

How to Use the General Plan

Icons: Policies and actions related to the four themes of the General Plan – community health, environmental justice, economic development, and sustainability – are identified using these icons.

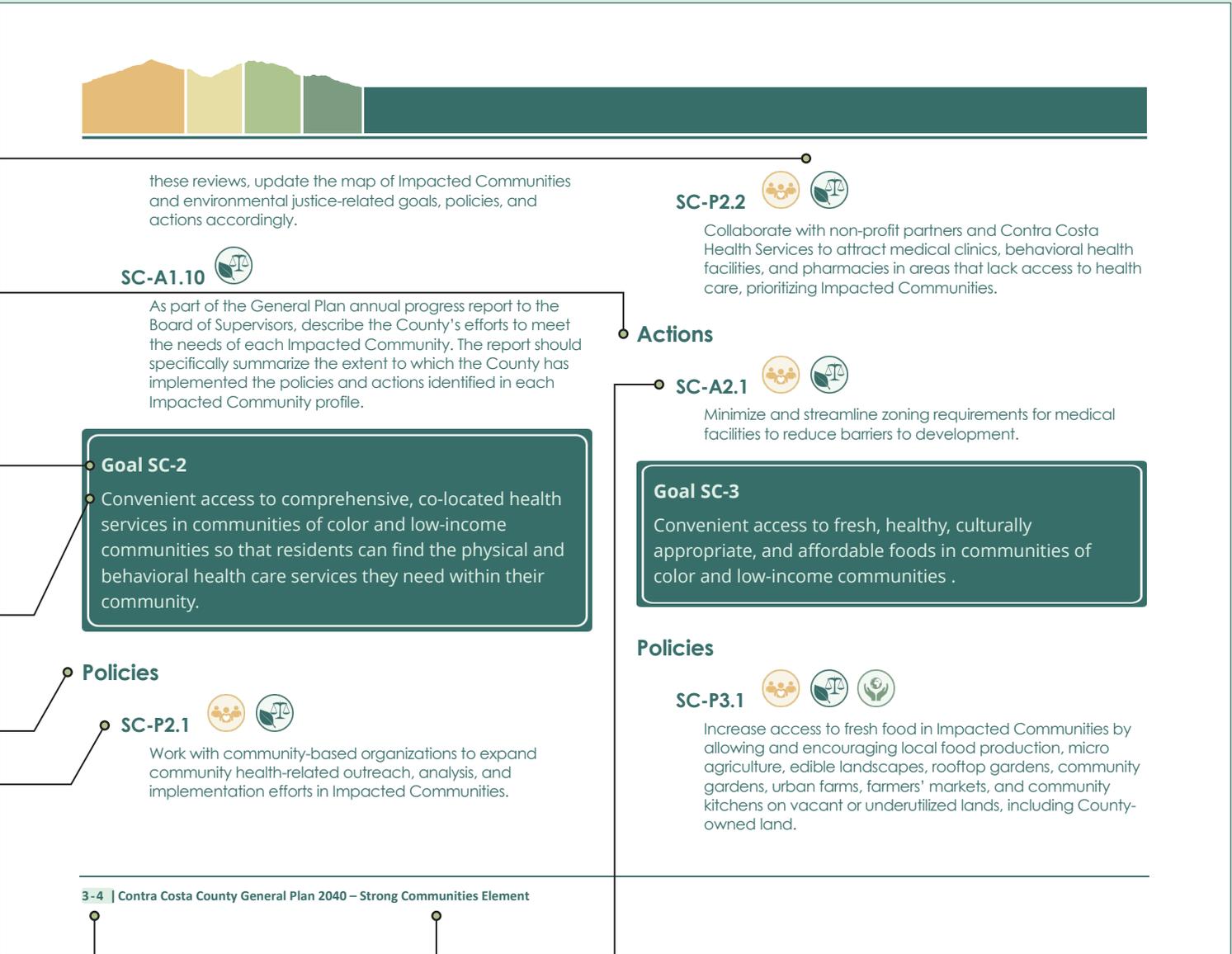
Actions: An action is a measure, procedure, or technique that helps the County achieve a specific goal. An action is something concrete that can and will be completed.

Goal Numbering: Each goal number starts with the element acronym and is followed by the number of the goal (e.g., SC-2 = Strong Communities Element, second goal).

Goals: A goal describes the general desired result sought by the County. Each goal has one or more policies and/or actions associated with the goal.

Policies: A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making as the County works to achieve a specific goal. Policies represent statements of County regulation and set the standards used by decision-makers when considering proposed development and actions. These are on-going and require no further action.

Policy Numbering: The policy number is shown as the last number, supporting the goal it follows (e.g., SC-P2.1 = Strong Communities Element, second goal, first policy). Policy numbers are not tied to action numbers.



Page Numbering: Shows the chapter and page number (e.g., 3-4 = Chapter 3, page 4).

Section Footer: Identifies the element title.

Action Numbering: The action number is shown as the last number, supporting the goal it follows (e.g., SC-A2.1 = Strong Communities Element, second goal, first action). Action numbers are not tied to policy numbers.

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STRONG COMMUNITIES ELEMENT

NOTES FOR ALL ELEMENTS

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Community Health



Environmental Justice



Economic Development



Sustainability

In addition, the draft policy guidance uses the term "Impacted Community" to identify what are called "disadvantaged communities" under Senate Bill (SB) 1000. SB 1000 defines these communities as low-income areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal SC-1

Equitable distribution of social and economic resources among all communities in the county so that Impacted Communities are not disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution or other hazards.

Policies

SC-P1.1



In coordination with residents of Impacted Communities, workers, and business/industry, support transition from petroleum-refining industries to just, equitable, and clean industries that offer living-wage jobs.

SC-P1.2



Incentivize and streamline the permitting process for public and private investment in new development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation that promotes community goals in Impacted Communities, as identified in the community profiles.



SC-P1.3



Support development of small-scale neighborhood nodes that provide a range of neighborhood-serving retail, public amenities, services, and related infrastructure to residents of Impacted Communities within walking distance of their homes.

SC-P1.4



Support community-driven events, such as festivals, farmers' markets, block parties, and community service days, that support social connections and neighborhood identity.

SC-P1.5



For projects negatively affecting an Impacted Community, pursue community benefits agreements that go beyond the inherent project benefits and achieve the community goals identified in the community profile, as negotiated with the community.

SC-P1.6



Prior to approval of a major development project in or adjacent to an Impacted Community, require applicants to document how the project will promote environmental justice and health, including how the project will ensure the following:

(a) It will not adversely impact the community;

- (b) It will provide benefits that support the community goals, as identified in the community profile and/or negotiated with the community;
- (c) It will provide economic opportunities for the community;
- (d) It will not directly or indirectly displace existing residents or businesses in the community; and
- (e) It will avoid direct or indirect negative impacts on the quality of life and health of residents within the community.

Actions

SC-A1.1



In coordination with residents of Impacted Communities, workers, business/industry, and the appropriate agencies, develop and implement a plan to transition from petroleum refining and other highly polluting industries to just, equitable, and clean industries that offer living-wage jobs. The plan should address site remediation responsibilities, timelines, and strategies to improve the health, safety, infrastructure, job opportunities, and revenue opportunities during the shift to a clean energy, zero emission economy, paying special attention to helping develop new opportunities for how Impacted Communities will realize economic, health, and other benefits.

SC-A1.2



With input from residents of Impacted Communities, develop criteria to be used in the project review process to evaluate how new development supports the County's environmental justice and health goals and the environmental justice and

health-related community goals identified in the applicable community profile.

SC-A1.3



Revise the hazard scoring system in the Industrial Safety Ordinance to increase the score for projects that negatively affect Impacted Communities.

SC-A1.4



Upon each review of the General Plan [will cross reference a Land Use Element action related to regular reviews of the General Plan], review health outcomes data for Impacted Communities to evaluate the effectiveness of the County's environmental justice policies. During this review, assess any updated information related to the delineation of Impacted Communities in Contra Costa County. Based on these reviews, update the map of Impacted Communities and environmental justice-related goals, policies, and actions accordingly.

SC-A1.5



As part of the General Plan annual progress report to the Board of Supervisors, describe specific efforts to implement the General Plan policies and actions in each Impacted Community.

SC-A1.6



Submit a report to the Board of Supervisors on the feasibility of creating, participating in, or attracting a public bank or

other types of economic development and wealth-building tools to support local interests and community development in Impacted Communities.

SC-A1.7



Establish a process for the County to identify seed grants, micro loans, or similar funding available to community-based organizations or public-private partners to support improvements in Impacted Communities, such as murals and planting strips.

SC-A1.8



Establish funding mechanisms to create and maintain public art in Impacted Communities. Work with residents of Impacted Communities to ensure public art is appropriate for their community.

SC-A1.9



Establish a process to permit and facilitate partial and/or temporary street closures for amenities such as parklets, farmers' markets, or other community-driven events as initiated by community groups. Provide streamlined and timely processing of permits and assist applicants through the permit process.

SC-A1.10



Develop and sufficiently fund a program to assist applicants from Impacted Communities in navigating the project application and review process.



SC-A1.11

Place appropriate contact information on the front page of the DCD website to maintain clear, simple lines of communication for residents to reach the County regarding code enforcement and nuisance complaints. Provide equitable, prompt responses to resident calls.

Goal SC-2

Convenient access to comprehensive, co-located health services so residents of Impacted Communities can find the physical and behavioral health care services they need.

Actions

SC-A2.1

Collaborate with non-profit partners to establish medical clinics, behavioral health facilities, and pharmacies in Impacted Communities.

SC-A2.2

Streamline zoning requirements for healthcare facilities to reduce barriers to their establishment in Impacted Communities.

Goal SC-3

Convenient access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food in Impacted Communities.

Policies

SC-P3.1

Increase access to fresh food in Impacted Communities by allowing and encouraging local food production, micro agriculture, edible landscapes, rooftop gardens, community gardens, urban farms, farmers' markets, and community kitchens on vacant or underutilized lands, including County-owned land.

SC-P3.2

Maximize multimodal access to fresh food in Impacted Communities, prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian access, by encouraging grocery stores, healthy corner stores, community gardens, and outdoor markets at key transit nodes and within transit-oriented developments.

SC-P3.3

Encourage new residential development to incorporate community gardens into the project design.



SC-P3.4   

Provide temporary access to County land in Impacted Communities for farmers' markets and community gardens.

Actions

SC-A3.1  

Inventory and map food deserts in the county. As part of the inventory, account for walking, biking, and transit access.

SC-A3.2   

Update the Zoning Code to streamline permitting of grocery stores and markets, including co-ops, in Impacted Communities and food deserts.

SC-A3.3   

Adopt guidelines to support implementation and program management of micro agriculture, rooftop gardens, community gardens, and urban farms.

SC-A3.4  

Study the feasibility of restricting fast food restaurants near schools, parks, and other places where children gather.

SC-A3.5  

Every five years, review the existing Alcoholic Beverage Sales Commercial Activities Ordinance to ensure Impacted Communities are not experiencing disproportionate concentrations of or impacts from new bars and liquor stores. To support implementation of this ordinance, set up and maintain a shared data system between the Health Services and Conservation and Development departments that identifies the location of current establishments, along with information about public safety and health.

Goal SC-4

Access to safe and sanitary homes in Impacted Communities.

Policies

SC-P4.1  

Ensure that future improvements in Impacted Communities will not produce a net loss of affordable housing or the displacement of residents, while seeking to increase the amount of affordable housing in the community.

SC-P4.2  

Coordinate with the Housing Authority of Contra Costa County, affordable housing developers, and other organizations to transition vacant, unentitled land in



Impacted Communities into affordable and transitional housing, which could include many types of innovative housing products. This should include homeownership opportunities to help residents build intergenerational wealth.

SC-P4.3  

Ensure rental housing is fit for human occupancy through ongoing and effective Code Enforcement, with priority given to rental properties in Impacted Communities.

Actions

SC-A4.1  

Develop and fund a land-banking program for future development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households in Impacted Communities.

SC-A4.2  

In collaboration with nonprofit and for-profit developers, study the feasibility of establishing community land trusts serving each Impacted Community that will support long-term community ownership and housing affordability.

SC-A4.3 

Expand the County's first-time homebuyer program to provide more information and assistance, prioritizing outreach and marketing in Impacted Communities to spread awareness of the program.

SC-A4.4  

Create an inventory of available land for tiny homes or other types of innovative housing products as alternatives to accommodate people who lack housing.

SC-A4.5  

Collaborate with the Contra Costa Council on Homelessness to develop and implement a plan to provide transition facilities and services for people facing homelessness. Link homeless programs with supportive services such as behavioral health, substance abuse, and primary healthcare.

SC-A4.6  

Conduct periodic outreach to absentee owners of properties in Impacted Communities to inform owners of their legal obligations to maintain rental properties in safe and habitable condition. Keep tenants informed of these efforts, including by translating the information into languages other than English.

SC-A4.7  

Create an online resource for tenants to understand their rights related to Building Code standards, landlord and tenant responsibilities, and how to request repairs or improvements to their home, including information that is specific to County housing and code enforcement regulations.



SC-A4.8   

Obtain funding for and reduce barriers to participation in the County's weatherization program and other programs like the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income homeowners; landlords; and renters. Focus these efforts on homes in Impacted Communities, and in particular rental housing and high-density housing.

SC-A4.9  

Consider the development of a vacant property registration ordinance that includes a fee to cover the costs for the County to deal with vacant properties and to reduce blight.

SC-A4.10   

Create a bulk buying program that allows people to purchase air conditioners, fans, air purifiers, heaters, and other electric appliances at wholesale prices and/or with zero-percent interest financing to increase energy efficiency and replace hazardous appliances. Work with volunteer groups to help people install air conditioners and other electrical appliances if they are unable to do so themselves, focusing on Impacted Communities and other areas with high levels of vulnerable people. Consider augmenting energy efficiency programs to reduce electricity use and help offset the cost of operating electrical appliances.

SC-A4.11   

Partner with local solar companies or MCE to enact a solar group buy program to purchase solar panels and battery storage in bulk for installation in Impacted Communities, including establishment and subsidization of community solar programs for joint membership, which aggregate multiple consumers' electricity sourced from a single photo-voltaic solar location. The program should include an educational component to teach the community about the benefits and process of solar installation and give them the opportunity to sign up for the program at a discounted rate.

Goal SC-5
Access to and expansion of job training, job opportunities, and economic stability in Impacted Communities so that residents can access safe jobs, earn a living wage to support their families, and build shared prosperity.

Policies

SC-P5.1   

Welcome businesses that provide desired goods and services in Impacted Communities, including food stores with fresh produce, healthcare, childcare, pharmacies, and other retailers. Balance community desires with comprehensive assessments of market demand to guide business attraction efforts.



SC-P5.2

Promote entrepreneurship and locally owned businesses and enterprises in Impacted Communities to support economic self-sufficiency and stability, including through training and outreach to local small business owners and minimizing permitting and other fees.

Actions

SC-A5.1

Establish a First Source Hiring Program requiring developers, contractors, and employers to utilize good faith efforts toward employing economically disadvantaged residents of Impacted Communities.

SC-A5.2

Explore strategies to establish a revolving loan fund, micro loans, or other economic development initiatives to support small businesses in Impacted Communities.

SC-A5.3

Develop and sufficiently fund a program to offer one-on-one support to small businesses in Impacted Communities; through this program, provide guidance related to available grants, marketing, financing, and mentorship.

Goal SC-6

Meaningful engagement with Impacted Communities so that residents have strong voices to communicate needs and solutions.

Policies

SC-P6.1

Notify and engage community members, organizations, and leaders when County planning decisions are being considered in or adjacent to Impacted Communities. Conduct outreach and engagement with Impacted Communities early in the planning process, as follows:

- Prepare public notices in the predominant language(s) spoken in the community and provide interpretation services at meetings as needed.
- Make public notices and other important documents easy to understand and available in print at local libraries, community centers, or other gathering places.
- Use a wide array of methods to inform community members of opportunities to participate, such as the County website, social media, texts, banners, mailers, and flyers.
- Use outreach approaches that are appropriate for the community.



- Schedule, format, and locate community workshops and meetings to be convenient for community members – both in-person and online.
- Use social media, virtual meeting platforms, recorded meetings, and other communication techniques for those without time or ability to attend public meetings.
- Consider data that reflects the economic, gender, age, and racial diversity of the affected population.
- Clearly explain potential adverse impacts of a proposed project in plain language that is easily understood by the target community.

annual budgeting process. Provide translation services at these meetings.

SC-A6.3 

Identify communities with a significant number of non-English speaking households and develop resources and strategies to better engage them.

SC-P6.2 

Support community-driven or community-led initiatives in Impacted Communities that work toward the policies and actions identified in the community profiles.

Actions

SC-A6.1 

Designate County staff to be liaisons to each Impacted Community.

SC-A6.2 

Hold semi-annually public meetings in each Impacted Community, including the County Supervisor representing the community and representatives from the full spectrum of County Departments, to hear from residents of these communities, and use that input to inform the County's

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TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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Community Health



Environmental Justice



Economic Development



Sustainability

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Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal TR-1

A transportation system that accommodates and encourages active, safe, reliable, comfortable, convenient, affordable, and resilient multi-modal travel options for all county residents, businesses, and visitors, regardless of age, ability, race, culture, or economic status.

Policies

TR-P1.1



Support improvements to transit, bikeways, and sidewalks to make active transportation more accessible, user-friendly, and safer. Prioritize infrastructure projects and programming in Impacted Communities.



TR-P1.2   

Provide energy-efficient street lighting for traveler safety and comfort. Prioritize implementation in Impacted Communities, particularly at parks, transit stops, alleyways, bike and pedestrian paths, and other appropriate areas.

TR-P1.3    

Streamline the implementation of traffic calming measures through the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to encourage walkability in Impacted Communities.

TR-P1.4   

Work with school districts, neighborhood groups, and the local Safe Routes to School Program to ensure that safe active modes of transportation to schools and related facilities are prioritized in Impacted Communities.

TR-P1.5  

Partner with adjacent jurisdictions, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to manage regional movement of goods through unincorporated areas, minimizing impacts on residents and other sensitive receptors.

Actions

TR-A1.1 

Implement an equitable pricing program for on-street parking in commercial corridors throughout the county. Such a program would allocate parking revenue to improvement projects in Impacted Communities.

TR-A1.2   

Pursue funding and other resources to implement the Accessible Transportation Services Strategic Plan and similar plans or initiatives that expand the hours of operation, operational boundaries, convenience, and quality of accessible transit to improve mobility for seniors, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations.

TR-A1.3   

Provide convenient ways for residents to notify the County and other responsible agencies when transit shelters and amenities, other transportation infrastructure, and street furniture (i.e., benches, garbage cans, and water fountains) are in a state of disrepair. Encourage and promote use of this reporting program in Impacted Communities.

TR-A1.4   

Support means-based fare programs that would subsidize transit passes for residents of Impacted Communities and other vulnerable populations.



TR-A1.5  

Develop a program that establishes, maintains, and enforces truck routes in the unincorporated county through State and local legislation and collaboration with other enforcement agencies, with the goal of minimizing impacts on residents and other sensitive receptors. This program should provide engineering solutions to divert trucks from Impacted Communities and establish criteria for designating truck routes, installing signage, and enforcement.

TR-A1.6   

Facilitate enforcement of idling trucks by promoting community-based reporting through the use of phone and online apps for offenses which would trigger immediate enforcement agency follow up.

TR-A1.7   

In collaboration with cities, transit providers, and CCTA, develop a uniform countywide transit shelter program, including maintenance and best practices in accessibility.



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PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES ELEMENT

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Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal PFS-1

Public facilities, infrastructure, and services that meet the needs of, and are accessible to, residents of Impacted Communities.

Policies

PFS-P1.1



Systematically prioritize investments in public facilities, infrastructure, and services that benefit Impacted Communities and respond to the needs identified in the community profiles.

PFS-P1.2



Advocate for and coordinate with various service providers (e.g., water, sewer, and recreation districts) for proper planning, maintenance, and implementation of services and infrastructure to ensure efficient and effective service delivery in Impacted Communities.



PFS-P1.3  

Prioritize clean-up of illegal dumping in Impacted Communities.

PFS-P1.4 

Continue to advocate for public-private partnerships that will improve access to reliable, fast internet and make digital resources available in Impacted Communities at affordable prices.

PFS-P1.5 

When communities request levels of County services that exceed the countywide standard, require the creation of a County Service Area or other special governmental unit to fund the service costs. Allow exceptions for enhanced services in Impacted Communities.

PFS-P1.6 

When adopting, amending, and imposing impact fees and developer exactions, consider the effects of such fees and exactions upon project economics, the County's goals, and housing supply. Consider fee reductions or exemptions for projects in Impacted Communities that are consistent with the priorities identified in the community profile.

PFS-P1.7 

Collaborate with local water providers (Contra Costa Water District, EBMUD, etc.) and private well-owners to ensure continuity of water supplies and provide financial relief to Impacted Communities if prices rise in drought conditions.

Actions

PFS-A1.1 

Prioritize needs and services in each Impacted Community as part of the annual budgeting process.

PFS-A1.2 

Establish funding and financing mechanisms in Impacted Communities to provide and maintain community-desired public facilities and services.

PFS-A1.3   

Implement and maintain urban greening projects in Impacted Communities that support the community's goals, including those identified in the community profiles.

PFS-A1.4  

Assess current Code Enforcement and Public Works maintenance practices for equitable implementation. Prioritize resources to keep Impacted Communities safe and

clean, emphasizing enforcement actions on issues identified in community profiles.

PFS-A1.5 

Ensure the 211 information service includes contact information for Code Enforcement.

PFS-A1.6 

Establish a task force of County department heads or their designee(s) to coordinate efforts, provide oversight, and otherwise ensure that public services and facilities in Impacted Communities are prioritized and efficiently and effectively delivered.

PFS-A1.7  

Partner with community organizations and franchise garbage haulers to optimize community clean-up days and residential on-call garbage pick-ups in Impacted Communities, including by focusing clean-up activities and pick-ups in Impacted Communities over other communities that are part of the same contract. Encourage community participation by holding these events in conjunction with other community events.

Goal PFS-2
Convenient access to safe and well-maintained recreational activities and parks in Impacted Communities.

Policies

PFS-P2.1   

Increase access to diverse, high-quality parks, green space, recreational facilities, and natural environments for residents of Impacted Communities, including through a variety of transportation modes. Collaborate with other organizations to obtain funding and design and maintain these facilities to offer a safe and comfortable environment for residents of all ages and abilities.

PFS-P2.2   

Require major new development projects in Impacted Communities to improve existing park and recreation amenities within the community and/or to add new amenities within the project, ideally open to the public. In-lieu fees may be used when the County determines that amenity improvements or new amenities are not feasible.

PFS-P2.3  

Coordinate with other agencies to support joint use of



facilities serving Impacted Communities.

PFS-P2.4  

Increase recreation opportunities by working with other agencies to convert public easements, such as utility corridors or unused rights-of-way, into parks and trails, with Impacted Communities prioritized.

PFS-P2.5  

Support local community groups and volunteer organizations in efforts to improve or maintain local parks, trails, and other public spaces, such as through an Adopt-A-Trail program, especially in Impacted Communities.

Actions

PFS-A2.1  

Coordinate with park and recreation districts to prepare a parks and open space needs assessment for each Impacted Community. Based on the results of the assessment for each community, implement improvements that address barriers to outdoor physical activity, such as inadequate infrastructure and safety concerns.

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HEALTH & SAFETY ELEMENT

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Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal HS-1

Healthy air quality for all communities so no community bears the disproportionate burden of environmental hazards and health risks.

Policies

HS-P1.1



Require a cumulative health risk assessment, including consideration of truck traffic impacts, when a project potentially affects sensitive receptors in Impacted Communities, and require appropriate mitigation based on the findings of the assessment, including the use of buffers around areas posing health risks as appropriate.

HS-P1.2



When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use a cancer risk of 1.0 per million as the threshold for a significant impact.



HS-P1.3  

Require new development to locate sensitive receptors such as homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, and long-term health care facilities as far away as possible from significant pollution sources.

HS-P1.4  

When evaluating air quality impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use thresholds of significance that match or are more stringent than the air quality thresholds of significance identified in the current Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Air Quality Guidelines.

HS-P1.5   

Require warehouse and distribution facilities to provide adequate on-site truck parking to prevent idling and require refrigerated warehouses to provide generators for refrigerated trucks.

HS-P1.6  

Prohibit fossil fuel powered truck, construction vehicle, and transit vehicle idling within 100 feet of sensitive receptors such as homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, and long-term health care facilities.

HS-P1.7   

Prioritize new street tree plantings and increase the tree canopy on public and private property in Impacted Communities, in particular areas with a high heat index.

HS-P1.8   

Support preservation, restoration, and enhancement of natural landscapes in and near Impacted Communities for their role in improving air quality and community health.

Actions

HS-A1.1  

Coordinate with State and regional regulatory entities and community members to facilitate AB 617 citizen-led programs including data collection, monitoring of pollution exposure, and identification and implementation of solutions in Impacted Communities.

HS-A1.2  

Assist BAAQMD in establishing and implementing Community Air Monitoring Plans to reduce the health impacts of air pollution in Impacted Communities, including considering future General Plan and/or Zoning Code amendments as needed to support BAAQMD in meeting AB 617 objectives.



HS-A1.3  

Coordinate with BAAQMD to determine where to focus a targeted permit inspection program in Impacted Communities to help ensure enforcement of air quality permits.

HS-A1.4   

Adopt an ordinance that matches or is more stringent than the State’s maximum idling law.

HS-A1.5   

Prepare an urban forest master plan for the county that includes quantified goals and tracking methods, including mapping the tree canopy, and prioritizes Impacted Communities.

Goal HS-2
Communities that are safe and resilient from hazards associated with the use, manufacture, transport, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous waste and hazardous materials, including from fossil fuels, chemical refining, and power plants, as well as pipelines, rail lines, and truck transportation.

Policies

HS-P2.1   

Coordinate with local and regional agencies in efforts to remediate or treat contaminated surface water, groundwater, or soils in or affecting Impacted Communities.

HS-P2.2   

Oppose construction of new large-scale hazardous waste facilities.

HS-P2.3   

Provide equitable inspection and enforcement of hazardous material and hazardous waste regulations throughout the county.

HS-P2.4   

Ensure there are adequate sites for the collection of household hazardous waste (HHW), unused pharmaceuticals, and wastes generated by boats and marinas, including provisions for residents that don’t own cars or are physically unable to deliver materials to a collection site.



Actions

HS-A2.1



In collaboration with local environmental justice organizations, update the County's Brownfields and Contaminated Sites Cleanup Policy and prioritize implementation of clean-up efforts in Impacted Communities.

HS-A2.2



Establish a mechanism to ensure that new industrial uses that involve hazardous materials will fund any needed clean-up of contamination resulting from the use.

HS-A2.3



Establish a comprehensive, long term strategy that coordinates efforts from appropriate regulatory agencies to mitigate impacts from industrial facilities on adjacent communities, both acute and long-term, with priority given to developing strategies for Impacted Communities. The strategies must include specific mitigations to address air pollution, pipeline risks, accidents, and sensitive ecological resources.

HS-A2.4



Provide clear information in plain language to residents of Impacted Communities about the hazards they face from

pollutant sources in and around their community.

HS-A2.5



Coordinate with park and recreation and school districts to identify indoor recreational and athletic facilities to serve as emergency housing and cooling centers in Impacted Communities for natural hazards or extreme heat events. In addition, work with these districts to prepare a list of priority improvements at these facilities to implement in preparation for emergency events.