



SHARED PROSPERITY COORDINATING COUNCIL ECONOMIC MOBILITY ACTION PLAN SAN MATEO COUNTY





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Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council Website
smcgov.org/ceo/shared-prosperity-economic-mobility-san-mateo-county

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

San Mateo County is a hub of innovation and economic opportunity, but not everyone shares in our region's prosperity. One in 10 people in our county are unable to afford their most basic needs like food and housing. The highest rates of poverty are among Black and Latino/e/x residents, single parents, non-college graduates, and part-time workers. Our "hourglass economy" of very high-wage and very low-wage workers perpetuates disparities in housing, employment, and education—and continues to hold back communities that have been under-resourced and disadvantaged for generations.

The San Mateo County Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council (SPCC) is a working group of leaders from county and local government, nonprofit, and private sector organizations that seek to advance economic mobility and promote shared prosperity in a county that suffers from significant disparities in income and opportunity. Many members of the SPCC were central in guiding the County's pandemic relief and recovery investments. Today, the group continues to focus on investing in local strategies that advance three universal prosperity goals: 1) economic success, 2) power and autonomy, and 3) being valued.

"The SPCC is a working group that seeks to advance economic mobility and promote shared prosperity in a county that suffers from significant disparities in income and opportunity."





Economic Success

All individuals and families have safe, stable, and affordable housing and reliable income that covers their expenses while building wealth throughout their lifetime and for future generations.



Power & Autonomy

All residents have access to opportunities to pursue their personal goals and voice and agency to influence larger policies and actions that affect their lives.



Being Valued

Everyone feels the respect, dignity, and wellbeing that comes from a sense of belonging and contributing to and being appreciated across all settings and demographics.

The Economic Mobility Action Plan (EMAP) was developed to complement the breadth and depth of ongoing countywide initiatives. SPCC's process involved first understanding the county's current economic mobility challenges. To do this, the SPCC reviewed economic indicator data related to housing, education, economy, public and environmental health, and governance. The group conducted a landscape analysis of existing initiatives in the county that are tackling many of our communities' most critical challenges to identify gaps and avoid duplication. SPCC also reviewed community feedback collected as part of several countywide community engagement efforts. This data and community feedback provided a data-driven and community-centered foundation for development of this plan.

The EMAP does not intend to address all aspects of economic mobility. Instead, the plan identifies select strategies that fill critical gaps across the landscape of efforts and expand nascent efforts that could benefit from the SPCC's multi-sector collaboration. The plan's goals, strategies, and key measurement indicators are summarized on the following page.

Economic Mobility Tools and Resources for San Mateo County

The SPCC has developed four tools that countywide organizations can use for aligning their efforts:

- » The County’s interactive [Community Data Dashboard](#) that presents key economic mobility indicators and analysis that organizations, agencies, and the public can view and download to better understand local data trends, priority populations, and inform decision-making.
- » Planning principles that can serve as a blueprint for any strategic planning and decision-making effort.
- » A localized economic mobility framework to understand current conditions, direct planning efforts, and identify targeted strategies.
- » A menu of policy and programming options, with key local recommendations and additional resources, to improve shared prosperity in San Mateo County.

Summary of the Economic Mobility Action Plan

	 Economic Success	 Power & Autonomy	 Being Valued
Universal Prosperity Goals	All individuals and families have safe, stable, and affordable housing and reliable income that covers their expenses while building wealth throughout their lifetime and for future generations	All residents have access to opportunities to pursue their personal goals, and voice and agency to influence larger policies and actions that affect their lives	Everyone feels the respect, dignity, and wellbeing that comes from a sense of belonging and contributing to and being appreciated across all settings and demographics
Root Causes of Inequities	» Racial segregation in schools and housing » Employment discrimination » Prejudice in hiring and pay » Loss of middle-wage jobs » Stagnant wages » High inflation » High cost of living	» Historical legacy of racial exclusion in politics » Legacy of voter suppression and intimidation » Racial gerrymandering » High costs of campaigning and lack of access to financing and donor networks	» Complex bureaucracy » Varied eligibility criteria creating “benefits cliffs”¹ » Language barriers and limited culturally and linguistically relevant services and information » Barriers for immigrants to access opportunities and benefits
Key Indicators	Median Annual Earnings: In San Mateo County, median earnings for Black, Latino/e/x, Native American, Multiracial, Pacific Islander communities, and women, fall below the countywide median Income Growth Over Time: Although wages for full-time and salary workers have risen over time, workers earning lower wages experience much less income growth	Descriptive Representation: Asian, Black, Multiracial, and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in local elected leadership and women fill fewer than half of elected positions. Community feedback suggests LGBTQ+ and people with disabilities are also underrepresented Voter Turnout: 2020 and 2024 voter turnout was lowest among Black and Latino/e/x voters and voters under 29 years old	Racial/Cultural Intolerance: Survey data shows that Black and Latino/e/x residents disproportionately experience racial and cultural intolerance Utilization of Benefits: Clients with the greatest need for social services and housing assistance are from communities of color in low-income neighborhoods Ease of Access to Social Services: Survey data shows Black, Pacific Islander, Latino/e/x, and LGBTQ+ residents experience difficulty accessing social services

CALL TO ACTION

Shared challenges require shared solutions. Organizations and agencies across San Mateo County are encouraged to take action to advance shared prosperity by aligning these efforts with their mission to contribute towards collective action:

- » **Adopt the Key Planning Principles** to guide decision-making and program planning, recognizing that effective and equitable processes lead to stronger outcomes
- » **Onboard the San Mateo County Economic Mobility Framework** to align with other organizations under a common, data-informed framework to improve outcomes for our communities and those we serve
- » **Make Data-Informed Decisions:** Use the Community Data Dashboard to examine disaggregated data, identify populations facing the greatest barriers, and track changes over time
- » **Advance the Plan's Recommendations:** Leverage your organization's influence, partnerships, and resources to implement the recommended strategies in the section below.

	 Economic Success	 Power & Autonomy	 Being Valued
Recommended Strategies	Anchor Institutions: Partner with major employers to connect local job seekers with employment opportunities and invest in workforce development Career Pipelines: Map pathways for individuals to enter into living-wage job opportunities and progress from entry-level positions to higher-paying jobs within an industry or organization Employee Ownership and Entrepreneurship: Provide supports for employees and entrepreneurs to start or take ownership, sustain, and grow their own businesses Housing Stabilization Supports: Leverage policies, programs, and resources to help renters and homeowners maintain safe, secure, and affordable housing	Pipeline for Diversifying Representation in Appointed and Elected Roles: Provide outreach, training, and resources for future leaders, including youth and transitional aged youth² in underrepresented communities Technical Assistance for Existing Representatives: Provide training and resources for existing representatives working in support of underrepresented populations	Narrative Change: Cultivate belonging and understanding of the value of diversity and shared prosperity Community Resource Mapping: Identify available programs, services, and supports for our most impacted residents Service Navigation Support/Promotoras: Strengthen peer-to-peer support for case management, connections to services, and help in navigating systems Benefits Calculator: Use online tools to estimate benefit eligibility and how benefits change in different scenarios to plan for job changes and life circumstances

OUR CHALLENGE

SHARED PROSPERITY

While San Mateo County is within the country's most prosperous metro region, it is one of the least inclusive when it comes to this prosperity, according to Brookings Metro Monitor.³ One in 10 people in our county are unable to afford their most basic needs like food and housing. The highest rates of poverty are among Black and Latino/e/x⁴ residents, single parents, non-college graduates, and part-time workers.⁵

San Mateo County has 42,000 households with an annual income greater than \$500,000⁶ but is also home to 48,000 families living in poverty.⁷ This “hourglass economy” of very high and very low earners perpetuates disparities in housing, employment, and education—and continues to hold back communities that have been under-resourced and disadvantaged for generations. Even the difference in life expectancy across the county's geography is significant. For example, people in Atherton, a town with a \$186,810 per capita income, have a life expectancy that is almost seven years longer⁸ than people in East Palo Alto, a city with a per capita income of \$37,736⁹—even though the two communities are just a few miles away from each other.

The Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council's Economic Mobility Action Plan (EMAP) seeks to advance equity,¹⁰ support economic mobility, and promote shared prosperity in a county that suffers from significant disparities in income and opportunity. The planning process used community input, data analysis, feedback from local experts, and best practice research to propose targeted strategies that foster economic opportunity in communities with the greatest need.

The Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council (SPCC) is leading the development and implementation of the Economic Mobility Action Plan. This group was established in Spring 2023 to continue the work of the COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Coordinating Council (RCC), the leadership group that oversaw the allocation of pandemic recovery funding from local, state, and federal sources.¹¹ Pandemic recovery investments helped stabilize our community and worked to keep individuals, families, and businesses afloat during an unprecedented time. But by the end of 2023, the County had allocated its remaining pandemic recovery funds, and RCC members recognized the need for longer-term, countywide economic planning that builds on the relationships, partnerships, and lessons learned from pandemic recovery programs. The group transitioned to the Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council, acknowledging a shift from a singular focus on COVID-era stabilization to the development of a shared framework for advancing economic mobility and identifying preliminary actions in support of shared prosperity.



OUR APPROACH

KEY PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The SPCC developed and applied six principles for economic mobility action planning. These principles can serve as a blueprint for other strategic planning and decision-making efforts. SPCC members have committed to working to integrate these principles in their respective organizations' work to promote more consistent and deliberate processes for program design across countywide institutions.

SPCC Key Planning Principles

					
1 Diverse Representation	2 Data-Driven Decisions	3 Equity-Focused Approach	4 Engagement of Impacted Communities	5 Initiative Mapping	6 Accountability
Planning teams with lived experience and local expertise	Using data to inform decision making	Using targeted universalism to prioritize populations	Engaging community members in meaningful ways	Analyzing the landscape of efforts to fill critical gaps	Promoting transparency, validating impact, tracking progress, learning and adjusting
Key Planning Principles					



DIVERSE REPRESENTATION: SPCC MEMBERSHIP

The Recovery Coordination Council (RCC), which oversaw San Mateo County's pandemic recovery investments from 2020-2023, was a group of leaders from county and local government, and nonprofit and private sector organizations. In 2023, this group decided to shift their focus to planning for economic prosperity as the Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council (SPCC) and conducted an analysis of the critical sectors related to economic prosperity that should be represented. The group also conducted an internal demographic and lived-experience survey of its membership. This was done to ensure SPCC representatives reflect the diversity of our county and provide representation for different demographic groups that have historically been underrepresented or excluded in decision-making processes and have experienced barriers to economic mobility. When reaching out to new member organizations, the SPCC requested that the organization appoint leaders to fill gaps in demographic representation. The sectoral and demographic analyses helped convene a group of SPCC members who:

- » Hold leadership positions with the ability to influence policy and resource decisions relevant to low-income communities
- » Represent the diverse concerns of many of our local communities through their personal and professional experiences

Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council Representation

SPCC Demographics and Lived Experience

Members who understand and share their own community's concerns

- » Adults, aging adults, and organizations that support children and youth
- » Asian, Black, Latino/e/x, Pacific Islander, White
- » LGBTQ+
- » Lived experience or a loved one experiencing mental or physical disability, immigration, economic insecurity, housing insecurity, incarceration, or having sought or utilized safety net services
- » Residents in Coastsides, North County, South County, and Mid-County

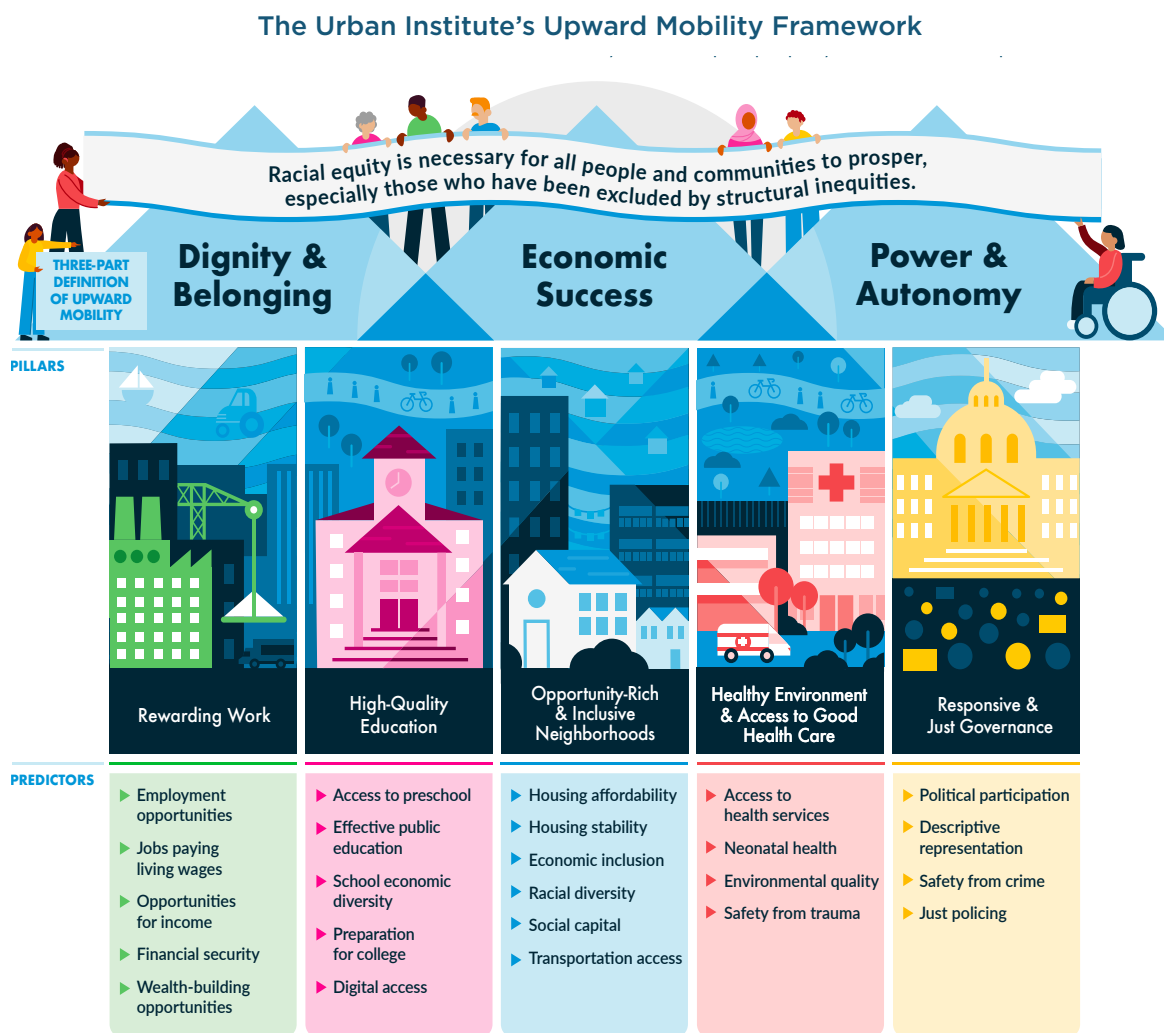
SPCC Organizations

Diverse institutions working with and for our most impacted communities

- » Academia and research institutions
- » Children and youth support organizations
- » Community development financial institutions
- » Community service organizations
- » Economic development agencies
- » Educational institutions and schools
- » Local government and elected officials
- » Philanthropy
- » Small business and entrepreneur service providers
- » Workforce development organizations

DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS: MOBILITY METRICS

The SPCC adopted the Urban Institute’s Upward Mobility Framework¹² (UI Framework) to guide the development of this Economic Mobility Action Plan given the alignment of the SPCC’s principles with the Urban Institute’s approach. The UI Framework was developed after years of research and collaboration of experts and leaders in poverty alleviation. The UI Framework incorporates an integrated focus on racial equity, featuring a three-part definition for economic mobility and five pillars that drive economic mobility: 1) rewarding work, 2) high-quality education, 3) opportunity-rich and inclusive neighborhoods, 4) healthy environment and access to good healthcare, and 5) responsive and just governance. Within each pillar, Urban Institute’s panel of experts identified specific predictors that can be measured using a suite of mobility metrics, or data indicators that provide insight into the community’s economic mobility conditions. In addition to reviewing local data sources, the SPCC reviewed mobility metrics across a wide range of predictors to assess current conditions and identify priorities. A summary of the UI Framework is shown in the graphic below.



Graphic sourced from the Upward Mobility Framework website.

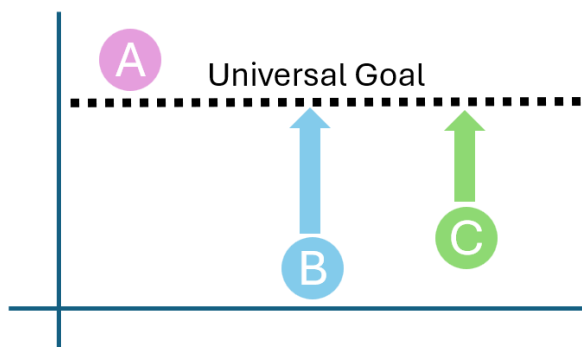


EQUITY-FOCUSED APPROACH: TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

While advancing equity is embedded across all of its key planning principles, the SPCC specifically utilizes the Targeted Universalism¹³ strategy, which sets universal goals and identifies targeted strategies to assist subgroups farthest from meeting the universal goals. Once a universal goal is set, data can be disaggregated across the population to understand which sub-populations are most challenged by barriers that limit opportunity.

Following this strategy, the SPCC identified universal prosperity goals for the county. It evaluated local data to determine which sub-populations are most challenged to meet each goal (“priority populations”) and then focused on developing targeted strategies to support these groups in advancing towards the universal goals.

Targeted Universalism Approach



1. Set a **universal goal**.
2. Disaggregate data to identify **priority populations** farthest from meeting the goal. A, B, and C represent different populations. Priority populations B and C are farthest from the goal.
3. Identify the priority population’s **specific issues and barriers** to achieving the goal. B and C may have distinct challenges.
4. Develop **targeted strategies** to address the key barriers for priority populations. B and C may need unique solutions.



ENGAGEMENT OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES: COUNTYWIDE OUTREACH

To be responsive to what San Mateo County residents feel are their greatest economic challenges, this Economic Mobility Action Plan incorporates data from three large-scale community engagement efforts conducted in 2021, 2022, and 2023 by the County of San Mateo in partnership with cities and local community organizations. Data was gathered from a wide cross-section of residents with a particular focus on reaching impacted populations. It represents input from over 5,500 residents in 12 languages through listening sessions, workshops, focus groups, and posters¹⁴. The SPCC honored these previous engagement efforts and used this valuable data as a foundation for its planning efforts.

Summary of Countywide Community Engagement Initiatives

	Pandemic Recovery	Immigrant Survey	Measure K Funding
Year Conducted	2021	2022	2023
Community Engagement Methods	» Survey: 7 languages » 7 Poster sites: 2 languages » 7 Focus groups: 2 languages » 3 Online forums: 3 languages	Survey: 12 languages	» Survey: 4 languages » 8 Listening sessions: 4 languages
Targeted Community Outreach	» CBO-hosted focus groups in East Palo Alto, Redwood City, Half Moon Bay, San Mateo, South San Francisco, Daly City » 7 Poster locations	» Multi-lingual graphics and flyers » 5 Community engagement teams	Online, paper, and phone survey
Overview of Participation	» 894 Survey respondents » 300 Poster contributions » 60 Focus group participants » 80 Online forum participants	2,700 Survey responses	» 2,316 Survey respondents » 345 Listening session participants
Survey Respondent Demographics (Non-exhaustive)	» 56% Low-income » 33% Responded in another language	» 75% Speak English and another language » 56% With child/children » 70% Employed	» 29% Age 65+ » 58% Non-white and 27% Latino/e/x » 61% HH income < \$100k/year

This data revealed the types of challenges faced by residents. Specifically, residents noted that it is difficult to navigate programs and services across a wide range of systems that support families in meeting their basic needs like food, housing, and employment. A lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate support to navigate available resources across systems was raised again and again. Other commonly cited concerns were related to job and training opportunities, barriers to employment, and high cost of living—particularly housing costs.

Countywide Community Concerns: Key themes across surveys, focus groups, and listening sessions (2021-2023)



- » Anxiety and stress over meeting basic needs like food and housing
- » Making a livable wage and being able to pay the bills
- » High housing costs and link to debt accrual



- » Lack of variety in educational programs and curriculum (vocational, trade, etc.)
- » Barriers to employment: childcare, technology, housing, transportation



- » Difficulty navigating across different systems and programs
- » Unique barriers to access safety net programs experienced by specific groups (e.g., immigrants, young adults, older workers, veterans, single parents)

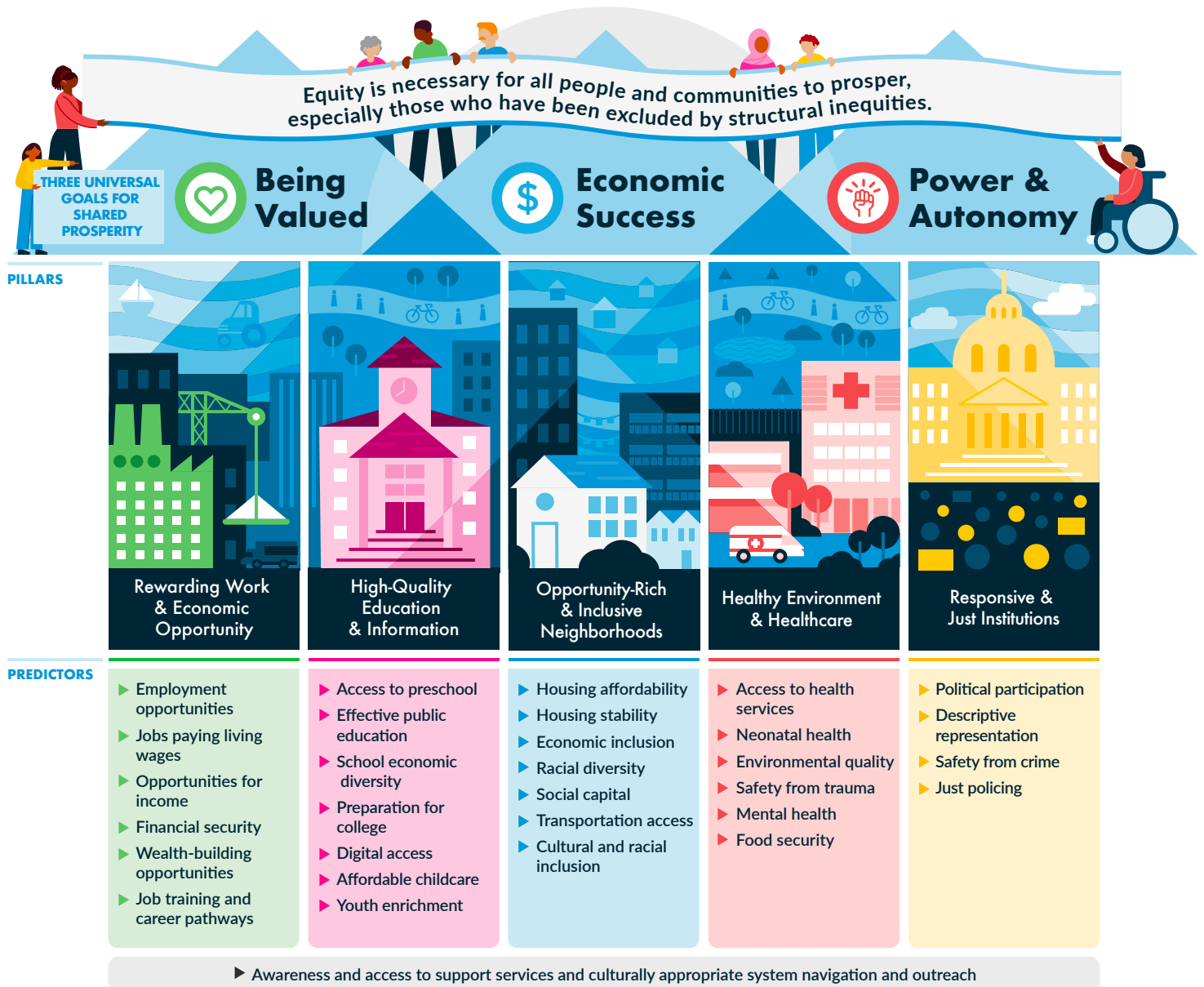
The SPCC used this community data to guide the development of initial goals and customize the UI Framework for the county. To further refine the goals and framework, the SPCC:

- » Held a webinar in Spring 2025 with more than 100 representatives from local partner organizations to gather feedback and share the universal goals, framework, and data
- » Facilitated seven in-person community conversations across the county with our most impacted communities including seniors, immigrants, youth, and communities of color, in partnership with six local, trusted community organizations¹⁵
- » Integrated feedback from community leaders and community members into the final framework that reflects UI Framework predictors as well as San Mateo County community priorities
- » Updated the plan's goals and added strategies based on the community feedback

The SPCC developed a localized economic mobility framework featured on the following page that can be adopted by local organizations to understand current conditions, direct planning efforts, and identify targeted strategies. The San Mateo County Economic Mobility Framework adds seven local community priorities to the list of UI Framework predictors, including:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| » Awareness and access to support services and culturally appropriate system navigation and outreach | » Youth enrichment |
| » Job training and career pathways | » Cultural and racial inclusion |
| » Affordable childcare | » Mental health |
| | » Food security |

SAN MATEO COUNTY ECONOMIC MOBILITY FRAMEWORK





LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS: BUILDING ON EXISTING EFFORTS AND IDENTIFYING CRITICAL GAPS

San Mateo County has a network of well-established, multi-sector initiatives tackling many of our communities’ most critical challenges. For example, collaboratives such as Home for All address housing challenges, the Big Lift focuses on strengthening education outcomes, and County Health’s Community Health Improvement Planning effort coordinates community actions to support health outcomes—just to name a few.

The SPCC performed an analysis of relevant initiatives to identify critical gaps, avoid duplication of efforts, and leverage existing expertise and resources to make the greatest impact. The SPCC also identified areas within the San Mateo County Economic Mobility Framework that could benefit from coordinated, cross-discipline, and multi-agency local leadership, and areas where pilot projects could demonstrate early successes.



ACCOUNTABILITY: PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY, VALIDATING IMPACT, TRACKING PROGRESS, LEARNING AND ADJUSTING

This Economic Mobility Action Plan sets a strategic framework and direction for the SPCC and the county as a whole to advance shared prosperity. As part of the implementation phase of the work, the SPCC commits to the follow best practices for accountability.

Accountability Principle	Best Practices
Promote transparency	Share data, decision-making processes, and project impacts and updates publicly, with pathways for feedback
Validate information and impact	Apply “ground-truthing” ¹⁶ by sharing data and findings with impacted communities to ensure accuracy and completeness, and to ensure anticipated outcomes resonate and the implementation process for the project aligns with community needs
Track progress	Establish meaningful performance measures and milestones to monitor progress and signal when adjustments are needed
Co-design projects with impacted communities	Where possible, design programs in collaboration between implementing organizations and impacted communities to customize to the unique needs of the communities
Measure outcomes	During implementation, measure progress with community or client feedback and adjust to improve experiences and outcomes

UNIVERSAL PROSPERITY GOALS

CONTEXT, KEY INDICATORS, AND STRATEGIES

This Economic Mobility Action Plan aims to provide pathways to prosperity for everyone in San Mateo County by advancing economic mobility for those with barriers to opportunity. Economic mobility is defined as the ability of individuals, families, and communities to improve their economic status over their lifetime and for future generations. Adapted from the Urban Institute's three-part definition for economic mobility, San Mateo County's Economic Mobility Action Plan sets three Universal Prosperity Goals.





Economic Success

All individuals and families have safe, stable, and affordable housing and reliable income that covers their expenses while building wealth throughout their lifetime and for future generations.



Power & Autonomy

All residents have access to opportunities to pursue their personal goals and voice and agency to influence larger policies and actions that affect their lives.



Being Valued

Everyone feels the respect, dignity, and wellbeing that comes from a sense of belonging and contributing to and being appreciated across all settings and demographics.

This section explores the context for inequities, key indicators and data, and strategies to advance each goal. Additional data and analyses related to these goals are available through the web-based interactive [Community Data Dashboard](#). The dashboard features more than thirty economic mobility metrics and employs a Targeted Universalism approach to examine impacts across different populations using disaggregated data by race, geography, age, gender, and other factors. This disaggregated data helps identify subpopulations facing the greatest challenges and in need of targeted support, as well as populations demonstrating strong outcomes from which we can learn.

UNIVERSAL PROSPERITY GOAL

ECONOMIC SUCCESS

All individuals and families have safe, stable, and affordable housing and reliable income that covers their expenses while building wealth throughout their lifetime and for future generations.



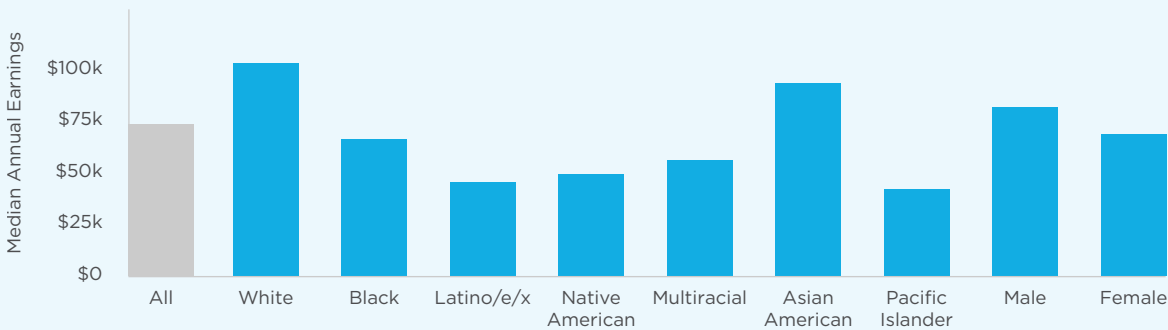
Context for Inequities

San Mateo County is a hub of innovation, with many high-paying jobs. But the loss of middle-wage jobs, stagnant incomes for low-wage workers, high inflation, and high cost of living has made it difficult for low-wage workers to move out of poverty. This compounds challenges for low-wage workers from communities of color, who experience institutional barriers to educational and job opportunities stemming from a legacy of housing and school segregation, school funding disparities, housing and employment discrimination, and prejudice in hiring, pay, and unions.

Key Indicator: Median Earnings by Gender and Race/Ethnicity¹⁷

Careers paying a living wage allow people to meet their daily financial needs independently without outside support. Disaggregating median earnings by key demographics shows that earnings for women and Black, Latino/e/x, Native American, Multiracial, and Pacific Islander communities fall significantly below the countywide median, increasing the likelihood these residents would need formal or informal assistance to meet daily financial needs. Median earnings is a static metric that can provide insight into economic inequities across communities. Looking at the distribution of earnings within each group can further enhance the notion of increasing economic success.

Figure 1. Median Annual Earnings in San Mateo County by Demographic

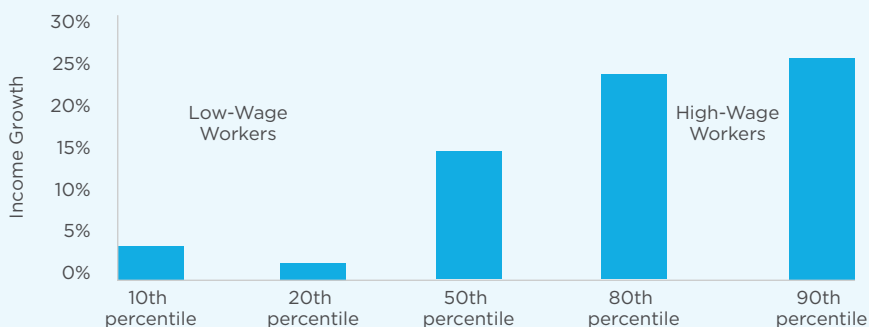


Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS B20017, B20017B through I, Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Key Indicator: Income Growth Over Time

From 2010 to 2020, wages for full-time and salary workers have risen across all income groups. However, workers earning lower wages experienced much less income growth. High-wage workers in the 80th percentile have seen significantly more income growth than low-wage workers in the 20th percentile, which has barely kept up with inflation.

Figure 2. Earned Income Growth for Full-time Wage and Salary Workers (2010-2020)



Data Source: IPUMS USA / Bay Area Equity Atlas

Strategies to Advance Economic Success

To achieve the universal goal for economic success, residents need pathways to quality jobs with medical and retirement benefits, career advancement opportunities, and limited barriers to entry. While the delivery of job training and job placement services to unemployed or underemployed residents in impacted communities is critical, there are limited living wage job vacancies for entry-level and lower-educated candidates. Many job seekers need immediate income to make ends meet and may find it challenging to take on additional job training or schooling. Regardless of employment status and earnings, all individuals and families need safe, stable, and affordable housing to thrive. It's critical that those in crisis or facing financial hardship are aware of and have access to resources to meet immediate housing needs while working towards long-term housing stability.

SPCC consultations with community organizations and workforce development partners serving our impacted communities highlighted the following strategies as those with the most potential to generate more living-wage jobs and open on-ramps to quality career pathways for local low-wage workers.

Anchor Institutions

Anchor institutions are public, private, and nonprofit employers that play a crucial role in the local economy and are committed to the local community.¹⁸ Many anchor institutions, including universities, hospitals, government agencies, and large corporations, are a fixture in our county. They provide stable employment and benefits, spend locally, and generate local economic opportunities with close ties to the community. Anchor institutions can leverage their financial resources and social influence to serve as catalysts for equitable economic opportunities, policies, and initiatives that support our most impacted communities.

Local Career Pipelines

Career pipelines are mapped pathways for individuals to enter into living-wage job opportunities with career pathways to progress from entry-level positions to higher-paying jobs within an industry or organization. These pipelines aim to promote local employment, address skill gaps, provide training and mentorship opportunities, and support career advancement—ultimately supporting individuals and families to build wealth over time and advance shared prosperity. This work includes identifying career entry points into industries or organizations with future growth potential, and the technical training, professional certifications, continuing education, or soft skills needed to support career progress. The career pipeline may identify or create pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and job or career readiness programs, internships, or entry-level positions that require minimal qualifications but provide opportunities for skill development and on-the-job training. When employers remove unnecessary requirements for entry into jobs—such as educational degrees or training that could be substituted with relevant experience—they reduce barriers to local employment.

Employee Ownership and Entrepreneurship

Support for employees and entrepreneurs involves providing access to capital, business development resources, and operational guidance to help individuals take on business ownership and start, sustain, and grow enterprises. This type of assistance can help fill crucial gaps for communities who have been historically excluded from lending and support networks. Specialized programs for worker cooperatives (COOPs) and other mechanisms for employee ownership can strengthen career pathways for all workers while adhering to legal and regulatory documentation requirements. Assistance could also take the form of low-interest loans, grants, and microfinancing options, as well as training in business planning, marketing, financial management, and compliance. Lowering barriers to entry and offering ongoing technical assistance for entrepreneurs can foster a more inclusive local economy, create jobs, and strengthen community wealth-building opportunities.

Housing Stabilization

Housing stabilization supports include policies, programs, and resources designed to help renters and homeowners maintain safe, secure, and affordable housing. These supports aim to reduce the risk of displacement and housing insecurity, and may include increased access to regional rental opportunities, rental assistance, mortgage relief, legal aid for eviction prevention, policy interventions, home repair grants, and financial counseling to help households stay current on housing payments. These resources help ensure residents have access to timely interventions, particularly during economic downturns or personal financial crises. By addressing immediate housing needs while promoting long-term stability, these efforts help preserve community ties, prevent homelessness, and provide a foundation for families to thrive.

UNIVERSAL PROSPERITY GOAL

POWER AND AUTONOMY

All residents have access to opportunities to pursue their personal goals, and voice and agency to influence larger policies and actions that affect their lives.



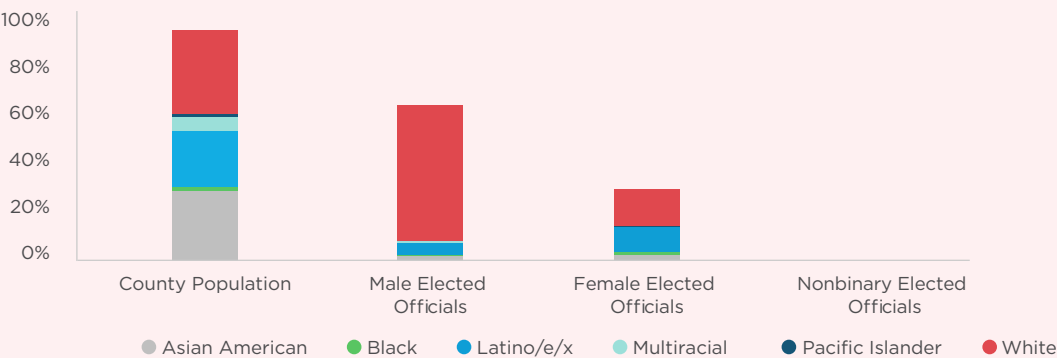
Context for Inequities

All residents in San Mateo County should be represented and empowered to influence local policies that affect their lives. Communities of color and women continue to be underrepresented in local elected offices as a result of a legacy of exclusion in political participation. In addition, many potential candidates are deterred by the high costs of campaigning and lack of access to financing and donors. There are few pathways to elected positions, and under-represented communities have fewer mentors to guide aspiring leaders. Persistent underrepresentation can lead to unbalanced public investment and policies that can amplify inequities across communities. At the voter level, voter suppression and intimidation techniques and gerrymandering strip vulnerable communities of their power to influence electoral outcomes.

Key Indicator: Descriptive Representation

Descriptive representation¹⁹—when elected leaders mirror their constituents’ identities—can increase community engagement, empower underrepresented groups, and ensure adequate representation of the diversity of our communities. When elected opportunities are equally accessible, it is more likely that city councilmembers and other elected positions will reflect the demographic makeup of those served. Across local jurisdictions in San Mateo County, Asian, Black, Multiracial, and Pacific Islander populations are frequently underrepresented.²⁰ In 2023, women filled less than half of elected positions in 20 cities and towns and at the County level.²¹ Data detailing representation of LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, and other populations is not available, but is anticipated to be lower, based on community feedback.

Figure 3. Descriptive Representation for San Mateo County and Local Jurisdictions

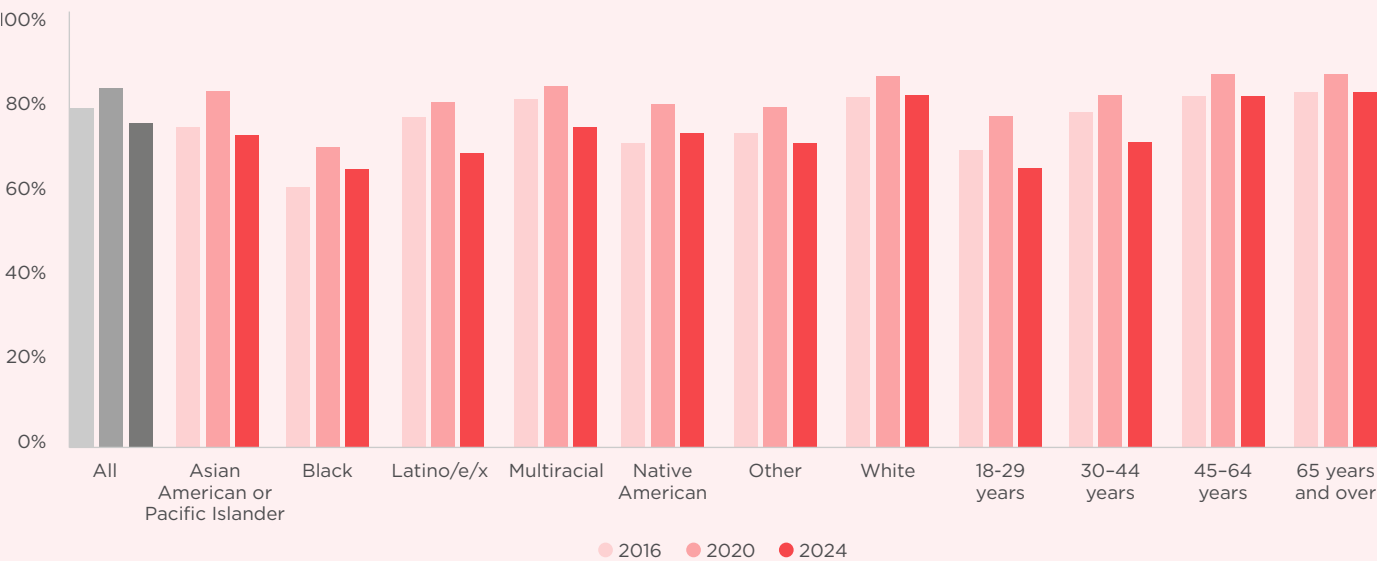


Data Source: GovBuddy; PolicyLink and USC PERE data collection; American Community Survey, Bay Area Equity Atlas,

Key Indicator: Voter Turnout

Political participation empowers individuals and communities to have influence over decisions affecting their communities. In the 2024 election, voter turnout in San Mateo County was 76%. This was a significant drop from an 84% voter turnout in the 2020 election. In both 2020 and 2024, voter turnout was lowest among Black voters and voters age 18-29, and highest among White voters and voters age 45+.

Figure 4. Registered San Mateo County Voters Who Voted (by Race/Ethnicity and Age)



Data Source: Eligible voter counts from U.S. Census Bureau ACS (B05003, Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status).
Vote counts from San Mateo County Elections Office

Strategies to Advance Power and Autonomy

To achieve the universal goal for power and autonomy, San Mateo County must foster inclusive governing and promote community power. Demographic surveys indicate that communities of color, low-income communities, and younger residents are underrepresented across many of the County’s boards and commissions. Anecdotally, this underrepresentation is mirrored across many of the counties’ other local governmental jurisdictions. Local leadership development programs can be enhanced or expanded to reach underrepresented communities, and recruitment into open positions can be more intentional to reach diverse audiences.

SPCC consultations with local community-based organizations working to advance fair and just governance highlighted the following strategies to achieve broad reach across the counties’ various cities and towns. These strategies leverage and expand on existing programs and nascent initiatives to diversify leadership and strengthen collaboration between local governments and the communities they serve.

Pipeline for Diversifying Representation in Elected and Appointed Positions

Mobilizing the next generation of leaders from underrepresented communities promotes diversity and inclusion in governance and gets us closer to a government for the people by the people. Appointed boards and commissions are the formal infrastructure for government to bring community voice and guidance to decision-makers. Leadership development programs can introduce and prepare aspiring leaders from under-resourced neighborhoods to understand the campaign process and employ strategies for engaging constituents and mobilizing community members. Pipelines for youth, transitional-aged youth (age 15-25), and emerging leaders may include mentorship or internship opportunities or positions as staffers or advocates for local elected officials. Also, local institutions recruiting for open boards and commissions can diversify community voice in advisory and decision-making roles by being more intentional at understanding gaps in their representation, engaging diverse communities in effective ways, and removing barriers to participation.

Technical Assistance for Existing Representatives

Appointed and elected representatives on boards and commissions from underserved communities do not always have access to the resources and support systems they need to elevate their leadership and capacity to represent their communities or their issues. Providing technical assistance and training for existing representatives who work in support of under-resourced and underrepresented populations can help advance fair and just public policy. For example, technical assistance efforts could develop internal processes for making data-driven decisions to influence equitable resource allocation, improving community engagement, and building effective community partnerships.

UNIVERSAL PROSPERITY GOAL

BEING VALUED

Everyone feels the respect, dignity, and wellbeing that comes from a sense of belonging and contributing to and being appreciated across all settings and demographics.



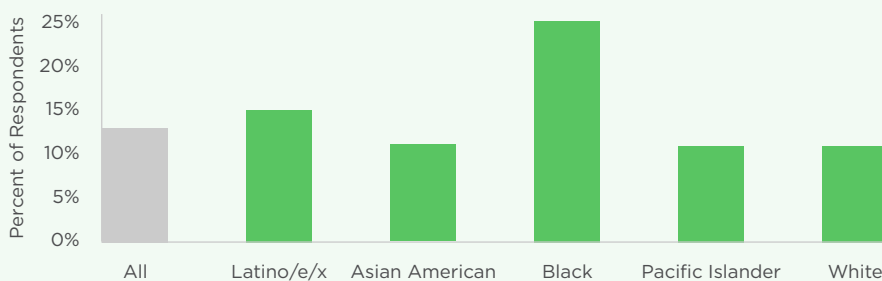
Context for Inequities

All residents of San Mateo County deserve respect, dignity, and wellbeing. At an individual level, this means residents feel like they belong and their contributions matter. At the county level, this means our local agencies are trusted to support those most in need. Local services are largely provided across complex systems of various city, county, regional, and state government and non-profit organizations. Services have differing eligibility requirements, applications, and bureaucratic processes. This makes it difficult for residents to be aware of benefits programs, determine whether they are eligible, and navigate the different systems and agencies. Immigrant communities are particularly challenged. Nearly one in five immigrants surveyed by the County said they were unaware of benefits programs. Also, challenges with English language proficiency make it difficult to navigate bureaucratic processes, understand eligibility criteria and application processes, and communicate effectively with service providers.²² In addition to barriers to accessing services, complex immigration and citizenship laws, policies, and enforcement has created a sentiment of fear and distrust of government among many immigrant communities.

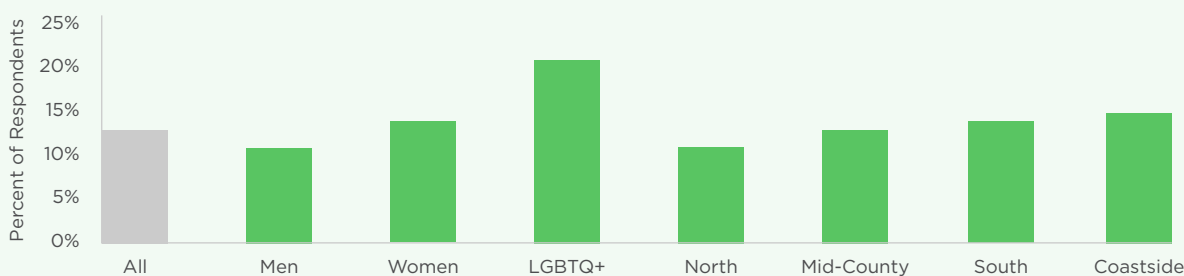
Key Indicator: Racial and Cultural Intolerance

The 2022 San Mateo County Health and Quality of Life Survey asked adults 18 years or older to rate their community's tolerance for people of different races or cultural backgrounds as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. In 2022, 58.6% of respondents rated the county's tolerance for people of different races and cultures as "excellent" or "very good." In contrast, 12.7% rated the county's tolerance as "fair/poor," with "fair/poor" ratings higher among Black, Latino/e/x, women, LGBTQ+, and residents of South and Coastside regions.

Figure 5. Cultural Tolerance of Community is "Fair or Poor"



Data Source: 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County



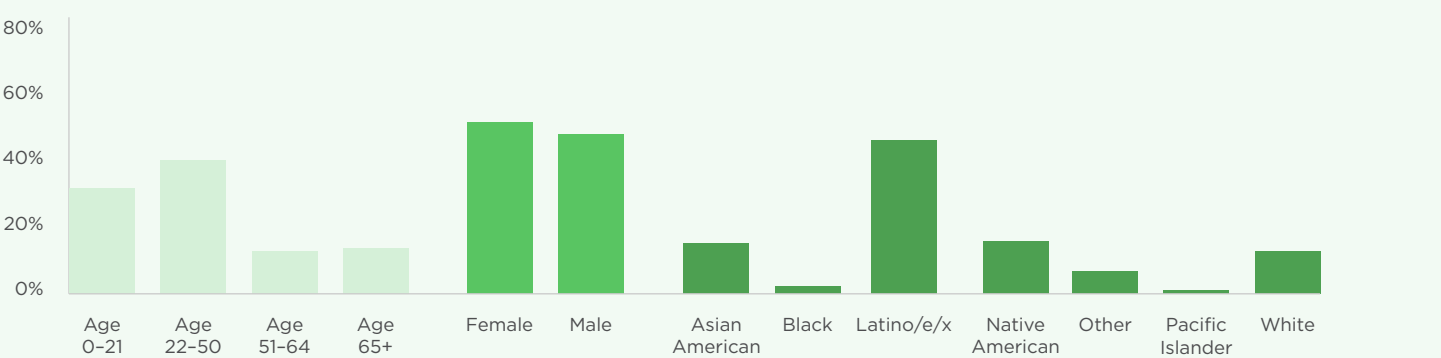
Data Source: 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County

Key Indicator: Utilization of Benefits

The San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA) collects demographic data on the provision of safety net services, such as Medi-Cal (healthcare), CalFresh (food assistance), CalWORKs (workforce support), General Assistance (financial assistance), and CAPI (Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants), which provide vital resources for impacted individuals and families to meet their basic needs. In 2025, the largest share of HSA clients self-identified as Hispanic or Latino/e/x²³.

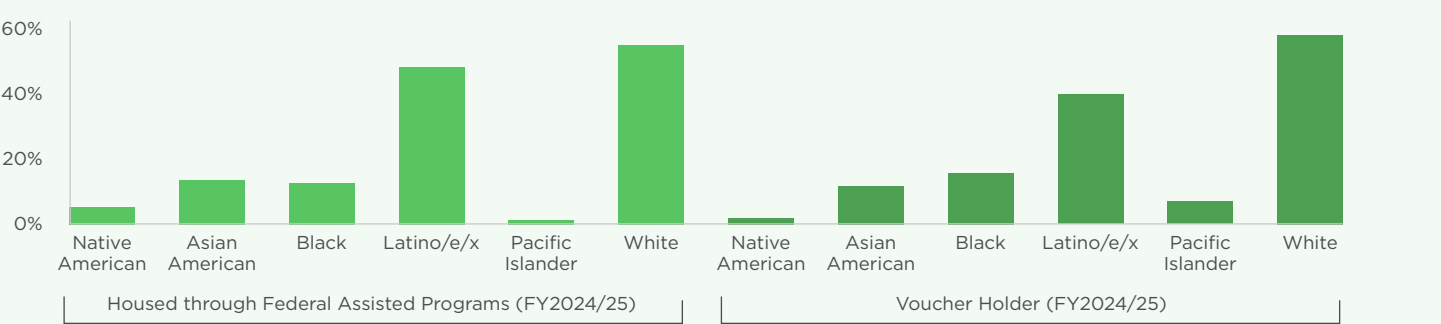
The San Mateo County Department of Housing (DOH) collects demographic data on the more than 15,000 individuals who have remained sheltered or stable through federal- and state-funded housing assistance programs and 5,000 holders of housing vouchers from the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo. In 2024, the majority of individuals receiving housing assistance self-identified as White and Hispanic or Latino/e/x.

Figure 6. 2025 San Mateo County Human Services Agency Client Demographics



Data Source: San Mateo County Human Services Agency

Figure 7. Housing Assistance Recipients by Race and Ethnicity

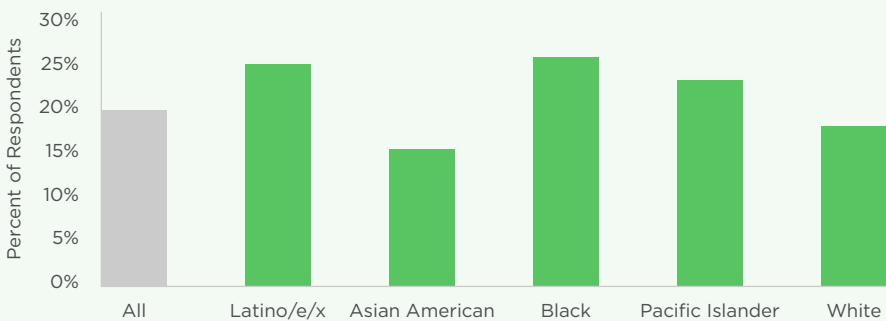


Data Source: San Mateo County Department of Housing Performance Portal

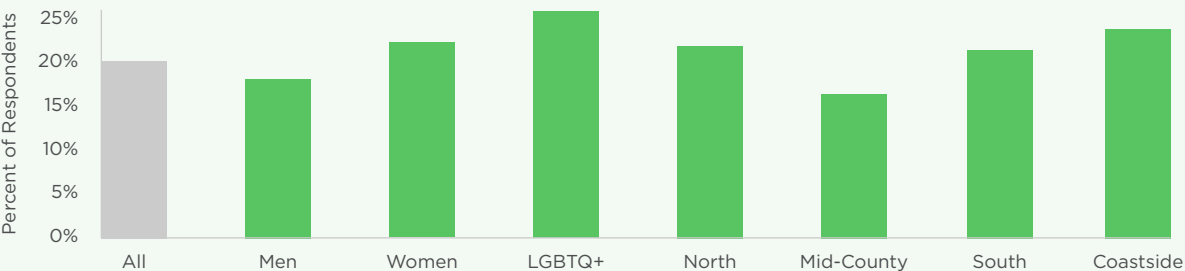
Key Indicator: Perceived Ease of Access to Social Services

Local community engagement data indicated that challenges with access to benefits and resources creates stress and anxiety for many. The 2022 San Mateo County Health and Quality of Life Survey²⁴ asked respondents to rate the ease of obtaining social services as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. Responses of fair or poor were highest among respondents who are Black, Pacific Islander, and Latino/e/x, and live in North County, South County, and Coastside regions. Continuing to identify ways to make our social services more accessible can help expand the reach of safety net programming to eligible residents in need of support.

Figure 8: Perceived Ease of Obtaining Social Services in San Mateo County is “Fair or Poor”



Data Source: 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County



Data Source: 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County

Strategies to Advance Being Valued

To achieve the universal goal of being valued, the county must foster an environment where everyone feels welcome and supported by their local community and government. The county's cultural diversity is a strength, and a shared narrative can foster the collective vision that all individuals and families are welcome in San Mateo County. Individuals also feel valued when their communities and local government provide help when it's needed most.

The SPCC community conversations indicated the continued difficulty of our most impacted residents to connect to the various services and systems of supports to help meet their basic needs like food and housing. For individuals and families in need, having trusted, local community partners who are culturally and linguistically competent and that also have a comprehensive knowledge of local resources and assistance programs serve as a lifeline. Many residents are unaware of available support services and need help both identifying resources and navigating the complex systems when a variety of organizations and agencies are involved. Once benefits are secured, they are challenged by potential benefits cliffs: when a slight increase in earned income can render an individual or household ineligible for benefits, leaving them worse off than before.

With input from community conversations and consultations with local agencies serving our most impacted residents, four strategies were identified to promote belonging and acceptance among community members and improve awareness, coordination, and navigation of critical assistance.

Narrative Change: Cultivating Belonging and Understanding

Narrative change²⁵—cultivating a culture of belonging and understanding in our community—is a priority of the SPCC as a countywide consortium and for each of the SPCC members' organizations. Changing the narrative is critical to the success of all three of the prosperity goals because it will help clarify a vision of a successful and unified San Mateo County where everyone feels included, represented, and invested in the efforts to expand shared prosperity. Narrative change includes the development and outreach of strong messages that effectively share a vision where all community members are valued and can fully participate in civic, economic, and social opportunities, with the understanding that this helps everyone in the county thrive. Narrative change includes sharing stories of community members, hosting webinar series, and generating other public-facing content, all with the goal of cultivating a culture of belonging and fostering an understanding of the shared humanity that holds us together across differences.

Community Resource Mapping

Community resource mapping involves identifying and locating the programs, services, and supports that help residents move toward economic stability and opportunity. It focuses on identifying resources that meet community needs, such as job training and career development; access to transportation; childcare options; housing support; and financial assistance. It also helps identify service coverage, gaps, duplication, and access barriers. Community resources can then be included in tools such as directories, databases, or maps of service locations. Comprehensive and up-to-date community resource mapping helps local organizations and agencies coordinate efforts and allocate limited resources to best serve residents.

Navigation Support (Promotoras)

Latino/e/x residents are the largest demographic currently utilizing HSA programs in San Mateo County and are the largest racial/ethnic group living below the California Poverty Measure (42% of individuals below the California Poverty Measure are Latino/e/x). The Promotoras model can provide needed assistance to help this priority population navigate the complex system of benefits. Promotoras are community members with specialized training that provide peer-to-peer, culturally relevant education and advocacy and serve as a liaison between the community and human services and other service providers, sharing on-the-ground learnings and areas for improvement.

Benefits Calculator

Benefits programs provide a critical safety net for vulnerable individuals and families. But as recipients increase their earned income, it's difficult to anticipate the timing and magnitude of benefits loss. Job seekers may accept a position without realizing their benefits will be reduced or may avoid seeking or accepting opportunities due to fear or uncertainty of benefits loss. A benefits calculator is an online tool that models the potential scenarios for benefits eligibility to maximize benefits and better plan for job opportunities. Existing benefits cliff tools²⁶ do not encompass all state- and local-specific benefit rules, eligibility thresholds, and cost-of-living assumptions for San Mateo County. A benefits calculator developed specifically for San Mateo County residents can assist job seeker service providers in helping clients plan for career advancement and social service providers as they provide case management support and advice to clients.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Moving forward, SPCC member organizations are committed to advancing the goals in the Economic Mobility Action Plan to achieve collective impact by:

- » Supporting, leading, and generating momentum to advance priority strategies
- » Promoting a countywide commitment to the principles, framework, strategies, and data analysis
- » Supporting and tracking collective impact against key indicators, adjusting as needed, and coordinating efforts in support of shared prosperity

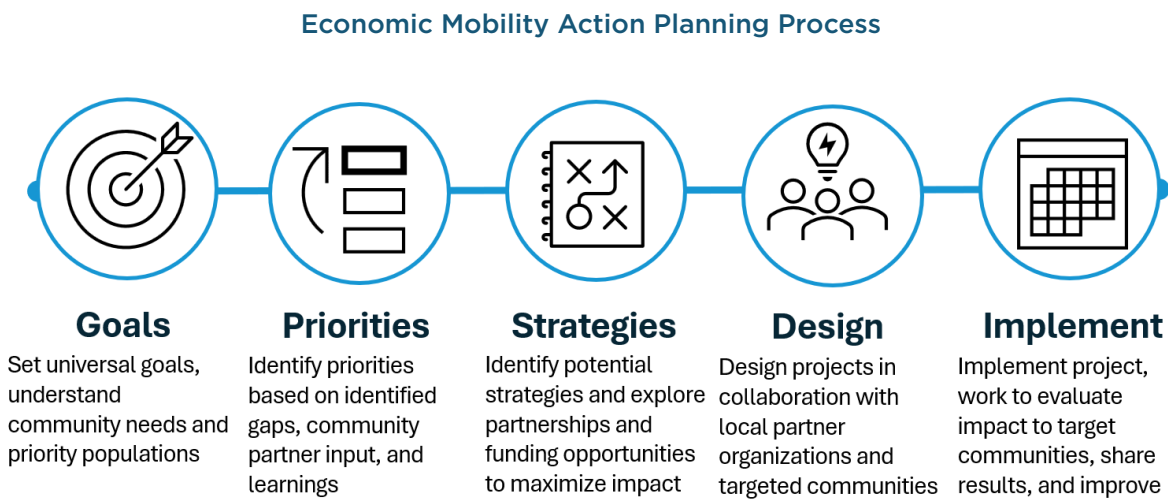
CALL TO ACTION

Shared challenges require shared solutions. Organizations and agencies across San Mateo County are encouraged to take action to advance shared prosperity. Each organization can align these efforts with its mission while contributing to a collective impact:

- » **Adopt the Key Planning Principles** to guide decision-making and program planning, recognizing that effective and equitable processes lead to stronger outcomes
- » **Onboard the San Mateo County Economic Mobility Framework** to align with other organizations under a common, data-informed framework to strengthen collaboration and improve outcomes for our communities and those we serve
- » **Make Data-Informed Decisions:** use the [Community Data Dashboard](#) to examine disaggregated data, identify populations facing the greatest barriers, and track changes over time
- » **Advance the Plan's Recommendations:** Leverage your organization's influence, partnerships, and resources to help move forward strategies that:
 - » Prioritize local hiring and local purchasing
 - » Build local career pathways from entry-level jobs to higher-wage careers
 - » Support local employee ownership and entrepreneurship
 - » Advance policies and programs that stabilize housing
 - » Build leadership pipelines and support leaders from underrepresented communities
 - » Promote the value of diversity, belonging, and acceptance
 - » Coordinate community resources to improve awareness of available supports
 - » Help residents navigate systems and access services

Shared prosperity requires collective action.

The SPCC is working with partners to pilot projects that advance key strategies and identify additional opportunities to put the recommendations into action. Where possible, the SPCC promotes programs or projects be designed and implemented following the process outlined below.



In 2025, SPCC designed and launched three pilot efforts, led by the County:

- » **Designing pathways to living-wage careers:** This pilot effort identifies entry-level career pathways in County positions that provide a living wage, benefits, job training, and educational assistance to lower barriers for local residents into quality career opportunities. The project is a collaborative effort with NOVAworks, the local Workforce Development Board.
- » **Narrative change:** Local communications experts from Berkeley Media Studies Group have been hired to work with the SPCC and the County to create a narrative, messaging, and pathways to share a vision where all community members are valued and can fully participate in civic, economic, and social opportunities. Sharing this narrative widely can foster a culture of dignity and belonging across diverse communities.
- » **Community Data Dashboard:** The SPCC’s dashboard developer collaborated across members and community organizations to aggregate data resources and create a beta dashboard. With input from community leaders and users, the dashboard was refined and launched on the San Mateo County website: www.smcgov.org/ceo/community-data-dashboard-local-data-shared-prosperity.

To build momentum for all strategies in the Economic Mobility Action Plan and strengthen countywide commitment to its principles and framework, the SPCC will share the Plan, Community Data Dashboard, and Narrative learnings broadly with diverse audiences. Given the diversity of SPCC members, its reach into San Mateo County communities is extensive. The SPCC has the capacity to galvanize a stronger understanding of the barriers to shared prosperity, demonstrate the value of aligning around a collective framework, and advance and support key efforts that hold promise to move the needle on economic mobility countywide. While not every organization in the county is explicitly focused on economic mobility, the economic health of the county is vital to all organizations and residents. The SPCC aims to equip partners with the shared understanding, data, and framework needed for an aligned approach that enables coordinated action and strengthens the path toward a successful future for everyone in San Mateo County.

APPENDIX

SHARED PROSPERITY COORDINATION COUNCIL

- » City of Redwood City, Melissa Stevenson Diaz, Former Redwood City Manager, Former President of the San Mateo County City Manager's Association; Briana Evans, Equity and Inclusion Officer; Michelle Flaherty, Assistant City Manager
- » Coastside Hope, Judith Guerrero, Executive Director
- » Council of Cities, Eddie Flores, City of South San Francisco Mayor and President of the Council of Cities
- » Daly City Partnership, Mike Stancil, Executive Director
- » First 5 San Mateo County, Kitty Lopez, Executive Director
- » JobTrain, Barrie Hathaway, President and CEO; Veronica Gutierrez C., Senior Programs Manager
- » Mission Asset Fund, Jose Quinonez, Founder and Chief Executive Officer; Veronica Gutierrez C., Senior Programs Manager
- » NOVAWorks, Marlena Sessions, Director; NOVAWorks Foundation, Kevin Perkey, Former Director
- » Public Policy Institute of California Economic Policy Center, Sarah Bohn, Vice President and Director
- » REACH Coalition, Kalimah Salahuddin, Co-Founder
- » Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, Tim Russell, Program Director
- » Samaritan House, Laura Bent, Chief Executive Officer; La Trice Taylor, Senior Director
- » SAMCEDA, Rosanne Foust, President and CEO; Larisa Ocanada, Marketing, Communication, and Operations Manager
- » San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, Noelia Corzo, District 2 Supervisor; Lisa Gauthier, District 4 Supervisor
- » San Mateo County Executive's Office, Roberto Manchia, Chief Financial Officer; Shireen Malekafzali Taidi, Chief Equity Officer and Director of Economic Opportunity and Labor Standards
- » San Mateo County Health, Kismet Baldwin-Santana, County Health Officer; Kate Hiester, Community Health Planner
- » San Mateo County Human Services Agency, Claire Cunningham, Agency Director; Navjeet Singh, Director of Self Sufficiency Services
- » San Mateo County Office of Education, Hector Camacho Jr., Executive Director, Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion; Rubie Acosta Macaraeg, Coordinator - Expanded Learning and Community Partnerships
- » Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Ariana Perez, Community Partnerships Manager
- » Sobrato Philanthropies, John Matthew Sobrato, Director - Impact and Learning; Zelica Rodriguez, Director of Thriving Communities; Arby Mariano, Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Analyst

ENDNOTES

- 1 “Benefits cliff” refers to sudden and unexpected decreases in key safety net benefits due to slight increases in income, which may create significant decreases in overall income or access to services for the household.
- 2 Transitional Age Youth (TAY) refers to individuals in the developmental transition from adolescence to adulthood. The age range is not uniformly defined and varies by program and agency, generally spanning the mid-teens through the mid-twenties. For example, San Mateo County Health BHRS Transitional Age Youth (TAY) program defines TAY as individuals age 18-25; California’s Medi-Cal reform initiative, CalAIM, defines TAY as individuals ages 16-26; and California Department of Social Services’ Transitional Housing Program-Plus defines TAY as ages 18-24.
- 3 Brookings Metro Monitor is a research tool that examines economic performance in the U.S. across five broad categories: growth, prosperity, overall inclusion, racial inclusion, and geographic inclusion. San Mateo County ranks low for geographic inclusion. This ranking indicates a significant disparities between the most advantaged (top 20%) and least advantaged (bottom 20%) of census tracts in terms of employment rate, median household income, and relative poverty rate. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/metro-monitor-2024/>.
- 4 The term “Latino/e/x” is used as an inclusive, gender-neutral alternative to the binary male “Latino” and female “Latina.”
- 5 Based on the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) California Poverty Measure (CPM), which measures the amount required to meet basic needs accounting for local cost of living and safety net benefits. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/>
- 6 San Mateo County All Together Better. (2024). Annual household income. Claritas. Retrieved September 27, 2024, from <https://www.smcalltogetherbetter.org>
- 7 Based on the PPIC California Poverty Measure (CPM), which measures the amount required to meet basic needs accounting for local cost of living and safety net benefits. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/>
- 8 National Center for Health Statistics Data Visualization Gallery. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data-visualization/life-expectancy>
- 9 Per capita income data source: San Mateo County All Together Better. Claritas, 2024. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://www.smcalltogetherbetter.org>. Race/ethnicity data source: U.S. Census Bureau; California Department of Finance; GeoLytics, Inc. | Bay Area Equity Atlas. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://bayareaequityatlas.org>
- 10 Equity is “just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential” (as defined by PolicyLink: <https://www.policylink.org/about-us/equity-manifesto>). Equity can be measured when a person’s identity—including race/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or expression, and immigration status—does not determine their life outcomes or opportunities.
- 11 County of San Mateo Pandemic Recovery Programs: Brief to the Board of Supervisors. 14 March 2023. Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=11736173&GUID=C80E0E11-953C-41E1-85AB-DDD3402E11AD>
- 12 Urban Institute Upward Mobility Framework provides “an evidence-based foundation for efforts to advance upward mobility and racial equity for people and communities. It offers local leaders a holistic definition of upward mobility and identifies factors they can influence to increase mobility for all people, especially those historically excluded from prosperity. More information: <https://upward-mobility.urban.org/framework>
- 13 Targeted universalism means setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned.

The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted based on how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. “Targeted Universalism: Policy and Practice” by John A. Powell (who spells his name lowercase), Stephen Menendian, and Wendy Ake of the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley. More information on targeted universalism: <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>

14 The three community engagement efforts referenced include:

1. Pandemic Recovery engagement (2021), conducted in partnership with the Stanford Gardner Center. This effort gathered 894 survey responses in seven languages (56% of respondents were low-income, 44% responded in a language other than English); 300 poster contributions at seven sites in two languages; 60 participants in seven focus groups in two languages in East Palo Alto, Redwood City, Half Moon Bay, San Mateo, South San Francisco, and Daly City; 80 participants in three online forums in three languages. More information: <https://www.smcgov.org/ceo/american-rescue-plan-act-arpa-funding>
2. Immigrant Survey (2022), led by a steering committee and five community engagement teams with the support of Stanford Gardner Center. The survey was distributed in 12 languages and received 2,700 responses (75% of respondents speak English and another language, 56% had children, and 70% were employed). More information: <https://www.smcgov.org/ceo/immigrant-inclusion-strategic-plan>
3. Measure K Funding Community Engagement (2023), conducted by InterEthnica, gathered 2,316 survey responses in four languages (61% of respondents had an income under \$100,000/year); 345 participants in eight listening sessions in four languages. More information: <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12329115&GUID=27BA61AF-558A-414B-8711-E7F8D325C981>

15 Partner organizations that hosted SPCC community conversations include: Samaritan House, Daly City Partnership, Coastside Hope, Redwood City Together, JobTrain, and El Concilio.

16 “Ground-truthing” refers to the process of verifying and validating information through direct engagement with the impacted community to ensure that data, assumptions, and conclusions are accurate, relevant, and reflect real conditions on the ground. Ground-truthing could involve community engagement to verify data used to design policies and programs; gain local knowledge of resident experience, needs, and challenges; and better understand the social, cultural, and other outcomes that may not be apparent in quantitative data.

17 Racial and ethnic groups featured in this data—in particular Latino/e/x and Asian American—comprise many diverse subgroups. These broader aggregate racial and ethnic identities may be inadequate representations of subgroups.

18 “Anchor institutions” are large public or non-profit organizations that are rooted in a specific geographic area and play a prominent role in their local communities (e.g., hospitals, universities, governments, utilities). For example, the Healthcare Anchor Network describes its primary mission as to “catalyze health systems individually and collectively to leverage their hiring, purchasing, investing, and other key institutional assets to create economically and racially equitable local economies that sustain healthy communities.” Last accessed September 27, 2024: <https://healthcareanchor.network/about-the-healthcare-anchor-network/>

19 “Descriptive representation” is the concept that an elected leader mirrors characteristics and identities, such as race and ethnicity, and lived experiences, of their constituents. More information: <https://upward-mobility.urban.org/framework/governance/representation>

20 Descriptive representation is measured as a ratio of the percentage of elected officials of a certain group divided by the percentage of total population for the same group. A value less than 1 indicates the group is under-represented, and a value greater than 1 indicates the group is over-represented. “Severely under-represented” in this graphic indicates a ratio less than 0.5.

21 Data Source: Bay Area Equity Atlas, 2023. Last Accessed October 2, 2024: <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/indicators/diversity-of-electeds>

22 More information on the 2022 Immigrant Survey and Strategic Planning effort can be found at: <https://www.smcgov.org/ceo/immigrant-inclusion-strategic-plan>

23 Demographic data and performance metrics for social services and housing assistance programs are shared via the County of San Mateo Performance Data Dashboard. Human Services Agency: <https://performance.smcgov.org/stories/s/Social-Services/n4c7-22xk>. Department of Housing: <https://performance.smcgov.org/stories/s/Department-of-Housing/f3tv-ykv3/>. Graphs feature demographic groups with available data. “Other” signifies that individuals identify as something other than the categories shown on the graph.

24 Data Source: San Mateo County Health Public Health Policy & Planning, Office of Epidemiology & Evaluation. “2023 Community Health Needs Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County.” Last accessed September 30, 2024: https://www.smcalltogetherbetter.org/content/sites/sanmateo/Reports/SMC_CHNA_2023.pdf

25 “Narrative change” refers to the process of replacing prevailing stories and beliefs that perpetuate inequality, bias, and exclusion, with more inclusive, accurate, and empowering stories. This may include media campaigns, art, and public discourse that highlight systematic inequities, amplify voices of disadvantaged communities, and encourage fair and just actions. Narrative change at the policy and institutional level involves reframing social issues to highlight systematic causes rather than individual blame, and design and implement policies that address systematic barriers, resulting in more equitable outcomes.

26 The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster (CLIFF) (<https://www.atlantafed.org/economic-mobility-and-resilience/advancing-careers-for-low-income-families/cliff-tool>) is a nationally recognized tool that models how changes in wages, hours, or career advancement affect net household resources after accounting for taxes and multiple public benefits. The tool is designed to support workforce, employer, and policy decision-making by illustrating where increases in earnings may result in reduced benefits or limited net financial gains. CLIFF does not fully reflect California-specific program rules, San Mateo County-administered benefits, local supplements, or the county’s high cost-of-living standards, which limits its accuracy for local analysis and decision-making. Other tax-and-benefit microsimulation models exist, but they are generally designed for academic or policy research rather than practical, program-level use.



SHARED PROSPERITY COORDINATING COUNCIL

ECONOMIC MOBILITY ACTION PLAN SAN MATEO COUNTY

JANUARY 2026

Learn more about Shared Prosperity in San Mateo County at
smcgov.org/ceo/shared-prosperity-economic-mobility-san-mateo-county