



5 YEAR REVIEW

2019 - 2024



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Credit: Mark Bright

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the County kicked off several planning efforts to identify future climate impacts, reduce carbon emissions and increase quality of life throughout the region. The various plans all cover some aspect of resource management and community development within the context of climate change.

The One Climate Initiative was launched to serve as an enduring brand and platform for a variety of long-range climate-related plans and their projects. The Initiative builds off of the tagline “One County. One Future.” and affirms the County’s leadership to ensure a prosperous and climate-safe future.

The One Climate Initiative spans a variety of topic areas that will shape the future of the County for decades to come to foster a more resilient Santa Barbara County.

The One Climate Initiative:

- Unifies messaging and outreach for several major long-range climate plans
- Increases visibility and awareness of the interrelated efforts
- Coordinates and aligns multiple strategic plans, while reducing costs and strain on staff capacity.

VISION STATEMENT

Through the One Climate Initiative, the County will:

Build Connections through physical improvements in the built environment, like bike routes and broadband, enabling communities to connect physically and virtually. Increase transit services, bike routes, and shared mobility vehicles and devices to enhance mobility. Make connections across economic sectors, public and private, north and south, rural and urban through partnerships and networks, implementing mutually beneficial initiatives to improve quality of life and community resilience. Invest in farms and ranches, and public lands to improve soil health, biodiversity, water use efficiency and quality, and local food access.



Increase Accessibility to safe and affordable housing that is in close proximity to jobs, schools, amenities, recreation, healthy foods and County services through collaborative ventures. Target incentives and programs to ensure equitable access to reliable public transportation, clean energy, medical care services, and a safe and healthy environment. Make community planning and government decision making processes more accessible through virtual meetings, interpretation services, and support for families to engage.

Address Equity through increasing resources directed to low-income communities and communities of color. Increase effectiveness and efficiency of daily services and utilities and bring greater value to the community. Prioritize and center populations once marginalized in planning and decision making, and give additional support to ensure meaningful engagement that is culturally and linguistically appropriate. Create processes and procedures to provide transparency and accountability, empowering communities to lead conversations and ensure outcomes are delivered as promised.

Improve Health both mental and physical, by ensuring accessibility and abundance of recreational facilities and opportunities, community and medical services, and healthy food. Improve air quality and comfort by investing in trees, green infrastructure, open spaces, and electrifying buildings and vehicles. Offer publicly available clean air rooms and facilities for easy breathing amidst wildfires and smoke impacts. Provide wrap around health care support services for under-served communities to mitigate and address mental and physical health impacts from climate change.



Source: KCBX



Enhance Resilience through planning, education and outreach, and community collaboration. Adapt built and natural infrastructure, buildings, and key community services to tolerate and respond to climate change impacts. Equip and train neighbors, utilities, critical facilities, and community centers to weather climate extremes, drought, power outages, and other emergencies while supporting each other. Better prepare communities to deal with the impacts with plans to prepare and manage disruptions and tools to aid recovery. Support local businesses and industries to be resilient and responsive to change and disruption.

INTEGRATING EQUITY

Frontline communities experience the impacts of climate change earlier and/or to a disproportionately severe degree than others and are less able to access resources. Residents of frontline communities are often immigrants and refugees, indigenous, and persons of color, and face increased hardship due to socio-economic or environmental pressures. These are compounded by historical institutionalized and structural inequities that further drive inequality. In order to address these challenges, the County has sought to integrate equity throughout its planning processes and outcomes.

The County established the Equity Advisory & Outreach Committee (EAOC) to serve as an advisory body to the One Climate Initiative projects. The EAOC is composed of individuals and organizations that work with or represent frontline communities in the County. County staff solicit input, guidance and feedback from the EAOC during planning and implementation phases.

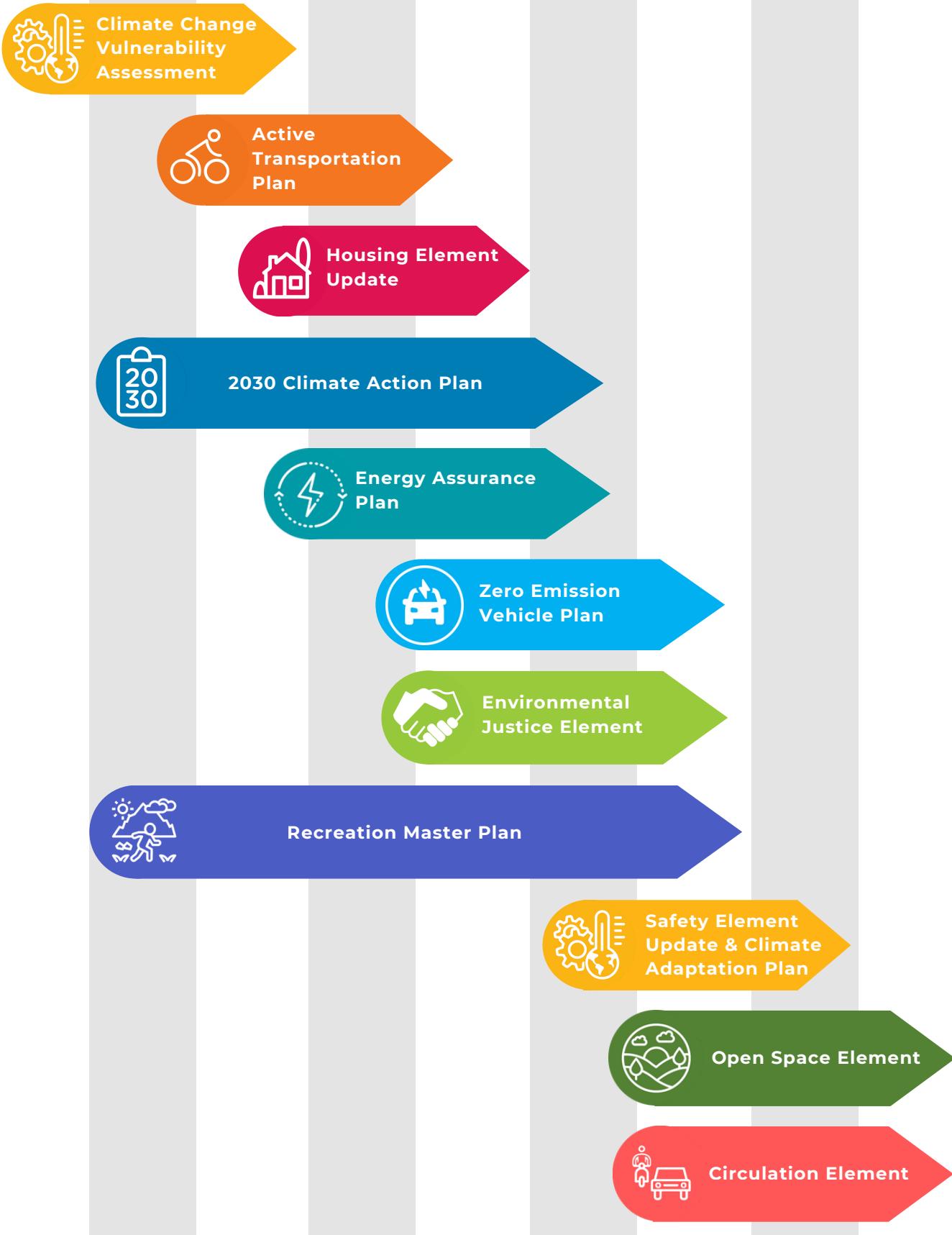
The County also engaged the Children and Family Resource Services in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Promotores Network to conduct outreach in Spanish and Mixteco. Promotores, or community-based outreach workers, leverage their community relationships to engage residents who may not speak English or access digital media and would otherwise not receive information from the County. On behalf of the County, Promotores have reached hundreds of residents by distributing flyers, conducting surveys and presentations and encouraging participation at workshops.



Above images from Santa Barbara County Promotores Network

ONE CLIMATE INITIATIVE PROJECTS

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027



CLIMATE CHANGE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT



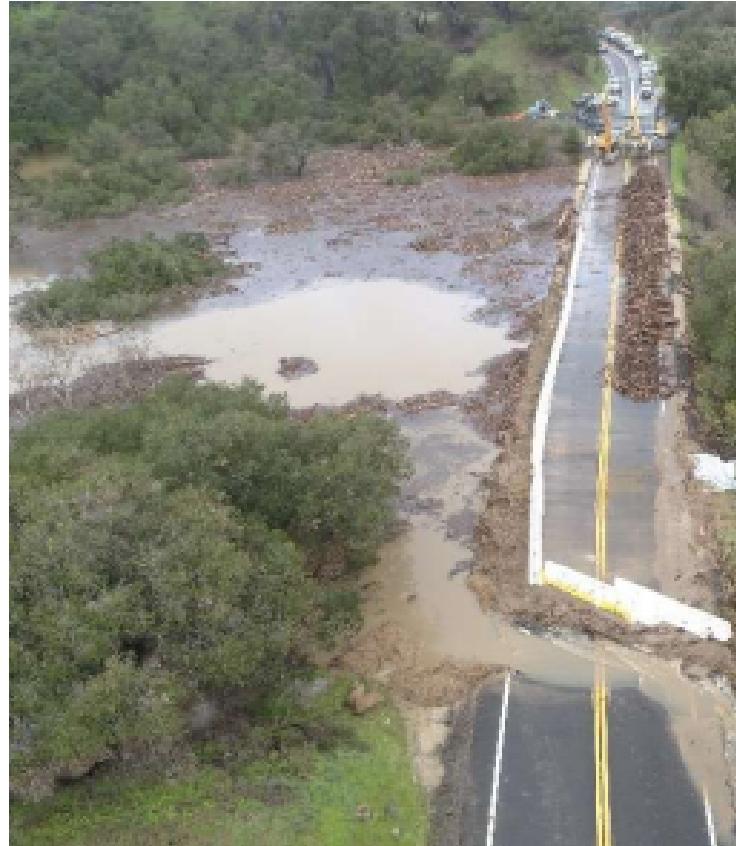
Completed November 2021

Identifying Impacts and Risks from Climate Change

The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) identifies potential climate impacts and considers how communities and infrastructure are exposed to specific hazards, and how well they can adjust to these risks. This is the first step in improving community resilience in the face of climate change.

The four major climate hazards which pose the greatest risk to the county are wildfire, coastal hazards, flooding, and extreme heat.

The Assessment offers conclusions and recommendations that will be addressed in the forthcoming Safety Element Update and Adaptation Plan.



The CCVA focuses on frontline communities, which include people who are likely to experience the impacts of climate change disproportionately or earlier. Examples include:

- Children and elderly
- People living in rental homes and mobile homes
- Households without access to a vehicle
- Overcrowded households
- Adults with limited education or English proficiency
- People not identifying as white
- Persons with disabilities
- Households spending more than 33 percent of their income on housing
- People with low incomes

Santa Barbara County Climate Vulnerabilities

- Transportation- and water-related infrastructure are vulnerable to flooding and debris-flow, which can be worsened by drought conditions and wildfires.
- Many buildings and facilities lack adequate insulation, heating and cooling and filtration to withstand extreme temperatures and wildfire smoke.
- Many communities are in wildfire-prone areas with limited options for evacuation.
- Water systems across the county are vulnerable to drought, sea level rise, and temperature increases.
- Frontline communities and vulnerable infrastructure should be prioritized via funding and projects.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Adopted May 2023

Increasing Access, Safety and Comfort for Walking and Biking

The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) aims to inspire all people to walk, bike, or roll through a connected, comfortable transportation system that supports alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles.

The Public Works Department will achieve this by focusing on creating safer, more accessible active travel in unincorporated areas of the County. The plan includes projects to improve bike lanes, pedestrian infrastructure, and connections between different types of transportation. It promotes reduced traffic, improved safety, health, air quality, and reduced carbon emissions.



What has happened since adoption?

- **Santa Claus Lane Bike Path** - The County completed a new bike and pedestrian path that provides a direct route between Summerland and Carpinteria including access to county beaches and Santa Claus Lane businesses.
- **Modoc Bicycle Path** - The County completed the design and is constructing the Path, which is funded by the State Active Transportation Program.
- **Isla Vista Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements Project** - The County is designing elements which will address missing sidewalks, add bike boulevards and bike lanes to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- **Santa Maria Levee River Trail** - The County is in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Review.



HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

Adopted December 2023



Increasing opportunities for accessible and affordable housing

California and Santa Barbara County are experiencing a housing crisis. There is not enough housing to accommodate residents, especially lower- and moderate-income households.

This imbalance of housing supply forces many to live outside of the region where they are employed and, therefore, must commute long distances.

Long commutes create carbon emissions and reduce quality of life for commuters and the communities they pass through.

How the County is Creating More Housing

The Housing Element Update (HEU) includes 25 programs and 99 actions that the County will take over the next several years to help accommodate existing and projected housing needs for all residents of the unincorporated county.

In addition to zoning code changes, the County will also develop and implement programs to encourage housing access for local workforce. New developments, coupled with supportive programs aim to reduce 8,000–10,000 daily commutes, lowering GHG emissions and offering residents more time for family and community engagement.

Following the adoption of the HEU, the County rezoned 10 North County sites and 18 South Coast sites for residential development, including large sites like the Glen Annie Golf Course and areas around the Eastern Goleta Valley.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

California law requires local governments to accommodate new housing units every eight years through plans, policies and programs.

For the 2023-2031 housing element cycle, the County needs to accommodate a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 5,664 units, including 2,573 lower-income units and 1,280 moderate-income units. To improve the balance of housing supply and jobs in the county, 73 percent of these units must be accommodated on the South Coast.

New housing built on vacant or redeveloped sites, including accessory dwelling units, are counted towards the County's RHNA.



Source: Lompoc Record

2030 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Adopted August 2024



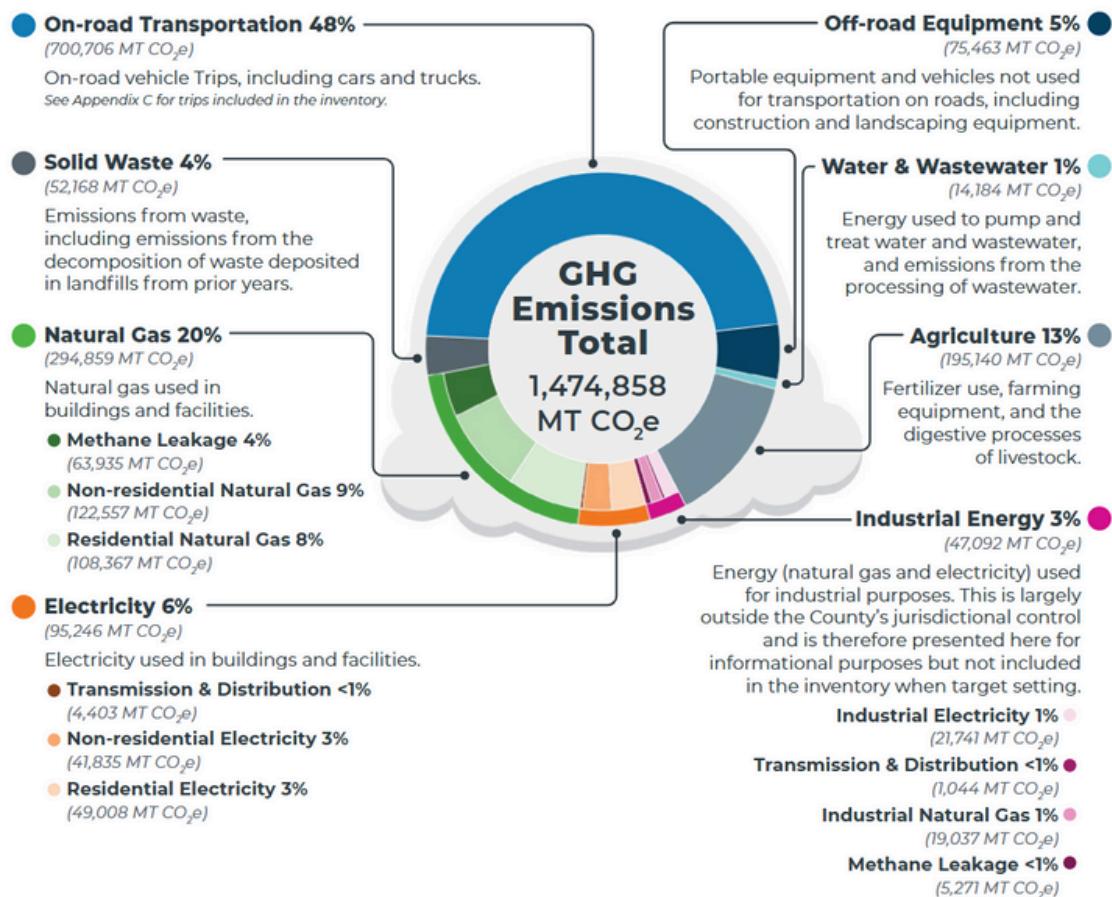
Reducing community emissions 50% by 2030

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) outlines how the County will reduce the effects of climate change while improving community health and the environment. The CAP has a minimum goal to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% and an aspirational goal of 50% by 2030.

Measures include:

- Achieving carbon free electricity by 2030
- Transitioning buildings to use electricity instead of fossil fuels
- Expanding the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and adding more EV charging stations
- Reducing vehicle trip frequencies and length
- Reducing waste and water use
- Promoting sustainable land management practices
- Limiting fossil fuel extraction and supporting green businesses
- Enhancing the sustainability and resilience of County buildings and facilities.

2018 Unincorporated County GHG Emissions by Source



ENERGY ASSURANCE PLAN

Adopted October 2024

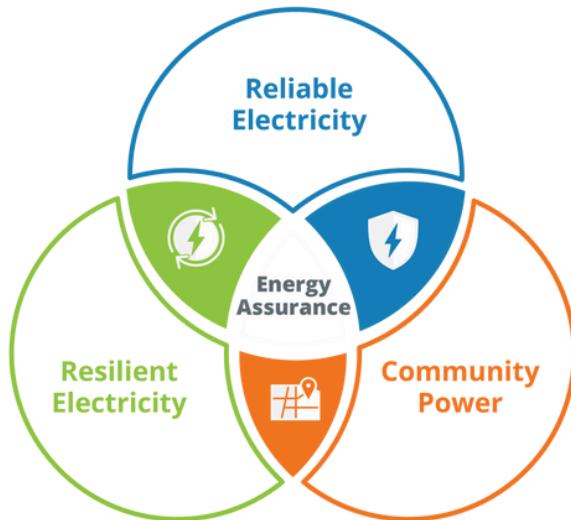


Achieving clean, reliable and resilient energy for all

The Energy Assurance Plan focuses on reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, transitioning to renewable energy, and ensuring that our power systems are resilient in the face of climate change.

The County is increasing energy resilience through leadership, partnerships, and community support. The County has and continues to implement projects to reduce energy use, increase solar power and implement battery storage at its own facilities.

At a community level, the County piloted an effort to establish three sites as resilience hubs. The Tri-County Regional Energy Network offers incentives and technical support for energy-efficient upgrades. New initiatives will seek to strengthen neighborhood networks during outages and assist residents and businesses in transitioning to renewable energy.



What is Energy Assurance?

Energy assurance ensures that Santa Barbara County's energy system is prepared to face current and future challenges. Energy assurance is a combination of:

- energy reliability — how we keep the power flowing
- energy resiliency — how we restore power as quickly as possible
- community power — how we provide publicly accessible emergency power

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT



Projected adoption Spring 2025

Increase quality of life and address environmental inequities

Environmental justice affirms that everyone has the right to a healthy environment, access to the decision-making process, and protection from environmental and health hazards.

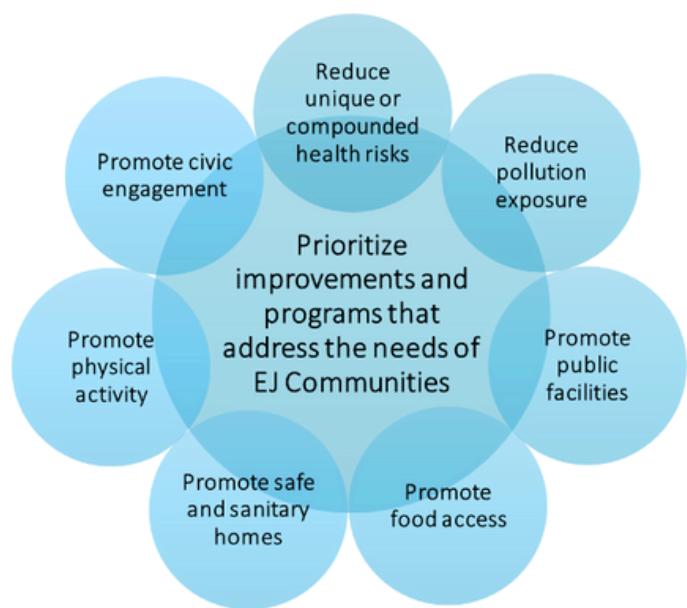
For the first time, the County is preparing a separate Environmental Justice Element to identify Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs) within the unincorporated county. The EJE will focus on meeting the unique needs of EJCs through:

- Promoting public facilities
- Increasing access to healthy food, safe and sanitary housing, and opportunities for physical activity
- Improving air quality and reduce pollution exposure
- Reducing compounding health risks
- Encouraging citizen engagement in public decision-making
- Prioritizing the needs of EJCs through targeted programs and policies

What Are Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs)?

Communities that face disproportionate impacts of environmental hazards.

Environmental Justice Communities in Santa Barbara County include: Casmalia, Cuyama, New Cuyama, Ventucopa, Garey, Sisquoc, Los Alamos, and Isla Vista.



ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE PLAN

Projected adoption in 2025



Increase adoption and use of zero emission vehicles

The Zero Emission Vehicle Plan (ZEVP) addresses greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. This plan sets goals to increase zero-emission vehicle usage, charging infrastructure, and the usage of shared transportation.

The ZEV Plan provides both municipal and public-facing actions focusing on increasing access to all types of zero-emission vehicles. There are several Actions identified in the ZEVP which will help meet the County's 2030 Climate Action Goals, including:

- **Planning and Policy Actions** to develop requirements for new developments, municipal fleet vehicles and infrastructure
- **Infrastructure Deployment Actions** to increase access to electric vehicle charging for the public and priority communities
- **Programmatic Actions** to provide ongoing services and resources to engage, educate and connect audiences to the actions and technologies that are desired
- **Outreach, Education, & Engagement Actions** to facilitate the update and adoption of electric vehicle and charging infrastructure through partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.

2030 Goals:

- Increase passenger electric vehicle (EV) ownership to 25% and commercial EV use to 15%.
- Install at least 375 public EV charging stations.

2045 Goals:

- Transition 90% of passenger vehicles and 75% of commercial vehicles to electric vehicles.



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RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Projected adoption in 2025



Expand parks, recreation, and trails across the region

Recreation is leisure, exercise, sports, and fun during free time and is an indispensable part of human health and well-being. The Recreation Master Plan assesses the need for parks, recreation, and trails in Santa Barbara County and guides the development of facilities and programs to help meet these needs. The goal of the Recreation Master Plan is to enhance the quality of life and leisure experience for Santa Barbara County residents of all ages.

While the Recreation Master Plan is a County plan, it also provides vision, direction, context, and recommendations for County Parks to substantially improve the countywide recreation system in partnership with other public agencies. The Recreation Master Plan will guide recreation planning in the county toward the following outcomes:

- Establish a long-range vision
- Assess current and future recreation needs of the community
- Promote new ideas and partnerships
- Establish a strong foundation for grant pursuit
- Create recreational value within existing public lands
- Plan for sustainable recreation
- Build community engagement, education, and support



SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE & CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN

Projected completion 2026/2027



Adapt and prepare for climate change impacts

The Seismic Safety and Safety Element (Safety Element) creates policies to protect the community from natural and human-made hazards. It guides land use planning by providing data, information, and policies with respect to various hazards including geologic, soil, seismic, fire, and flooding.

The Safety Element Update includes three phases:

Phase 1: Wildfire Information and Policy Updates (Completed)

- Developed maps of areas with only one road out.
- Updated information on fire history, fuels, evacuation strategies, and public outreach.
- Adopted the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce the risk of disasters and make the County eligible for federal disaster relief funding.

Phase 2: Evacuation Modeling and Planning Project (Completed)

- Completed the Evacuation Modeling and Planning Project (2024), including an Evacuation Traffic Modeling Study (Evacuation Study) to meet state requirements to update the County's Safety Element by assessing the capacity, safety, and viability of all roadways in the county and seeking to protect the community from geologic and climate-related risks.
- The Evacuation Study and associated public education materials are pending release to the public in 2025.



Phase 3: Climate Adaptation (Ongoing)

Following the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, the Climate Adaptation Plan will create strategies and actions to address the impacts of climate change and provide resources to ensure the health and safety of the public. Strategies and actions will address:

- Countywide transportation infrastructure.
- Single-egress roads, bridges, highways, bus routes, and coastal roads
- Water, flood control, and electricity infrastructure
- Residential, commercial, and government buildings
- Sediment management and enhancing existing parks and beaches
- Agriculture, agritourism, and power reliability
- Isolation of communities like Cuyama Valley
- Emergency management

CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE

Projected completion 2027



Improve access and safety for all road users

The current Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan outlines the types of roads, the standards for roads and intersections, and performance levels to make sure everything aligns with the plan's goals for transportation. While many individual Community Plans throughout the County have adopted specific Circulation Elements for the community plan areas, the countywide Comprehensive Plan Circulation Element has not been substantially updated since it was adopted in 1980.

The Circulation Element update will plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the unique rural, suburban, and urban areas of the county.

Timeline

2024/2025

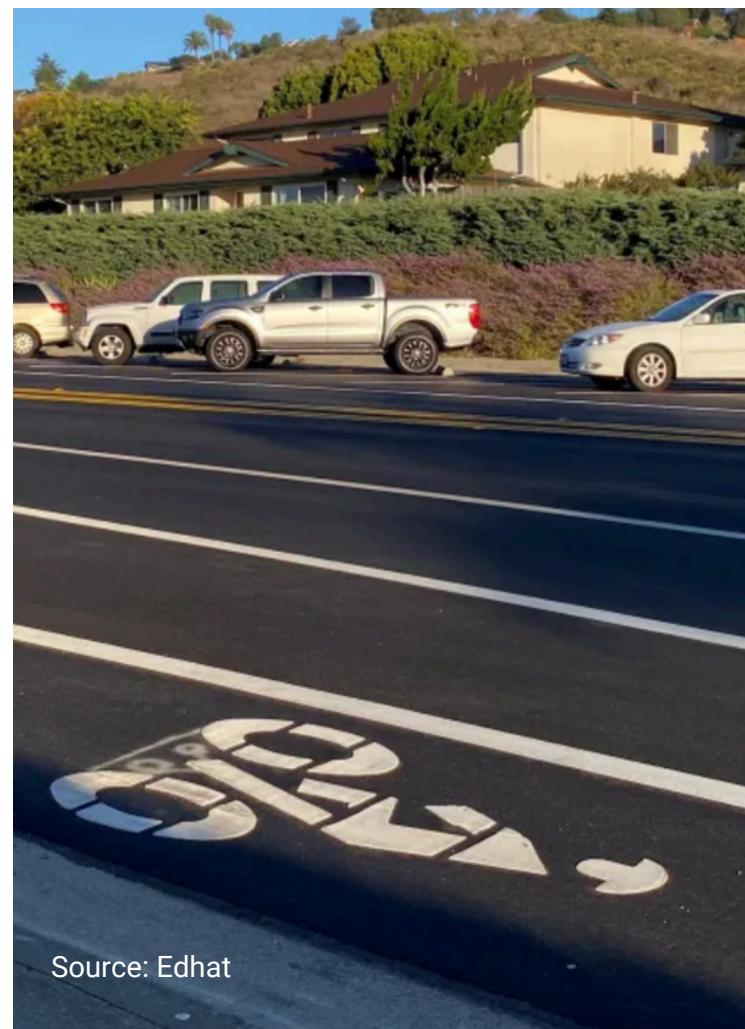
- Research and Data Gathering
- Traffic Modeling

2025/2026

- Conduct public outreach
- Multimodal Transportation Strategy Development
- Advisory Group Meetings
- Develop Draft Goals, Policies, and Objectives
- Finalize Goals, Policies, Objectives, and Programs
- Environmental Review (CEQA)

2026/2027

- Finalize Circulation Element text
- Decision-maker hearings – County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors hearings to adopt the Circulation Element Update



Source: Edhat

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT UPDATE



Projected completion 2027

Protect and maintain open spaces for community and climate resilience

The Open Space Element describes open space for public health and safety, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and the preservation of natural resources. These factors have been mapped to identify lands that should be considered for open space preservation.

The County's Open Space Element has not been substantially updated since it was first adopted in 1979 (minor amendment in 1991). SB 1425, passed in 2022, requires the County to update its Open Space Element to address the following components:

- Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice element or environmental justice policies in the general plan.
- Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, correlated with the safety element.
- Rewilding opportunities, correlated with the land use element.



Timeline

2024/2025

- Research and data gathering
- Develop scope of work options for Board of Supervisors consideration and direction
- Stakeholder outreach and public workshops
- Draft amendments to Open Space Element

2025/2026

- Continue stakeholder outreach and public workshops
- Continue drafting amendments to Open Space Element
- Decision-maker hearings – County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors hearings to adopt the Open Space Element Update

ONE COUNTY | ONE FUTURE ONE CLIMATE



Planning is important to determining the County's future growth and development, but planning alone is not sufficient. Each plan has its own set of objectives, strategies and actions. Once adopted, these plans enter a new phase of implementation.

Implementing plans can encompass a breadth of activity from developing and adopting policies, to constructing new infrastructure to implementing programs to education and outreach. All of these activities require staff capacity, funding and management systems to ensure plans can be implemented to the fullest extent possible.

Just as with climate change, these plans generate new demands on limited resources. As plans are adopted, their specific actions are delegated to the appropriate County department for implementation.

The County will keep working together internally to make sure that resources are used effectively and that opportunities for collaboration are fully taken advantage of. The One Climate Initiative will provide continuity through the multitude of policies, programs and projects over time as the County continues to make the region more climate resilient and prosperous.



www.countyofsb.org/oneclimate

