rate Description</b>	<b>Avg. Monthly Charges</b>	<b>Demand<sup>2</sup></b>
Residential	Flat monthly rate of \$25.24	\$25.24	250 gpd
<b>Rate Zones</b>			
None			
<b>Rate-Setting Procedures</b>			
Last Rate Change	7/1/2010	Frequency of Rate Changes	Every 2-3 years
<b>Wastewater Development Fees and Requirements</b>			
Fee Approach	Connection and facility fees are dependent on meter size		
Connection Fee Amount <sup>3</sup>	Residential: \$1,100		
Development Impact Fee	Residential: \$5,324 (5/8" meter)		
<b>Wastewater Enterprise Revenues, FY 09-10</b>		<b>Operating Expenditures, FY 09-10</b>	
<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>		<b>Amount</b>
Total	\$469,267	100%	Total \$579,112
Rates & Charges	\$465,867	99%	Administration \$62,009
Property Tax	\$0	0%	O & M \$395,179
Grants	\$0	0%	Capital Depreciation \$93,230
Interest	\$3,400	1%	Debt \$28,694
Connection Fees	\$0	0%	Other \$0
Notes:			
(1) Rates include wastewater-related service charges and strength and flow charges. Average monthly charges calculated based on average consumption. Rates are rounded for presentation.			
(2) Wastewater use assumptions by customer type were used to calculate average monthly charges. Assumed use levels are 250 gallons per home per day, and are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.			
(3) Connection fee amount is calculated for a single-family home.			

## WATER SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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Portola provides water for domestic consumption and fire flow. The City owns and operates the water storage, treatment and distribution system that serves the City. All services are provided directly by city staff. There are two FTEs dedicated to water services. As of 2011, the City provides water services to 1200 connections.

Water services are provided within the City's limits and to 113 connections just outside of the City's boundaries to the north of Joy Road and portions of the Portola Heights neighborhood. Within the City's limits, Teanna Ranch is the only area where water services are not available. There are no other lots that are unserved and rely on wells within the city limits.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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#### Water Supplies

#### Water Source and Rights

The current sources of city water supply include 1) Willow Creek Springs and 2) groundwater pumped at two municipal wells. The City also has 3) rights to four separate spring sources, as well as 4) contract water from Lake Davis; however, these two supply sources are not presently in use. The City plans to resume use of water from Lake Davis in the summer of 2011.

The City has appropriative water rights, dating from 1943, of up to 875.9 af of water from Willow Creek.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the City has appropriative water rights of up to 600 af from "five unnamed springs tributary to an unnamed stream thence Willow Creek and seven unnamed springs tributary to Willow Creek..."<sup>26</sup> Between the two licenses, the City may not divert more than 1.8 cubic feet per second from the springs and Willow Creek at any given time.

The numerous spring outcrops at Willow Creek Springs are collected several feet below ground surface in collection galleries consisting of gravel embedded perforated plastic pipe or concrete masonry units laid on their sides. The water is conducted from the collection galleries to manholes along the transmission main through collecting branch pipelines. Production of the spring varies somewhat throughout the year. Flows were previously estimated to be between 200 gpm (summer months) and 300 gpm (winter months);

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<sup>25</sup> 1.6 cubic feet per second from March 1 to December 1.

<sup>26</sup> 1.17 cubic feet per second all year round.

however, with the closure of two springs due to high turbidity, recent estimates show that flows average about 150 gpm.<sup>27</sup>

The City pumps water from the Humbug Valley Groundwater Basin. The Department of Water Resources estimates storage capacity of the basin to be 76,000 acre-feet to a depth of 100 feet.<sup>28</sup> Groundwater extraction for municipal and industrial uses is estimated to be 200 acre-feet. Deep percolation of applied water is estimated to be 200 acre-feet, meaning that the amount pumped by users is replaced by groundwater recharge. The City and Grizzly Lake Resort Improvement District are the only public users of the Humbug Valley Basin. Neither agency has a groundwater management plan. The City reported that there had been no periods of significant drawdown and there is little noticeable change in available water during droughts.<sup>29</sup>

The City has claimed water rights through Statements of Diversion and Water Use to four separate spring sources on Beckwourth Peak, south of the City—Turner, Malloy, Golden and Darby.<sup>30</sup> The total estimated capacity of these springs is 170 gpm (270 acre-feet per year). The City stopped using the springs as a water source in 1971, after the Lake Davis water became available. At that time the Lake Davis water was considered more reliable and subject to fewer potential health hazards.

The City has historically received water from Lake Davis through a contract with Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The original allotment was made in 1968 and increases annually through 2027 to 1,350 acre feet. As of 2007, Portola's contract reservation of water was 599.1 acre feet.

The City ceased use of the Lake Davis supply when, in 1997, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) treated the lake in an attempt to remove the invasive Northern Pike fish. Although Lake Davis is not currently being used as a source by the City, the City intends to return to the use of Lake Davis water in the summer of 2011 following the completion of a new 1.5 mgd treatment plant. At that time, the City intends to take the wells offline and use them only in cases of emergency.

### Quality

Willow Creek Springs generally has water of high quality that does not require treatment; however, the water has occasionally had high levels of turbidity during storm events and rapid snowmelt. The DPH has directed the City to continue daily turbidity samples.

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<sup>27</sup> Department of Public Health, Annual System Inspection Report, 2010, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Department of Water Resources, California's Groundwater Bulletin 118 – Humbug Valley Groundwater Basin, 2004, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Todd Roberts, Portola Director of Public Works, March 17, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> A Statement of Diversion and Use for Darby Springs is not on file with the Department of Water Resources.



While the Humbug Valley Groundwater Basin is considered to have high quality water that does not require treatment, there have been arsenic levels that exceed the MCL at both of the City's wells. The City reported that recent tests during the last half of 2010 and the beginning of 2011 had not detected arsenic.<sup>31</sup>

The City reports that although the four springs are not in use, the water quality is good. While there is some public concern regarding the quality of the lake water due to the previous treatments, the water will be treated to required national and state standards.

### Existing and Projected Water Use

According to the City's Water Master Plan from 2007, the City had a sustained yield source capacity of approximately 950 gpm or 1.37 mgd and a short term ability to produce 1100 gpm or 1.58 mgd. This is composed of the Maintenance Yard Well, Commercial Street Well, and Willow Springs. However, given the arsenic levels in the Maintenance Yard Well, that well is only for emergency purposes, and due to the closure of two springs the estimated average flow of the springs has dropped to 150 gpm. Consequently, it is estimated that as of the drafting of this report the City had a sustained yield source capacity of 650 gpm or 0.94 mgd which is below the City's maximum day demand. When the Lake Davis treatment plant comes online in 2011, the City will have a combined maximum source capacity of approximately 2.58 mgd, including the well capacity that will be used for emergency purposes.

In 2010, city demand for water averaged 0.6 mgd, or 64 percent of the City's sustainable yield water supply (less the Lake Davis WTP). Based on the City's assumption of five percent annual average growth, and contingent upon the completion of the Lake Davis plant, the City should have sufficient source capacity to service demand through at least 2030.

### Treatment and Distribution Facilities

The City owns a subterranean water collection system on 160 acres at Willow Creek Springs, located approximately four miles northwest of the City. Willow Creek was originally developed by the City in 1957. The source was further improved with the construction of underground galleries in 1974. The water is delivered to the City's terminal facility through a nine-mile steel line consisting of 8 inch pipe. A 1958 report by the state Department of Public Health reported the pipe capacity at 667 gpm, more than double the output of the springs. Though this has decreased markedly with age, the delivery system probably has some unused available capacity. Springs #5 and #6 are offline as they are the main sources of high turbidity in the system.<sup>32</sup> While the water is of high quality, the water from the springs is chlorinated as a precautionary measure. Disinfection occurs at the Willow Springs metering point upstream from the 1,000,000

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Todd Roberts, Portola Director of Public Works, March 17, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Department of Public Health, Annual Inspection Report, 2010, p. 2.

gallon tank on the north side. The 1,000,000 gallon tank is used as contact time prior to entering the distribution system.

The City operates two wells located on the south side of town. The Maintenance Yard Well, located in the Portola Corporation Yard at First and Main Streets was drilled in 1993 and fully improved as a municipal water supply in 1995. The well has consistently yielded 300 to 320 gpm. This well is presently offline due to historically high levels of arsenic, although recent tests, at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011, have not detected arsenic. The Commercial Street Park Well, located at the intersection of Commercial Street and Gulling Street, was put in service in 1998. This well has an estimated sustained yield of 600 gpm. While this well has had levels of arsenic at certain times that exceed the MCL, this well is still online. Because the City currently relies primarily on groundwater sources of generally high quality, the well water is not routinely disinfected. The City plans to take the wells offline once the Lake Davis treatment plant becomes active, and maintain them for emergency purposes only. The City constructed a third well located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Pacific Streets in 2010, which is to be used only for emergency flows. The well has a capacity of 150 gpm.

The City owns facilities that were previously operative when the Turner, Malloy, Golden and Darby springs were in use. Approximately 30,000 feet of antiquated and substandard water lines connect the spring sources with the City's distribution system. Development of these springs for future use would require improvements to collect the water below ground (below root level) and a new delivery pipeline system. The cost of such improvements is unknown, but likely to be substantial relative to the amount of water that can be delivered. Due to the relatively high cost and the uncertainty surrounding the Golden Springs source, the City currently has no plans to pursue its development.

The original Lake Davis Water Treatment Plant, currently not in service, was constructed as part of the State Water Project, and commenced deliveries to the City in 1970. A new water treatment plant is planned to be opened at Lake Davis in 2011. The Army Corps of Engineers is overseeing plant construction. Ownership of the plant will be transferred from the Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to the City after completion.

The City's distribution system is composed of steel (25 percent), C900 (14 percent), asbestos cement (55 percent), and iron (six percent) piping. DPH reported that the steel and iron piping were generally in fair condition, and the C900 and asbestos cement piping was in good condition.

#### *Storage Facilities and Emergency Supply*

All of the City's supply and storage facilities are in good operating order and comply with current water supply standards. Water storage for the city is in three covered, above-ground steel tanks. The Northside tank is a 1 million-gallon facility installed in 1976. A 200,000 gallon tank and a 500,000 gallon tank located south of the high school serves the City south of the river.

With a combined total storage of 1,700,000 gallons, the existing service area currently has sufficient storage. The only challenge with the current storage configuration is that the North-side tank provides limited functionality for diurnal storage purposes since there is no way currently to get water into the north side tank from the existing wells. Recovery rates for the North-side tank are limited to the output of Willow Springs. This condition will be remedied when the Lake Davis Treatment Plant is operable since the treated surface water will enter the City distribution system at the North-side tank.<sup>33</sup>

No redundancy is available in the system and a water shortage could exist on peak demand days if any existing sources were out of service. Once the Lake Davis plant comes online, the potential for a shortage will be eliminated.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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This section discusses existing infrastructure needs not related to growth induced needs that are planned for in the City's Water Master Plan. While the City needs additional water supply to meet maximum day demand,<sup>34</sup> the Lake Davis Water Treatment Plant is anticipated to rectify this deficiency in 2011. The two other significant deficiencies that presently need to be addressed in the City's water system are 1) the presence of arsenic in the well water, and 2) inadequate fire flow in several areas.

### Arsenic Removal

Two of the City's wells have exceeded arsenic MCLs on several occasions. The Maintenance Yard Well is presently offline, and is only used for emergency purposes. In order to continue utilizing these two sources, it will be necessary for the City to treat at least one of the sources for arsenic. It is anticipated that any treatment strategy would include a combination of arsenic treatment and blending to achieve the required objective. Consequently, a new pipeline will be required from the Commercial Street site to the Maintenance Yard site so that one treatment/blending process can be constructed to achieve the necessary arsenic levels. A portion of the existing maintenance yard could be used as a site for the treatment facility.<sup>35</sup> The City does not presently have plans to address the arsenic issue, as the wells will be in standby after this summer and the arsenic has declined to undetectable levels over the last year.

### Fire Flow

Most of the distribution system appears to have adequate fire flow with a few exceptions. Some weak areas are found on the north side of the highway near Rocky Point

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<sup>33</sup> City of Portola, Water Master Plan, 2007, p. 5-5.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 7-8.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 7-8.

Road, Meadow Way, Ellen Avenue, Magnolia Avenue, and Cherry Circle. One will note a few other isolated areas that appear throughout the system with minimum fire flow.

Questionable fire flow also exists within the commercial corridor along Highway 70. Much of this area along the south side of the highway is fed from a 4" steel pipe. The addition of a larger main line or replacement of the existing 4" pipe would be required to allow for the construction of a commercial building of significant size. Available fire flow should be at least 2,000 gpm in commercially designated areas. Commercial areas to the east of Gulling St. are also in need of improved fire flow. The current distribution system could not support the addition of a new commercial structure in this area. The high density apartments located near the intersection of Meadow Way and Highway 70 are significantly lacking in fire flow. Unfortunately, modeling results suggest that the only way to get adequate fire flow of at least 1,000 gpm to this area would require replacement of one of the pipelines along Highway 70 or additional looping of pipelines from the north.<sup>36</sup> The Master Plan identifies several improvements to rectify the fire flow deficiencies. To date, none of these proposed improvements have been completed.

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## Challenges

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The primary challenges to water services for the City are addressing arsenic levels in excess of maximum contaminant limits and ensuring sufficient fire flow in all areas of the City.

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## Service Adequacy

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This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including the Department of Public Health's (DPH) annual system evaluation, drinking water quality, and distribution system integrity.

The DPH is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts and the operational permitting and regulatory oversight of public water systems. Domestic water providers of at least 200 connections are subject to inspections by DPH. During the Department of Public Health's most recent annual inspection in 2010, DPH reports that the City's system "appears to be well operated and maintained in professional manner that meets good waterworks practices."<sup>37</sup>

Drinking water quality is determined by a combination of historical violations reported by the EPA since 2000 and the percent of time that the City was in compliance with Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2010. Since 2000, the City has had 12 health violations due to arsenic exceedances at the wells. This equates to approximately 11 violations per 1,000 connections served. By comparison, the other water providers in the

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 5-6.

<sup>37</sup> Department of Public Health, Annual Inspection Report, 2010, p. 8.

eastern region of the County had a median of 21 violations per 1,000 connections served during that same time frame. Water service providers in the region were in compliance 96 percent of the time on average in 2010. The City was in compliance with drinking water regulations 50 percent of the time, which was below the regional average. It is noteworthy that the City was only out of compliance on two separate arsenic tests; however, as the tests are completed quarterly, if the City is out of compliance on one test that equates to being out of compliance for three months.

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2010 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. The City reported 49 breaks and leaks per 100 miles of pipe lines in 2010, while other providers in the region had a median rate of 12 breaks per 100 pipe miles. The City loses approximately 13 percent of water between the water source and the connections served, which was relatively high compared to other providers in the area that averaged seven percent distribution losses.

**Figure 4-9: City of Portola Water Service Adequacy Indicators**

<b>Water Service Adequacy and Efficiency Indicators</b>			
<b><i>Service Adequacy Indicators</i></b>			
Connections/FTE	511	O&M Cost Ratio <sup>1</sup>	\$624,709
MGD Delivered/FTE	0.30	Distribution Loss Rate	13%
Distribution Breaks & Leaks (2010)	12	Distribution Break Rate <sup>2</sup>	49.0
Water Pressure	20 to 120 psi	Total Employees (FTEs)	2
Customer Complaints CY 2010:	Odor/taste (4), leaks (0), pressure (0), other (0)		
<b><i>Drinking Water Quality Regulatory Information</i></b> <sup>3</sup>			
	#	Description	
Health Violations	12	Exceedances of arsenic MCL (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)	
Monitoring Violations	0		
DW Compliance Rate <sup>4</sup>	50%		
Notes:			
(1) Operations and maintenance costs (exc. purchased water, debt, depreciation) per volume (mgd) delivered.			
(2) Distribution break rate is the number of leaks and pipeline breaks per 100 miles of distribution piping.			
(3) Violations since 2000, as reported by the U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Information System.			
(4) Drinking water compliance is percent of time in compliance with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2010.			

**Figure 4-10: City of Portola Water Service Tables**

<b>Water Service Configuration &amp; Infrastructure</b>				
<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	
Retail Water	Portola	Groundwater Recharge	Portola	
Wholesale Water	PCFCD	Groundwater Extraction	Portola	
Water Treatment	Portola	Recycled Water	None	
<b>Service Area Description</b>				
Retail Water	The area within the City limits as well as 113 connections to the north of Joy Road, and portions of the Portola Heights neighborhood.			
Wholesale Water	NA			
Recycled Water	NA			
<b>Water Sources</b>		<b>Supply (Acre-Feet/Year)</b>		
Source	Type	Average	Maximum	Safe/Firm
Humbug Valley Basin	Groundwater	356	1,453	200 <sup>2</sup>
Willow Creek	Surface Water	0	875.9	
12 unnamed springs that flow into Willow Creek	Groundwater	316	600	241.5
Lake Davis	Surface Water	0	1,682	Unknown
Turner, Malloy, Golden and Darby Springs	Groundwater	0	Unknown	274
<b>System Overview</b>				
Average Daily Demand		0.6 mgd	Peak Day Demand	1.1 mgd
<b>Major Facilities</b>				
Facility Name	Type	Capacity	Condition	Yr Built
Northside Tank	Storage	1 mg	Good	1976
Southside Tank #1	Storage	0.5 mg	Good	1987
Southside Tank #2	Storage	0.20 mg	Good	1983
Willow Creek Springs Underground Galleries	Storage/Source	150 gpm <sup>3</sup>	Good	1957/1974
Maintenance Yard Well	Well	300 gpm	Poor <sup>4</sup>	1993
Commercial Street Well	Well	600 gpm	Fair	1998
6th and Pacific Street Well	Well	150 gpm	Excellent	2010
Lake Davis Treatment Plant	Treatment	1.5 mgd	Excellent	2011
<b>Other Infrastructure</b>				
Reservoirs	-	Storage Capacity (mg)	1.70 mg	
Pump Stations	0	Pressure Zones	2	
Production Wells	3	Pipe Miles	25	
<b>Facility-Sharing and Regional Collaboration</b>				
<p><b>Current Practices:</b> The City does not presently share water facilities with other agencies or departments. Administration for the water services are provided by the City's general government, which provides management efficiencies and cost minimization. In addition, the water and wastewater utilities operated by the City share employees.</p>				
<p><b>Opportunities:</b> The City did not identify any opportunities for future facility sharing related to water services.</p>				
<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) NA means Not Applicable, NP means Not Provided, mg means millions of gallons, af means acre-feet.</p> <p>(2) Based on the groundwater recharge rate reported by the Department of Water Resources.</p> <p>(3) The capacity of the springs was recently reduced from 250 gpm to 150 gpm.</p> <p>(4) The well is presently offline due to high arsenic levels.</p>				

<b>Water Demand and Supply</b>							
<i>Service Connections</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Inside Bounds</i>		<i>Outside Bounds</i>		
Total	1,022		909		113		
Irrigation/Landscape	8		8		0		
Domestic	904		791		113		
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional	110		110		0		
Recycled	0		0		0		
Other	0		0		0		
<i>Average Annual Demand Information (Acre-Feet per Year) <sup>1</sup></i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	547	732	585	746	952	1,216	1,551
Residential	397	531	424	541	690	881	1,125
Commercial/Industrial	181	243	194	247	316	403	514
Irrigation/Landscape	79	106	84	108	137	175	224
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Supply Information (Acre-feet per Year)</i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	629	841	672	858	1,095	1,397	1,783
Imported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Groundwater	629	841	672	403	515	657	838
Surface <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	455	580	741	945
Recycled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Drought Supply and Plans</i>							
Drought Supply (af) <sup>3</sup>	Year 1: Unknown		Year 2: Unknown		Year 3: Unknown		
Storage Practices	Storage is for treatment and short-term emergency supply only.						
Drought Plan	The City maintains a water rationing plan for odd and even days during periods of drought.						
<i>Water Conservation Practices</i>							
CUWCC Signatory	No						
Metering	Yes						
Conservation Pricing	Yes						
Other Practices	None						
Notes:							
(1) Annual demand estimated based on 13 percent distribution loss in 2010 reported by the City.							
(2) The projected use of surface water assumes that once the Lake Davis WTP is online it will replace all well production.							
(3) The City has not estimated available supply during a three year drought. During past droughts, the City reported that it has experienced little difference in groundwater and spring levels.							

<b>Water Rates and Financing</b>				
<b><i>Residential Water Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 10-11</i></b> <sup>1</sup>				
	Rate Description	Avg. Monthly Charges	Consumption <sup>2</sup>	
Residential	Base monthly rate \$24.55 for 5,000 gallons (5/8" meter), \$2.39 per 1,000 gallons used over base rate	\$ 30.76	7,600 gal/month	
<b><i>Rate-Setting Procedures</i></b>				
Most Recent Rate Change	7/1/10	Frequency of Rate Changes	Every 2-3 years	
<b><i>Water Development Fees and Requirements</i></b>				
Fee Approach	Connection and facility fees are dependent on meter size and includes a meter fee to cover the equipment installed			
Connection Fee Amount	\$1,375/Single Family Unit			
Development Impact Fee	\$4,015/Single Family Unit			
<b><i>Water Enterprise Revenues, FY 09-10</i></b>			<b><i>Operating Expenditures, FY 09-10</i></b>	
Source	Amount	%		Amount
Total	\$636,995	100%	Total	\$663,150
Rates & charges	\$512,811	81%	Administration	\$82,363
Property tax	\$0	0%	O & M	\$374,825
Grants	\$0	0%	Capital Depreciation	\$114,549
Interest	\$2,267	0.4%	Debt	\$91,413
Connection Fees	\$0	0%	Purchased Water	\$0
Other: Lake Davis Reimbursmnt	\$121,917	19%	Other	\$0
Notes:				
(1) Rates include water-related service charges and usage charges.				
(2) Water use assumptions were used to calculate average monthly bills. Assumed use levels are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.				



## FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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City of Portola Fire Department provides fire suppression and Basic Life Support services. Ambulance and Advanced Life Support services are provided by the Eastern Plumas Healthcare District. Care Flight and My Life Flight provide air ambulance services. Fire helicopter is provided by USFS and CalFire.

#### Collaboration

City of Portola provides fire services to Gold Mountain CSD by contract. These services were previously provided through a LAFCo-approved Out-of-Area Service Agreement until 2010, when the OASA expired and the LAFCo Executive Officer advised the two agencies that an OASA was not necessary for an agreement between two public entities.

The fire department has mutual aid agreements with Beckwourth Fire Protection District and Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District. The City of Portola Fire Department staff participates in the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association and the Fire Safe Council.

#### Dispatch

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the CHP Susanville Dispatch Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo-approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The City reported that there had been recent improvements to the GIS mapping and consequently understanding of boundaries. The improvements have helped with confusion as to which parcels are in the City and which ones are in the County.

There are occasional communication problems with dispatch. According to the City, dispatch times need to be provided more consistently.

When multiple agencies respond to an incident, the responders are coordinated through a central incident command per OES. The incident commander is the highest ranking officer on site. Radio frequencies are shared with other fire providers in the County.

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## Staffing

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City of Portola Fire Department has 16 sworn personnel—three Chief Officers, three Line Officers, and ten Firefighters. The Fire Department has no paid employees, but each firefighter gets paid \$10 per service call. Fire personnel receive their compensation once a year at a holiday party.

The City has 30 Volunteer Firefighter positions available. Although the fire department has never been fully staffed, it has been able to adequately provide the necessary services. The Department is currently staffed with 23 Firefighters, which is sufficient for the department's current needs. The City continuously recruits for new and additional volunteers by making itself visible at community events (Portola Fire Department Beef Feed, Railroad Days, Concerts in the Park, etc.), hanging a "Volunteers Needed" banner when necessary, and providing information to new residents.

According to the California State Fire Marshal, all volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fire ground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>38</sup> All three Chief Officers at the City's Fire Department are trained at the FFI/FFII levels, with secondary certifications of wild land firefighting, command operations, hazmat operations and firefighting training certifications. They are also trained as paramedics to first responder level. Three Line Officers are trained at the FFI level and EMT to first responder. Ten Firefighters are trained at the FFI level, with secondary certifications of wild land firefighting, hazmat operations, confined space rescue and paramedic to first responder level.

The Fire Department holds two-hour training sessions every week in the evenings. Additional trainings are held on the weekends as weather permits. Generally, the training sessions are attended by five to twenty volunteers. The City reports that it is a challenge to attain State-mandated training levels for volunteers since it is difficult to ensure that a volunteer has enough time to participate in training.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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The City of Portola owns and operates two fire stations—North Side Fire Hall and South Side Fire Hall.

North Side Fire Hall, which was built in 1984, was reported to be in fair condition. The station houses one Type I engine, one Type IV engine, a 3,500-gallon water tender, and a

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<sup>38</sup> State Fire Marshall, *Course Information and Required Materials*, 2007, p. 44

rescue squad truck. South Side Fire Hall, which was built in the 1940s, was also reported to be in fair condition. This station contains two Type II engines and one Type V utility wildland vehicle.

There are no set hours when the stations are staffed. Volunteers are always on call. The goal of the fire department is to have personnel on the way within two to three minutes from 8am to 8pm and within five minutes from 8pm to 8am.

The City's water reserves are represented by three water storage tanks that provide a combined emergency water supply of 1.75 million gallons.

As discussed previously in the Water section of this chapter, the City Engineer has identified a potential fire flow deficiency within portions of the City resulting from the elevation relative to, and the distance from, the south storage tank. This will be resolved by constructing a new water storage tank at a higher elevation on the south side of the city, and construction of new water distribution lines to serve the other areas. The City has not yet scheduled these improvements.

Portola Fire Department identified no opportunities for service improvements and reported that it had adequate capacity to serve current and future developments in the City.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The City reported that both fire stations needed ADA accessibility improvements, which have not been completed due to financing constraints. There is also a need for a medical rescue truck with wildland fire suppression capabilities. There are currently no specific plans for facility improvements or vehicle acquisition. The City did not identify any possible additional financing sources to cover the costs of improvements.

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## Challenges

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The City did not identify any difficult-to-serve areas or any other challenges to providing fire services.

However, the following challenges were identified by the authors:

- ❖ The City lacks adequate fire flow in certain high-density residential areas.
- ❖ Delivering services to Gold Mountain CSD is a challenge due to its remoteness from the City.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. The City of Portola fire department has an ISO rating of 5/8B—5 within the city limits and 8B in Gold Mountain. The City did not provide the date of the last ISO evaluation.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.<sup>39</sup>

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. Most of the City's response zone is considered rural by the Local EMS Agency. The City reported that its fire department's response time was between 10 and 20 minutes depending on volunteer response time and location of an incident. One area that the City can improve upon is tracking its fire department's response time for each incident.

The service area size<sup>40</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in eastern Plumas serves approximately 20 square miles. Sierra Valley FPD serves the most expansive area, with 111 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for the City of Portola is 3.8 square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. An agency with more firefighters could have fewer resources if availability is restricted. Staffing levels in eastern Plumas vary from eight call firefighters per 1,000 residents in City of Portola service area to 42 in Beckwourth FD.

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<sup>39</sup> Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

<sup>40</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sheriff's office.

**Figure 4-11: City of Portola Fire Department Fire Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
North Side Fire Hall	420 North Gulling St., Portola, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	Type I Engine, Type IV Engine, Water Tender, Rescue Squad	
South Side Fire Hall	301 First Ave., Portola, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	2 Type II Engines, Type V Engine	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> The City does not currently share its facilities with other agencies.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> EPHCD may start to house its ambulance equipment and crew at the South Side Fire Hall.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
The City identified a need for ADA accessibility improvements to both fire stations and a medical rescue truck with wildland fire suppression capabilities.					
City Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2010	Configuration Base Year	2010	Statistical Base Year	2010
Fire Stations in District	2	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	260
Stations Serving District	2	EMS	Direct	% EMS	78%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	3.8	Ambulance Transport	EPHCD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	8%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	16	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	3%
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CareFlight	% Misc. emergency	10%
Total Call Firefighters	16	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency	0.4%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	8	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	2%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	8	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	130
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2010	No service challenges were identified.			
Median Response Time (min)	NP	Training			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	NP	Two hour training sessions are held weekly in the evenings. Additional trainings are held on weekends as weather permits. Generally, 5 to 20 volunteers participate in training sessions, depending on personnel availability.			
ISO Rating	5/8B				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
The City of Portola has mutual aid agreements with Beckwourth FPD and EPRFPD.					
Notes:					
1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.					
2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.					
3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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The City of Portola owns and operates one community park, one neighborhood park, five pocket parks and the riverfront recreation corridor along the Feather River. The purpose of the City of Portola parks is to provide recreation amenities, space for public gatherings to attract visitors, space for music, exhibitions, craft fairs and other public events. With the community park to the south of the Feather River and the neighborhood park to the north of the river, there is a park within walking distance of all residents of the City.<sup>41</sup> The City provides a series of parks within convenient walking distance of one another and linked by a pedestrian system consisting of sidewalks and trails through open space areas.

The City collects a Parkland Development Fee and/or requires new residential developments to dedicate land for parks and recreation services and facilities.<sup>42</sup>

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### Staffing

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The parks and facilities are maintained directly by one FTE city employee and two seasonal personnel.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The City's recreation infrastructure consists of seven parks and the riverfront recreation corridor. Details on each facility are discussed below.

#### City Park

City Park is a community park,<sup>43</sup> which is located on South Gulling Street. It consists of approximately 14 acres and is divided into northern and southern parts. The northern grounds encompass: a community identification monument sign, a swimming pool, changing rooms, play structure, restrooms, a skate park, a pavilion, BBQ pits, a dance floor, pergolas, picnic tables, horseshoe pits, grass event space, and tennis courts.<sup>44</sup> The southern

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<sup>41</sup> City of Portola General Plan, *Public Services and Facilities Element*, 2010, p. 6-17.

<sup>42</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Introduction, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> As described in the City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a community park is a centrally located park that offers a wide range of recreational activities and appeals to all age groups. A community park is generally defined as being 10 to 30 acres in size.

<sup>44</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 1.

portion of the park contains a little league field, a high school softball field, a practice softball/little league field, bleachers, a batting cage, and a snack bar.

The City Park is in good overall condition. The little league and softball fields, swimming pool, safe fall surrounding the play structure, pavilion with the BBQ, buffet, dance floor, wind screens on the tennis courts, and the skate park are in good working order and are maintained on a regular basis. The City identified the following needed improvements to the park:

- ❖ Parking and handicap accessible parking near the southern ball fields;
- ❖ More parking near the northern portion of the park;
- ❖ Improved restroom facilities at all parks;
- ❖ Better pedestrian access around the ball fields;
- ❖ Sign identifying the City Park;
- ❖ Repair the cracks at the tennis courts;
- ❖ Repair the batting cage;
- ❖ Maybe demolition of the small ballfield in the center field area of the upper softball field.<sup>45</sup>

### Baldwin Park

Baldwin Park is a neighborhood park,<sup>46</sup> which is located in the north-central part of the City of Portola on the southeast corner of Beckwith Street and Joy Way. The park, which is over five acres in size, includes the following facilities: a ball field and backstop, restrooms, basketball court, play structure and tot-lot, picnic tables, and BBQ pits.<sup>47</sup>

There was a fire at Baldwin Park in the summer of 2010, which resulted in the loss of the playground structure. The City is in the process of installing new ADA compliant playground equipment. The replacement cost of the equipment is covered by insurance.

Other than the playground equipment, the park is considered to be in fair condition, but lacks identity and is underutilized, according to the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The ball fields, play area and basketball court are not well kept. Restrooms contain

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<sup>45</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> As described in the City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Neighborhood Park is a park that serves the basic recreational needs of the City. The facilities and activities usually depend on the family type and needs of the residents. Neighborhood parks are usually three to ten acres in size.

<sup>47</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 4.

graffiti. The basketball court has cracks in the asphalt with weeds growing through and does not have a hoop. The following improvements were identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

- ❖ Landscaping to give the park more identity;
- ❖ Park clean-up and weeding;
- ❖ Internal pathway system to provide access from the street to park structures and facilities;
- ❖ Additional safe fall material around the play structure;
- ❖ Fix the broken basketball hoop and seal the cracks on the court;
- ❖ Improve the ball field to make it suitable for tee-ball games or practice facility;
- ❖ Consider additional park uses, such as a BMX bike park and dog park.<sup>48</sup>

### *Carmichael Elementary School*

Carmichael Elementary School is a ten acre neighborhood park located in the City of Portola, but is not owned by the City. It is owned and maintained by Plumas County in conjunction with the Plumas Unified School District. The park is divided into park and ball field areas. The ball field portion contains a large multi-use field area currently used for soccer, and baseball diamond with dugouts. The ball field part is considered in poor condition and not suitable for use by the City. The park has sufficient parking and could be developed into a multi-use soccer complex. The park is only available to the general public during non-school hours. Although this park is not owned by the City, it is made available for use by the public and as such is included here as an indicator of park service level in the City.

The following needed improvements were identified for Carmichael Elementary School:

- ❖ Better irrigation and overall maintenance of multi-use field area;
- ❖ Development of pedestrian access from the parking lot to the fields;
- ❖ Better dirt surface and weeding on western ball field to make it suitable for little league or softball practice;
- ❖ Mow the small turf ball field with backstop to make it usable as a practice facility.

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<sup>48</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 5.



### Bench Park

Bench Park is a 3,000 square foot pocket park<sup>49</sup> located on the southeast corner of Commercial and California Streets next to downtown center. The park contains a “Welcome to Old Town” sign and serves as a rest stop with turf grass, benches and trees. It is in good condition and is regularly maintained. One desired improvement identified by the City is to provide a hard surface path from the sidewalks to the benches.<sup>50</sup>

### Clock Park

Clock Park is a 10,000-square foot pocket park located at the entrance to downtown Portola at South Gulling and Commercial Streets. It serves as an identity-creating front door to the downtown area and functions as a town square. The park has a decorative clock, two pergolas, decorative lighting, and benches. No needed improvements were identified.<sup>51</sup>

### Caboose Park

Caboose Park is also a pocket park. It consists of about 12,000 square feet and is located on the south side of Commercial Street. The park includes a red caboose, a parking lot and a picnic table. It is underutilized because of limited access to the caboose. Identified improvements include landscaping around the caboose, sign for the park, and possible adaptation of the caboose for civic or retail use.<sup>52</sup>

### Volleyball Park

Volleyball Park is a pocket park located on South Gulling Street across from City Park. It contains a sand volleyball court with net and landscaping. The park is considered to be in good condition. Although no improvements were identified it is recommended to continue regular maintenance.<sup>53</sup>

### City Hall Park

City Hall Park is another pocket park. It is located at the corner of South Gulling Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue next to city hall. The park consists of a half-court concrete basketball court,

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<sup>49</sup> As described in the City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Pocket Park is a part that is usually less than one acre in size and is typically used for a specific purpose. Pocket Parks are designed to maximize available winter sun and are encouraged to become venues for public art.

<sup>50</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 7.

picnic table and message board. It has no landscaping, but is in good condition. No necessary improvements were identified.<sup>54</sup>

### Riverwalk

Riverwalk is a paved trail that connects downtown area to the National Forest picnic area just east of the City. The park is about 35 acres in size and is mostly vacant. It is a place for active recreation, quiet open space and river access.<sup>55</sup> The trail is in good condition. The identified infrastructure needs include elimination of weeds growing through the cracks.<sup>56</sup> The City has plans to expand the riverfront recreation corridor and will provide additional parkland to keep pace with the growth of the City in compliance with the General Plan policies on parks and recreation.

### West City Park

West City Park is a piece of City-owned land located on SR 70, around Veterans' Memorial Hall. There are three parcels to the west of Veterans' Memorial Hall and one parcel to the east of it. Currently, there is a sewer pump on the western portion of the property; the rest of the land is vacant. The possible future uses include:

- ❖ Venue to support activities of the Veterans' Memorial Hall;
- ❖ Branding and marketing to travelers on SR 70;
- ❖ Western trail extension of the Riverwalk;
- ❖ Amphitheater for concerts and events;
- ❖ River and fishing access;
- ❖ Gateway signs on the highway; or
- ❖ Gazebo.<sup>57</sup>

### Visitor Center

The Visitor Center is located on SR 70 at the eastern entrance to the City of Portola. It includes a tourist welcome center, museum, gazebo and a small play and picnic area. The only improvement identified was the repair or elimination of wooden steps to the river.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 8.

<sup>55</sup> City of Portola General Plan, *Public Services and Facilities Element*, 2010, p. 6-18.

<sup>56</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> Wood Rodgers, *City of Portola Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Draft, 2010, Parks and Recreation Inventory, p. 10.

In addition to the individual needs identified for each park, the City also plans to replace some grass areas with water efficient landscaping. The City plans to complete this improvement sometime during this summer.

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## Service Adequacy

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“Under the California Subdivision Map Act (the “Quimby Act”) a city or county can require the dedication of up to five (5) acres of park per one thousand residents. In lieu of dedication of land, a developer may pay a fee for dedication of land to the city.”<sup>59</sup> The City’s General plan outlines the following criteria for recreation and Parks:

- ❖ The City aims to provide five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, three acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents and two acres of community parks per 1,000 residents. Portola owns 54.4 acres of all categories of parkland, which equates to 24.7 acres per 1,000 residents. The City has approximately two acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents and six acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents.
- ❖ The minimum size of a neighborhood park is supposed to be three acres. The only neighborhood park in the City, Baldwin Park, is five acres in size.
- ❖ Another policy for a neighborhood park for a public street to front the park on at least two sides. Beckwith Street and Joy Way front Baldwin Park on two sides.
- ❖ Portola’s policy is to provide space for outdoor events near Old Town and the Railroad Museum. The multiple pocket parks within the City fulfill this requirement.
- ❖ Both the Riverwalk and the City Park, as is required by the General Plan, include picnic areas, restrooms and turf area.<sup>60</sup>

The City appears to meet or exceed the General Plan policies that have been adopted, with the exception of the ratio of neighborhood parkland to residents. The City needs an addition one acre of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents, or approximately 2 acres, in order to meet the General Plan policy of three acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>59</sup> City of Portola General Plan, *Public Services and Facilities Element*, 2010, p. 6-18.

<sup>60</sup> City of Portola General Plan, *Public Services and Facilities Element*, 2010, pp. 6-18, 6-19.

**Figure 4-12: City of Portola Park and Recreation Profile**

<b>Park and Recreation Services</b>							
<i><b>Park/Facility</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Location</b></i>	<i><b>Condition</b></i>	<i><b>Acres</b></i>			
City Park	Community	S. Gulling St.	Good	13.8			
Bench Park	Pocket	Commercial & California St.	Good	0.07			
Clock Park	Pocket	S. Gulling & Commercial St.	Good	0.2			
Caboose Park	Pocket	South of Commercial St.	Fair	0.3			
Baldwin Park	Neighborhood	North-central part of City	Fair	5			
Riverwalk	Trail	From downtown to forest	Good	35			
Volleyball Park	Pocket	Across from City Park	Good	0.05			
City Hall Park	Pocket	S. Gulling & 4th Ave	Good	0.05			
West City Park	N/A	SR 70 by Veterans' Hall	N/A	N/A			
<i><b>Service Configuration</b></i>							
Park Maintenance:		Direct	Number of Parks Maintained:	8			
<i><b>Service Adequacy</b></i>							
Acres per 1,000 residents		24.7	City Policy:	5			
<i><b>Park Acreage</b></i>							
Community Parks:	13.8	Neighborhood Parks:	5	Pocket Parks:	0.7	Riverwalk:	35
<i><b>Facility Needs/Deficiencies</b></i>							
City Park		Parking, signage, repairs to tennis courts & batting cage					
Bench Park		Hard surface path from sidewalk to benches					
Clock Park		None identified					
Caboose Park		Landscaping, signage, caboose adaptation					
Baldwin Park		Signage, clean-up, pathways, repairs to court and ballfield					
Riverwalk		Expansion, weeding					
Volleyball Park		None identified					
City Hall Park		None identified					
West City Park		Development					
<i><b>Facility Sharing</b></i>							
The City aims to initiate ongoing relationship with other agencies with common recreation interests, such as Plumas County, Plumas Unified School District, and Feather River College.							
<i><b>Service Challenges</b></i>							
The City did not report any particular challenges to providing park and recreation services.							
<i><b>Developer Requirements</b></i>							
It is required that developers make a land dedication or pay an in-lieu fee for park land dedication based on the City's policy of providing 5 acres per 1,000 residents.							

## CITY OF PORTOLA DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ The City experienced a decline in population between 2000 and 2010 with negative annual growth rates of between zero and two percent. The City has a population of approximately 1,997.
- ❖ While the City's historical growth rates and countywide growth rate projections by the Department of Finance and Plumas County Transportation Commission indicate minimal growth in the future, there are three planned developments within the city limits, which could add approximately 2,440 additional residents to the City, indicating the potential for significant growth.

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### Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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- ❖ While Average Dry Weather Flow (ADWF) is well within the City's permitted capacity for the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Peak Wet Weather Flows (PWWFs) have on occasion exceeded the treatment system's permitted wet weather flow due to significant I/I. In 2010, the City's PWWF was almost double its permitted PWWF capacity.
- ❖ Assuming an aggressive annual growth rate of five percent, the existing WWTP should have the capacity to serve growth in demand through 2028; however, this is contingent upon the City addressing the I/I issues.
- ❖ The sewer collection and treatment system in Portola has been constructed piece meal over a period of decades. The two issues that are currently threatening the wastewater system are: a) inflow and infiltration, and b) significantly diminished treatment pond capacity from sludge buildup and lack of regular maintenance.
- ❖ In 2010, city demand for water averaged 0.6 mgd, or 64 percent of the City's sustainable yield water supply (less the Lake Davis Water Treatment Plant). Based on the City's assumption of five percent annual average growth, and contingent upon the completion of the Lake Davis plant, the City should have sufficient source capacity to service demand through at least 2030.
- ❖ While the City needs additional water supply to meet maximum day demand, the Lake Davis Water Treatment Plant is anticipated to rectify this deficiency in 2011. The two other significant deficiencies that presently need to be addressed in the City's water system are 1) the presence of arsenic in the well water, and 2) inadequate fire flow in several areas.

- ❖ The Fire Department reportedly has the capacity to serve existing and anticipated growth in demand; although, significant growth will require augmentation of services to address an increase in demand for urban service levels.
- ❖ Both fire stations require ADA accessibility improvements, which have not been completed due to financing constraints. There is also a need for a medical rescue truck with wildland fire suppression capabilities.
- ❖ It is a recommended practice that the Fire Department track its response time for each incident.
- ❖ The City greatly exceeds the General Plan standard of five park acres per 1,000 residents.
- ❖ A majority of the park facilities were identified as being in good condition. Several park deficiencies and potential for development of additional facilities were identified, including improvements to landscaping, signage and sport courts at the various parks.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The City reported that while financing levels were generally adequate to provide services, there had been a decline in revenues which had forced the City to find ways to trim expenditures.
- ❖ Capital projects in the past have generally been funded through interest income on investments; however, project expenditures in recent years have started to exceed the City's interest income due to declining interest rates.
- ❖ Key fiscal challenges are a decline in sales tax revenues, a decline in assessed property values and a recent decrease in development activity and related fees.
- ❖ The City does not have a citywide Capital Improvement Plan, but has outlined infrastructure needs in its water, wastewater and parks and recreation master plans. Capital planning is also completed annually in the budget. It is recommended that the City consider implementing a multi-year CIP to identify potential financing sources and timing for the capital improvements.
- ❖ The City's water and wastewater rates were last updated in 2010. Water rates are lower than the regional median charged by other service providers. Similarly, wastewater rates are the second lowest among the providers in the region.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ The City does not presently share water, wastewater, fire or park facilities with other agencies.

- ❖ The City does participate in joint financing of some facilities with Eastern Plumas Recreation District, such as the Portola swimming pool.
- ❖ Administration for all city services are provided by the City's general government, which provides management efficiencies and cost minimization. In addition, the water and wastewater utilities operated by the same City employees.
- ❖ Regionalization of sewer services in the Delleker/Portola area is a potential opportunity for facility sharing and regional collaboration. Joint efforts between Portola and Grizzly Lake Community Services District may maximize efficiencies, reduce costs, and aid the agency's to better leverage available resources.
- ❖ There is an opportunity to share specialized equipment (i.e., CCTV) among other small wastewater providers in the area.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ The City demonstrated full accountability through its disclosure of information as indicated by the City's cooperation in providing all requested information, meeting for interviews, and providing review and comments during the MSR process.
- ❖ Accountability is best ensured when contested elections are held for governing body seats, constituent outreach is conducted to promote accountability and ensure that constituents are informed and not disenfranchised, and public agency operations and management are transparent to the public. The City of Portola demonstrated accountability with respect to all of these factors.
- ❖ The City along with Beckwourth Fire District and Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District (EPRFPD) have broached the discussion of consolidation; however there are concerns regarding liquidation of assets and varying property tax revenues among the agencies.
- ❖ The City has considered the potential of transferring fire service provision in the Gold Mountain community to EPRFPD; however, this is dependent on the desire of the community. In 2008-2009, the District did a study and conducted a survey among its residents that among other options considered annexing its fire services into EPRFPD. The decision has not yet been made.
- ❖ As the City of Portola and Grizzly Lake Community Services District serve adjacent communities, there is an opportunity to work closely together in joint efforts to provide services in the most efficient, safe and cost effective way. Potential governance options include regionalization of sewer services or a collaborative agreement to share specialized equipment and mutual aid resources.

- ❖ The Portola Planning Commission has identified several areas outside of the City limits and SOI as areas of mutual interest for Portola and Plumas County. The communities include Lake Davis to the north, Grizzly Ranch to the east, Iron Horse and Gold Mountain to the south, and Delleker to the west. The City reports that these areas impact the City and City services, particularly related to fire, safety, traffic, aesthetics, and the environment.<sup>61</sup> A governance structure option that may afford the City the planning involvement it desires may be designating the area an Area of Concern.
- ❖ The City provides services to 113 utility connections outside of the city limits. Annexation of these extraterritorial service areas is an option that would promote logical boundaries.

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<sup>61</sup> Karen Downs, City of Portola Planner, Letter to the Plumas County Planning Commission, January 19, 2011.