

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Welcome to the eleventh annual edition of *Indicators for a Sustainable San Mateo County!* This report features trends on 32 indicators of sustainability and highlights actions our cities and the county are taking to move toward a more sustainable future. Are we better off now than we were yesterday? Read on to find out!

This annual report strives to stimulate a community-wide dialogue about bettering this special place where we work, play, and live. It challenges each of us to ask, “How do we simultaneously achieve the triple goals of a healthy economy, society, and environment in San Mateo County, while using only our fair share of the planet’s resources?” Propelled by the philosophy that “what gets measured gets managed,” this report card holds us collectively accountable for improvement in all areas. This report aims to weave the concept of sustainability into the vocabulary of our leaders, residents, and workers, and ultimately into the fabric of our entire community.

We have chosen each indicator because of its importance to one of the three goals of sustainability: a healthy environment, society, and economy. We present the most recent data available for each indicator. The exclusion of any indicators that have been analyzed in previous editions does not reflect our belief that those indicators are no longer important, but rather the unavailability of new data to add to our previous reporting. By providing fact-based information about local trends over time, this report improves our ability to make sound decisions for the benefit of current and future generations. It is distributed to government policy makers, Chambers of Commerce, environmental organizations, human services agencies, civic groups, businesses, individuals, and more.

This report is a reflection of our community in more ways than one. It would not be possible without the help of dozens of local volunteers representing various walks of life in our county. These volunteers selflessly contributed their talents in research and the graphic arts. We are grateful for their assistance and the financial contributions of our sponsors.

ABOUT SUSTAINABLE SAN MATEO COUNTY

Sustainable San Mateo County (SSMC) is dedicated to the long-term health of our county’s economy, environment, and social equity and fosters sustainability through education. Every year SSMC publishes this indicators report in order to raise awareness of sustainability issues in our county and improve our ability to make sound decisions for the benefit of future generations. It is the only countywide report that tracks major economic, social, and environmental issues in one document. In addition to publishing the indicators report, SSMC hosts an annual sustainability awards program to recognize San Mateo County businesses, community groups, and individuals that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to bringing sustainable practices to their work.

COVER PHOTOS

Rotary Floritas, San Mateo: Sponsored by the San Mateo Rotary Club and a 2007 SSMC Award winner, Rotary Floritas is a 50-unit housing facility for low-income seniors. It was designed using green building construction methods and opened in November 2005. Photograph courtesy of the San Mateo Rotary Club.

Bair Island Restoration: Volunteers with the nonprofit Save the Bay are shown removing the invasive species commonly known as ice plant on Bair Island in Redwood City. The restoration project is an important step in the revitalization of the San Francisco Bay wetlands which are critical to the health of the Bay ecosystem. Photograph courtesy of Save the Bay.

Hybrid Autos, Redwood City: Two of Redwood City’s hybrid automobiles are shown. Hybrid automobiles make up one quarter of Redwood City’s entire sedan fleet. Photograph courtesy of Redwood City.