Our mission is to provide solutions that advance climate protection and enhance quality of life for all San Franciscans.
Dear Friends,

We are proud to serve the City of San Francisco—often viewed as one of the greenest cities in North America. At the Department of the Environment, our vision for a more sustainable future is expressed simply as “0-80-100 Roots”: we must achieve 0 waste, take at least 80% of our trips sustainably, and use 100% renewable energy while reducing consumption. And if those goals are about being less harmful to the planet, our “Roots” goal is about healing the planet by planting trees and promoting soil health to absorb carbon and restore natural systems.

At the Department of the Environment, we are working every day to help San Francisco be a sustainable and healthy city for all of its residents; human, plant and animal. We know we will face pressing challenges. Many residents and families struggle to find safe and affordable housing and good jobs to pay their bills. At the same time the threat and impact of climate change has never been more real for San Francisco and the world. With rising sea levels and more unpredictable weather patterns, we must simultaneously prevent more harm to our environment, as we prepare our City to grow and thrive.

In creating this document, we took time to reaffirm our collective values and make them the pillars of our work. We are committed to helping all San Francisco residents and businesses access our programs and services. We are committed to ensuring that all communities have a strong voice in shaping our work, especially those most impacted by environmental harms. We will continue to collaborate with partner agencies and organizations to deliver quality programs and remain a trusted resource for action and impact. And we will remain bold leaders and innovators on urban sustainability and climate change, working to protect our planet while prioritizing the needs of our residents and businesses.

San Franciscans face many collective challenges, but we have the benefit of living in a community of diverse and talented residents and we are endowed with a spirit of action and innovation.

This strategic plan outlines our five-year roadmap for the Department’s work on sustainability and climate change, including key strategies for meeting our goals. But in order for us to truly make the changes we believe are necessary, all San Franciscans must be a part of the solution.

So consider this strategic plan my invitation to participate, a guiding document for what is possible, strengthened with your collaboration, so that all may thrive in San Francisco. If not here, where? If not now, when?

Sincerely,

DEBORAH RAPHAEL
DIRECTOR
Our Values

Credibility
We are a trusted source of information about environmental challenges, drawing on deep expertise to create solutions that make a measurable difference.

Innovation
We experiment and prototype to identify the best solutions to address environmental challenges, setting examples for other cities to follow.

Collaboration
We understand that working with a range of partners is critical to our success. We are an engaged member of the San Francisco city family and passionately work with business and community stakeholders to advance shared civic goals.

Equity
Our programs benefit all residents and businesses in San Francisco and focus on supporting those communities most in need. All our initiatives are underpinned by a commitment to inclusiveness and accessibility.

Impact
We know that the condition of San Francisco’s environment is critically important to the quality of life of all residents, and our programs clearly demonstrate a resilient environment is possible.
Our Goals

GOAL 1
Promoting Healthy Communities & Ecosystems

GOAL 2
Leading on Climate Action

GOAL 3
Strengthening Community Resilience

GOAL 4
Eliminating Waste

GOAL 5
Amplifying Community Action
Navigating this document:
Promoting Healthy Communities & Ecosystems
Foster healthy and sustainable communities through science, with an emphasis on supporting our most vulnerable populations.

**Goal 1: Promoting Healthy Communities and Ecosystems**

- Increase adoption of safer alternatives to harmful products and materials
  Collaborate with key stakeholders to research and identify safer products, practices and materials.

- Support residents, businesses, and city staff in limiting use of toxic and hazardous products, practices and materials
  Partner with low-income and public housing developers and managers to expand integrated pest management (IPM) principles and other environmental initiatives.
  Encourage residents, businesses and city departments to use safer, less-toxic products and practices through targeted programs and outreach.
  Invoke the Precautionary Principle to accelerate best practices in decision making.

- Partner with key stakeholders to ensure sustainability initiatives are equitable and accessible.

- Leverage the purchasing power of municipal operations to advance markets for green products and services.
Connect all residents, workers and visitors with nature every day

Lead and leverage inter-agency efforts to green San Francisco’s built and natural environments
Increase the size, health and biodiversity of our urban forest, natural areas, open spaces, and community gardens
Support intergovernmental efforts to advance building standards and codes that reduce environmental and health impacts

Maximize carbon sequestration through natural ecosystems
Research and facilitate compost application on City-owned and agricultural properties for carbon sequestration impacts

Support sustainable and healthy food options for all individuals and families in San Francisco, especially the food insecure
Key Metrics

9,374,768
Square feet of private and municipal building stock certified through an environmental rating system such as LEED or GPR

100%
Employees that have received racial equity training

ACCOMPLISHMENT
Launch of racial equity initiative

In recognition of the fact that addressing institutional racism across all levels of government requires leadership and political will, on March 14, 2018 the SF Department of the Environment launched a racial equity initiative. The resolution affirms the Department’s commitment to racial equity and sets a path to develop a Racial Equity Action Plan with measurable outcomes.

WE ASKED OUR COMMUNITY:
What matters most to you?

“The priority is educating people, be they kids or adults. Workshops, education on what the environment is and how we can help from our own homes.”
GOAL 2

Leading on Climate Action
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2025

Maximize energy efficiency in existing buildings
Benchmark the city’s built environment to identify energy efficiency and on-site renewable generation potential to advance innovation and implementation of programs.

Reduce dependency on single-occupancy vehicles by improving access to sustainable and affordable modes of transportation
Foster walking, biking, and the use of public transportation and shared rides by implementing the Citywide Transportation Demand Management plan in partnership with partner agencies.

Commit to ambitious carbon reduction targets across city agencies

Continue to share San Francisco’s practices and lessons to show the world what is possible
Leverage innovation funding for activities that result in market transformation for Distributed Energy Resources.

Goal 2: Leading on Climate Action
Decarbonize the fuel used for buildings and transportation

Decarbonize the energy used for heating and cooling buildings
Promote policies requiring energy efficiency improvement in existing buildings and new construction, such as driving adoption of high-efficient heat pump technologies

Accelerate shift to 100% renewable grid electricity by 2030 and maximize local on-site generation of renewable electricity through policy development and investment
Align Department programs to support greater adoption of CleanPower SF

Decarbonize the transport sector by facilitating deployment of electric and zero-emissions vehicles
Rapidly expand charging and refueling infrastructure to scale Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) technologies across the city through partnerships and policy development
Transition light and medium duty vehicle classes to ZEVs through partnerships, coalition building, increasing consumer awareness and demand, and bulk procurement
Key Metrics

142,618,148
Square feet of commercial building stock participating in annual energy benchmark

36%
of greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels

4.2%
Percent of vehicles registered in San Francisco that are Zero Emission Vehicles

WE ASKED OUR COMMUNITY

What do you care about the most?

“I care about living within a vibrant city while connecting to nature and having easy, convenient, sustainable transportation.”

Goal 2: Leading on Climate Action
GOAL 3

Strengthening Community Resilience
Support economically resilient communities

Keep small businesses and community-based organizations in San Francisco by minimizing costs associated with energy use, water use, and waste generation

Evaluate the status of the Green Business Program to more effectively enable small, local businesses to participate

Decrease energy costs for residents by partnering with utilities and other jurisdictions through public goods charge funding and construction ordinances

Reduce cost of living in San Francisco by ensuring cost effective energy efficiency upgrades in all housing, with a special focus on affordable housing

Create jobs and economic opportunity by keeping sustainability investments in our communities

Collaborate with city departments to develop a clean energy workforce that can rapidly scale distributed renewable generation and energy efficiency upgrades

Provide entry-level environmental career pathways through Public Service Trainee (PST) program

Increase equitable distribution and installation of local renewable energy and battery storage

Decrease energy costs for residents through construction ordinances and by partnering with utilities and other stakeholders to offer incentive and rebate programs
Increase San Francisco’s resilience to climate change impacts

Connect communities most adversely impacted by environmental injustices with resources that enable them to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Make San Francisco infrastructure, landscapes and neighborhoods resilient to climate change.

Provide interdisciplinary expertise, resources, and thought leadership on climate resilience to both public and private entities.

Coordinate with other City agencies and jurisdictions on adaptation planning and community engagement to ensure everyone has a seat at the table.

Goal 3: Strengthening Community Resilience
Key Metrics

$3,653,007
Incentive dollars provided to multi-family housing and commercial housing sector for energy efficiency upgrades

314
Green Businesses in San Francisco

55%
of all Department of the Environment grant funds allocated to low-income communities or public housing

We asked our community

How can we achieve a thriving, equitable San Francisco?

By understanding individual communities—values, ideas, history, culture—and making initiatives responsive and inclusive of all people.”
GOAL 4

Eliminating Waste
Achieve zero waste and work towards closing landfills serving San Francisco

Increase participation in recycling and composting programs

- Develop tailored outreach and engagement programs so that more San Franciscans properly dispose of recyclables, compostables, and hazardous waste
- Expand number of recyclable and compostable materials accepted throughout the city

Expand accessibility and structure of programs for collecting hazardous products

- Increase collection opportunities for household hazardous waste by expanding number of local business drop-off sites
- Accelerate innovation and enable robust community involvement through Zero Waste grant program
- Develop policies and coordinate with other jurisdictions to implement producer responsibility programs for waste streams that are difficult to manage

Modernize San Francisco’s refuse collection and process infrastructure

- Oversee investment in processing facility upgrades, beginning with the highest priority needs

Increase reuse and recycling of construction & demolition

Goal 4: Eliminating Waste
Promote responsible consumption by San Francisco residents and businesses

Prevent food waste
Drive awareness and provide solutions that radically shift the food waste paradigm

Reduce consumption of single-use items
Provide interdisciplinary expertise, resources, and thought leadership on climate resilience to both public and private entities

Expand use of sustainable packaging materials
Key Metrics

1,599
Tons of material sent to primary landfill on an average workday

4,209
Homes serviced for household hazardous waste collection annually (equivalent loads)

ACCOMPLISHMENT
Update to recycling program

In October 2017, the SF Department of Environment and Recology announced the most significant changes to the City’s recycling program since it was launched in 2000. The City’s “Fantastic Three” bin system for recyclables, compostables and landfill-bound material has been updated to allow San Franciscans to recycle more than ever.

WE ASKED OUR COMMUNITY
What do you want to learn about?

“...How to use ecological products and services. Knowing more about these programs would help maintain the quality of our environment.”
GOAL 5

Amplifying Community Action
Build a shared culture of environmental stewardship across San Francisco

Reflect stakeholders’ values, needs, and everyday lives in Department program offerings and environmental action

Tie all SFE series to San Franciscans’ priorities and everyday lives by adopting user-centric program design

Increase public–private partnerships that accelerate local innovation and engagement

Challenge businesses and local influencers to commit to meaningful action on climate strategy: 0–80–100–Roots

Align program services with partners across city departments to maximize impact and reduce confusion

Ensure messaging in all SFE content is consistent, relevant, and accessible to its intended audiences

Collaborate across program areas and with partner agencies on engagement timing and messaging
Provide residents and institutions with resources and opportunities to help protect our city and planet.

Support and grow local environmental leaders, particularly in communities that have historically been underrepresented in the environmental movement.

Develop long-term relationships with community leaders and organizations by establishing community councils, innovation sprints, community dialogues, and hosting community events.

Provide grants and resources to a wide range of organizations in order to increase reach and collaboration.

Increase personal actions that reduce our impacts while preparing for climate change.

Inspire children and young adults to take action and serve as environmental leaders in their families, schools, and communities.

Increase funding pool available to community groups for neighborhood environmental work by expanding carbon fund grant program.

Invest in existing neighborhood actions that amplify community cohesion and increase climate protection.

Goal 5: Amplifying Community Action
Key Metrics

26,241
K-12 students reached annually through the school education environmental sustainability program

70
Number of interns and public safety trainees recruited annually

ACCOMPLISHMENT
Carbon Fund Grant Awards

In 2018, SF Environment’s Carbon Fund awarded $150,000 in grants. The San Francisco Carbon Fund is the first fund of its kind to invest solely in local projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions close to where they were created – rather than large scale offset projects across the globe. The San Francisco Carbon Fund’s impact can be seen and felt by the community daily.

WE ASKED OUR COMMUNITY
What matters most to you when thinking about the future of San Francisco?

“...that our legacy as a forward-thinking, compassionate, responsive, inclusive city continues. That we recognize our moral leadership to address the climate crisis.”
AKNOWLEDGMENTS

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SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- Jessie Denver
- Anne Eng
- Robert Haley
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- Jennifer Kass
- Donnie Oliveira
- Debbie Raphael
- Guillermo Rodriguez
- Shawn Rosenmoss
- Joe Salem

AECOM
Asian Neighborhood Design
California ISO Board
Chinatown Community Development Center
Environmental Science Associates
GRID Alternatives
IDEO
Interethnica
IP Eco Services
Neighborhood Empowerment Network
Recology San Francisco
Resilient Bayview
SF Department of Public Health
SF Public Utilities Commission