



County of Santa Barbara
Clean Commute
Executive Report

February 2021



Authored by:

Jaime Espinosa, Benefits & Wellness Division

Sean Burns, Sustainability Division

1. Program Summary.....	3
2. Program Goals.....	3
3. Components of 2019-2020 Clean Commute Program.....	3
4. Program Accomplishments to date:	4
• New Employee Welcomes (N.E.W.)	
• Health & Benefit Fairs	
• Digital Content	
• Educational Events	
• Community Partnerships	
• Bicycle Repair Stations	
5. Telework.....	6
6. Telework Pilot Program.....	7
7. June 2020 Telework Survey.....	8
8. Upcoming Activities.....	10
9. Performance Metrics.....	10
10. Financial Summary.....	13
11. Clean Commute Resources.....	14

Clean Commute Executive Report

February 2021



Program Summary:

On May 14, 2019, the County Sustainability Division presented options to the County Board of Supervisors with the potential to reduce roadway congestion and air pollutants such as greenhouse gases (GHG) by incentivizing the County workforce with commuter benefits.

The recommendation offered was to have the Human Resources Department along with other required County Departments return to the Board with a more thorough assessment of employee benefits that could positively impact roadway congestion and GHG.

Upon returning in September 2019, the Board of Supervisors approved \$50,000 in funds to integrate an employee Clean Commute Program into County Human Resources, commission a Board approved Telework Pilot Program in two departments, and allow more employees the opportunity to earn extra vacation hours by using sustainable transportation for 60% of their commute trips.

County Human Resources and the Sustainability Division have collaborated to implement the Board identified goals through activities including:

- Updating the benefits and streamlining available information
- Increasing awareness of clean commute benefits and resources by leveraging new channels of communication
- Pursuing relevant projects such as supporting telework, hosting educational events, and coordinating with community partners.

This briefing seeks to provide an update on County Human Resources' Clean Commute Program and accompanying deliverables, activities, and services.

Program Goals:

The primary goal of the Clean Commute Program is to promote sustainable commute options that reduce traffic congestion, parking demand, and GHG emissions. Secondly, the program seeks to increase employee wellbeing and support engagement and retention by minimizing the impact on employees from long regional commutes and limited affordable housing.

The Clean Commute Program supports the policy goals of the County including the Climate Action Plan and goals to reduce County GHG emissions by 30% in 2030. The program helps to demonstrate County leadership on implementation of its own policy goals.

Components of 2019-2020 Clean Commute Program:

The Clean Commute Program organizes all the transportation benefits offered by the county. The Program provides information on how to access and use benefits, along with communication to County employees, and education about sustainable transportation. Below are the program components.

Clean Commute Benefits:	
TDM Vacation Bonus	Eligibility expanded to include employees using all forms of clean commute mode for 60% of their commute trips. Retain the 2 days of vacations per year.

\$10 Pre-Tax Transit Contribution	Employees can allocate pre-tax dollars for commute trips on public transportation including bus, train, vanpools. The County will match up to \$10 each month.
Parking for Rideshare	Employees commuting via Rideshare (carpool/vanpool) have the opportunity to apply for a parking permit in Downtown Santa Barbara lots.
Guaranteed Ride Home Program	In the event of an emergency, employees commuting via sustainable transportation may use a motor pool vehicle to get to home or loved ones.
Alternate Work Schedules	Employees can utilize alternate work schedules such as 9/80, 4/10 at the discretion of their department and managers.
Employee Discount Program	Offer E-vehicle and E-bicycle employee discounts through the establishment of a County Employee Discount Program.
Other Program Activities:	
Webpage	Redesigned the County's Human Resources Website, including a new internet and intranet page to consolidate Clean Commute Program Benefits and sustainable commuting resources.
Updated Commuter Forms	Updated the telework policy and form.
Leverage Human Resources Influence	Share benefits, resources, and sustainable commute information within Human Resources programs such as New Employee Welcomes, Open Enrollment, and Health and Benefit fairs, and regular electronic communications.
Telework Pilot	The Board identified a telework pilot study to evaluate the existing policy as well as gather management and employee sentiment.
Telework Support	Conducted information gathering to collect feedback on telework, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Education Events	Regular events bring information directly to employees such as Electric Vehicle 101 Webinars, Telework Support Webinars, and community walking and biking events in the future.

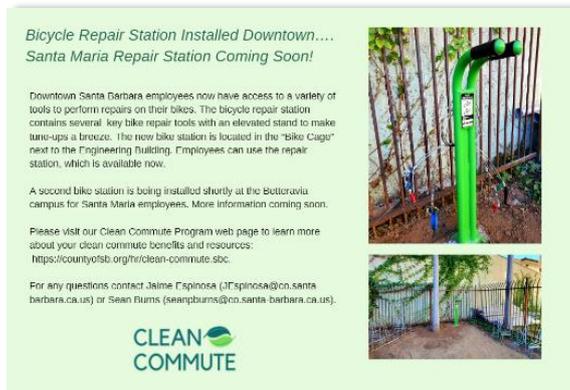
Program Accomplishments to Date

Both the Sustainability Committee and Board identified communication of commuter benefits to County employees as a priority. To address communication of information to employees, County Human Resources focused on:

New channels of communication:

- **New Employee Welcomes:**
 - Starting a new job is one of the best opportunities to rethink how an employee gets to work. The Clean Commute Program leveraged this opportunity to highlight program benefits information at County New Employee Welcomes (NEW).
 - Human Resources and Sustainability Division staff presented at several in-person NEWs in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria.
 - Developed and integrated digital content into virtual New Employee Welcomes during the pandemic.
- **Health and Benefits Fairs:**
 - The clean commute program worked to include benefits and information around sustainable transportation into County Open Enrollment and Health Fairs.
 - Tabled at in-person benefits fairs in Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria in 2019
 - Created a Clean Commute Benefits video to include in 2020's virtual open enrollment fair. During the one-week-long event, the Clean Commute Benefits video presentation received 134 views from employees.

- **Digital Content:**
 - Human Resources helped organize and consolidate benefits information, forms, and transportation resources into a new Clean Commute Program webpage.
 - Staff integrated benefits information and updates into existing Human Resources communication channels such as Monday Morning Connect for all employees and Tip Tuesdays for leadership staff.



Educational Events:

The clean commute program has partnered with several organizations to offer educational events around sustainable commuting for County employees.

- Coordinated with Community Environmental Council to deliver an Electric Vehicles 101 webinar in June 2020. Over 100 County employees attended, with several following through to purchase vehicles using the information presented.
- Co-sponsored and implemented a multi-agency initiative to provide a Telework Best Practices Webinar Series in June of 2020 to help guide County employees transitioning to remote work.

The partnership consisted of the following Agencies: SBCCCP (Santa Barbara County Clean Commute Program), SBCAG (Santa Barbara County Associated Governments)/Traffic Solutions, SLOCOG (San Louis Obispo Council of Governments), Commute Kern (Kern Council of Governments), VCTC (Ventura County Transportation Commission), TAMC (Transportation Agency for Monterey County)



“Thanks to the EV-101 webinar, I was able to purchase my dream car. The webinar provided lots of valuable information, I was able to take advantage of some of the benefits to purchase my Tesla.”

Alvaro Tolis
EHR Support Site Specialist

Community Partners:

- The Clean Commute Committee is comprised of representatives from County Human Resources, General Services, Sustainability Division, and SBCAG’s Traffic Solutions that regularly meet to provide updates, guidance, and coordinate on relevant projects.
- County Human Resource’s Merchant Partnership Program includes a partnership with Bunnin Chevrolet to offer employees discount pricing and a free fast charger with their purchase of an EV (Electric Vehicle).

Bicycle Repair Stations

In an effort to encourage County employees to use alternative transportations methods such as bicycling to work, the Clean Commute Program purchased 2 bicycle repair stations for the County employees. Knowing the workplace has basic tools for employees to fix/maintain their bikes can help increase employee confidence in riding to work and also save money on the cost of maintenance.

The 1st bicycle repair station was installed at our downtown location next the Engineering Building and the 2nd repair station was installed in Santa Maria on the east side of the Department of Social Services Building.



“As a County employee who relies on a bicycle to commute to work, I commend the County for installing a new bike repair station at the County Engineering Building in Santa Barbara. The bike repair station better serves County employees who already bike to work and encourages more employees to start biking to work.

The bike repair station, equipped with tools and a stand, makes it possible for County employees to repair and maintain their bikes, keeping them safe from breakdowns and helping them save money.”

Mark Friedlander
Alternative Transportation Manager

Telework

Telework is an important area of focus for the Clean Commute Program. Telework was identified as a low-cost and familiar tool to reduce employee commute emissions and improve employee wellbeing. The Telework pilot, originally requested by the Board of Supervisors, attempted to evaluate the existing County policy and collect manager and employee sentiment.

When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted traditional commuting and planned program activities, the Program transitioned focus to remote work. This included designing and distributing a County-wide survey to gather feedback on the rapid shift to telework for 30% of County employees in early 2020. The program also provided additional resources to help employees successfully remote work. The program will continue to assist County Human Resources and employees with future remote work support.

Telework Pilot Program

After the May 14th 2019 presentation on Commuter Benefits, the Board of Supervisors approved a pilot program to evaluate the existing County Telework Policy and employee and manager sentiments to regular telework.

The 6-month pilot was conducted from October 2019 to March 2020. The pilot included 18 sustained participants between the Community Services and General Services Departments. Participants completed a pre-and post-pilot survey to evaluate their experience. Monthly check-in’s captured regular participation and feedback. The pilot reviewed employee feedback on metrics such as personal satisfaction and productivity while collecting written input on challenges and opportunities.

Key takeaways after the pilot included:

- All participants felt the current County telework policy provided enough information and understanding to successfully telework.
- **95%** of participants expressed incorporating telework into their routines was beneficial.

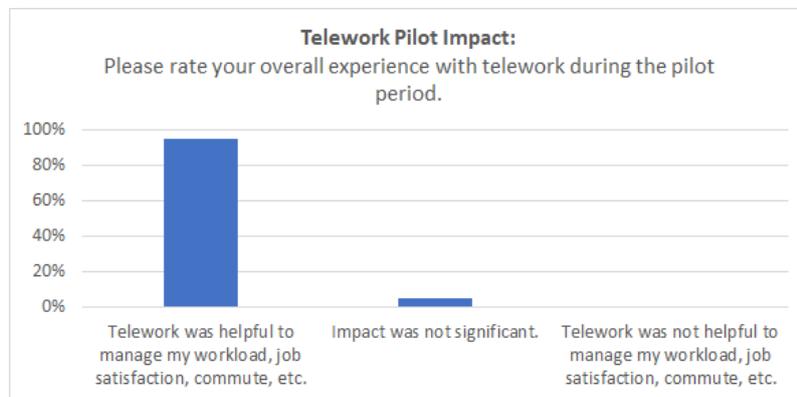


Figure 1. Participants were asked to evaluate their experience with telework during the pilot.

- **55%** of participants teleworked 1-2 days a week.
- **70%** of participants noted some increase in productivity when incorporating remote work into their schedule.

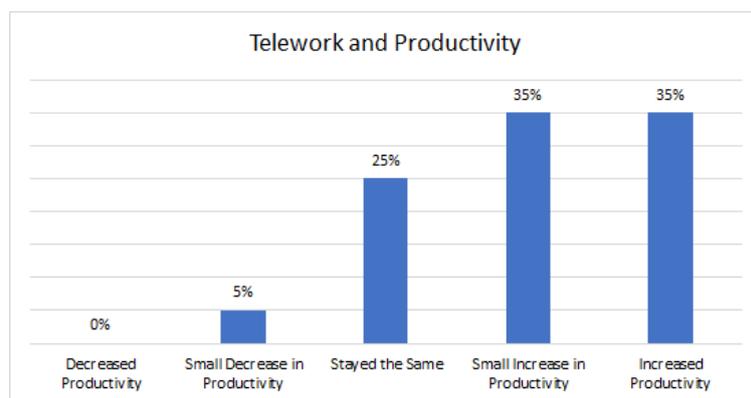


Figure 2. Participants were asked how telework impacted their productivity during the pilot.

- Commuting was the most important category of benefits. In fact, “less stress when not commuting every day” had the highest jump in importance (**44% to 85%**) before and after.

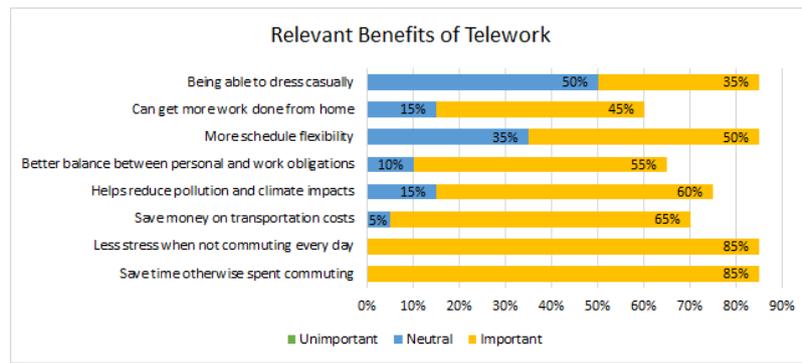


Figure 3. Participants were asked to rank the importance of telework benefits after the pilot.

- Common challenges consisted of equipment and IT issues such as software and forfeiting dual-screen monitors.
- **20%** of participants ranked manager interaction as the most important concern after the pilot, including “being passed over for promotions or opportunities...” and “difficulty communicating with my manager at home.”
- Each participant saved roughly **40-50** gallons of gasoline, **1,200 – 1,300** vehicle miles traveled, and around **0.4** metric tons of carbon dioxide over 6 months of teleworking 1-3 times per week.

The telework pilot suggests that incorporating regular telework into employee’s schedules offers a benefit for employees without negatively impacting productivity or operations. It also reaffirmed the current County telework policy was sufficient to get folks working remotely.

The pilot ended right as the COVID-19 pandemic began. Participants expressed gratitude that the pilot had prepared them for the quick shift to remote work in early 2020.

June 2020 Telework Survey

When the pandemic derailed planned activities and traditional commuting in 2020, the clean commute program shifted focus to telework. To capture feedback from County employees teleworking due to COVID-19, a short survey was developed by the Clean Commute Program.

The survey gathered feedback on telework and staff responsibilities, job satisfaction, and supervisor’s ability to manage their teams and maintain delivery of services. Questions were segmented between potential challenges and benefits experienced by managers and regular County employees. Over the course of two weeks, 625 County employees provided feedback including over 300 written comments

Key takeaways from the survey included:

- The County of Santa Barbara effectively expanded telework to applicable positions in response to COVID-19 stay-at-home orders while providing for employee health and safety and maintaining productivity.
- Managers and regular employees both recognized the benefits of a hybrid telework-office approach. This hybrid approach would preserve the benefits of office work and telework environments while mitigating difficulties when returning to work after the pandemic.

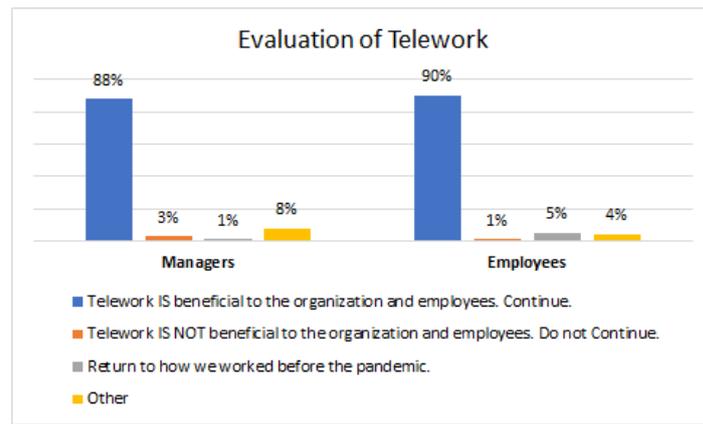


Figure 4. Management and regular employee responses to continuing telework.

- **43%** of managers cited increase in their employee’s job satisfaction. Another **23%** of managers cited the benefit was “increased employee productivity.”

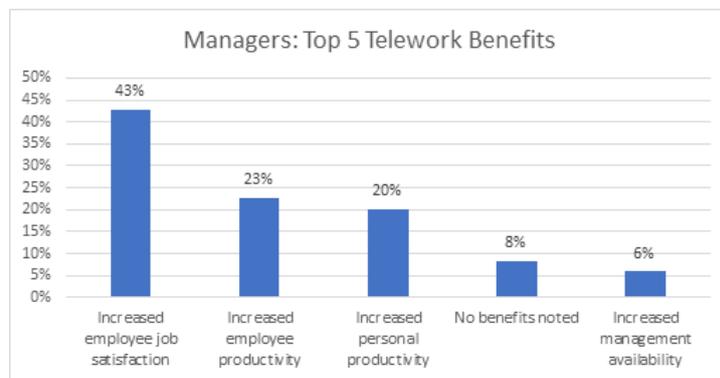


Figure 5. Management’s primary benefits noted with the shift to telework.

- **29%** of managers and **22%** of employees found computer and telecommunications to be the most significant challenge when adapting to telework. IT issues have largely been resolved. After IT, **28%** of managers indicated that no challenges were experienced.

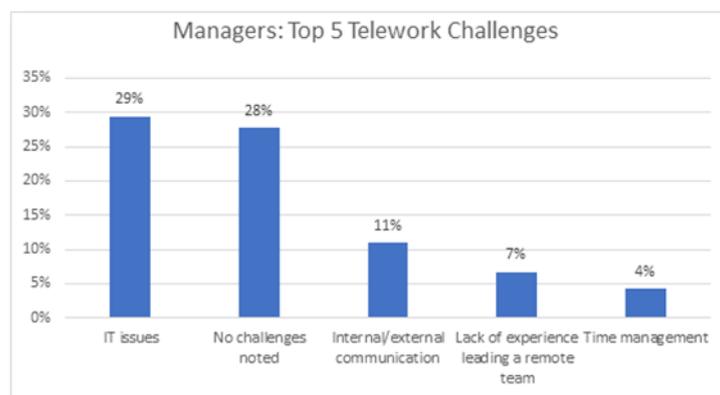


Figure 5. Management’s primary challenges noted with the shift to telework.

- **25%** of regular employees identified a reduced or eliminated commute as the primary benefit of telework. **19%** identified better work/life balance as their primary benefit.

Although challenges remain to long-term implementation, managers and regular employees recognize the benefits of telework for organizational and personal wellbeing including:

- Reduced commute times and increased employee satisfaction
 - Organizational resiliency during emergencies
 - Sustained increased productivity and reduced distractions
 - Reduced employee vehicle miles traveled
- While employees indicated that the TLC policy (44.83%) and agreement (43.06%) were easy to understand and were sufficient to get folks working remotely quickly due to the pandemic there are still revisions and updates needed to enhance them which include things like: automation of forms for ease of filling them out and submitting them, add language around ergonomics training to name a few.

Upcoming Activities:

Clean Commute staff is working on twice-annual newsletters for distribution to County employees. The newsletter will contain benefits information, updates from community partners, and highlight employee commute testimonials.

Performance Metrics

Performance measures let us know whether we’re on track to achieve our strategy and accomplish our objectives while also shedding light on areas where improvements are necessary.

The following metrics were identified for the Clean Commute Program in 2019 to track employees’ use of the clean commute benefits and to demonstrate program effectiveness.

Please note, some metrics were re-evaluated to address data challenges, use more meaningful indicators, and reflect additional program goals. The pandemic limited the performance of several metrics while boosting others.

Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM):

Regular employees that work part-time or full-time that use all forms of clean commuting qualifying clean commute modes commute mode at least 60% of their normally scheduled workdays in a pay period can accrue up to 2 extra vacation days per year.

Baseline % / December 2018:	11% participation
Target % / December 2020:	22% participation
Actual % / December 2020:	17.63 % participation

Important: Many County employees were mandated to telework due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the TDM benefit has been placed on a hold until the local emergency is lifted.

County Pre-Tax Fair Contribution:

For employees that want to use transit to get to work, the County will match up to \$10/month in a pre-tax account.

Baseline % / December 2018:	1.96% participation
Target % / December 2020:	10% participation
Actual % / December 2020:	2.1% participation

While participation marginally increased, the decline in public transportation riders due to the COVID-19 pandemic limited benefit usage. When employees return to work, greater awareness of this benefit and other public transportation options will be highlighted.

Telework Arrangement:

Teleworking from an approved alternate work location such as a home office can eliminate the need to commute to work. Teleworking can provide greater flexibility for employees and a more productive work environment with fewer in-office interruptions or distractions. Telework exceeded goals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote work will continue to be tracked and an area of focus for future program support.

Baseline % / December 2018:	5% participation
Target % / December 2020:	8% participation
Actual % / December 2020:	33.54% participation

A. Policy Satisfaction:

Baseline % / December 2018:	NA
Target % / December 2020:	NA
Actual % / December 2020:	80% satisfaction

B. Form Satisfaction:

Baseline % / December 2018:	NA
Target % / December 2020:	NA
Actual % / December 2020:	80% satisfaction

- *The automated form performance measure is now included here.*

Re-Designed Internet, Intranet, Portal Sites Satisfaction Website:

Baseline:	NA
Target / December 2020:	Overall satisfaction rating from 4/5 from 90% of respondents
Actual % / December 2020:	No data currently available

Overall satisfaction does not indicate behavior change, we believe employees who engaged in a clean commute video presentation at the virtual health fair correlates to an increase in the number of employees visiting the Clean Commute Website.

We found that consolidating clean commute information and resources in one centralized location has made it easier for employees to find what they need, when they need it. Between September of 2019 – December of 2020, the updated Clean Commute Program web pages received over **3,000-page** views. “Your Clean Commute Benefits”, “Ways to Commute to Work” and “Forms” were the top 3 most visited pages.

Free Parking for Ride Share:

Baseline:	5%
Target % / December 2020:	10% Participation
Actual % / December 2020:	30 employees are taking advantage of the Carpool Program

The County currently has 30 employees taking advantage of the Carpool Program. Vanpool is sponsored by California Vanpool Authority, a public transit agency, CalVans supplies qualified drivers (County employees) with late model vans to drive themselves and others to work. CalVans pays for

the gas, maintenance, repairs, and a \$10 million insurance policy. Although the County does not track the Vanpool program participation, it is being utilized successfully.

Guaranteed Ride Home:

County employees who use an alternative method of transportation to commute to work and then have an unexpected emergency may utilize the "Guaranteed Ride Home Program" to commute home.

Baseline:	NA
Target / December 2020:	Overall satisfaction rating from 4/5 from 90% of respondents
Actual % / December 2020:	No data currently available

Although a valuable program benefit, there is currently no reliable tracking mechanism to understand this performance measure. We are working with General Services to find ways to measure this metrics for future reporting.

Alternative Work Week Schedule:

Employees work longer days for part of the week or pay period in exchange for shorter days or a day off during that week or pay period. Benefits include more days off; less time spent commuting to work, and longer service hours.

Baseline:	NA
Target % / December 2020:	40% Participation
Actual % / December 2020:	Currently not available

There is currently no reliable tracking mechanism to understand this performance measure. We are working with the Auditor Controller’s office to find ways to measure this metrics starting in the new fiscal year.

Zero-Emission Vehicle and E-Bicycle Employee Discounts Through a County Merchant Partnership Satisfaction:

Baseline:	NA
Target / December 2020:	Overall satisfaction rating from 4/5 from 90% of respondents
Actual % / December 2020:	No data currently available

We are developing a survey to better understand our employee’s satisfaction with the entire merchant partnership program as a whole. Insight from the participating vendors is critical and we are working to develop a new performance measure to gain insight from their perspective.

Health and Benefits Fair Satisfaction:

Baseline:	NA
Target / December 2020:	Overall satisfaction rating from 4/5 from 90% of respondents
Actual % / December 2020:	134 attendees

Overall satisfaction does not indicate a behavior change, however, employee engagement is a better indicator of success. The 134 attendees represent the unique number of individuals who stayed engaged during the Clean Commute presentation from beginning to end which is a useful data point that we can expand upon in the future.

This performance measure will no longer look at satisfaction as a measurement but will look at engagement of employees at future events like health and wellness fairs.

Commuter Events Satisfaction:

Baseline:	NA
Target / December 2020:	Overall satisfaction rating from 4/5 from 90% of respondents
Actual % / December 2020:	NA

Due to Covid-19 no commuter events were offered.

Financial Summary

Clean Commute Program (FY 2019-20 Expansion)

Financial Summary (as of 6/30/2020)

	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Salaries and Employee Benefits	\$28,100.00	\$28,612
Services and Supplies	\$3,000.00	\$2,740
Total	\$31,100.00	\$31,352

Breakdown

Salaries and Employee Benefits	\$28,612
Services & Supplies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telework Webinar Series Co-Sponsorship • Bicycle Repair Station (2) 	\$900 \$1,840
Total:	\$31,352

Clean Commute Resources

Clean Commute Program Web Page

<https://countyofsb.org/hr/clean-commute.sbc>

Monday Morning Connect News Letter 2.1.2021

[2.1.2021 MMC \(5\).pdf](#) | [Powered by Box](#)

(CEC) Community Environmental Council: www.cecsb.org

[CEC's Electric Vehicles 101 Webinar](#)

“Best Practices and Tips for Telework During COVID-19 and Beyond”

4 Part Webinar Series

[Click here](#) to access the recorded Webinar #1: Remote Management

[Click here](#) to access the recorded Webinar #2: Telework Best Practices

[Click here](#) to access the recorded Webinar #3: What's Next? Incorporating Telework into your Business Strategy.

[Click here](#) to access the recorded Webinar #4: Real Conversations with Real Teleworkers and Employers.

For questions regarding the County of Santa Barbara Clean Commute Program please contact:

Jaime Espinosa: Jespinosa@sbcountyhr.org

Or

Sean Burns: SeanPBurns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us