# Flood and Sea Level Rise Work Group

Santa Clara County
Climate Collaborative

August 26, 2025

# Welcome!

Please introduce yourself in the chat:

- Name
- Organization

# Meeting Objectives

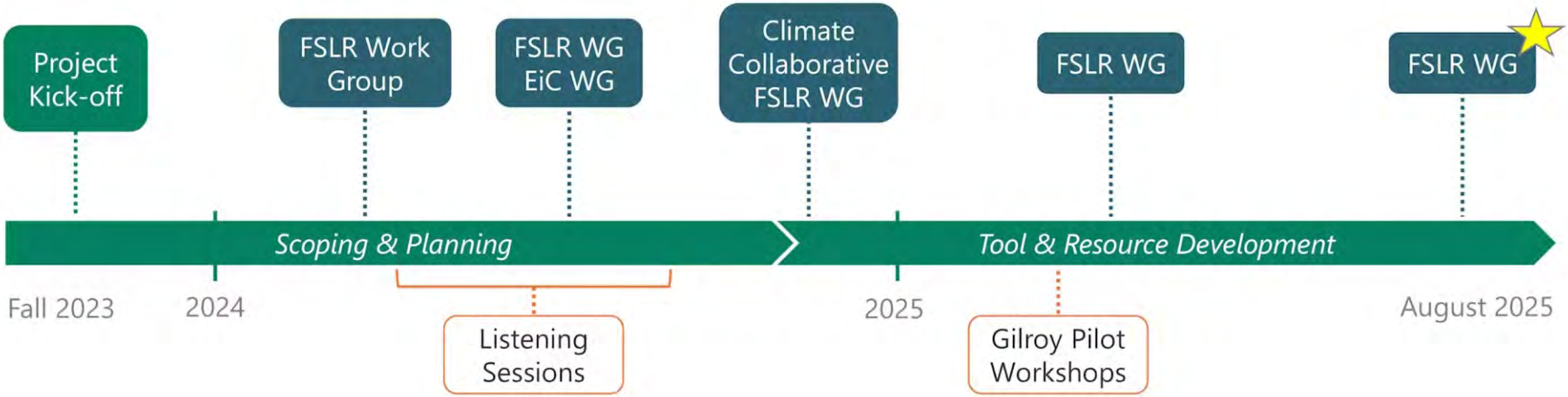
- Receive final update on the NFWF Community Resilience Framework
- Provide Health Watersheds & Thriving Cities (HW&TC) project update
  - Gather input on how this project can best build on existing urban greening frameworks
  - Develop a process for compiling a list of recently completed projects and their objectives/intended benefits
  - Identify types of urban greening projects that are likely to be implemented

# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- NFWF Community Resilience Framework Final Presentation
- Healthy Watersheds & Thriving Cities (HW&TC) Project
- Next Steps

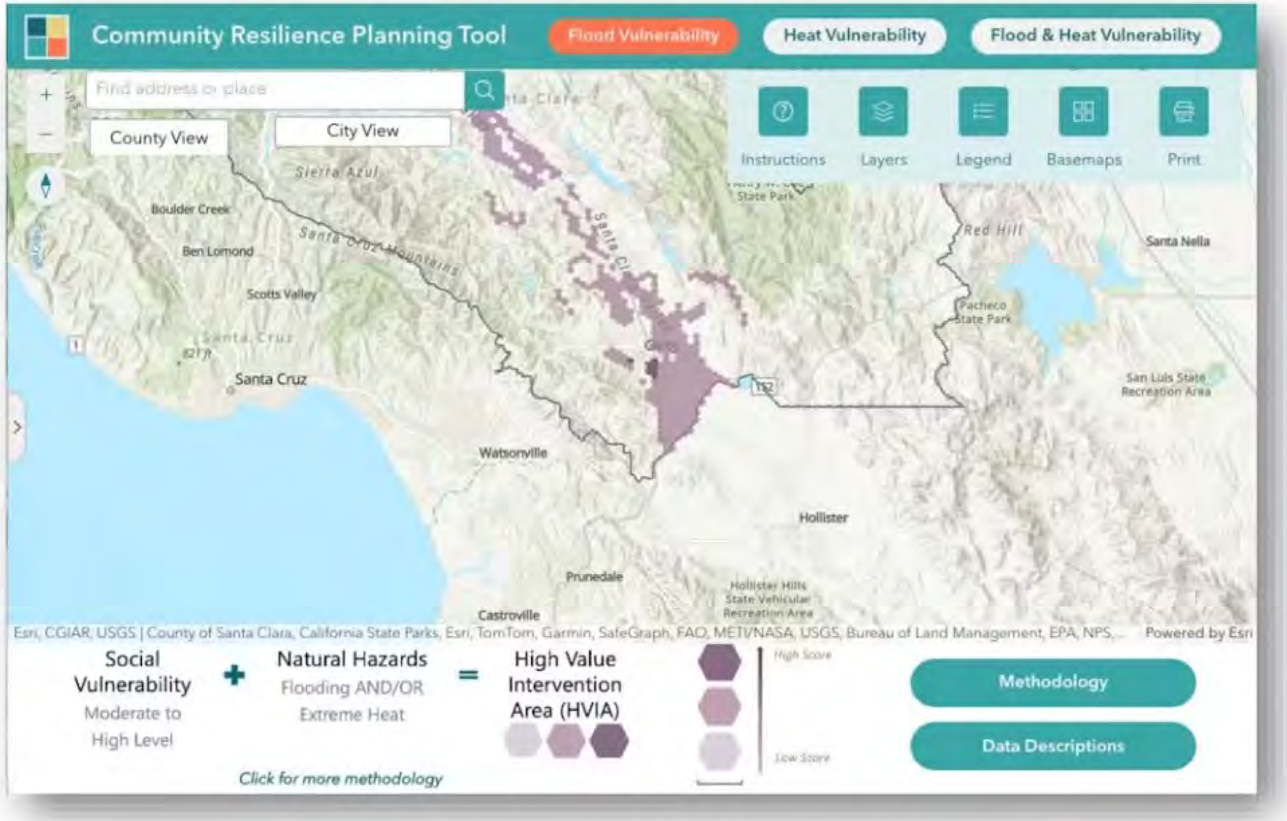
# NFWF Community Resilience Framework

# Timeline & Project Recap



# Final Products

- Revised Climate Resilience webpage on Climate Collaborative site
  - Updated resilience guidance
  - Vision to Implementation Guide
  - Example Gilroy Project Implementation Plan
  - Community Resilience Planning Tool




*Community Resilience Planning Tool*

# Who is this for?

## CBOs

- Use as guidance for leading engagement in their communities to identify community priorities and concerns
- Develop project concepts

## Jurisdictions & Planners

- Identify priority locations for resilience interventions
- Identify potential areas of collaboration
- Develop project concepts

# What is this for?

Connect social vulnerability to climate risks and impacts

Highlight areas of concern

Illustrate potential for regional partnerships

Identify how time and resources can be prioritized

Focus on potential opportunity areas

# Climate Resilience on Collaborative Website


www.climatecollaborativescc.org/processguidance

# Four key elements

## Vision to Implementation Guide

A five-step process for jurisdictions and community groups to collaboratively develop funding-ready climate resilience projects.

## Multi-benefit Assessment

An in-depth analysis of the potential benefits and tradeoffs of a climate resilience project.

## Resilience Project Mapping

A mapping tool to help identify where nature-based solutions can strengthen resilience and reduce community vulnerability to flood or heat risks.

## Resilience Solutions Catalog

Nature-based physical interventions, policy interventions, and case studies relevant to climate hazards in Santa Clara County.

# Vision to Implementation Guide


## Scope

Understand the problem, scope the scale and location, and set project goals.

## Identify

Identify locations and opportunities for nature-based solutions.

## Assess

Assess solutions with the multi-benefit assessment, technical data, and community feedback to determine how well they meet project goals and maximize impact.

## Conceptualize

Develop an overall project concept indicating what types of solutions to install, any unique needs, and where to place solutions.

## Actualize

Identify potential funding sources and determine project partners and team members.

*ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT*

# Nature-based Solutions Engagement Cards

## Rain Garden

Rain Gardens are areas filled with flood able, native plants that collect, slow, and filter stormwater.

Rain Gardens can vary in size and be used in many different locations, but they should not contain edible plants due to the water quality.

**WHY**

Heavy storms create more water than typical storm drains can handle. Rain gardens help to reduce neighborhood flooding from storms.

Rain gardens also provide space for plants and pollinators like bees.

**WHERE**

Urban spaces (parking lots, along sidewalks) and parks

## Green Streets

Streets with a combination of trees, native plants, and rain collection areas that work together to reduce the severity and risk of major flood events.

**WHY**

Most stormwater goes directly into street drains and can back up sewer systems.

Green streets absorb and filter stormwate before it goes into the sewer system.

They also increase native plant diversity, reduce extreme heat through tree shade and improve air quality.

**WHERE**

City and neighborhood streets

**EFFORT** High

Santa Clara County
Climate Collaborative



## Jardines de Lluvia

Los jardines de lluvia son áreas llenas de plantas nativas inundables que recolectan, ralentizan y filtran las aguas pluviales.

Los jardines de lluvia pueden variar en tamaño y usarse en muchos lugares diferentes, pero no deben contener plantas comestibles debido a la calidad del agua.

**POR QUÉ**

Las tormentas fuertes generan más agua de la que pueden manejar los desagües pluviales típicos. Los jardines de lluvia ayudan a reducir las inundaciones del vecindario debido a las tormentas.

Los jardines de lluvia también brindan espacio para plantas y polinizadores como las abejas.

**DÓNDE**

Espacios urbanos (estacionamientos, a lo largo de las aceras) y parques

Patios delanteros o traseros de las casas

**ESFUERZO** Bajo

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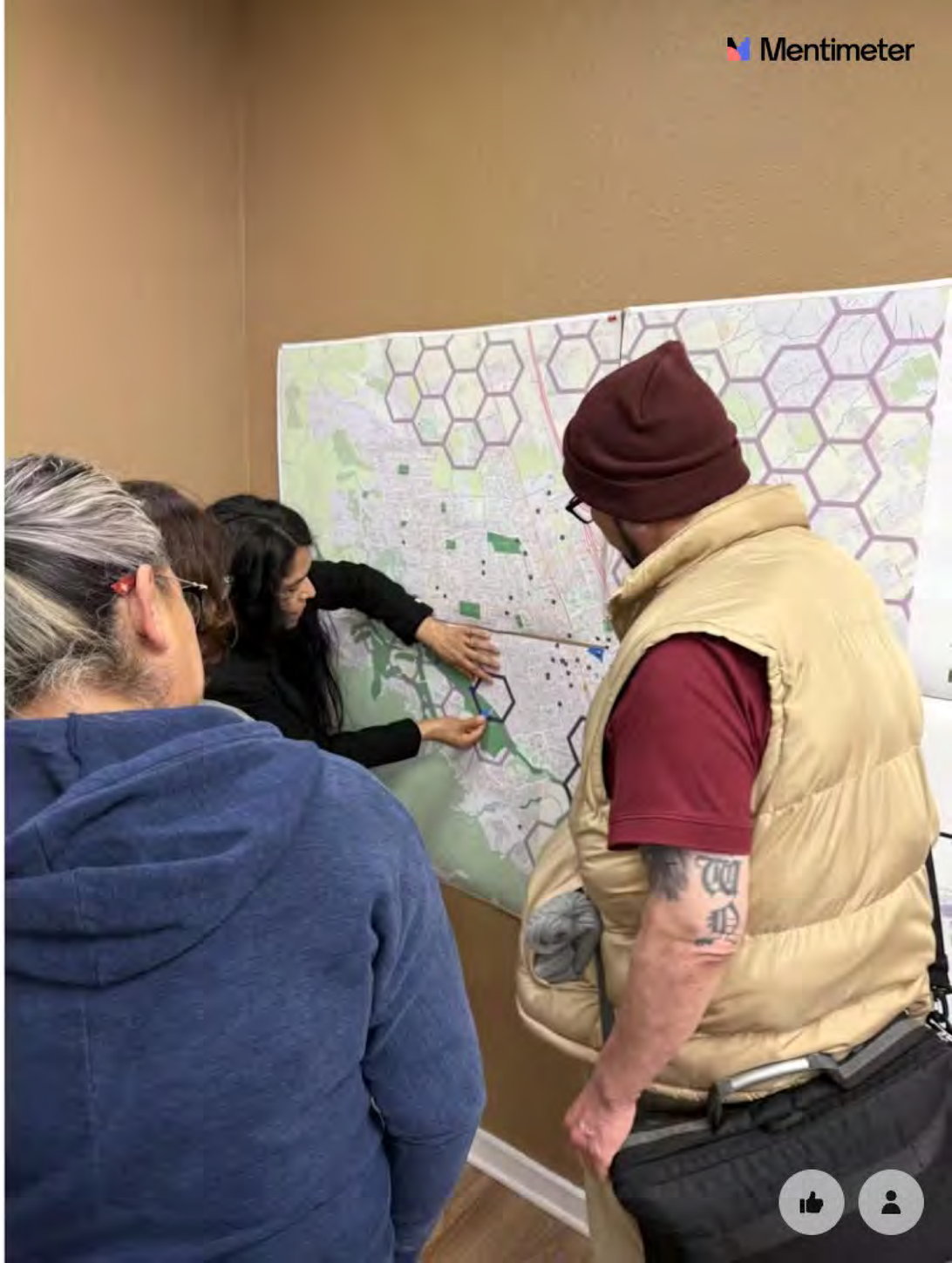
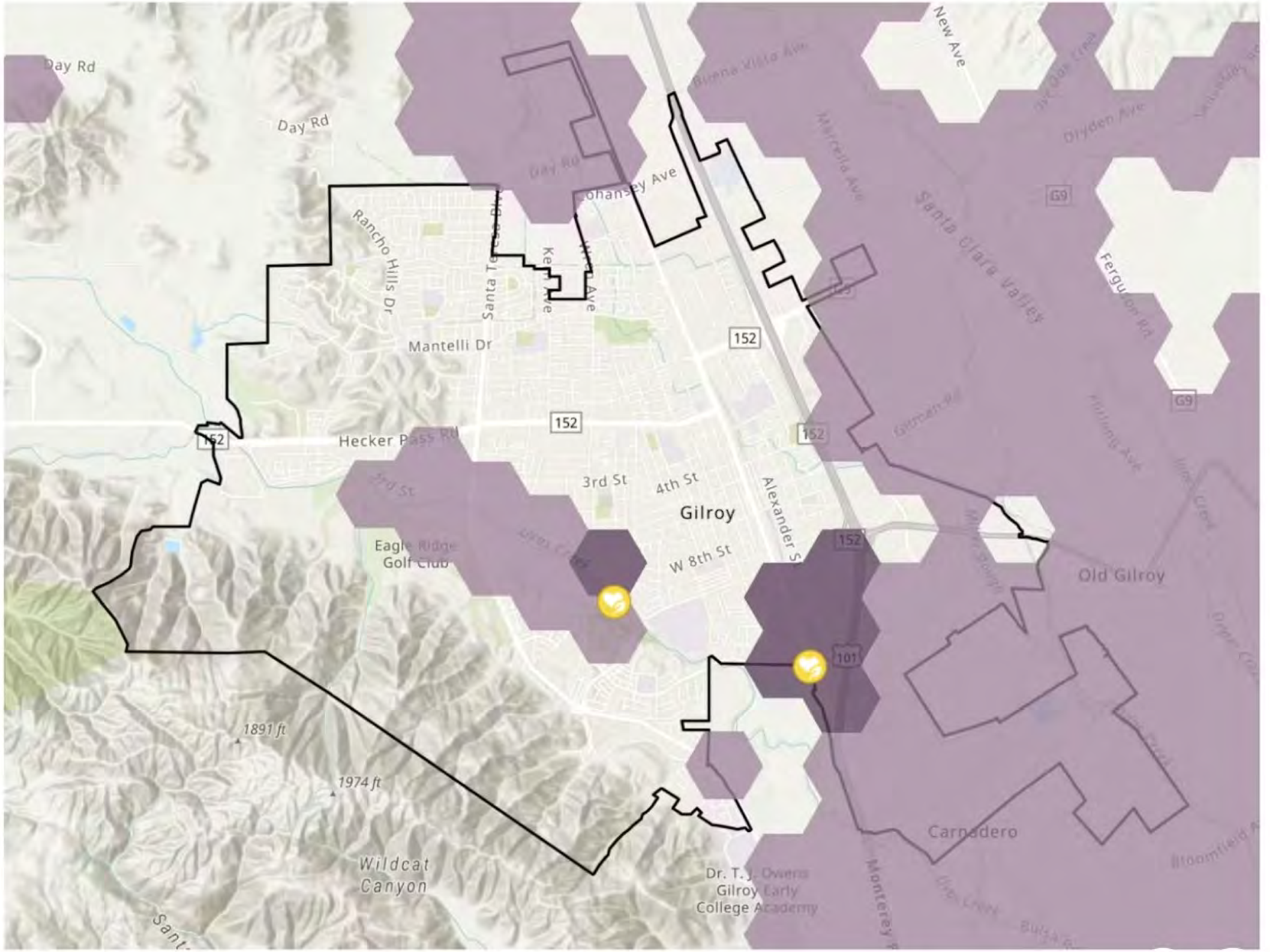
# Community Pilot in Gilroy

- Series of 4 workshops conducted by CRC and CARAS in Spring 2025
  - 10 participants
  - Conducted entirely in Spanish
- Participants identified specific locations in Gilroy that experience flooding
- Resulted in a list of desired nature-based solutions for each location



# Potential Project Locations




Gilroy Engagement-Identified Project Locations

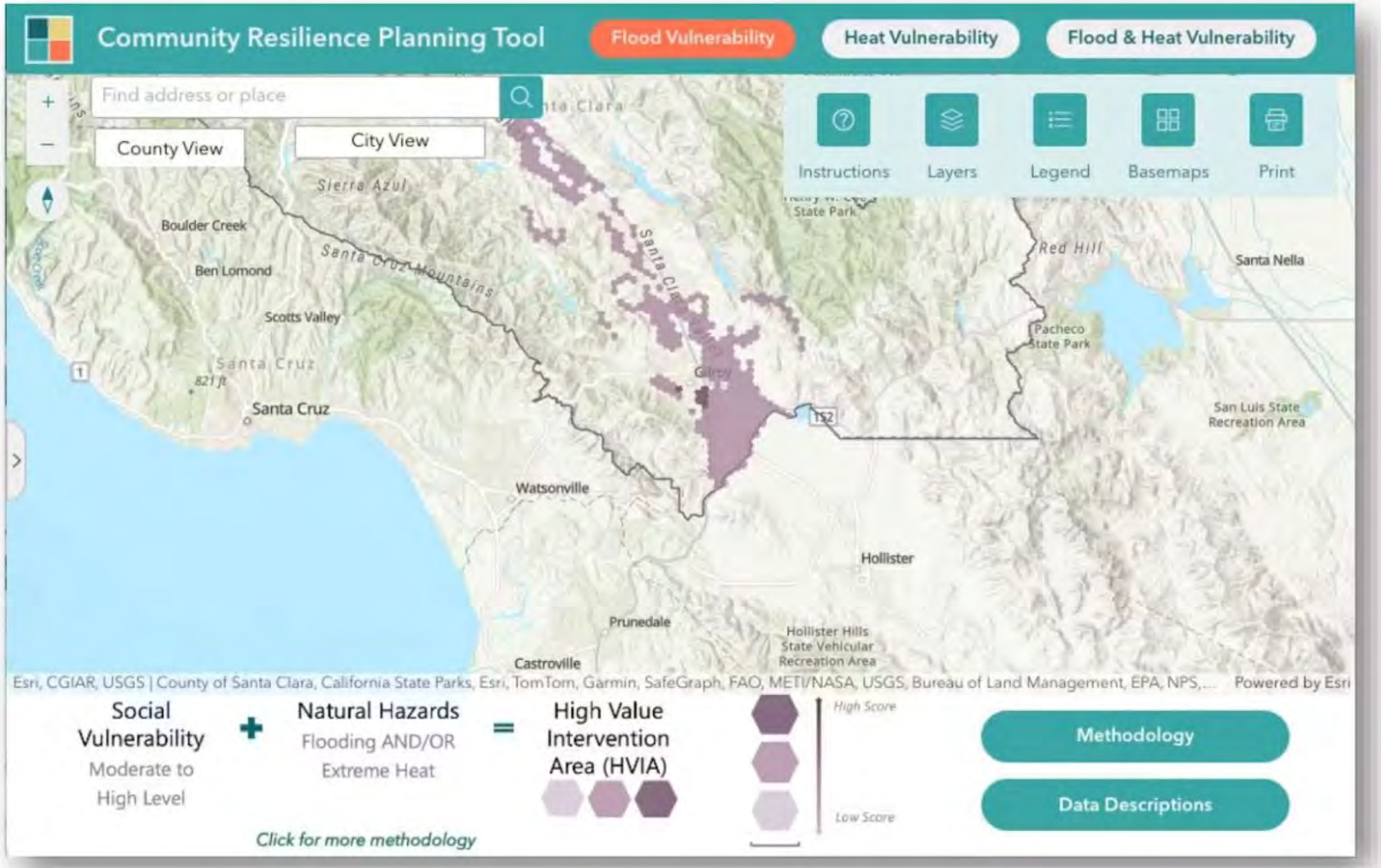
# Community Project Details

| | Christmas Hill Park | Monterey & Luchessa Intersection |
|---|---|---|
| Flooding Issues | • Frequent flooding leads to **park closures** and makes the bridge inaccessible.<br>• **Water gathers quickly** in the canal, and there is a water hole with broken trees and trash that needs cleaning.<br>• **Illegal dumping** is a persistent problem. | • Flooding **adds to existing traffic** issues here<br>• Pavement improvements are needed so water can move through the area more effectively.<br>• Desire for a dedicated **group responsible for project implementation and maintenance** because of how long term and ongoing this issue is observed in the area. |
| Desired Solutions | • Rain gardens<br>• Cisterns<br>• Increased tree planting<br>• Bioswales<br>• Improved maintenance and cleaning<br>• Anti-dumping measures (surveillance and signage) | • Improvement pavement for water flow<br>• Assigned maintenance and oversight team with community presence so that community members can notify when work is needed again<br>• Bioswales |

# Project Concept Map

## Christmas Hill Park, Gilroy

# Community Resilience Planning Tool



# Identifying a High-Value Intervention Area – Final Mapping Methodology

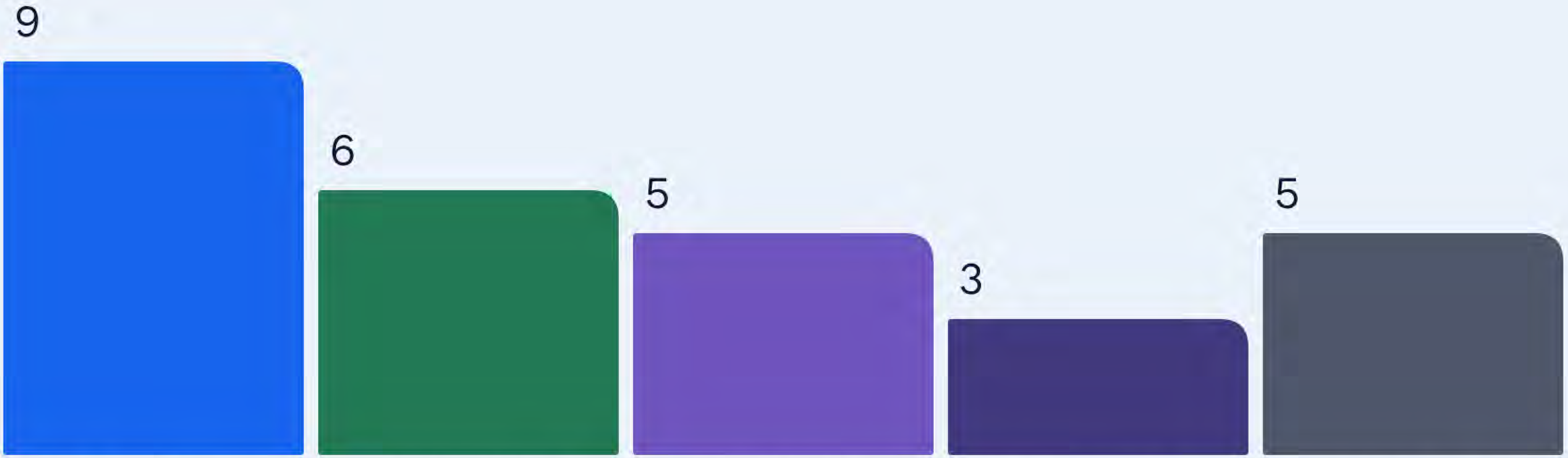
| Flooding Risk | Extreme Heat Risk | Combined Flood + Heat Risk |
|---|---|---|
| 100-year flood risk<br>+<br>Social Vulnerability<br>(Moderate or High) | Extreme Heat Exposure Risk<br>+<br>Social Vulnerability<br>(Moderate or High) | 100-year flood risk<br>+<br>Extreme Heat Exposure Risk<br>+<br>Social Vulnerability<br>(Moderate or High) |
| Score of 0 - 3 | Score of 0 - 3 | Score of 0 - 4 |

# Access the Map Tool


Climate Resilience Page


Climate Resilience Menu Bar

# How will these resources be of most value to you? You can also add your answer to the next question (open-ended).



# Tell us more about how these resources will be useful for you.

Conveying a need in our community - visuals will aide in this

Fundraising and policy making efforts

I want to try it out first - maybe I'll have more ideas after testing

Identifying problem areas and opportunities

Funding

Policy making efforts and advocating for funding

Mapping tool can help folks see & u destined problem areas

# What resource or tool are you most interested in exploring?


Map Tool


Vision to Implementation Guide


Updated Climate Resilience Webpage


Revised Resilience Guidance

0

Engagement Resources

# Continuing...

## NFWF Project


- *Conceptual level, countywide data-driven mapping tool*
- *Grounded in two key areas: social vulnerability and climate hazards*

## HWTC Project


- *Guadalupe Watershed*
- *In-depth and detailed analysis*
- *Identifies benefits and opportunities*

***Thank you!***

# Healthy Watersheds & Thriving Cities

## Regional Working Group Meeting #2

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SAN FRANCISCO ESTUARY INSTITUTE

August 26, 2025

Funded by US EPA Region IX Water Quality Improvement Fund

# Agenda

- Project overview
- Project updates
- Plans & priorities for urban greening
- Overview of approach comparison and input on recently completed Projects
- Priority urban greening project types
- Wrap up & next steps

# Healthy Watersheds & Thriving Cities

Project overview

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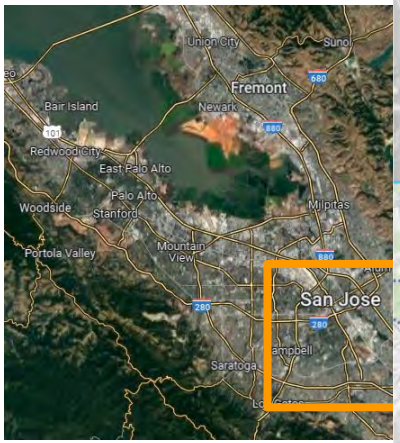
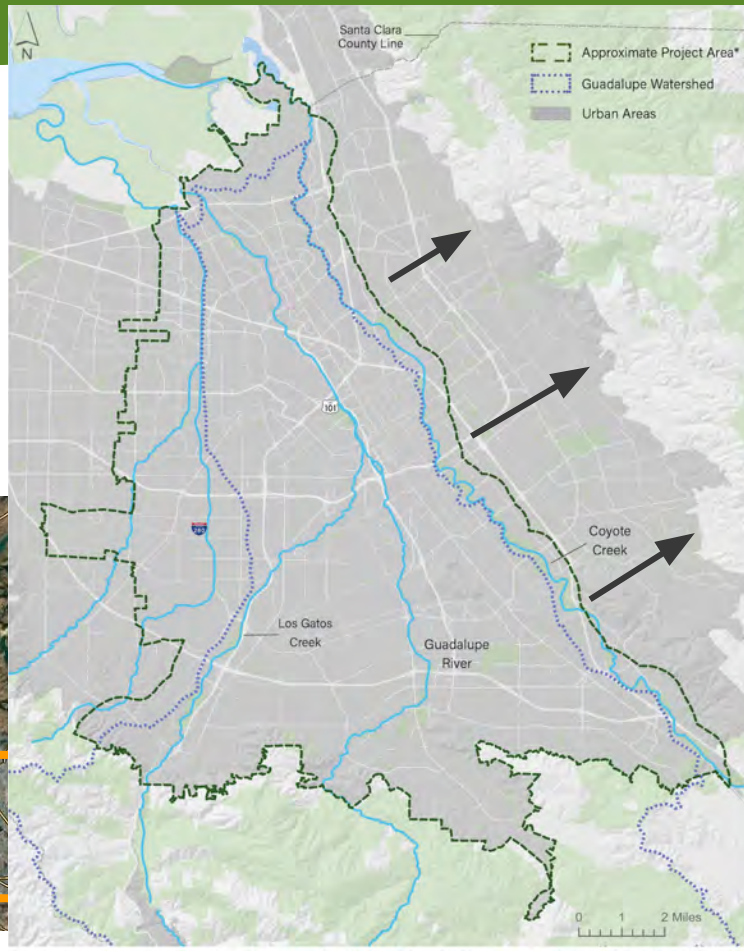
# Project goals

- Advance **landscape-scale** coordination and planning of multi-benefit nature-based urban greening projects
- Co-develop a model of lasting **coordination** for the region
- Develop strategies for incorporating multiple benefits into urban greening project **design and maintenance**
- Enhance **fundraising opportunities** for coordinated urban greening projects

# Project area

- Urban portion of the **Guadalupe River watershed**
- Urban riparian corridor of **Coyote Creek**



# HW&TC Regional Working Group

- Input on **existing condition** analysis
- Inventory of **past and current** urban greening projects
- Inform **tool/data layer** development

# RWG and Community Team

- Co-identify **priority areas** for urban greening projects
- Identify **collaborative pilot project**
- Co-develop **Regional Collaboration Handbook**

# Project Updates

- Opportunity Area Identification
- Community Team Meetings

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# Opportunity Area Identification

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# Opportunity Area Identification

Where are the **most impactful opportunities to use urban greening projects to meet multiple local needs,** such as urban heat mitigation, flood and stormwater management, and biodiversity support?

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## Opportunity Area Identification

# What is the process?

#1. Map existing conditions

#2. Where are benefits needed or missing?

#3. What benefits do projects provide? Where are they feasible?

#4. ID and prioritize opportunity areas

June 2025 - June 2026

July 2026 - mid-2027

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## Opportunity Area Identification

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June 2025 - June 2026

July 2026 - mid-2027

#5. ID pilot project

#6. Publish opportunity area data in online map

2027 - 2028

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Opportunity Area Identification

# What is the process?

**#1. Map existing conditions** → #2. Where are benefits needed or missing? → #3. What benefits do projects provide? Where are they feasible? → #4. ID and prioritize opportunity areas

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Opportunity Area Identification

# What is the process?

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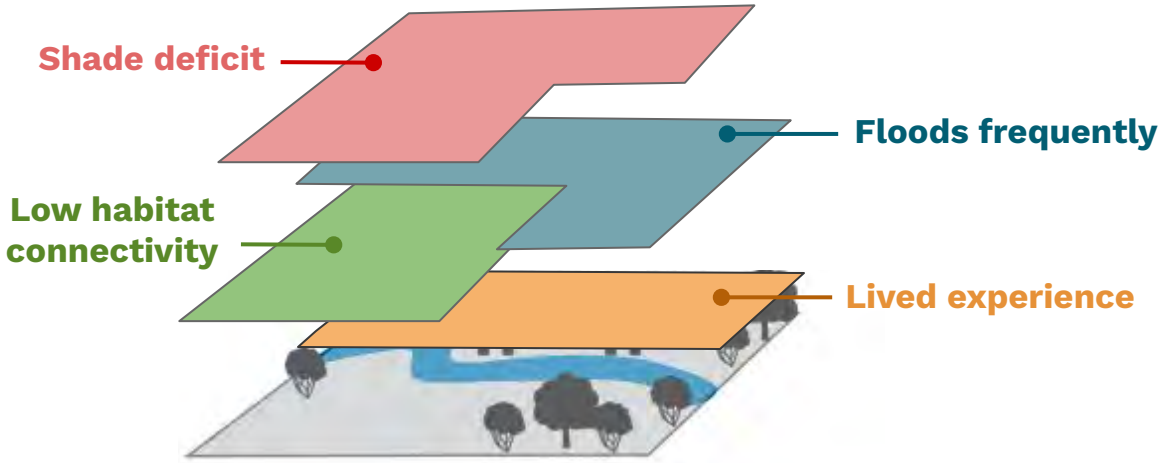


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Opportunity Area Identification

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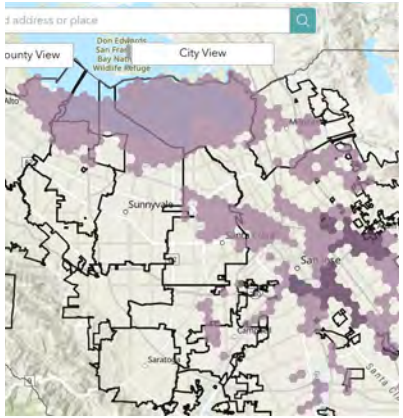
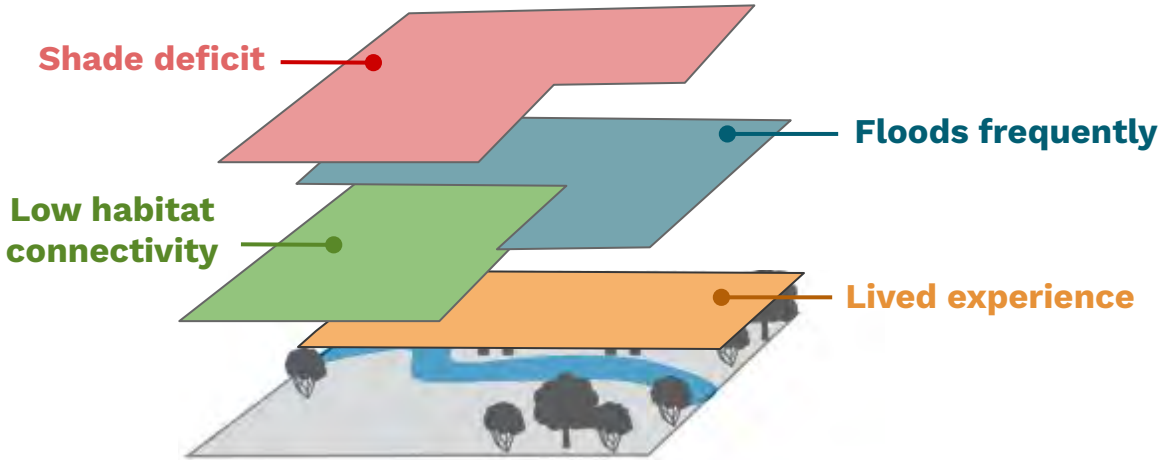
## NFWF Planning Tool

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Opportunity Area Identification

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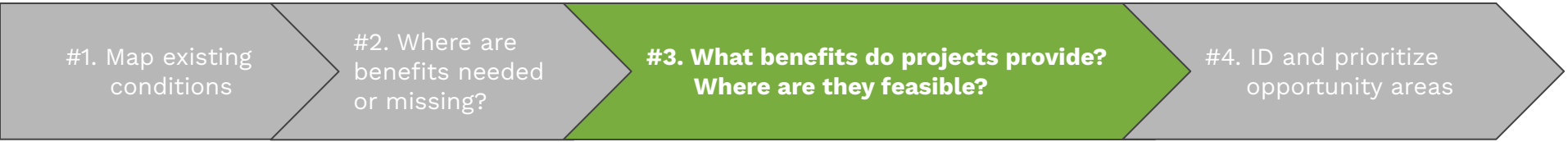


| | |
|---|---|
| **Type 1** | Urban cooling, high-quality habitat |
| **Type 2** | Stormwater management, nutrient cycling |

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Opportunity Area Identification

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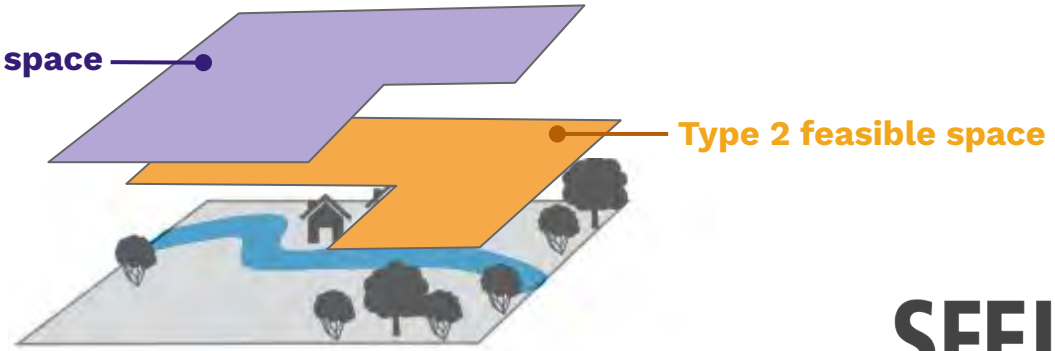


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Opportunity to **create new recreation space and fill a major gap in habitat connectivity** through restoration of oak woodlands in existing park

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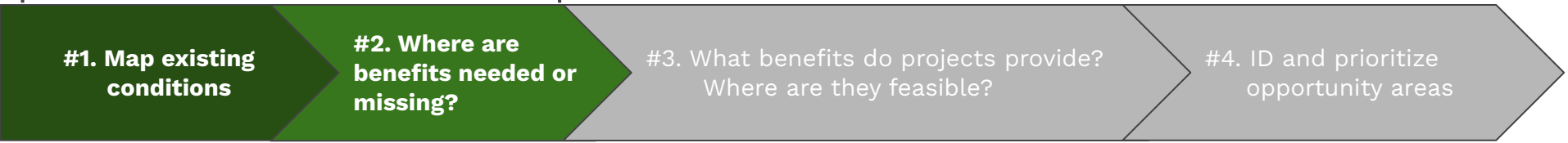
Opportunity Area Identification

# What's happening now?

In Progress




Urban heat

Biodiversity support

Riparian habitat

Flooding & stormwater

Community and tribal interests

Human health

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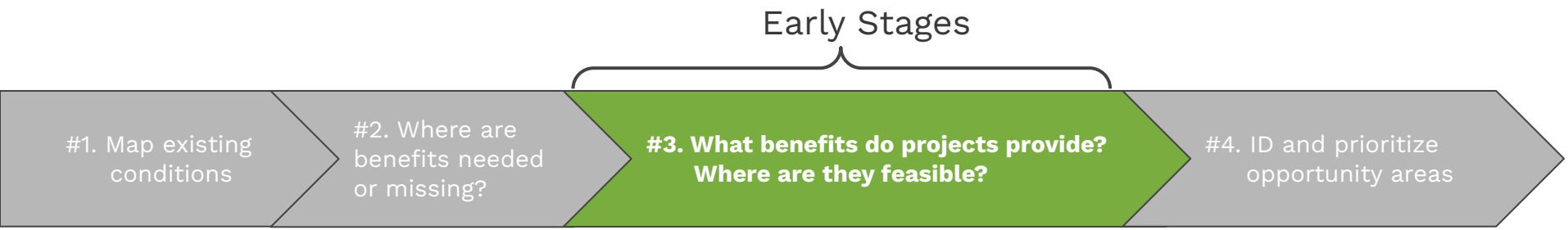
Opportunity Area Identification

# What's happening now?




- Creating project type list
- Linking to benefits

  + Carbon

  + Historical ecosystem function

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# More about individual analyses

**Spatial assessments (steps #1-2):**

Underway

- Urban heat
- Biodiversity support

Early partner coordination started

- Flooding & stormwater
- Community and Tribal needs & lived experience
- Human health
- Riparian habitat

**Non-spatial assessments (steps #3):**

Underway

- Carbon
- Historical ecology

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# More about individual analyses

**Spatial assessments (steps #1-2):**

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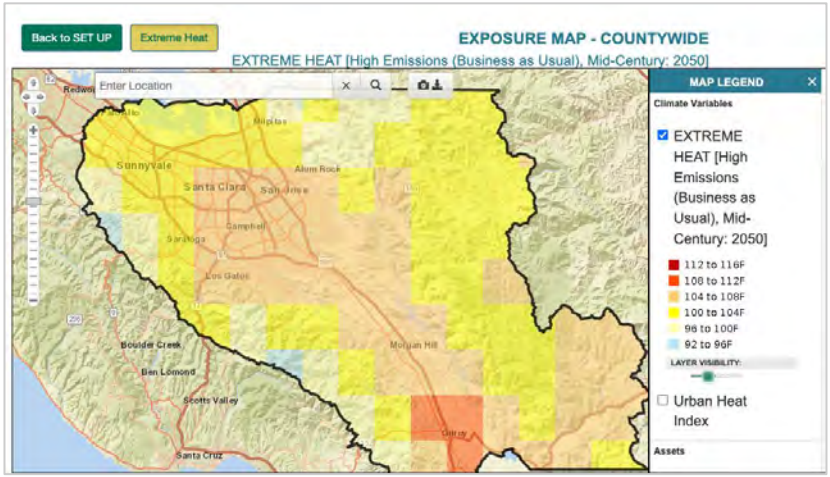
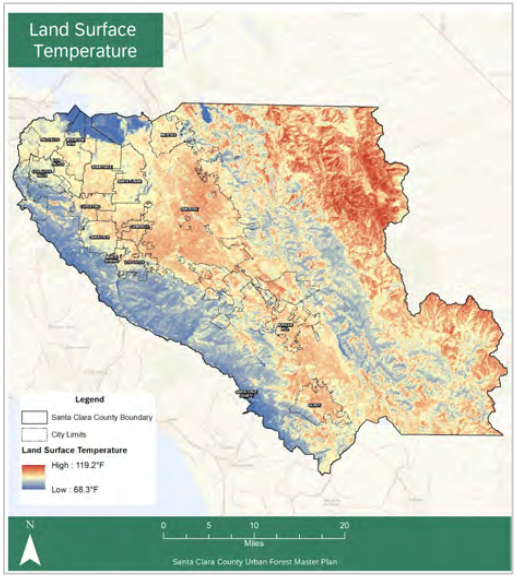
Urban Heat

# Existing Work in Santa Clara County

## Silicon Valley 2.0 CCPT




## Santa Clara County UFMP
## Urban Forest Prioritization Analysis

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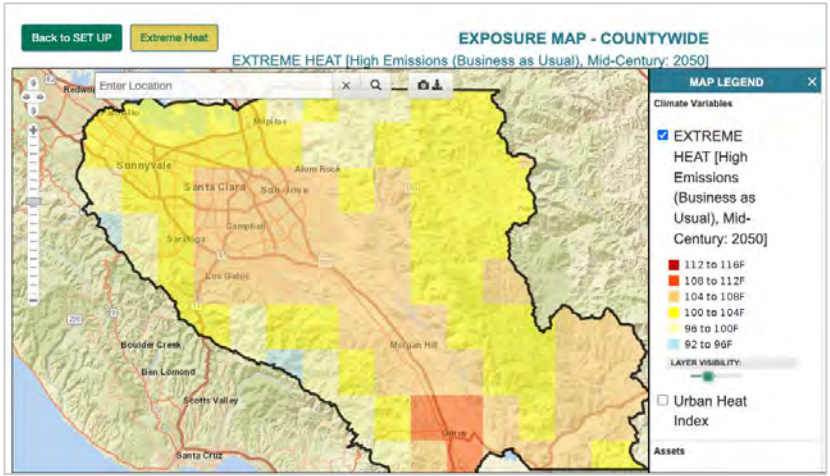
## Urban Heat

# Existing Work in Santa Clara County

### Silicon Valley 2.0 CCPT




Mid- and late-century extreme heat

**Resolution:** ~6 km

**Strength:** shows future heat trends under future environmental conditions

**Limitation:**

- Too coarse for siting local cooling interventions
- Too uniform for prioritization

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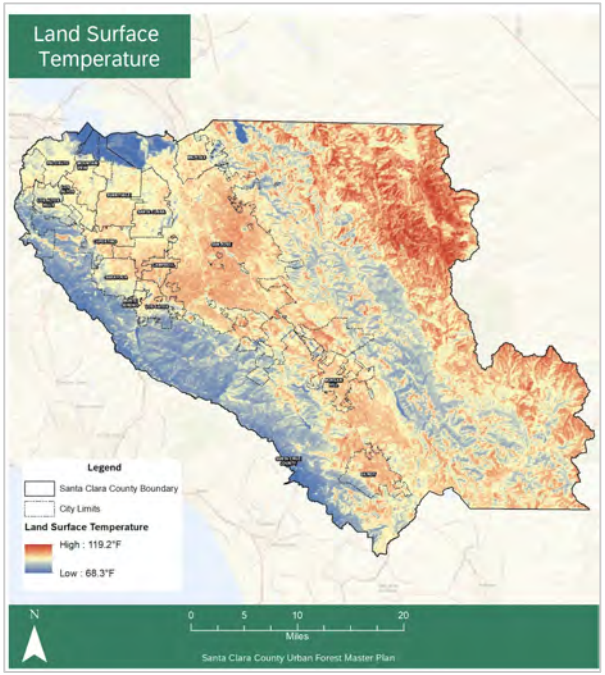
## Urban Heat

# Existing Work in Santa Clara County

### Santa Clara County UFMP
### Urban Forest Prioritization Analysis




Captures land surface heat from two late-summer afternoons

**Resolution:** ~30 m

**Strength:** provides county-wide temperature patterns at neighborhood scale

**Limitation:**

- Measures *surface* heat (top of vegetation, roofs, etc), not conditions at ground level
- Identifies hot spots but not the underlying causes (e.g., lack of shade)

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Urban Heat

# New Analysis: Shade Deficit

Captures shade availability across the day throughout the hot season

**Resolution:** 1 m

**Strength:** identifies gaps in tree and built shade for targeted cooling interventions

**Limitation:** models shade potential but not on-the-ground temperature or heat stress

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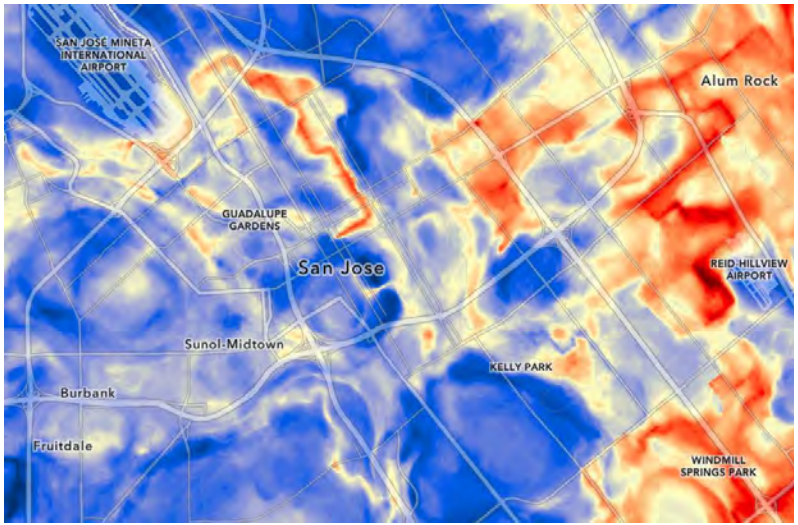
Urban Heat

# New Analysis: Shade Deficit

## Where is shade missing?

+

## Where is air temperature hot?




*Heat Watch San Jose & Santa Clara*
*2020 CAPA/NIHHIS*

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# Community Team Meeting Update

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# Plans & Priorities

Current uses in urban greening planning and implementation

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Opportunity Area Identification

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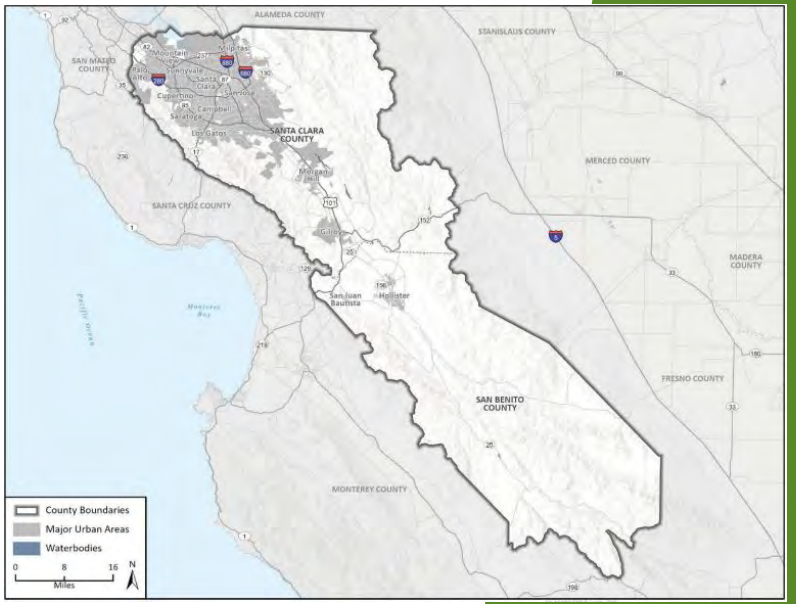
# County of San Benito & Santa Clara Priority CAP (2024)

Plan addressing future environmental impacts including heat, drought, wildfire, air quality, and flooding in San Benito & Santa Clara counties

**Urban Greening Component**: Opportunities for urban greening to reduce building energy needs, trails/cycleways to connect neighborhoods, compost matchmaking

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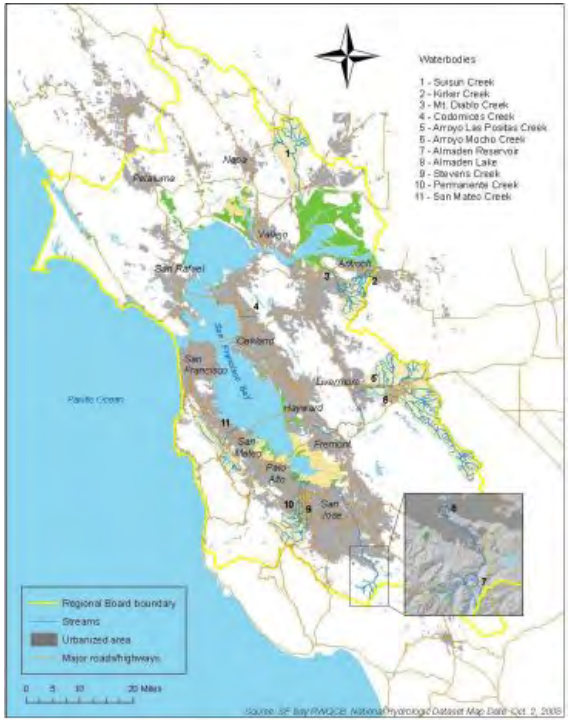
# Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit

Permit guiding stormwater and green stormwater infrastructure projects in the San Francisco Bay Region

**Urban Greening Component**: Requires municipalities to integrate green infrastructure such as bioretention, vegetated areas, and permeable surfaces into stormwater systems to retrofit impervious areas, reduce runoff, improve water quality, and enhance environmental durability

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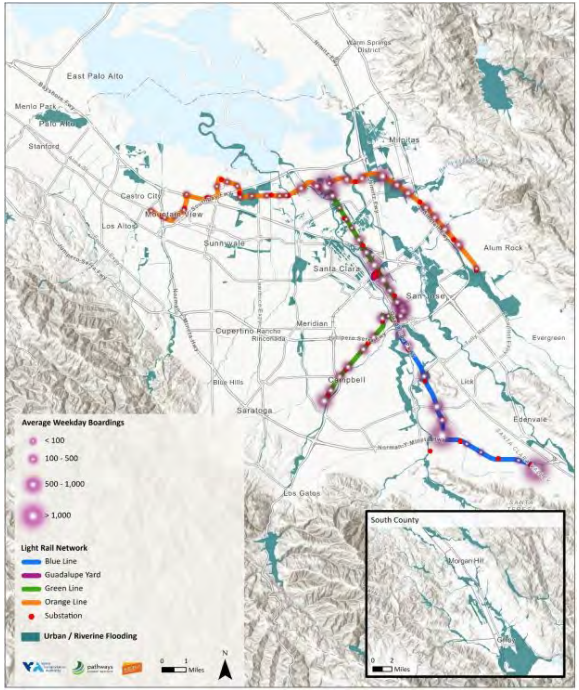
# VTA CAAP

Transit plan addressing risks to infrastructure and riders from long-term environmental impacts in Santa Clara County

**Urban Greening Component**: Expands tree planting, shade structures, permeable surfaces, and nature-based solutions to reduce heat and flooding while improving rider comfort, supporting groundwater recharge, and strengthening long-term system resilience

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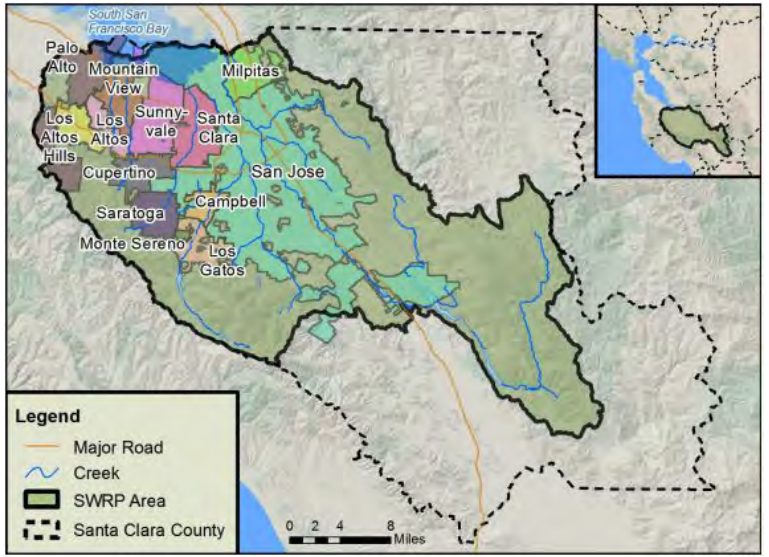
# SCVURPPP Stormwater Resource Protection Plan

Resource plan that identifies and prioritizes multi-benefit stormwater and dry-weather runoff capture project location opportunities within Santa Clara Basin

**Urban Greening Component**:Promotes green infrastructure such as bioswales, bioretention basins, permeable pavements, and expanded tree canopy to reduce stormwater runoff, improve water quality, mitigate heat, and enhance communities

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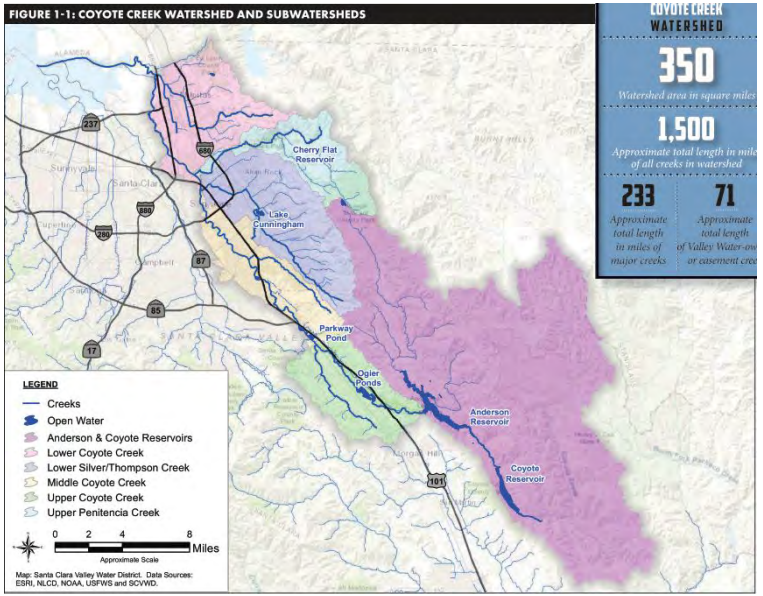
# Valley Water - Watershed Master Plans

Framework for the Coyote Creek and Guadalupe River that strategically allocate limited resources to provide a reliable water supply, minimize flood risk, and conserve and improve environmental stewardship.

**Urban Greening Component**: Emphasis is on multi-benefit projects that manage water resources holistically at the watershed scale

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# Additional Plans & Programs

**Other Existing Plans**

City of San Jose Heat Resilience

Santa Clara Open Space Authority

AB 1572 Statewide Irrigation Ban on Non-Functional Turf

**Future Plans**

SC Valley Urban Forest Plan

SB 1425 Updates to open space plans (2026)

AB 1889 Habitat connectivity analysis for conservation projects

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Opportunity Area Identification

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# Identifying Priority Area Gaps

Regional plans already highlight a range of benefits, but each emphasizes different priorities and locations. **HW&TC will help connect these priorities into a coordinated strategy.**

| **Priority Areas** | PCAP | MRP | CAAP | Stormwater Resource Plan | One Water Plans | Additional Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heat Mitigation |  | |  |  |  |  |
| Flood/Stormwater |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Water Quality | |  |  |  |  | |
| Biodiversity /Habitat | | | | |  |  |
| Community Improvements |  | | |  | |  |
| **LOCATION** | County Wide | SF Bay Wide | Transit Corridors and Rider Facilities | Project Sites in Santa Clara Basin | Specific Watersheds | Varied |



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# Pre-Meeting Survey Results

**Are there any documents or resources that your team uses to prioritize project areas and opportunities?**

- FEMA flood maps
- For green roofs, to achieve the greatest multi benefits, it is best to replace dark roofs and identify areas of large flat roofs
- City of Mountain View has a Sea Level Rise Capital Improvement Program and a storm drain master plan. The City will update the GSI plan, and develop a creek management plan.
- Coyote Creek Native Ecosystem Enhancement Tool
- Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan
- Valley Water One Water/Watershed Master Plans
- Asset Management Plans

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# Pre-Meeting Survey Results

**What other methods does your team use to prioritize project areas and opportunities?**

- Flood Vulnerability Assessment
- Low hanging fruit opportunities on newly acquired lands for aquatic habitat restoration and special status species support projects

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# Discussion

**Additional Responses to Survey Questions?**

1. Are there any documents or resources that your team uses to prioritize project areas and opportunities?

2. What other methods does your team use to prioritize project areas and opportunities?

David A. Hoffman, Flickr CC license

# Discussion

1. **How often are these plans updated?** *(ex: VTA CAAP was just released last year, is a future update planned?)*

- Is an opportunity map helpful in addition to the plans you are already using, in terms of identifying new priority areas?
- If not helpful for identifying new priority areas, would it be helpful to identify locations where your projects can provide multiple benefits?
- What about identifying types of projects that would be most beneficial to the areas identified?

2. **Are there benefits that are missing from these plans** that people are interested in incorporating into their project planning and prioritization?


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# Comparing Approaches to Urban Greening: a Validation Exercise

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# Comparing Approaches

A goal of this project is to advance **landscape-scale coordination** and **planning** of multi-benefit nature-based urban greening projects

# Comparing Approaches

A goal of this project is to advance **landscape-scale coordination** and **planning**

**VS**

A **project-by-project approach**

# We expect the landscape approach is preferred

| Expectations of Landscape-Scale Planning |
| --- |
| Cost efficiency |
| Smoother permitting |
| A larger network of funding opportunities |
| More in line with how ecosystems function |
| Projects placed where needed most |
| Less pressure on a single project to provide multiple benefits |
| More net benefits across the landscape |

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# Likely trade-offs compared to a project-based approach

| Potential Trade-offs of Landscape-Scale Planning |
| --- |
| Multiple jurisdictions |
| Increased coordination effort |
| Less nimble & responsive |
| Perhaps easier to garner community support for a specific project? |

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Comparing Approaches

# Validation Exercise

We aim to compare the expected outcomes of these two scales of approach

**landscape-scale coordination** and **planning**

**VS**

**project-by-project approach**

Comparing Approaches

# Validation Exercise

**landscape-scale coordination** and **planning**

VS

**project-by-project approach**

Landscape-scale project opportunity map and expected benefits produced

Map and/or list of projects completed 2015-2024 and expected benefits produced

Comparing Approaches

# Validation Exercise

Develop an analysis plan

Likely revise analysis plan & adjust methods

## project-by-project approach

Inventory of 2015-2024 completed projects

Devise method for tallying benefits of existing projects in line with ongoing landscape-scale analyses

## landscape-scale coordination and planning

What benefits do projects provide?

**ID and prioritize opportunity areas**

Compare approaches

June 2025 - June 2026

July 2026 - mid-2027

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Comparing Approaches

# Validation Exercise

We are here

Develop an analysis plan → Likely revise analysis plan & adjust methods

## project-by-project approach

Inventory of 2015-2024 completed projects → Devise method for tallying benefits of existing projects in line with ongoing landscape-scale analyses

## landscape-scale coordination and planning

What benefits do projects provide? → **ID and prioritize opportunity areas**

Compare approaches

June 2025 - June 2026

July 2026 - mid-2027

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# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

Step 1. Compile inventory of 2015-2024 urban greening projects in the study area

Example: SCVURPPP Stormwater Treatment Measures GIS dataset

# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

Survey results and discussion:

1. **Please list names or links (if possible) for datasets that compile information on previous urban greening projects in the region.**

    - Valley Water One Water/Watershed Master Plans https://www.valleywater.org/project-updates/watershed-master-plan
    - The SCVURPPP database is a good start for the agencies under the MRP permit. It may be helpful to contact other landowners and jurisdictions in County that are not under MRP permit.
    - Others:
        - Valley Water One Water, SCVURPPP (contact those not under permit)
        - One Shoreline (San Mateo)
        - Agencies under SF Regional Water Quality R2 permit

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# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

## Survey results and discussion:

**2. Are there *types* of urban greening projects that are not already captured in existing datasets and that we might need to compile at the project level?**

- onsite mitigation projects (riparian setback plantings in San Jose, e.g. Mazzone Project).
- There could be projects that are not just meant to meet the MRP compliance requirements. Is there a database such as LEED accredited projects which could show additional work done?
- Others:
  - Santa Clara County green infrastructure plan
  - Safety Elements/Haz Mit plans
  - Park greening projects/pocket parks
  - Development Permits
  - Development Standards (req. Bioswales or stormwater management)

# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

Survey results and discussion:

**3. If you are open to us reaching out to you for follow-up questions, please provide your Name, Affiliation, and Email here:**

- SPUR, City of Mountain View, Habitat Agency
- Anyone else?
- City of San Jose

# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

Survey results and discussion:

**4. Do you have suggestions for other individuals who might be able to help us with this information?**

- NASA Moffett Field
- Mid Pen (Open Space?)
- Applied River Science
- Anyone else?
    - Universities- San Jose State, Stanford, UCB
    - CSJ Parks Dept (Dan Greeley)
    - Dev Architects
    - Corporate Campus Greening
    - CNPS
    - Private Companies (Google…)

# Inventory of 2015-2024 projects

## Questions?

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# Project Types

Priority nature-based urban greening project types

# Project Types

Opportunity areas will be accompanied by guidance on **which types of urban greening projects might be best suited to provide needed benefits in a particular location.**

# Project Types

## How did we arrive at an initial list

SC4 Definitions


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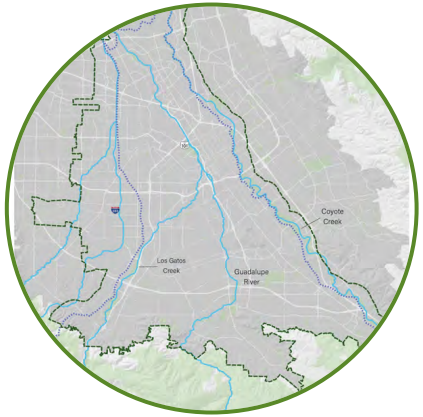
Study Area

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SFEI Definitions


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# Project Types

| **Large Projects**<br>*multi-parcel to full parcel* | **Small-Medium Projects**<br>*sub-parcel to full parcel* | **Small GSI Projects**<br>*sub-parcel* |
|---|---|---|
| Retention Pond / Wet Pond | Urban Agriculture | Stormwater Tree Pits/Wells |
| Upland Habitat | Green Roof | Flow-through Planter |
| Floodplain restoration | Upland Habitat | Bioswale / bioretention cell |
| Park Trees | Street Trees | Rain Garden |
| Constructed Inland Wetlands | | |
| Creek Daylighting (with trees) | | |
| Creek Daylighting (no trees) | | |

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# Feedback from you

## Specific types of interest and proposed additions

| **Large Projects** *multi-parcel to full parcel* | **Small-Medium Projects** *sub-parcel to full parcel* | **Small GSI Projects** *sub-parcel* |
|---|---|---|
| Retention Pond / Wet Pond | Urban Agriculture | Stormwater Tree Pits/Wells |
| **Upland Habitat** *native oak woodland* | **Green Roof** | Flow-through Planter |
| **Floodplain restoration** | **Upland Habitat** *native oak woodland* | **Bioswale / bioretention cell** |
| Park Trees | **Street Trees** *Incl. median planting* | **Rain Garden** |
| Constructed Inland Wetlands | | |
| **Creek Daylighting (with trees)** | | |
| **Creek Daylighting (no trees)** | | |
| **Street/Transportation Corridor** | | |

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# Feedback from you

## Opportunity space highlights

- Transportation hubs and stops
- Schoolyards and playgrounds
- Neighborhood streets
- Commercial and industrial areas
- Riparian zones
- Federal properties
- Waterways & In-Channel Areas
- Residential yards

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# Feedback from you

## Opportunities on private lands

- Private schoolyards
- Conservation easements
- Publicly managed, privately owned recreational spaces
- Places of worship
- Riparian zones
- Vacant lots and brownfields
- Community centers
- Parking lots
- Museums
- Office parks
- Commercial developments

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# Project Types

## Additional Questions?

*Photo credits: Shira Bezalel*

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# Wrap up and Next Steps

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# Next steps

- Follow up - your input is **CRITICAL**
  - Project types and locations
  - Project type definitions
- Next meeting: December 2, 2025

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# Thank you!

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# Next Steps

- Next Work Group meeting: December 2, 2025
- Work Group document share