



2020 Annual Sustainability Report



*Prepared by the County of Santa Clara
Office of Sustainability*



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2020 Sustainability – At a Glance

Though 2020 was a challenging year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the County continued to work towards achieving the County's sustainability goals. Through the Sustainability Master Plan adopted in January 2021, four Priority Areas and eight goals were identified to help guide the County's efforts to build a livable, equitable and resilient Santa Clara County. The 2020 Annual Sustainability Report uses this new structure to report on and highlight key achievements. To learn more about the Sustainability Master Plan and Priority Areas and see the Data Dashboard, visit www.sccgov.org/sustainabilityplan.



Climate Protection and Defense

Goal #1: Carbon Neutrality

- **Carbon Emission Reduction.** Greenhouse gas emissions from County operations in 2019 decreased 20% from 2015 and 11% from 2010 with 61% of emissions attributed to employee commute and 26% to buildings and facilities.
- **Energy Efficiency.** Energy efficient lighting retrofits at 1.8 million square feet of County facilities, saving the County over \$5 million in electricity costs over the 15-year lifetime.
- **Green Fleet.** Greening County Fleet and Operations Study recommends increasing County's alternative fuel vehicles to 75% by 2035.
- **Electric Vehicles (EV).** 145 EV charging ports installed, bringing total to 282 EV ports.
- **Telecommuting.** 33% of County employees telecommuted due to COVID-19.

Goal #2: Resilient and Prepared County

- **Climate Change Risks.** Flood mitigation impacts from new shoreline infrastructure projects were identified and added to the County flooding risk analysis in the Silicon Valley 2.0 Tool.
- **Wildfire Preparedness.** Forest Health Plan for Mt Madonna County Park and education programs were developed and implemented.



Natural Resources and Environment

Goal #3: Air and Water Resources

- **Water Use.** Despite increases in County real estate square footage, water use remained stable in 2020, partly due to increase in telework because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Sustainable Landscaping.** To increase water conservation, the County now has 7 campuses tied to recycled water for irrigation.
- **Stream and Riparian Protection.** Cape Ivy Team, made up of 7 volunteers, worked 60 hours to improve habitat and water quality of Penitencia Creek.
- **Education and Outreach.** Curriculum and pollution prevention outreach expanded to children at McKinley Elementary School.
- **Resource Management.** 25 County Parks were managed using pesticide free practices.

Goal #4: Natural Lands and Land Use

- **Urban Forestry.** Planted 397 trees, which when mature avoid over 77,541 lbs of CO2 per year, equivalent to 87,275 miles driven by an average passenger vehicle.
- **Park Trails.** Over 10.5 miles of unpaved trail constructed to connect open space areas around the County.



Community Health and Well-Being

Goal #5: Healthy Communities

- **Community Health.** Supported healthy lifestyles by engaging vulnerable high-risk families in interpreter-led walks at County Parks through the Park Prescription (Parks Rx) Initiative.
- **Healthy Homes.** 522 households completed energy efficiency upgrades to create a more comfortable, healthy, and safe home.
- **Telehealth.** 295,000 telephone and video visits offered during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping maintain the health and well-being of patients, providers, and staff.

Goal #6: Equitable and Inclusive County

- **Civic Engagement.** Hosted over 700 outreach events and over 1 million registered voters, a 16% increase from the November 2016 General Presidential Election.
- **Safety Net Services.** During the pandemic, approximately 1.4 million meals were provided, 600 clients were assisted with housing, and 16,800 individuals received financial assistance.
- **Reducing Homelessness.** Achieved a 13% reduction in number of people experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- **Access to Learning.** 80% increase in number of e-material downloaded and 179% increase in County Library District student portal visits.



Prosperous and Just Economy

Goal #7: Prosperous County

- **Green Business.** Certified 41 Green Businesses incorporated environmentally sound practices to save 23,093 lbs of CO₂, equivalent to planting 35 acres of urban trees.
- **Boosting Economy.** Over \$2 million dollars in rebates paid to County residents and multifamily property owners through BayREN to implement energy and water efficiency upgrades.
- **Work Experience.** Empowered young adults of the San Jose Conservation Corps with over 6,000 hours of parkland work experience.

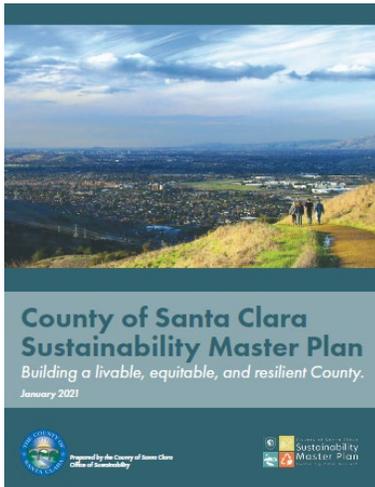
Goal #8: Lead by Example

- **Regional Collaboration.** Secured grant funding to develop a Santa Clara County Coastal Resiliency Strategy and convene a regional County Collaborative of partners and stakeholders for climate adaptation solutions.
- **Food Equity.** Interviewed 36 food system stakeholders and hosted multiple focus groups to develop a Countywide food system workplan to increase food sector viability, improve coordination and promote food security.
- **Racial Equity.** 14 County departments and agencies participated in the Government Alliance for Race and Equity to further center equity and social justice in County operations.

The pandemic, social unrest, and natural disasters in 2020 further elevated the need to integrate sustainability as a core value and function within County programs and operations. Collaboration, commitment, and innovation was pivotal to developing a sustainability road map to meet the needs of a community as diverse as Santa Clara County. Together we are stronger, as evident by all that was achieved during these unprecedented times. I thank all the County staff and partners for their service and dedication to create a Sustainable Santa Clara County!

-Jasneet Sharma, Director, Office of Sustainability

Introduction



On January 12, 2021, the County of Santa Clara (County) adopted the [Sustainability Master Plan](#) (SMP), which provides a framework and roadmap to guide the County’s present and future sustainability goals and strategies.

The SMP establishes a vision that addresses the emerging societal challenges posed by the changing climate and racial inequities and prioritizes building resilience and serving the historically marginalized and vulnerable community members. The SMP presents the approach to integrate sustainability as a core function within County operations, coordinate and support cross-departmental sustainability efforts, inform connectivity and partnerships, empower collective action and transformation, and provide transparency on progress to build a livable, equitable and resilient County.

The SMP outlines four Priority Areas (listed below) and corresponding Priority Area Actions (goals, strategies, and targets) that will help achieve the County’s sustainability Vision. The Priority Areas reflect the growing understanding that a whole systems approach that addresses challenges from current and future hazards, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, is essential to meet the needs of current and future generations. The SMP also considers and plans holistically to address inequities in housing affordability, food insecurity, income and health disparities, unequal opportunities for education and self-sufficiency, and lack of resources and access to robust social safety networks and preventative health services.



With the adoption of the SMP, the 2020 Annual Sustainability Report will focus on reporting on the annual progress on Priority Area Actions and sustainability targets included in the SMP and other notable sustainability programs for the year. In addition, this Report is accompanied with the launch of a publicly accessible SMP website and Data Dashboard that will allow the community and County leaders to easily view and track annual progress through interactive, easy-to-understand visualizations of data for targets currently available.

To learn more about the Sustainability Master Plan and see the Data Dashboard, visit www.sccgov.org/sustainabilityplan.



Climate Protection and Defense

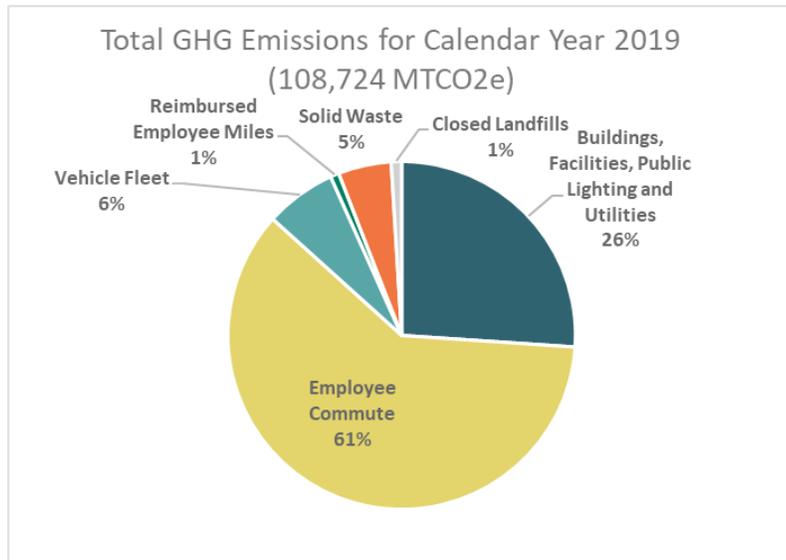
Goal #1: Carbon Neutrality

Become a carbon neutral County that supports a transition to zero waste and zero emissions (aligns with County Board Resolution 2018-145).

Annual County Operations Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory

To support the County’s efforts to move towards carbon neutrality, the annual County operations GHG inventory for calendar year (CY) 2019 has been completed, with CY 2020 tentatively scheduled to be completed by summer 2021. The 2019 GHG emissions profile for Santa Clara County operations, broken down by sector, show that employee commutes, buildings, facilities, utilities, and public lighting, and vehicle fleet continue to make up the majority of operations emissions. For the 2019 and past inventory reports, visit <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osp/Pages/annual-reports.aspx>

Overall GHG emissions in 2019 decreased 20% from 2015 and 11% from 2010.



Emission from

- Employee commutes increased 5% from 2015,
- Buildings and facilities decreased 52% from 2015,
- Vehicle fleet decreased 15% from 2015,
- Reimbursed employee miles decreased 13% from 2015 and
- Solid waste and closed landfills increased 30% and 128% from 2015, respectively.

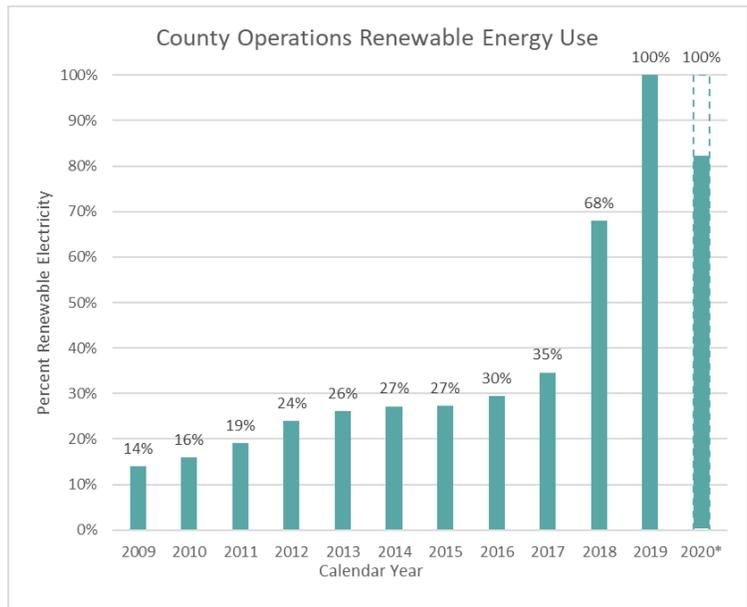
Community Climate Action Plan

Another major project to advance carbon neutrality is the County’s Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP), which kicked off in October 2020 by OOS. The CCAP will include a big picture understanding of the region to develop a comprehensive road map that complements other local strategies and allows for efficient Countywide collaboration on carbon neutrality. Four key components of the CCAP will include: 1) countywide greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecasting; 2) strategic outreach; 3) an online interactive climate actions map that will provide a catalog of climate action/adaptation activities being undertaken by cities and organizations in Santa Clara County; and 4) greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures, and a menu of priority strategies.

Strategy 1.1 Clean Energy.

Target: Transition to a 100% renewable energy system by 2045.

As of January 25, 2021, 78.5% of the County's 2020 electricity came from renewable energy. To increase the County's usage of renewable energy to 100% for 2020, Facilities and Fleet Department (FAF) is working with the Procurement Department (PRC) to make a supplemental purchase of renewable energy certificates (RECs). Once purchased, the supplemental RECs will be retroactively applied to the County's 2020 energy usage, as is allowable under the Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System rules.



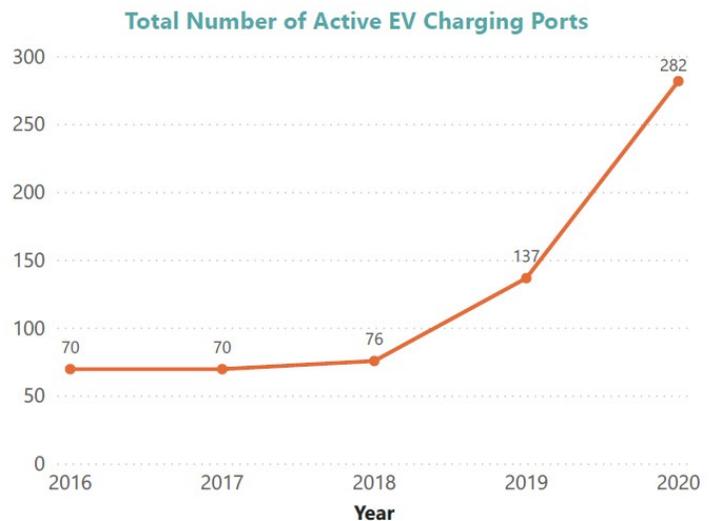
Strategy 1.2 Decarbonization of Buildings and Facilities.

Target: Ensure that the most energy-efficient lighting is installed, when feasible, on new construction, major renovation projects, and energy-efficiency projects where the energy savings will cover the cost of the lighting investment.

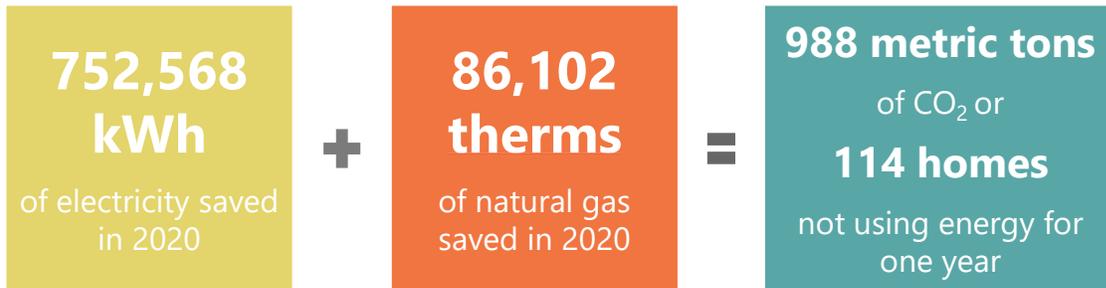
Ameresco and Siemens led two projects to develop energy efficiency at County facilities that were completed in late 2020. Combined, the two projects represent energy efficient lighting retrofits at 1.8 million square feet of County real estate. Over the 15-year lifetimes, these upgrades are projected to reduce electricity usage by over 46 million kilowatt-hours and save the County \$5,243,758 in electricity costs. Additionally, FAF is working on the development of a retro-commissioning program that will "tune-up" County building systems to operate in a more efficient manner.

Target: Increase number of electric vehicle (EV) chargers at County facilities based on recommendations from County fleet study on alternative fuel vehicles.

In 2020, a total of 145 charging ports were added at the Julian Campus, Charcot Campus, Civic Center, Tasman Campus, South County Fleet Yard, and the Animal Services Center, bringing the total EV charging ports to 282. Twenty-two new ports are currently under construction at Valley Health Clinic at Gilroy.



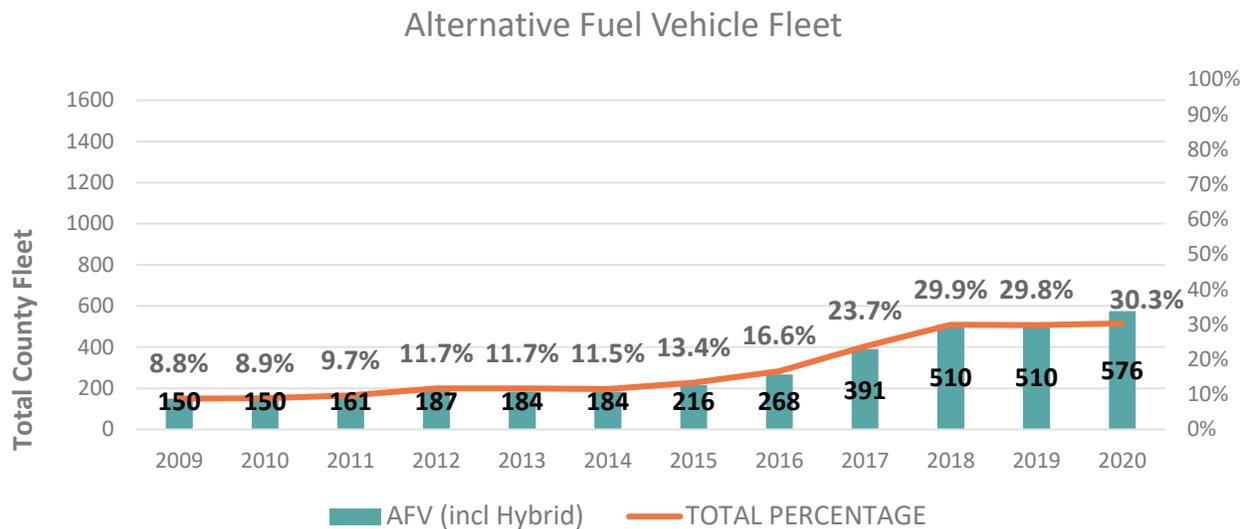
Target: Increase the overall energy savings achieved through Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) rebate programs.



Strategy 1.3 Clean, Safe, and Active Transportation.

Target: Where alternatives exist, ensure that 100% of public fleet vehicles are electric, hybrid-electric, or run on alternative fuels.

The percentage of alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) for both FAF and Parks and Recreation Department (Parks) has been increasing since 2009. In 2020, the total percentage of alternative fuel vehicles for these departments was at 30.3%.



The *Greening County Fleet and Operations Study* was completed in October 2020. Based on the findings of the report, the County can increase its AFV percentage to 75% by 2035, with a potential of saving 4 million metric tons of CO₂ annually. This is equivalent to 461,574 homes’ energy use for one year.

According to the study, achieving 100% AFV is challenging due to the operational needs of County fleet vehicles, such as pursuit rated vehicles for the Sherriff’s Office, and off-road vehicles for Parks. However, as the vehicle industry trends towards electrification, the County might have the opportunity to see a higher than 75% fleet by 2035. Due to budget constraints, at this time, FAF is working within its Fleet Management Division to determine and proceed with implementing vehicle reallocation to optimize usage without the need to purchase additional vehicles.

Target: Establish Telecommuting Policies and targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from employee commutes and meet local and regional requirements.

After the County’s COVID-19 shelter in place order, employee telecommuting jumped from 3.8% in February 2020 to 33.7% in June 2020. Continued telecommuting at this scale would result in preventing 33,800 MTCO₂e annually, which is the equivalent of removing 7,302 passenger vehicles from the road each year.

33%
of eligible County employees telecommuted during COVID in 2020

Strategy 1.4 Smart Growth.

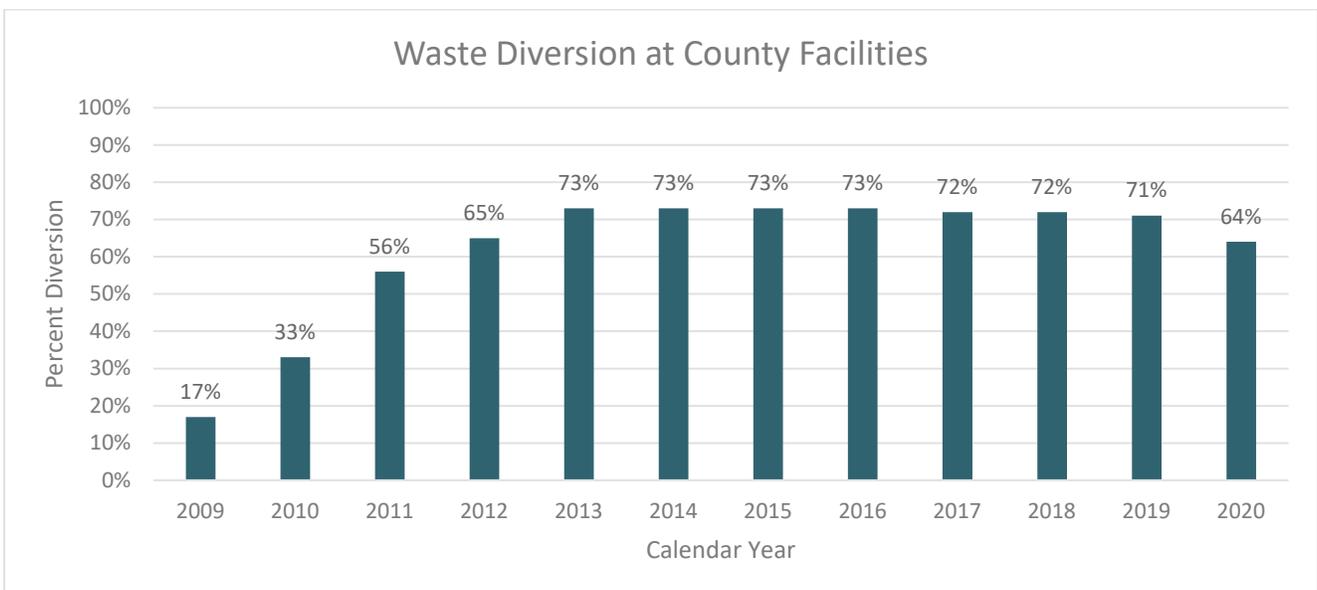
Promote smart growth development patterns to reduce land consumption, lower vehicle miles traveled, and support active transportation.

Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has been working on Zoning Ordinance amendments to better protect open space and agricultural areas. In September 2020, additional amendments were approved to have land development standards for non-residential development in rural unincorporated County also apply to residential development in the same rural area. This was to address both the potential disconnect between the County policy goals of supporting agriculture and Zoning Ordinance provisions and the threats to the County’s remaining agricultural areas and rural character by encroaching, incompatible land uses.

Strategy 1.5 Zero Waste.

Target: Divert 100% of achievable waste from landfills.

A 64% diversion rate in calendar year 2020 was reported for County sites for both planned and unplanned services. This rate of diversion has decreased compared to prior years due to the addition of O’Connor Hospital and challenges implementing the waste program at Valley Medical Center (VMC). Implementation of waste reduction programs at O’Connor Hospital was postponed due to the need to focus on COVID-19 response. Combined diversion rate for VMC and O’Connor is 30% and the diversion rate for the administrative buildings serviced is 82%.



Under COVID-19 conditions, unincorporated haulers were able to maintain collection and processing services including higher amounts of cardboard from home delivery, and the shift of garbage and recycling materials from the commercial to the residential sector as residents largely worked from home. While the waste reduction campaigns for reusable cups and take-out utensils were postponed, the County leveraged its participation in Bay Area Recycling Outreach Coalition on regional food waste reduction campaigns that were targeted at the increased number of residents cooking at home.

Implementation of California’s Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy (SB 1383)

In anticipation of the final approval from the Office of Administrative Law on SB 1383 Short Lived Climate Pollutants regulations, received on November 3, 2020, staff has made progress in the implementation of multiple SB 1383 provisions such as: confirming solid waste collection and processing compliance under existing Franchise Agreements; contracting with Joint Venture Silicon Valley on behalf of County cities, coordinating with students at Santa Clara University

and Stanford to create an edible food program to be implemented in conjunction with jurisdictions, food recovery organizations, and edible food generators; reviewing existing ordinances and policies to identify needed updates; and identifying monitoring, enforcement and staff needs to support implementation.



Strategy 1.6 Carbon Sequestration.

Target: Secure dedicated and sustainable funding to continue the Agricultural Resilience Incentive (ARI) Grant Program on an annual basis, facilitating the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices such as planting perennials and carbon farming, which improves soil quality while sequestering atmospheric carbon.

In May 2020, the Policies and Procedure Guide and Application for the ARI grant program was developed by staff and approved by the Board of Supervisors. Application and outreach materials have been drafted in preparation for early 2021 solicitation of grant projects.



Goal #2: Resilient and Prepared County

Increase preparedness and resilience to respond to the shocks and stressors that impact Santa Clara County and the services it provides.

Strategy 2.1 Planning and Assessment.

Target: Update and maintain a climate vulnerability and adaptation interactive web-based tool.



Updates to the [Silicon Valley 2.0](#) Climate Change Preparedness Decision Support Tool (SV 2.0) are underway to include the latest information on climate stressors such as sea level rise, riverine flooding, extreme heat, and wildfire. Improvements to the SV 2.0 tool include the addition of new shoreline flood protection projects in the flooding risk analysis and the development of a social vulnerability index layer to help target areas most vulnerable to climate impacts. Efforts will also include launching a County Collaborative composed

of cities, public agency staff, and nonprofit and private-sector partners to build capacity for cross-jurisdictional resiliency planning and project solutions, and develop a Santa Clara County Resiliency Strategy.

Wildfire Planning

Parks started development of a Forest Health Plan for Sanborn and Upper Stevens Creek County Park to assess forest conditions and develop recommendations. Implementation of the Forest Health Plan will remove dead, dying, and diseased trees, reduce forest fuels, establish fuel breaks, improve forest ecosystem health, and improve public safety.



Strategy 2.2 Emergency Preparedness and Response.

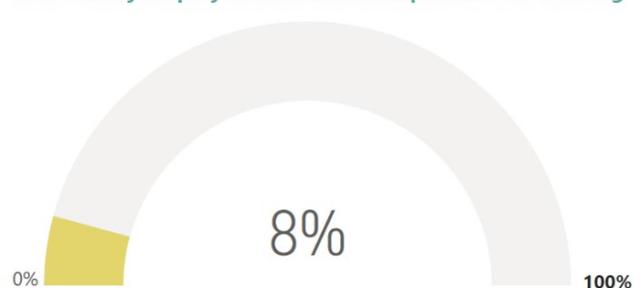
Target: An additional 10% of County residents to sign up for AlertSCC by 2025.

Target: All County employees to complete Disaster Service Worker Training and/or other specialized training by 2025.

Number of County Residents Signed up for AlertSCC as of 2020



% of County Employees that have completed DSW Training



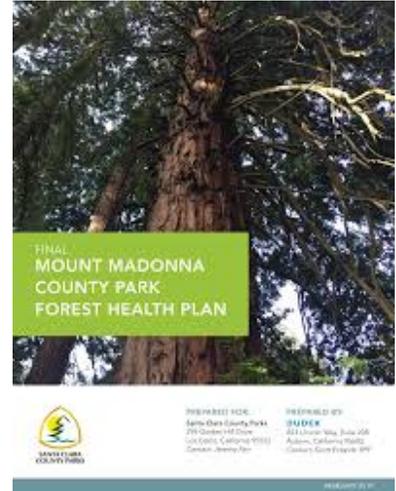
* Represents the 2025 target of signing an additional 10% of County Residents, with 2020 as the baseline

Wildfire Preparedness and Response

Parks implemented fuel reduction projects included in the Mt. Madonna Forest Health Plan with assistance and collaboration from California Conservation Corps and CAL FIRE. Corp members were trained by Parks staff and CAL FIRE on proper chainsaw technique, vegetation removal standards, and how to construct and manage fire fuel breaks.

Parks' Interpretive Program assisted with wildfire preparation by doing the following:

- Co-led two virtual public programs and one staff session on Fire as a Land Steward, in conjunction with Natural Resources Management with the goal to increase the understanding of how fire can be used as a tool to combat future fires, and the effects of wildfire on our parks.
- Set up a citizen science project at Joseph D. Grant Ranch County Park wherein visitors hike to designated spots and take photos to document recovery from the 2020 fires in the park last fall.
- Worked on disaster preparedness/response plans for protection, rescue and salvage of historical collections items stored or on display in county parks.





Natural Resources and the Environment

Goal #3: Air and Water Resources

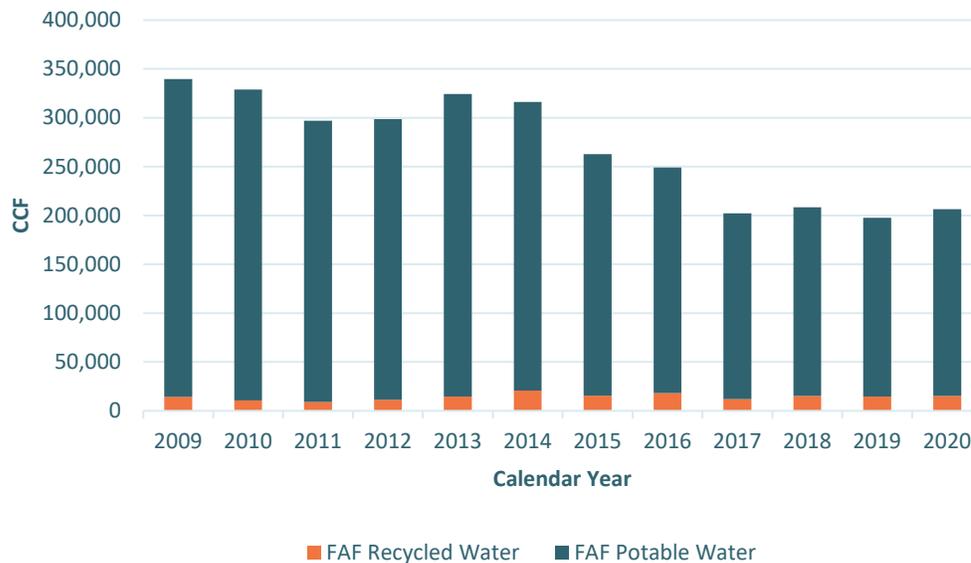
Maintain a healthy environment for all residents and living creatures.

Strategy 3.2 Water Use and Conservation.

Target: Reduce water use by at least 20% relative to a 2013 baseline by 2025.

Potable water usage for FAF serviced facilities has decreased since 2009 and plateaued starting in 2017. Despite recent increases in real estate square footage, water use remained stable in 2020. This is primarily due to an increase in telework as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and limited occupancy at two of the County's recent real estate purchases (Silver Creek and Tasman campuses).

FAF Annual Potable and Recycled Water



Target: Beneficially reuse 100% of wastewater by 2050.

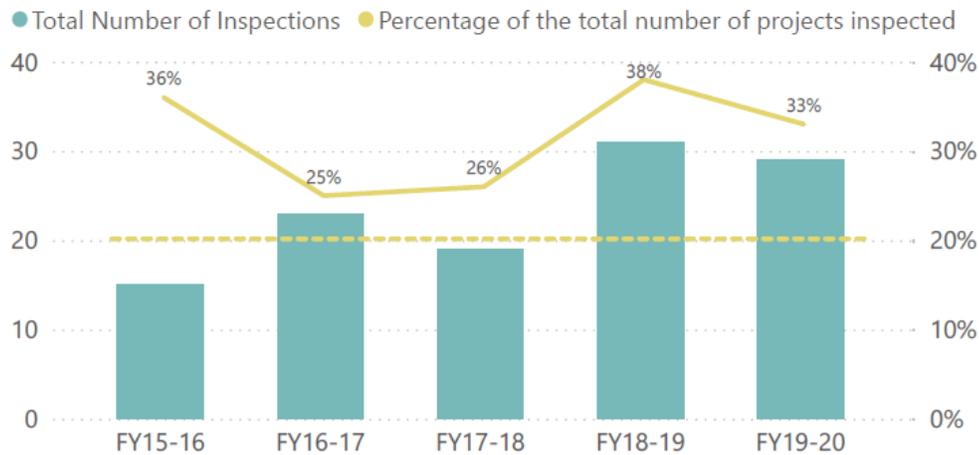
Recycled water use preserves the drinking water supply and helps the County achieve cost savings because recycled water typically costs less than potable water. Completed in 2020, Charcot campus is the newest facility to tie into recycled water for irrigation, bringing the total to seven County facilities that use recycled water.

Strategy 3.3 Water Quality and Stormwater Management.

Target: Meet or exceed requirements of the County’s Municipal Regional Stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits for North and South County by fostering best practices in County operations, promoting increased public awareness of stormwater pollution prevention, and supporting innovative approaches to meet state and federal stormwater regulations.

Regular inspections of stormwater treatment systems installed are required. Total operations and maintenance (O&M) inspections must be an average of 20% of the total number of projects installed at the end of the previous fiscal year.

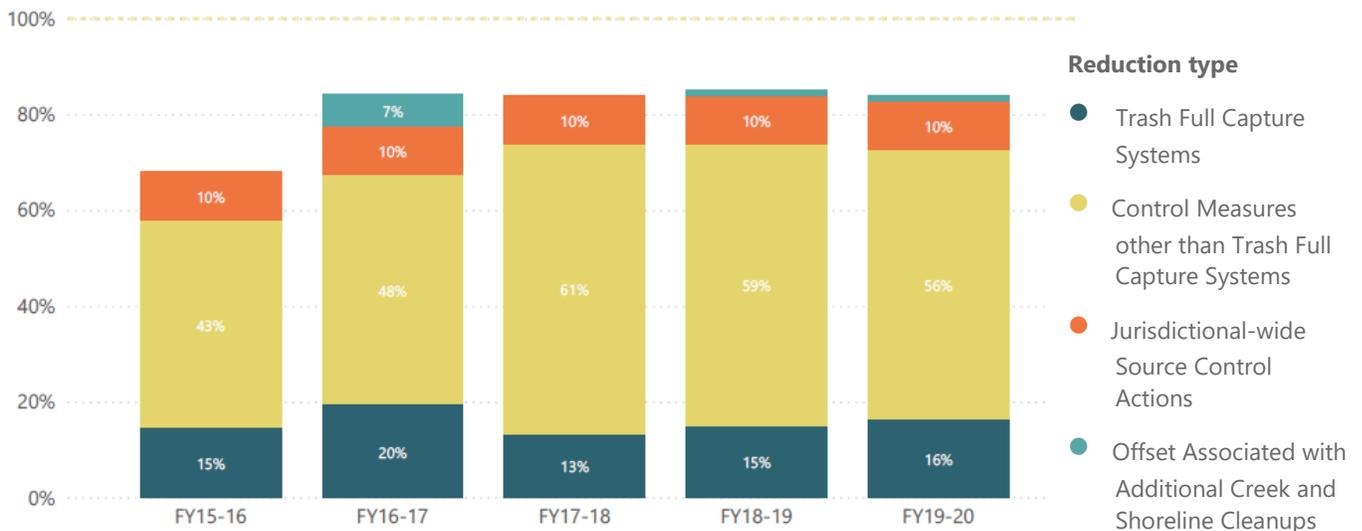
Number and Percentage of O&M inspections (for stormwater treatment systems)



Note: The dotted line represents the required minimum level of inspections required (20%).

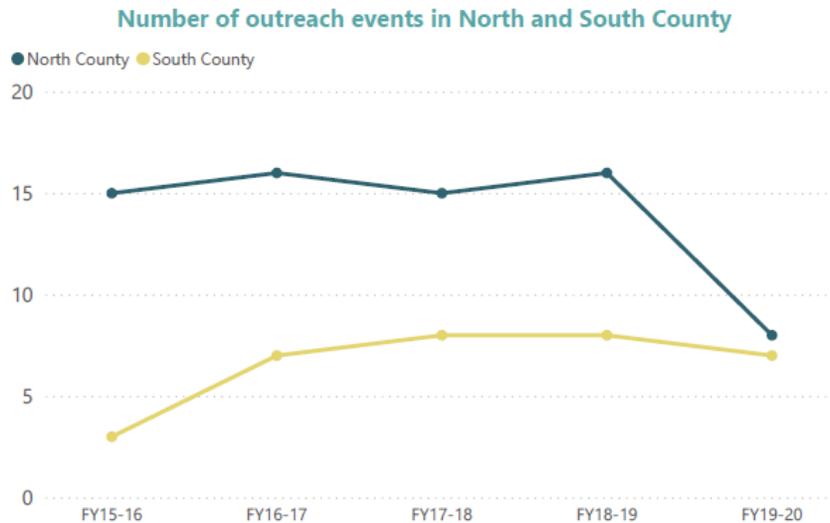
The County must demonstrate compliance with actions to reduce trash loads from municipal storm sewer systems. By July 1, 2022, the County must meet the goal of 100% trash load reduction or no adverse impact to receiving waters from trash.

Total percentage of trash reduction from municipal storm sewer



Strategy 3.4 Streams and Riparian Corridors.

Target: Increase the reach of stormwater outreach and/or conduct more regional outreach campaigns.



Due to COVID-19 safety measures that limited large group events, there was a significant decrease in outreach events in 2020.

Target: Increase awareness of the importance of riparian areas and protect them by working with community-based organizations and other partners to provide interpretive elements and programming.

In October 2020, Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency’s (CEPA) Clean Water Program (CWP) worked with San Jose State University’s COMMUniverCity on a partnership opportunity to provide expanded watershed education curriculum and pollution prevention outreach to school-aged children at McKinley Elementary School. A virtual presentation on Green Stormwater Infrastructure, which provides an environmental benefit to our local riparian habitats, was delivered to a classroom of children through Zoom. CWP is working with COMMUniverCity to help broaden the curriculum by introducing Parks staff to COMMUniverCity for future environmental lessons presented to school-aged children.



Parks was able to successfully recruit and establish a “Cape Ivy Team,” a new volunteer group dedicated to the removal of invasive plant species along Penitencia Creek in order to improve the habitat and water quality of the creek. The group of 7 volunteers was able to contribute over 60 hours of volunteer time cleaning and improving the creek.

Park Maintenance and Natural Resources Management staff were able to complete a total overhaul and reroute of the Town Springs water system at Harvey Bear. This project improved water efficiency, reduced water waste, provided additional water sources for cattle in the conservation grazing program and for wildlife in general, and reduced

erosion and water runoff thereby restoring the willow riparian habitat.

Strategy 3.5 Hazardous Materials Management.

Target: Meet and exceed pesticide elimination and reduction requirements of the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permits for County owned and managed lands.

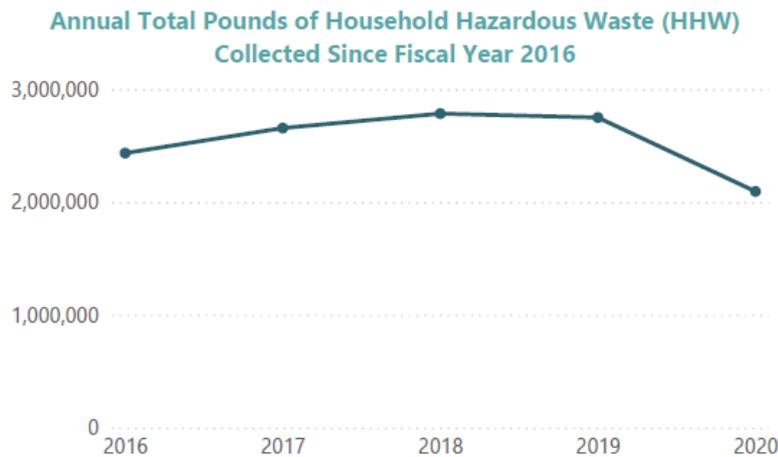
26
Legacy Pesticides Removed over the last 18 years

25
out of 29 Parks
Pesticide-free in 2019-2020

Percent of Pesticide Use Reduction from 2005 - 2020

Programs	% Reduction
Airports Pest Management	100%
Aquatic Pest Management	100%
Tree Health-Care Management	100%
Urban Turf and Landscape Management	100%
Parks - Natural Resource Management	99%
Structural Pest Management	99%
Roads Vegetation Management	75%

Target: Increase total household hazardous waste collected annually and disposed of responsibly



12,717,164
total pounds of HHW collected since 2016

1,796
Number of businesses currently enrolled in the small quantity business disposal program

* Due to COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders in 2020, the HHW Program was forced to halt operations from mid-March to mid-June, resulting in a significant decrease in pounds of HHW collected.

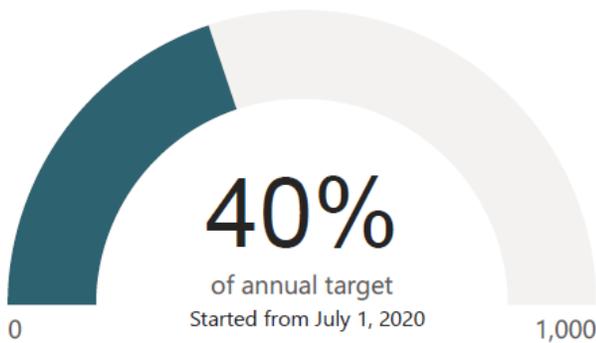


Goal #4: Natural Lands and Land Use

Enhance and protect natural and working lands so that they provide a range of social, environmental, economic, and health benefits for County residents and businesses.

Strategy 4.1 Habitat Conservation.

Target: Plant 1,000 trees annually Countywide in areas to address issues such as urban heat islands, low tree canopy, poor air quality and stormwater management and work with local governments, agencies and non-profits to build a comprehensive urban forest.



In June 2020, the County contracted with two local urban forestry non-profits, Our City Forest and Canopy, to facilitate a tree planting and outreach program and plant 1,000 trees per year over the next three years. Under this contract 397 trees were planted during 2020 by Our City Forest, which avoids 77,541 lbs of CO₂ per year¹. Since the planting season runs from October to May, this number includes only half of the planting season.



=



Part of this urban forestry partnership also includes the development of outreach and education programs to highlight to the public the importance of trees and the role they play in helping combat climate change. From July to October 2020, Canopy developed and deployed three webinars in the “More Trees Please” series, which had 821 participants. Of the total participants for the series, roughly 20%, more than 200, were from Santa Clara County. Professionals and decision makers from across the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond also participated

¹ Estimated eco-service benefits per year are projected when a tree reaches a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 12 inches at age 30.

² Source: [EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator](#)

in the series. In fall 2020, Canopy delivered the eight-week course, “Community Forestry School” through which 38 community members gained knowledge, skills, and hands-on training needed to take immediate action in their community to advocate for and grow and maintain the urban forest. Of the total attendees, 21 (over half) were from Santa Clara County, with 12 cities represented.

Strategy 4.2 Working Lands.

Target: Preserve at least 12,000 acres of agricultural lands most vulnerable to development (aligns with Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan and Agricultural Conservation Easement program).

In June 2020, a [funding agreement](#) was signed between the County of Santa Clara and Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (OSA) to preserve agricultural land. As part of this agreement, in November 2020, OSA acquired an agricultural conservation easement on 97 acres of the Frantoio Grove property in San Martin for agricultural conservation.

Strategy 4.3 Parks and Recreation.

Target: Work with local governments and regional authorities to link open space areas via regional trails, and close gaps in the Countywide trails network.

Aside from constructing a total of 10.48 miles of unpaved trail in both Calero County Park and to the Saratoga-to-the-Skyline Trail, additional trail construction began at Coyote Canyon. The trail crew is in the early stages of working with the California Conservation Corps to clear and construct new trails in preparation for the opening of the new property. Keeping these trails and lands open during the pandemic provides health, as well as sustainability, benefits.





Community Health and Well-Being

Goal #5: Healthy Communities

Improve the overall health and well-being of all County employees, residents, and visitors and eliminate health inequities to minimize the potential impacts of disasters and climate change on the most vulnerable residents.

Strategy 5.1 Public Health and Prevention.

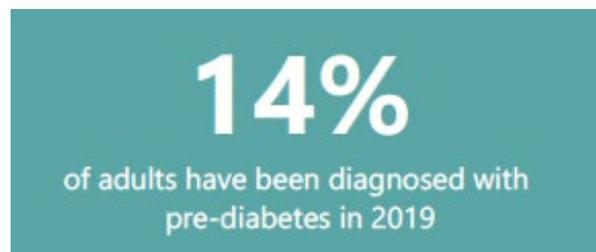
Target: Increase the number of households who upgrade their homes with energy efficient and electrification measures through Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) that improve indoor air quality, safety, and comfort of homes.

BayREN offers incentive programs for homeowners and property owners to implement energy efficiency and electrification upgrades and create healthier homes through improved air quality.



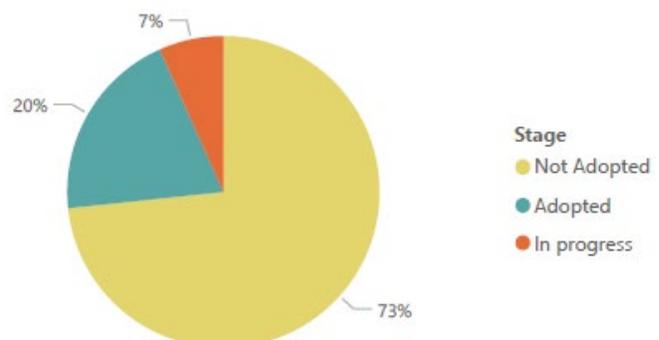
Target: Reduce percent of adults diagnosed with pre-diabetes.

The Diabetes Prevention Initiative (DPI) ensures that all people with prediabetes in Santa Clara County are identified and connected to prevention education, thereby increasing a healthy lifespan, and decreasing the burden of illness.



Target: Achieve 100% adoption of a Vision Zero Action Plan across all jurisdictions to prevent traffic injuries and casualties.

Vision Zero Action Plans as of 2020



Target: Improve health outcomes and well-being for the County’s most historically marginalized and vulnerable communities through population health approaches.

Public Health Department (PHD) continues to implement the Park Prescription Initiative (Parks Rx) and engage pediatric patients with chronic health concerns in bimonthly interpreter led walks at County Parks to promote the health benefits of park use and build future stewards of parks and open space as part of a larger climate mitigation strategy. In December 2020, Santa Clara County Public Health Department was awarded \$100,000 by the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority to expand the program and include:



- Calendario De Actividades Trimestrales/Quarterly Park Activity Schedules: Over 40 SCVMC pediatricians providing bilingual activity schedules that will feature 6 to 8 park outdoor activities to patients. Activities will include Parks staff-led walks to learn about climate change and conservation, hands-on gardening, self-guided farm tours, pediatrician/family hikes and park clean up events.
- Promotores Program (peer educators): training parents to be Promotores (community leaders who provide cultural and linguistically appropriate health education and outreach services within their own communities), to co-lead nature-based park walks, participate in hands on gardening, and promote environmental stewardship to friends and family.

Strategy 5.2 Health Systems and Access to Care.

Target: Increase the number of healthcare workers educated/trained on the public health impacts of climate change.

In 2020, PHD revised its climate change and health staff training. The updated training—Addressing Climate Change to Create Healthy, Equitable, and Resilient Communities—is designed to increase knowledge among employees about climate change impacts on health and the environment. Focused attention is given to how climate change exacerbates race and health inequities and impacts groups already vulnerable to climate change health effects. The training will be required of staff who have not completed the previous module and incorporated into the department’s orientation process in 2021.

Target: Improve access to infrastructure to support the increased utilization of telehealth (phone or audio-video) services.

Telehealth visits became an option in 2020, when Medicare and Medicaid provided temporary flexibility on how patient visits could be conducted and reimbursed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, as the Shelter-in-Place orders and expected surges of infections and hospitalizations made modifications to patient visits necessary, the Health System began offering telephone or video appointments. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these visits helped maintain the health and well-being of patients, providers and staff, and made it easier for patients to access care.





Goal #6: Equitable and Inclusive County

Encourage the civic participation, leadership, and engagement of all County residents and ensure all are supported in getting their basic needs met and reaching their full potential.

Strategy 6.1 – Civic Engagement.

Target: Increase the percentage of historically marginalized communities engaging in civic participation (e.g., voting, Census, etc).

In 2020, the Registrar of Voters (ROV) transitioned to a new model of voting, the Voter’s Choice Act (VCA), thereby greatly expanding voter participation and engagement opportunities for all County residents. Under the new VCA election model, all registered voters are mailed a vote-by-mail ballot prior to Election Day and have the choice of returning their ballot by mail, through a secure ballot drop box, or at any Vote Center within the County. Vote Centers, which have replaced traditional polling places, are open for multiple days and offer more space, language and accessibility services, and enhanced voting equipment.

VCA implementation efforts included extensive community outreach and engagement, particularly amongst historically underserved communities such as voters who primarily speak a language other than English and voters with disabilities. An expansive multilingual advertising campaign was launched utilizing a variety of advertising modalities, ultimately generating over 77 million impressions county-wide. Leveraging partnerships with a diverse spectrum of community-based organizations, ROV hosted over 700 hundred outreach events from 2018 through 2020. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department pivoted to virtual hosting platforms thus enabling the continuation of voter outreach events and meetings with ROV’s three community-based committees: (1) the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee; (2) Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee; and (3) Voter Education and Outreach Coalition.

732
total community outreach
events since 2018 for the 2020
Presidential Elections

1,019,309
registered voters

ROV’s sweeping outreach efforts culminated in a resoundingly successful November 2020 Presidential General Election, with election data reflecting increased voter participation and engagement amongst the County’s diverse residents. This includes reaching a monumental milestone of over 1 million registered voters, a 16% increase from the previous November 2016 General Presidential Election.

Strategy 6.2 Community Engagement and Leadership.

Target: Develop or expand leadership and capacity-building programs to provide education, training, and leadership opportunities (County or city training, community advocate leadership academy).

One of the components of the Parks Rx expansion that received funding in December 2020 is the Capitanes del Bosque/Captains of the Forest program, which aims to provide youth volunteer and leadership opportunities. This program will include environmental science thematic hands-on activities that meet Common Core and Next

Generation Science standards. Topics will include the importance of protecting and preserving parkland, wildlife adaptation to climate change, and urban agriculture. After training completion, youth will assist with park events.

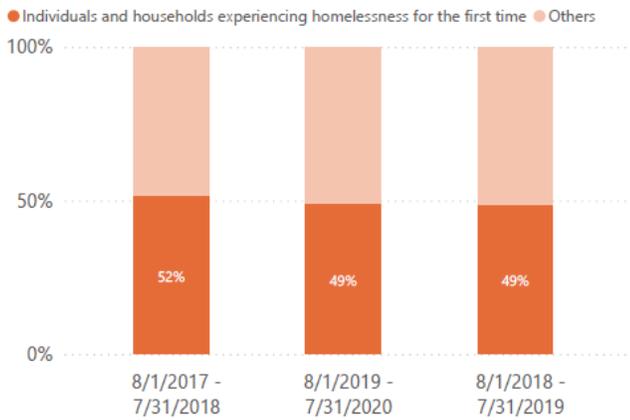
Strategy 6.3 Safe and Affordable Housing.

To build a community in which all residents have access to appropriate and affordable housing, the County developed the Community Plan to End Homelessness. Informed by community member input, this plan provides a roadmap for ensuring housing for all, as well as how to provide the support needed to stay housed.

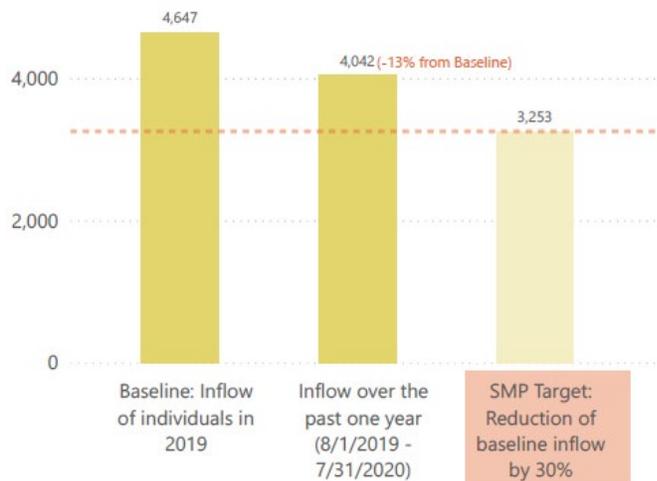
Target: Reduce the proportion of individuals and households experiencing homelessness for the first time to 60% or less.

Target: By 2025, achieve a 30% reduction in annual inflow of people experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Proportion of individuals and households experiencing homelessness for the first time



Annual Inflow of People Becoming Homeless

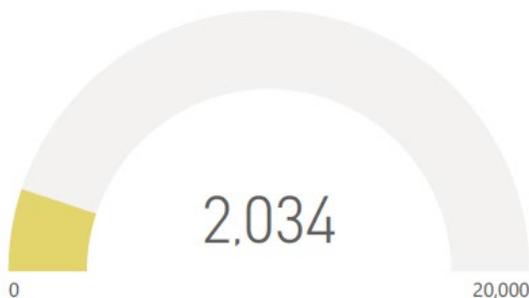


Target: From 2020 to 2025, house 20,000 people through the supportive housing system.

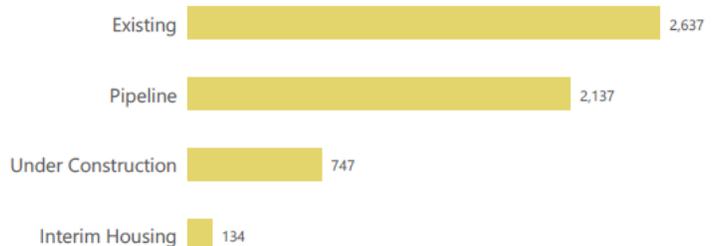
Target: Maximize utility of resilient, climate smart affordable housing on County owned parcels

Note: Data shows only affordable housing units as County is currently working on tracking climate smart units.

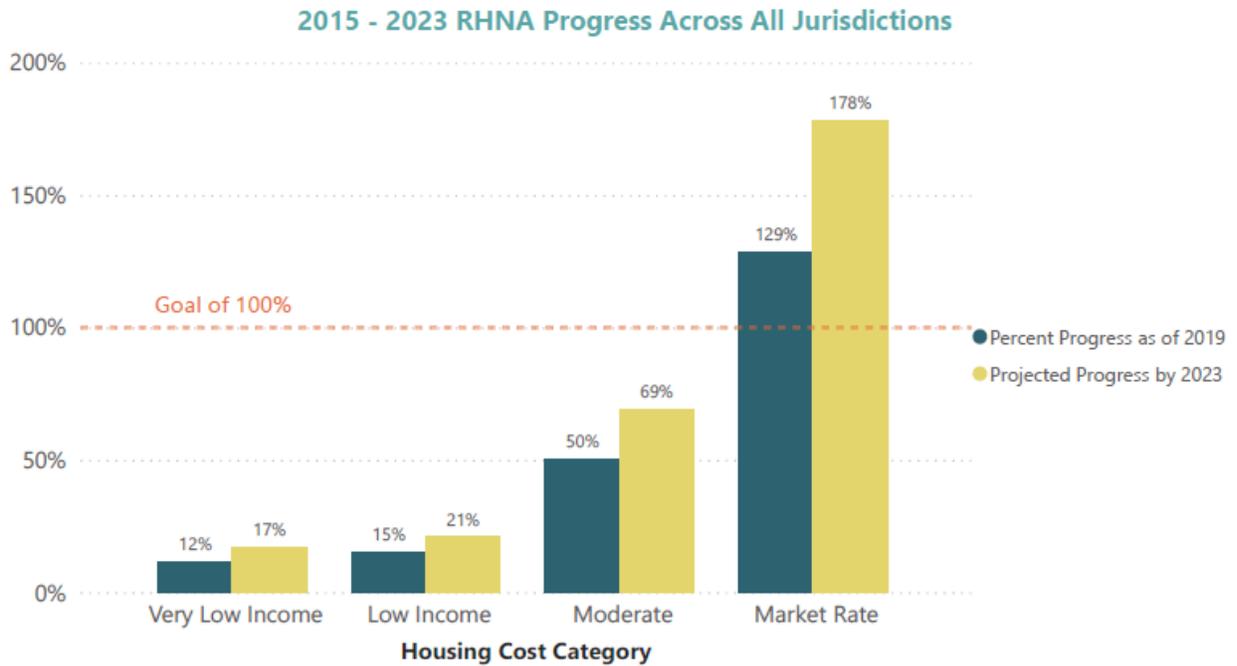
Number of people housed as of 2020



5,655
total units of affordable housing that received funding from the county



Target: Meet Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) targets in both unincorporated County and geographic County in all categories.



Strategy 6.4 Social Services and Safety Net.

Target: Increase permanent-housing outcomes for all homeless and unstably housed persons participating in safety net services.

300

families assisted by CalWORKs Family Stabilization Housing Assistance Program in 2020

146

clients housed by CalWORKs Housing Support Program in 2020

155

chronically homeless individuals placed in permanent housing through the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program in 2020

Target: Ensure that the basic needs of eligible, low-income residents in the County are met through accessible and timely services that increases participation rates in CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, General Assistance, and other County-administered benefit programs.

As of January 2020, before the beginning of the pandemic shelter in place order, 360,365 individuals or approximately 19% of the County population was enrolled in public assistance (CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Calworks, and/or General Assistance). As of December 2020, there were 399,269 enrolled, or approximately 21% of the County population of 1.9 million residents.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Social Services Agency (SSA), through the Senior Nutrition Program continued to provide meals and services for older adults and congregate sites. (Source: Senior Nutrition Program Annual Report 2019-2020)

15,384
Unduplicated Participants



1,433,802
Meals Served



638,274
MOW Meals Delivered



10
Ethnic Cuisines Served



11,975
Paratransit Rides



6,272
Monthly Bus Passes



1,711
Shared Ride Gas Cards



Target: Protect children and promote their healthy growth by increasing the percentage of children in foster care that achieve permanency within 12 months.

SSA provides eligibility determination and ongoing case management for clients shared with the Department of Children and Family Services.

almost
4,500
highly sensitive benefits cases managed involving children and young adults in care in 2020.

Target: Support economic self-sufficiency and the well-being of public assistance recipients through increased participation in CalWORKs and CalFresh workforce programs to gain skills, tools, basic education, training, and work experience to obtain and retain a living wage job.

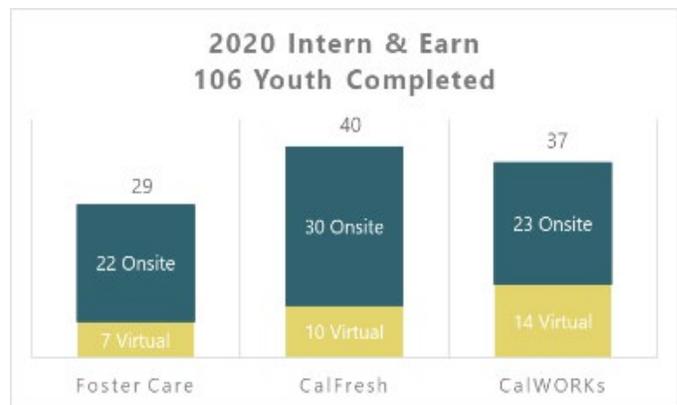
Clients in the CalWORKs and General Assistance (GA) programs receive a monthly cash grant to help with the basic necessities of day-to-day living. The CalWORKs cash grant is calculated based on family size and income,

and the maximum cash grant for a three-person family was approximately \$890 per month this year. GA clients without housing received \$150 per month for their personal needs, while clients with housing expenses received up to \$343 per month for their personal and housing needs.

almost
12,500
individuals (including over 9,800 children) per month helped through CalWORKs Program

over
4,300
individuals per month helped through General Assistance Program

Through SSA's Employment Services Program, CalWORKs Employment Services assists adults with one or more children, while GA Vocational Services assists adults without dependents. Almost 3,000 parents participated in Employment Services. During the pandemic, applications for the CalWORKs program spiked by 60% in the month of April 2020, rising from an average of 500 new applications per month to an average of 800 applications. Intern & Earn (serves eligible youth from CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Foster Care programs) youth earned up to \$3,960 this summer, working up to 30 hours per week at \$16.50 per hour.



(Source: 2020 Annual Report - Department of Employment and Benefit Services)

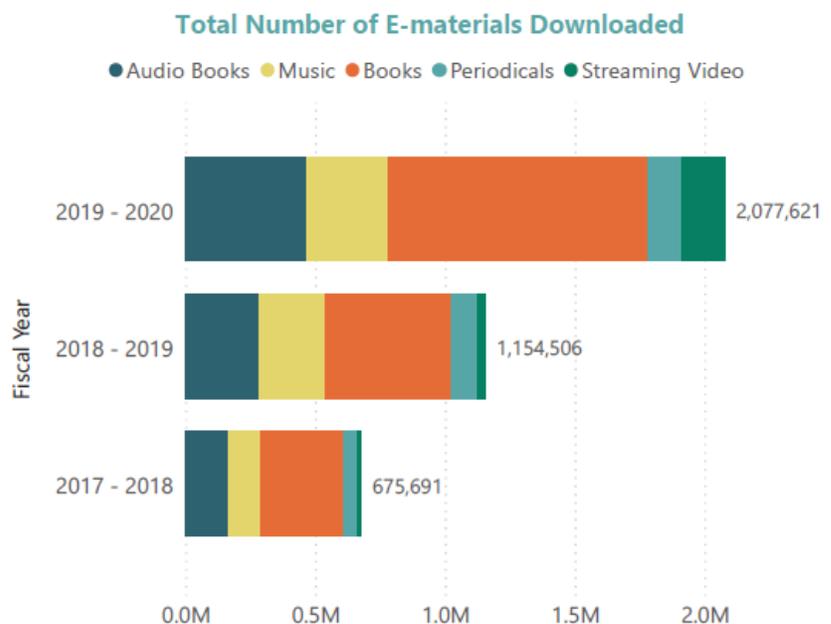
Strategy 6.5 Education.

Target: Increase the number of e-material downloads including ebooks, audiobooks, music, streaming video and eMagazines.

The number of e-materials, especially ebooks, downloaded saw a sharp increase in 2020 due to COVID-19 shelter in place restrictions.

Target: Increase the number of visits to the Santa Clara County Library District student portal.

Visits to the Santa Clara County Library District (SCCLD) student portal increased by 179% in FY 2019-2020, compared to FY 2018-2019.





Prosperous and Just Economy

Goal #7: Prosperous County

Cultivate a prosperous and economically vibrant County that builds career pipelines to match County residents with job opportunities through education, training, and resources.

Strategy 7.1 Workforce Development.

Target: Increase the available blue and white collar “clean and green workforce” courses/trainings jobs available regionally and in Santa Clara County.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were 596 green jobs in Santa Clara County in 2019.

Regionally, the County is in partnership with Rising Sun Center for Opportunity's Climate Careers Program, which trains and employs Bay Area youth to conduct Green House Calls in their home communities to educate residents about energy efficiency. Due to COVID-19, Green House Calls went contact-free in 2020. When residents signed up for a Green House Call, an energy and water efficiency kit was delivered directly to their door, including instructions on how to check on their home's efficiency, install energy and water-saving equipment, and help secure recommendations for further resource savings. After the kit arrived, Rising Sun conducted a brief phone follow up to ensure the installation process went smoothly and provide any necessary troubleshooting.

582
Santa Clara County residences served by
Green House Calls in 2020

Collaboration with California Conservation Corps, CalTrans and San Jose Conservation Corps

CEPA continued to oversee a contract between CalTrans and the San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC) for litter, debris, and vegetation management on freeways and highways in the County. This program provides paid job training and education for at-risk youth, ages 18-27 who desire training and completion of their high school diploma or G.E.D. In 2020, SJCC corps members worked 36,759 hours and removed 253 Cubic Yards of trash and 2,535 cubic yards of vegetations/debris from freeways and highways within Santa Clara County.



In 2020, Parks collaborated with the San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC) to provide Corps members with valuable work experience in a parkland setting, via removal and reconstruction of a new pedestrian bridge, vegetation management, and trail hardening. Park lands also provide SJCC the ability to host and carry out a variety of staff training exercises for new and returning members. In 2020, Parks and SJCC partnered to provide a basic chainsaw skill training workshop for new members at Sanborn County Park and trail construction and management at Villa Montalvo Creek Trail and Saratoga to Skyline Trail.

6,074
hours of service to provide parkland work experience and environmental education.

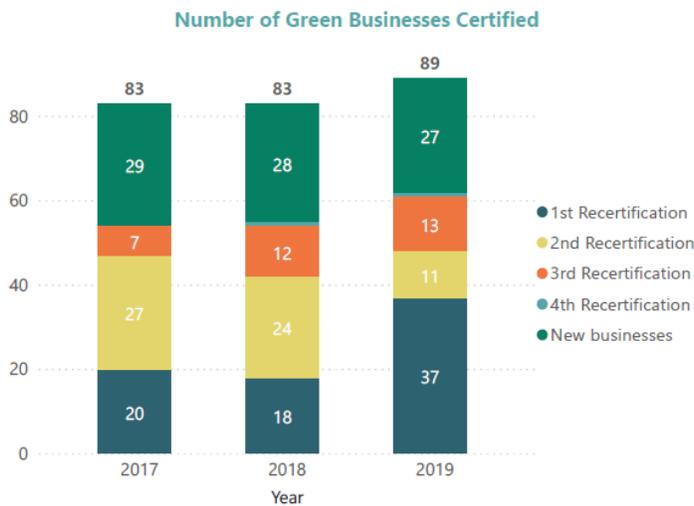
Target: Enroll at least 5 new Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) participating contractors who are trained in building science to become energy efficiency and electrification specialists.

To avail of BayREN rebates for single family homes, eligible energy efficiency improvements need to be installed by a Participating Contractor.

22
BayREN participating contractors received specialized training to become energy efficiency experts in 2020

Strategy 7.2 Local Economy and Diverse Job Opportunities.

Target: Certify at least 20 new Green Businesses per year and recertify all active Green Businesses on a 3-year cycle.



In 2020, a total of 41 Green Businesses were certified, which included both new businesses and recertifications. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the number of certifications, the program requirements for the year were still met. These 41 businesses saved 23,093 lbs of CO₂, or the equivalent of planting 35 acres of urban trees, 2,311,079 gallons of water, or the equivalent of 6 bathtubs of fresh drinking water per hour for a year, and 1,384 gallons of hazardous waste (calculated using [California Green Business Network tracker](#)).

Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) rebates

BayREN gives money back to the community by providing rebates to County residents and multifamily property owners who implement energy and water efficiency upgrades.

over
\$850,000
paid to County residents through BayREN Home+ Program in 2020.

\$1,215,750
paid to multifamily property owners in the County through the Bay Area Multifamily Building Enhancement Program in 2020.



Goal #8: Lead by Example

Leverage the County's resources and influence to advance sustainability, strengthen internal operations and responsiveness, and lead by example.

Strategy 8.1 Partnerships and Collaboration.

Target: Secure funding for Countywide or multi-jurisdictional collaborative proposals and projects.

In November 2020, Office of Sustainability (OOS) was awarded grant funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Coastal Resilience Fund to develop a coordinated Santa Clara County Resiliency Strategy and shared approach to increase coastal human and habitat community resiliency to sea level rise (SLR) and flooding throughout the County. The project will convene a regional Collaborative of partners and stakeholders in Santa Clara County to build capacity and political will for coordinated and multi-scale policy and project solutions and actions to increase community, economic, and ecological resiliency to SLR and flood risks in Santa Clara County.

Target: Develop a Comprehensive Countywide Work Plan to build a food system that provides for agricultural and food sector viability, improves coordination among food system partners, and promotes community-wide food security.

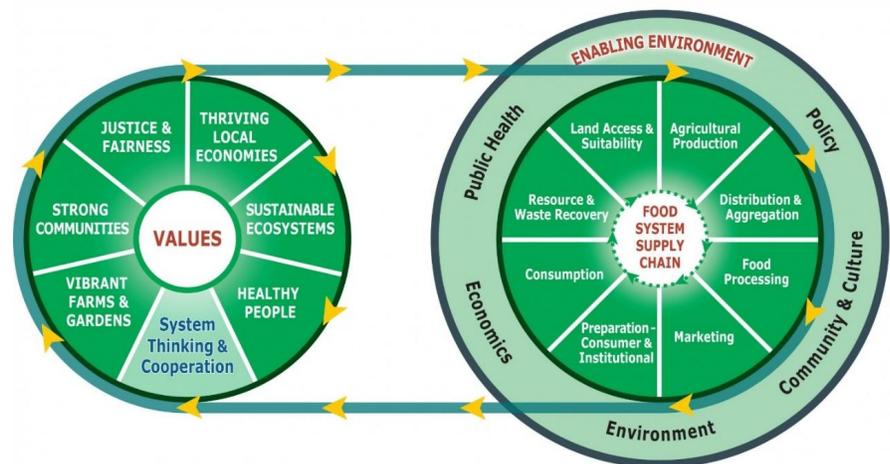
CEPA, along with contracted support from University of California Cooperative Extension, is leading the creation of a Comprehensive Countywide Food System Workplan in response to a request approved by the Board of Supervisors on developing a Food, Restaurants, Agriculture, and Health Access Initiative (FRAHAI).

The workplan, which will be presented to the Board of Supervisors in early 2021, is being developed with input from the:

- Food Insecurity Response Subcommittee Team (F.I.R.S.T) of the South County Youth Taskforce,
- CommUniverCity,
- South Bay Food Justice Collaborative,
- Santa Clara County Food System Alliance,
- SSA convening of emergency food providers,
- South Bay Food Justice Collaborative,
- Santa Clara County Farm Bureau, and
- "Kitchen Cabinet" meetings with representatives from different County agencies and programs.

So far, a total of 31 interviews with key food system stakeholders, 5 interviews with food manufacturers and processors and 29 reports and other documents about Santa Clara County's food system have been reviewed.

Food System Framework



County Climate Coalition

OOS launched a Learning Network with the County Climate Coalition in August 2020 and held the first two webinars of a three-part series about, “The Climate Crisis and a Just and Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19”. A total of 14 counties attended these webinars. The last webinar of the series will be held in March 2021.



Strategy 8.2 Procurement and Investment.

Target: Support the development of an adopted Sustainable Purchasing Policy in partnership with the Office of Sustainability and partner in calendar year 2021 on a pilot of two to five new acquisitions for Countywide implementation.

The Sustainable Purchasing Policy working group has expanded to include the Office of Countywide Contracting Management to provide a holistic perspective and representation for Countywide departments, ensuring its applicability to relevant County commodities and services. The working group has developed a draft Sustainable Purchasing Policy (SPP) to align practical and achievable County purchasing practices and activities with the Sustainability Master Plan. In parallel, this working group is drafting administrative guidelines to the SPP and outlining a process that demonstrates effectiveness in selected sustainable categories. The SPP is intended to communicate the County’s sustainable purchasing priorities and enable administration of sustainable purchasing standards. The administrative guidelines will help set purchasing standards to operationalize these priorities.

Strategy 8.3 Governance to transform systems, structures, and policies that perpetuate inequities.

Target: 100% of County agencies, departments, and offices to participate in the Government Alliance for Race and Equity (GARE) and implement their racial equity action plans by 2025.

In September-October of 2020, six County agencies and departments participated in the first internally led Race Equity and Leadership (REAL) Academy³. Departments were led on how to apply the GARE framework to visualize race equity in practice, policy, and governmental structures to transform the experiences and outcomes of historically marginalized communities.

The Race Equity Steering Committee provides support to participating departments in development and implementation of departments’ Race Equity Action Plans.



³ Departments trained included Health and Hospital System, Social Services Agency, Probation Department, Office of Reentry Services, Pretrial Services Department, and Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency. The four training sessions were led by staff from the Public Health Department and Equal Opportunity Department.

Acknowledgements and Acronyms

Updates and information on projects mentioned in this report were provided by the following County departments and divisions:

NAME	ACRONYM
Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency	CEPA
County of Santa Clara Health System	Health System
Department of Planning and Development	DPD
Facilities and Fleet Department	FAF
Office of the County Executive	CEO
Office of the County Executive – Division of Equity and Social Justice	DESJ
Office of the County Executive – Office of Supportive Housing	OSH
Office of the County Executive – Office of Sustainability	OOS
Parks and Recreation Department	Parks
Procurement Department	PRC
Public Health Department	PHD
Registrar of Voters	ROV
Santa Clara County Library District	SCCLD
Social Services Agency	SSA

Photo Credits

Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency / Office of Sustainability / Parks and Recreation Department / Public Health Department / Cover Photo: Michelle Wexler, Parks Rx Walk at Alviso Marina County Park

To learn more about the Sustainability Master Plan and to see the Data Dashboard,
visit www.sccgov.org/sustainabilityplan

Contact Us at sustainability@ceo.sccgov.org



Prepared by the County of Santa Clara
Office of Sustainability

