

Supporting a Healthier San Joaquin Valley



California's innovative Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) offers San Joaquin Valley communities a real opportunity to grow healthier. Everyone's health benefits when communities are more compact and provide safe, practical opportunities for walking, biking, and transit. Through strong Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) under SB 375, revitalized downtowns can become vibrant places for people to live, shop and work. The SCS process can set a vision for what healthier, more prosperous communities will look like throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Healthier Communities Save Lives and Money

Healthier Growth Can Save \$340 Million in Valleywide Health Costs

A Valleywide land use scenario focused on compact communities with more housing choices can help reduce the need to drive. Building healthier can avoid over 21,000 asthma attacks and other respiratory issues and help the San Joaquin Valley avoid over \$340 million in health costs in 2035.

Unhealthy Air Costs the Valley Billions Annually

Cal State Fullerton researchers have found that air pollution costs the Valley economy over \$6 billion per year, or over \$1,400 per resident. Failing to meet federal air quality standards in California led to 33,000 hospital admissions and emergency room visits, and cost the state \$193 million over a three-year period (2005-07), according to a 2010 RAND study.

Walkable Communities Lower Risk of Obesity

Sustainable, mixed-use communities designed around mass transit, walking and cycling have been shown to reduce lung and heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses. Research has found that individuals who live in more walkable communities have a 35 percent lower risk of obesity.

Active Transportation Fights Heart Disease, Diabetes and other Chronic Diseases

Recent California Department of Public Health research has shown that increasing active transportation along with cleaner vehicles could substantially reduce premature deaths and chronic illness in communities around the state. A Bay Area study demonstrated a 15 percent reduction in heart disease and diabetes in 2035 compared to a business as usual case, and similar research is underway in other areas.

Reduced Driving Cuts Air Pollution That Causes 1,500 Valley Deaths Annually

By reducing driving and providing more transportation options, we also reduce air pollution and the substantial health damages associated with it. The California Air Resources Board currently estimates that over 9,200 Californians die prematurely each year due to air pollution, including 1,500 Valley residents.

Support Sustainable Communities for a Healthier San Joaquin Valley.