

# Appendix A.

## Outreach and Engagement Report

# Vehicle Miles Traveled/Greenhouse Gases (VMT/GHG) Model Mitigation Program Outreach and Engagement Topline Report



InterEthnica  
1001 Lombard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

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## Introduction

In partnership with C/CAG of San Mateo, InterEthnica spoke with community representatives who live and work with San Mateo County's diverse populations. Interview participants work at organizations that support a range of groups throughout San Mateo County, including people of color, low-income, essential workers, rural residents on the coast, older adults, parents, children, migrants, domestic workers, tenants, survivors of partner abuse, and those living in redlined communities. From education on environmental justice, bike safety, and business ownership to necessities like medical care, transportation, affordable housing support, and counseling, interview participants came from varied backgrounds, all oriented around supporting communities. The objectives of the interviews were to:

1. Inform the San Mateo community about the VMT/GHG Model Mitigation Program, its process, its potential impacts, and opportunities for involvement.
2. Gather input on community concerns, barriers, and opportunities around development and reducing driving in San Mateo County.

From structured interviews with these community representatives, InterEthnica heard unique perspectives surrounding the benefits, challenges, and opportunities of the eight mitigation strategies:

1. Transit Enhancements
2. Affordable Housing
3. Subsidy Programs (e.g. Transit Discount program, e-bike rebate)
4. First/Last-Mile Services (e.g. bikeshare, carshare, mobility hubs)
5. Community Travel Planning
6. Biking and Walking Paths
7. Parking Program/Curb Management
8. EV Charging Facilities

Across the eight strategies, interview participants vouched for equity, reliability, frequency, accessibility, and safety. They hope that the development, implementation, and public use of the eight mitigation strategies ultimately maximize benefits for their communities, rather than exacerbate existing concerns. The strategies elicited a range of reactions among interview participants, depending on their community and geographic area. Primarily, interview participants who serve communities on the coast tended to hold different opinions than those who work with communities east of 280. Furthermore, perspectives from the Latinx/o/a, disabled, and low-income communities, domestic and agricultural workers, children and families, government workers, and more unearthed telling insights about what San Mateo County residents need to reduce their gas-powered car usage.

When asked to indicate which strategies they believed would be most beneficial to their communities overall, interview participants mentioned all of them. Interview participants also raised several relevant concerns, including transit safety, access to transit, eligibility criteria for subsidy programs, access to parking, and development costs. Outside of the eight strategies discussed, interview participants suggested approaches that they believe will benefit their communities. Innovative ideas surfaced in conversation, such as altering routes and frequencies for local buses and shuttles, utilizing empty lots and buildings, and funding public automated vehicles. This summary recaps patterns and themes outlining each of the eight strategies' benefits and concerns and ranks them according to their potential benefits.

## Methodology

Given the demographic and geographic diversity of San Mateo County, a broad cross-section of community leaders with extensive reach in and familiarity with the communities that will be most impacted by potential VMT/GHG Model Mitigation Program projects were engaged.

Community leaders and organizations were mapped out based on those who represent communities who live, work, and spend time in **C/CAG's Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)**.

- The included EFAs have an equity score greater than 8 out of 10, identified in the following map generated as part of C/CAG's Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan: <https://tooledesign.github.io/F0066-San-Mateo-CCAG/>. These scores are based on an analysis of U.S. Census block group data using the following four metrics:
  - Share of the population that is non-white population,
  - Median household income,
  - Housing and transportation cost burden, and
  - Share of households who do not own cars.

In addition to these criteria, InterEthnica mapped out community organizations that serve highly impacted populations, including:

- Older adults
- Families with children
- Disability community
- Limited English Proficient

InterEthnica conducted 50-minute virtual interviews via Zoom with 20 community leaders across San Mateo County. InterEthnica provided background on the VMT/GHG Model Mitigation Program and introduced the eight mitigation strategies. Each interview consisted of a 40–45-minute conversation regarding the eight strategies, followed by a 5–10-minute activity wherein participants delineated the strategies into the categories that they deemed “most beneficial,” “somewhat beneficial,” and “not at all beneficial”. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The table below lists the community representatives with whom InterEthnica spoke. Participants were speaking based on their own experiences working within their communities and not on behalf of any organization.

Organization	Services provided	Equity Priority Geography	Equity Priority Communities Served
<b>Coast</b>			
Ayudando Latinos a Soñar (ALAS)	Social wellness through multicultural practices, mental health care, education, immigration processes, and work	Half Moon Bay	Latinx/o/a coastal community
Boys and Girls Club of the Coastsides	Character & Leadership Development, Education and Career Development, Health & Life Skills, The Arts, Sports, Fitness & Recreation for youth	Half Moon Bay	Coastsides youth
Senior Coastsiders	Resource for information on aging, support of caregivers, and the development of innovative approaches to address issues of aging	Half Moon Bay	Coastsides older adults
Pacifica Resource Center	Grocery assistance, emergency financial assistance for rent and mortgage, homeless services, and other critical services.	Pacifica	Families and individuals along the coast
Farmworker Advisory Commission	Advise government bodies on the needs of farmworkers.	Pescadero	Farmworkers
Viviendas Justas (ALAS)	Fair housing advocacy	Half Moon Bay	Latinx/o/a coastal community
<b>North County</b>			
Rise South City	Build climate-resilient communities by creating dialogue with frontline communities about climate change and social equity. Trains Promotoras as trusted messengers.	South San Francisco	Frontline communities
Peninsula Family Service	Provides comprehensive services including early learning, financial empowerment, older adult services, and employment services.	San Mateo / Daly City	Children, families, older adults throughout the Bay Area.

Pilipino Bayanihan Resource Center (PBRC)	Provide direct services including immigration and legal and community education to Filipino population in Daly City and San Mateo County.	Daly City	Filipino
<b>Central County</b>			
Casa Circulo Cultural	Provides quality educational, cultural, and developmental opportunities for underserved and immigrant families throughout San Mateo County.	North Fair Oaks	Low-income, vulnerable families. Latinx/o/a communities in San Mateo County.
CORA - Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse	Help those affected by intimate partner abuse through services including counseling, legal support, and emergency housing.	San Mateo	Those affected by intimate partner abuse
Saint James AME Zion church	Methodist church, historically African American. Provides community support in North Central San Mateo County.	San Mateo	Black community in North Central San Mateo County
Samaritan House	Comprehensive services to fight poverty in San Mateo County including food services, housing, children and school programs, health & dental, case management, worker resource center, and tax preparation services.	San Mateo	Anyone facing poverty in San Mateo County
Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center	Opens pathways to small business through training, one-on-one consulting, access to capital, and networks of support.	North Fair Oaks / East Palo Alto	People facing systemic barrier to economic mobility
<b>South County</b>			
Youth United for Community Action (YUCA)	Leadership development for youth grounded in community organizing.	East Palo Alto	Young people of color, majority low-income, majority women

The Primary School	A school that brings together all of the adults in a child’s life, including parents, educators, and medical and mental health providers, starting from a very early age.	East Palo Alto	Early childhood, school-aged youth, parents, caregivers
El Concilio of San Mateo County	Increase education, employment and access to quality of life services to underserved communities in San Mateo County	East Palo Alto	underserved communities in San Mateo County including immigrant families, Latinx/o/a community
East Palo Alto Community Alliance and Neighborhood Development Organization (EPA CanDo)	Co-develop permanently-affordable rental housing and support residents in acquiring and maintaining homeownership	East Palo Alto	Residents of East Palo Alto in need of affordable housing
<b>Countywide</b>			
Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities	Support services, community awareness, and systems change advocacy to promote full and equal community integration and participation for people with disabilities	Countywide	People with disabilities
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	Advocate for making bicycling safe and accessible for everyone	Countywide	Cycling community throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

## Executive Summary

Community leaders across San Mateo County were eager to learn about the eight mitigation strategies and contribute their views on how these strategies would impact their communities. They appreciated being included in the conversation in shaping the mitigation strategies and recognized the thought that had gone into developing the strategies in the first place. Overall, participants contributed positive comments about the mitigation strategies and expressed that the strategies could be benefit their communities if implemented well and considered their community needs.

The top strategies that were viewed as most beneficial in descending order were affordable housing, biking/walking paths, transit enhancements, first/last mile services, community travel planning, and subsidy programs. The two strategies that were viewed as having the least beneficial impacts were EV charging facilities and parking program/curb management.



Across all geographies and communities, affordable housing was considered the most beneficial strategy. Participants expressed a need for affordable housing that is close to resources such as public transit, grocery stores, schools, medical centers, and downtown commercial areas. They stressed the importance of clear, inclusive eligibility criteria that would include both low to middle-income groups.

Biking and walking paths were presented as one category to participants and were considered the second most beneficial strategy. However, there was a split between participants who expressed a strong desire for more walking paths versus biking paths. Particularly in East Palo Alto and North Central County, participants lamented the lack of sidewalks and expressed that there were plenty of bike lanes already. The Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition provided examples of how biking paths could be safer through protected lanes and traffic calming. Additional concerns were raised around ensuring that the construction of new bike lanes in commercial areas do not obstruct wheelchair-accessible parking and that walking paths are made wide enough to ensure wheelchair access even with lampposts and outdoor restaurant seating posing as obstacles. Coastsiders did not view biking and walking paths as viable means of commuting, but they expressed the importance of adequate lighting and clear bike lanes for leisure and exercise.

Transit enhancements and first/last mile services were also considered to be highly beneficial, and their benefits were closely tied together. The most common pain point expressed around public transit was that it takes too long and is not a viable option for getting to work, taking children to school, and squeezing in errands. Participants suggest increasing public transit frequency, reliability, and efficiency by both ensuring existing public transit runs on time as well as investing in additional express buses, trains, and shuttles. Additionally, participants stated that public transit stops drop off community members, particularly older adults, too far from their final destination. Participants envisioned a system that would take them from their doorsteps to a transit hub. Participants found on-demand taxi and shuttle services that pick up and drop off door to door or in a local automated loop to be particularly appealing to close the first and last mile gap. Some participants suggested ensuring a strong micromobility network for those who have concerns around accepting rides from others while ensuring e-bikes and e-scooters are maintained and not left littered on the streets. Additionally, participants suggested improving the efficiency of existing shuttle services such as Redi-Wheels for people with disabilities by decreasing the amount of lead time from days to a few hours in which a ride must be requested.

Because of the distance and mountains, first/last mile services were not considered to be relevant to the coastside. However, microtransit services, including shuttle services were highly valued. In particular, participants suggested that an on-demand shuttle service with a smaller passenger capacity and greater frequency would help older adults get over the Santa Cruz mountains and to their medical appointments. Coastsiders expressed that existing shuttle services are too infrequent and have multiple stops, that take too long to pick up too many passengers along the way. It would take all day to get to and from a medical appointment, and Ubers are unaffordable and hard to come by.

Community travel planning and subsidy programs were both ranked as most and somewhat beneficial, with the greatest benefit resulting from a combination of the two. Many organizations expressed that they already informally offer community travel planning services and that it would be optimal to combine community travel planning with subsidy programs to ensure that community members could afford the transit options they are proposing. Throughout all strategies, participants indicated the necessity of education and guidance around the new strategies so that community members are aware of and have the resources to access them. Additionally, because of the lack of trust in these communities with government agencies, community organizations are best positioned to provide the resources and support for their community members.

Mobility wallets, transit discounts, and e-bike rebates were all potential strategies under the subsidy program. Participants were most excited about mobility wallets and regional transit passes to help community members more easily navigate public transit. However, participants expressed concerns about cumbersome enrollment and eligibility processes. To ease this process, participants suggested an automatic enrollment process with EBT or similar income-eligible programs. Additional concerns were raised around the complexity of mobility wallets, particularly for older adults who may have more challenges using technology. Participants suggested keeping the mobility wallets very simple and providing technology training and support, which could be done through community organizations. Participants expressed the importance of having subsidy programs that last for a substantial period of time so that they can have a real impact. Rather than an e-bike rebate program, participants suggested an upfront discount program, as previous experience showed that community members were skeptical of rebate programs, particularly those who are undocumented and who do not file taxes.

EV charging facilities and parking program/curb management strategies were the two strategies that participants indicated as being the least beneficial. Participants could see the value of having more EV charging facilities in general, but they indicated that it would not be very relevant in their communities because most community members were unable to afford electric vehicles, and the addition of charging facilities may instead create tourism and gentrification. For the strategy to be effective, electric vehicles would first need to be made more affordable or accessible, such as through an EV carshare program. Concerns were also raised around EV charging facilities being placed in the most accessible locations and taking away parking spots from people with disabilities.

Although not a top choice, participants could see the benefits of parking programs as long as they were limited to commercial areas and measures were taken to alleviate the impact on local community members. Participants suggested a subsidy or permit program for residents to ensure that additional financial burdens are not placed on them. A parking program and curb management would not work for the coastal communities as they are reliant on cars, and paid parking would cause an outrage.

Overall, participants could see benefits in all strategies despite the unique challenges and concerns that remain to be addressed for each community around accessibility, affordability, eligibility, and ease of use. The eight strategies were viewed as particularly beneficial when combined, and participants stressed the importance of education and outreach to ensure that the strategies were utilized to its potential. What follows is a detailed breakdown of each of the strategies, opportunities, and concerns raised by different communities in San Mateo County.

## Affordable Housing

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*“If I live 5 miles from the nearest bus stop and can’t park there, what does that do for me? I know people who can’t go to Safeway or pick up their medication. That’s a big concern.”*

— Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities (CID)

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Interview participants unanimously shared the following aspects of affordable housing that would maximize benefits for their communities:

- Proximity to resources, including public transit stations/stops, transit hubs, grocery stores, schools, medical care, pharmacies, biking/walking paths, and downtown areas. In particular, interview participants hope affordable housing does not create disparities in access to public transportation.
- Inclusive and clear eligibility criteria that accounts for groups ranging from low to middle incomes. Interview participants would like for public servants, county employees, older adults, and families alike to access affordable housing. One recommended a points system that determines the housing price, so that affordable housing is efficiently and ethically used.
- Dignified, safe, permanent housing that fosters a sense of housing security, and in turn contributes to overall wellbeing.

When it comes to affordable housing, specific communities bring specific considerations:

*Coastside communities’ desires for affordable housing:*

- Along the coast, build affordable housing that is environmentally resilient and sustainable.
- Consider the local Coastal plan, which mandates minimum growth.
- Plan to increase parking with the advent of affordable housing, so that streets do not become overburdened with parked cars.
- Build culturally informed housing, like those on 555 Kelly Avenue and Moonridge Housing.
- Regulate Airbnb more aggressively.

*Urban communities’ desires for affordable housing:*

- In North Central, in historically redlined neighborhood of San Mateo, turn the empty state courthouse building on the corner of Humboldt into affordable housing. Utilize other empty lots as well.
- Educate community members on programs that specialize in affordable housing and create pathways to communicate concerns to the city and county. Interview participants mentioned that affordable housing often has long waitlists, and that contractors typically don’t want to develop affordable housing.
- Establish rent control in Redwood City.
- Intentionally plan affordable housing so that it accommodates people with disabilities. Include ramps, showers with grab bars, and hallways wide enough for wheelchairs.

## Biking and Walking Paths

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*“East Palo Alto was unincorporated for a long time so we didn’t have sidewalks for a very long time. There’s still parts of our community that don’t have sidewalks at all. I think it’s very crucial. It makes people feel safe.” — EPACANDO*

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As for biking and walking paths, interview participants expressed mixed opinions and concerns. Whether they hope to see maximally beneficial walking and biking paths or claim their communities don’t utilize biking or walking at all, their insights were telling:

Interview participants shared the following general ideas:

- Create better coexistence among cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians through:
  - “Share the lane” and bike lane signage
  - Cycling education for drivers and cyclists
- Keep cyclists safe by widening and protecting bike lanes, ensuring that physical barriers are implemented, rather than a mere green painted stripe.
- Reduce bike theft and increase bike usage through bike parking.

Interview participants who work with *Latinx/o/a communities* stated the following:

- Make pedestrian pathways on both sides of El Camino and 101. People already walk and bike down Middlefield Road, on one side of the train tracks. On the other side of the train tracks, biking and walking aren’t accessible.

Interview participants who *live and work on the coast* mentioned a few key points:

- Designate a clear bike lane on Highway One, wide enough for cyclists.
- Woodside and El Camino aren’t viable locations to bike commute since they are dangerous and mountainous.
- Create biking and walking paths where people can socialize and exercise since coastsiders enjoy spending time in their beautiful and natural environment. Include adequate lighting on these paths. However, sea level rise and coastal erosion will impact these paths.

A representative from the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition offered a wealth of suggestions:

- Install protected lanes in areas where there are frequent crashes, as this would address common sites of crashes.
- Convert car lanes to walking and biking paths via “road diets,” a standard practice within bike advocacy initiatives.
- Calm traffic by getting cars to slow down for cyclists and walkers.

Interview participants who work with *communities on the eastside of the county* would like to see the following:

- More sidewalks, but there are enough bike lanes already

- Accessible safety gear, like helmets, free or reduced price for communities
- Wheelchair accessibility by removing obstacles from sidewalks, such as lampposts
- Sidewalk texture for vision-impaired people to follow
- Removal of biking from streets via the separation of biking and walking paths, since cyclists go too fast or too slow, adversely impacting safety
- Even sidewalks without bumps, where people can easily trip and hurt themselves
- Plants along the paths, to enhance walkability
- Speed bumps to slow down cars and cyclists
- Flashing lights to warn and slow down cars and cyclists
- Discounts on e-bikes and e-scooters through local organizations to increase access
- A greater quantity of bike lanes and walking paths to encourage cycling and walking
- Mile or kilometer markers on walking paths for those who like to track their physical progress
- Advertise and promote hiking and walking trails to encourage outdoor walking
- Projects similar to the new Foster City bikeway and walkway
- Consideration that the pandemic resulted in outdoor restaurant seating that has taken space away from older adults and people with disabilities. Ideally, eliminate some of these parklets.
- Consider that added bike lanes on the street will permit people to live in their vehicles on the side of the road.

## Subsidy Programs

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*“I think community centers (Mercy Housing, CORA, service providers offering direct service and support) should have access to these transit passes. I would love to have some.” — CORA*

*“If you’re going to have a rebate, why not just hand e-bikes to the community? The programs are promising but it depends on how they’re implemented.” — Rise South City*

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Interview participants specified what would maximize the community benefits of subsidy programs:

- Mobility wallets and regional transit passes were favored among interview participants, who claimed that all-encompassing passes would help their community members more easily navigate public transit.
- Automatic enrollment with EBT would ease the qualification and application processes of subsidy programs and would alleviate the concerns interview participants expressed about cumbersome enrollment processes.
- Flexible eligibility criteria of programs would maximize accessibility and inclusion. Especially for newly arrived immigrants and undocumented residents. Public services can elicit distrust among communities who do not feel that the government unconditionally serves them.

- In a similar vein to transit enhancements, interview participants stated that technology might not be accessible to all of their community members, and to therefore offer technology training sessions.
- Interview participants were quick to identify community-based organizations who could distribute mobility wallets, transit passes, and other programming materials.
- Regarding e-bike and e-scooter safety, interview participants advocated for the following safety measures:
  - Protected lanes that separate cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers
  - Bike and scooter education so that users ride cautiously and safely
  - Subsidies on safety gear (e.g. helmets, bike lights, and bells, to enhance safety)
- To distribute e-bikes and e-scooters as equitably as possible, interview participants offered the following ideas:
  - Significant discounts or subsidy programs that make e-bikes affordable for all incomes
  - Monitoring and maintenance of e-bike and e-scooter programs to avoid theft and damage
  - A trade-in program for cheap e-bikes that are not UL certified and are therefore likely to catch on fire

Interview participants spoke about the overall irrelevance of subsidy programs for their communities, especially e-bikes and e-scooters. However, they offered a few key suggestions on what helpful subsidy programs might offer:

- \$2.00–\$5.00 off the City of San Mateo’s taxi service on a regular basis
- One free pass for all modes of transit upon enrollment as an incentive to participate
- Funds for CBOs to disperse subsidy program resources
- Subsidies for purchases of electric vehicles, to ensure people who cannot afford full-priced EVs can purchase one if they want to
- EV car share for those who must drive to their destination, or who want to try out an EV

For interview participants who work with low-income individuals, families, and children throughout the county, the following ideas were top of mind:

- Clipper Cards and train passes with \$100.00 of pre-loaded value for clients, offered three times each year
- \$60.00 monthly subsidy on mobility wallets
- Suggestion to administer a subsidy program with support from organizations including St. Ames, CORA, and Mercy Housing
- Clear safety and insurance policies
- Accident education
- Targeted ads to spread awareness of transportation programs
- A website where people can see eligibility criteria and register
- Discounted transit passes and mobility wallets for employers to distribute to their employees.
- Reimbursements for e-bikes
- Reinstatement of previous transit subsidy programs, such as the Daly City program that helped people access \$20.00 off on transit.

Finally, preemptively hinting at first/last mile services, interview participants emphasized that bikes, scooters, and public transit must be provided together to effectively replace driving.

## Transit Enhancements

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*“Definitely transit frequency, capacity, reliability, expanding Caltrain service. Express bus service sounds cool. Shuttle services also. All of them.” — CORA*

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The majority of interview participants believe that the following measures would maximize the benefits of transit enhancements for their communities:

- Increase the frequency, reliability, and efficiency of public transit. Make existing public transit run on time and more frequently. Invest in express buses, trains, and shuttles.
- Nearly everyone lamented that public transit simply takes too long, making it an unviable option for getting to work, getting children to school, and squeezing in errands. Interview participants also wondered how long these enhancements would take to develop, and how much they would cost.
- Enhance public transit safety by improving lighting and security to ensure people feel safer riding public transit.
- Provide guidance on how to take public transit. Equip transit riders with maps, personnel at stations, and informative apps to appeal to people’s diverse preferences and needs. Interview participants mentioned that some transit systems, especially BART, are not user-friendly, discouraging community members from taking it.
- Consider a streamlined system that connects various transit operators. Although the Clipper Card can be used for all Bay Area transit systems, interview participants think that the transit systems their community members take could be better integrated.
- Launch culturally and linguistically resonant campaigns to educate people about public transit.

Depending on their respective communities and geographic locations, interview participants advocated for a focus on several key transit systems, both existing and potential:

### *Coastside communities’ desires for transit enhancements*

InterEthnica gained invaluable insights from community leaders who understand the needs of coastsiders, particularly in Half Moon Bay, Pescadero, El Granada, and unincorporated areas along the coast. Coastsiders would benefit from the following:

- Express bus, ideally SamTrans, that bounces back and forth between Half Moon Bay, Pescadero, and San Mateo to swiftly transport rural residents who have experienced a lack of reliable transportation. Importantly, concerns were raised over the impact of express bus lanes on major, already crowded corridors, namely Highway 92.
- Extension of Caltrain, in the form of a Caltrain spur line, to take coastsiders from established Caltrain stations, such as Hillsdale over Highway 280 to Half Moon Bay.
- Expansion of BART from Millbrae to Half Moon Bay
- **Older adults along the coast:** A ride share system to get to medical appointments over the hill. YUCA Organization is currently working on a shared mini-van system. Additionally, Senior Coastsiders would like to see both a car share service and medical care that is located in close proximity to the coast.

- **Latinx/o/a agricultural workers along the coast:** Language accessibility for newly arrived Latinos, Spanish-speaking staff at transit stations, and in-language information about schedules and routes. Culturally speaking, Latinx/o/a community members do not feel comfortable accepting rides from people they do not know.
- **Families along the coast:** Shuttle to pick up children from school and expanded shuttle hours to 11 pm. Currently, some children wait two hours after school to be picked up since their parents cannot always readily access a car.

#### *Urban communities' desires for transit enhancements*

InterEthnica also spoke with community leaders who work directly with residents of San Mateo County cities, including San Mateo, East Palo Alto, Daly City, and Menlo Park. The following suggestions were brought up. Shuttles were top of mind:

- A shuttle to Caltrain would increase the accessibility of Caltrain to all residents. Even with a transit subsidy, some community members, particularly those who have been historically redlined, live too far away from Caltrain stations to walk.
- An on-demand shuttle that can arrive in 15 minute used to be free in East Palo Alto. Now, it costs a fee, negatively impacting inclusion and accessibility.
- For older adults, buses are noisy, large, and intimidating. Instead, a smaller shuttle, perhaps an autonomous car, would draw in older adults.
- Greyhound is affordable and reliable, but there is no easy way to get to the Greyhound Station. A shuttle service to the Greyhound Stations would address this concern.

InterEthnica also gained vital perspectives from SMC residents who come from *systemically underserved backgrounds*:

- Expand the reach of existing transit systems, so that more areas are accessible by transit. Survivors of partner abuse, for example, cannot get to the CORA office without a car. Similarly, individuals with disabilities who cannot drive cannot get to the Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities since there is a lack of transit to Santa Clara via 101 or El Camino.
- Communicate maintenance issues. People with disabilities would benefit from social media or email updates when an elevator is out of order at their local transit station or stop.

## First/Last Mile Services

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*“A couple years ago, Caltrain or SamTrans gave out free passes if people qualified. Complaints of community members were that, while the passes are great, sometimes the walk to the station is 35 minutes. Consider all of these issues. It’s great to be able to take the train.” — Rise South City*

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Most interview participants sought further explanation about first/last mile services. When told that first/last mile services might include microtransit, ride shares, shuttles, and transportation hubs, they promptly provided insight into what would best benefit their respective communities. Generally, they support first/last mile services but request that they are equitably executed by pursuing the following:



- Partnerships with transit systems, such as SamTrans
- A comprehensive landscape analysis that identifies where clusters of communities are present
- Transit hubs near communities and resources, such as libraries, stores, and neighborhoods, to ensure that transit hubs are within a close radius of people who use them. This might alleviate one interview participant's concern that first/last mile services will not be useful for families with children.
- Maintenance system for e-bikes and e-scooters to prevent litter on the sidewalks, since theft and damage are the top concerns:
  - Designated points for pick-up and drop-off
  - Technology that prevents theft

Interview participants who serve *communities on the coast* shared salient points:

- Micromobility is not feasible on the coastside, since community members must traverse miles and mountains to reach their destination.
- Healthcare offices and hospitals are over the hill, located on the eastside of the county. For coastsiders who do not have access to a car, a form of microtransit, such as a shuttle, would help them travel to their appointments and limit long, unfeasible wait times required of existing transit.
- Microtransit might also help community members travel from Half Moon Bay to Moss Beach
- Coastsiders need a ride-share system
  - Ubers are not only unaffordable but also sparse.
  - Coastsiders harbor concerns over traffic on major corridors, such as 92 and 1. A car share service might reduce the total number of cars on these corridors.
- Major corridors must be repaired and improved to better prepare coastsiders for emergencies.

*Communities east of 280* mostly praised the ideas around first/last mile services. They offered suggestions as to what would best benefit their communities, particularly those who don't feel comfortable taking a bus or who struggle to get to major transit stations.

- Through micromobility and rideshare services, create a system that allows people to get to a transit hub right from their doorstep. Currently, public transit stops and stations drop older adults off too far from their final destination.
- Cater to low literacy community members who need help to follow written promotions or instructions.
- Provide on-demand taxis, perhaps autonomous, that follow a regular loop.
- Ensure reliable, clean, safe shuttle service that goes to BART, airports, hospitals, and other highly trafficked areas.
- Organize an EV car share, for those who must drive to their destination.
- Update buses on El Camino Real with new technology, to attract more users.
- Build protected bike and pedestrian lanes, and pedestrian traffic signaling to augment safety.
- Utilize phone lines, apps, and physical cards to help a range of community members access transportation services
- Offer covered seating areas to accommodate inclement weather.
- Include signage in multiple languages to improve language accessibility.
- Offer food and amenities at the transit hubs, using the Sacramento Greyhound station as inspiration.

- Improve the sidewalks on University Ave and Bay Road in East Palo Alto, so that people can walk safely to transit stops.
- Interview participants stated that the following locations would serve as effective mobility hubs:
  - Cardenas and University Ave (where the bus stops) in East Palo Alto
  - University Ave and Willow Road in East Palo Alto
  - Grand Avenue and Linden in South City
  - Downtown areas in Redwood City
  - King Community Center
  - Caltrain Stations
- One interview participant expressed concern that first/last mile services might create more traffic on North Humboldt Street in San Mateo.
- One interview participant advocated for a strong micromobility framework, since Latinx/o/a community members are skeptical to accept rides from others.
- Notably, interview participants hope not to take away the option of driving a car, but rather to offer strong, reliable, and safe non-car travel.
- An interview participant who represents the disability community mentioned that [Redi-Wheels](#) could be improved by offering rides within 1–2 hours of being ordered, rather than 1–2 days.

## Community Travel Planning

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*“The companies we refer people to have to fulfill what they say they can in a timely manner. I don’t want to stick my neck out and say a service is great then people have a bad experience.”*

— Center Independence Disabilities

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First and foremost, interview participants stated that their organizations and partners already provide community travel planning, such as:

- Printed Google Maps for clients
- Half Moon Bay minibuses requested through an app

Interview participants firmly believe that community travel planning funds should be allocated to the following organizations, who already do the work and are trusted by communities:

- Affordable housing organizations, especially those who help older adults and immigrants
- Trusted community-based organizations. Government entities create skepticism, particularly among Latinx/o/a communities.
- Public services, such as libraries, clinics, and schools, for families who struggle to travel elsewhere
- Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council
- Senior Coastsiders
- Community centers that assist non-English speakers, especially among the agricultural workers in Pescadero

- Kings Center
- Economic Employment Center
- Dole Senior Center
- Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities (CID)
- YUCA
- 511.org

Additionally, interview participants highlighted their desires and concerns about community travel planning:

- Invest in an in-language app that guides community members through transit, telling them where to go and how to get there.
- Enlist younger adults to provide ride-share services to older adults, as this would provide jobs, strengthen community, and support older adults.
- Ensure community members have a comprehensive ride plan and direct help. Consider accompanying them on transit.
- Create a public education campaign about the program via:
  - A newsletter
  - Classes at Renaissance Entrepreneur Center
  - Displays at bus stops, online, and at schools
- Create and advertise shared transportation opportunities for large events
- Train bus drivers to support confused riders.
- Make sure people know which BART line and bus to take to their destination. As of now, they are only instructed to take BART itself.
- Identify a city or county department willing to take on community travel planning.
- Hold transit agencies and companies accountable to fulfill what they promise in timely manner.

## EV Charging Facilities

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*“What is stopping people from getting EVs is wondering where they are going to charge their car. I am in favor of this one” — El Concilio*

*“I don’t think I’ve seen one electric car in this neighborhood. We want to do things that the neighborhood needs. I don’t think there is a need for charging stations.” — Saint James AME Zion church*

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EV charging facilities, as a potential mitigation strategy, was generally well received by some and questioned by others. Many interview participants immediately pointed to the cost of EVs, claiming that people in their communities would not be able to afford an EV. Those who supported EV charging facilities mentioned [California’s 2035 EV sales mandate plan](#), and thought that charging facilities would be an incentive to purchase EVs.

Important considerations arose about how EV charging facilities would be best implemented throughout the county:

- Ensure the following locations have EV charging:
  - Community-based organizations to target diverse communities
  - Municipal lots in South San Francisco that currently don't have chargers
  - McDonalds, especially in East Palo Alto
  - Garage on 2<sup>nd</sup> downtown in San Mateo
  - Strip mall on Monte Diablo in Walnut Creek
  - School parking lots during evenings and weekends
  - Downtown areas
  - Public areas in Redwood City
  - Gas stations
  - New affordable housing developments; and older housing developments. Interview participants shared concerns about their community members who live in older housing that were not equipped with EV charging capabilities.
- Make EVs and EV charging more affordable by all:
  - Provide affordable EV cars via a subsidy program.
  - Make a certain amount of miles free each month, or provide a mobility wallet for affordable charging.
  - Offer free charging from chargers at affordable housing units.
  - Fund the maintenance of charging facilities.
- Actively promote EVs among communities to make sure EV chargers are not only installed, but also used.
- Similar to paid parking, interview participants suggested pivoting funds from EV charging facilities to public transit.

Equity was also a key component of discussions around EV charging facilities:

- An increase of EV charging facilities would take away from overall parking. This is because EV charging facilities go unused in areas where they aren't needed, particularly in **East Palo Alto and Half Moon Bay**.
- From a **disability perspective**, EV charging should not reduce the number of accessible parking spots. For example, the Safeway in San Mateo has charging stations that aren't used, so individuals with disabilities and older adults must park further away.
- **Along the coast**, PG&E is already expensive and unreliable, resulting in frequent power outages. Coastal communities might become stranded if they cannot charge their cars.
- An interview participant was wary that the encouragement of privately and individually owned EVs might, in turn, **discourage public transit and walking**.

## Parking Program/Curb Management

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*“Most people here get around by bike or walking, and those who use cars usually park in free public places. I believe the implementation of paid parking would not be well-received by the community and would not solve any significant parking problems.” — Viviendas Justas (ALAS)*

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Out of all the mitigation strategies, parking program/curb management elicited the most concern and subsequent resistance. Importantly, most interview participants believe that a paid parking system would exacerbate existing inequities that most strongly affect the communities with whom they work:

- **Latinx/o/a communities** will be hurt by paid parking. It would not help them access parking more easily.
- Paid parking systems that utilize technology might be difficult for **older adults and for people who do not own a smart phone**.
- Paid parking would spark outrage among **coastal communities** and would only affect people for whom the cost is significant.
- **Families who struggle to pay for their existing living expenses** will not be able to park in areas that charge for parking.
- For **historically redlined communities** in the North Central neighborhood of San Mateo, parking is already strained, where people currently park in the Kings Center overnight, then walk back to their homes.
- For **multi-family homes**, residential parking is already limited.
- **People who cannot afford to pay parking fees** might resort to parking on others' properties, posing community wide concerns.
- There is an overall lack of staff who work on parking policies, limiting research and thought on how changes to parking management would affect local residents.

Interview participants were asked what measures would alleviate these concerns, if paid parking were to be implemented. They suggested the following:

- Paid parking should only be in commercial areas.
- Hand out stickers, hangers, or permits for community members to mark their right to park for free. Charge parking for tourists, not residents.
- Enlist help from community centers, who could guide their clients through the parking system or provide parking subsidies.
- Provide public transparency about where the money goes.
- Make parking free, or discounted at the very least, at popular destinations. In particular, the Half Moon Bay beach is frequented by low-income people who would have to drive back home if they were charged for parking.
- Create both digital and physical payment options to appeal to different people.
- Time parking with a limit to ensure many drivers get a chance to visit a popular destination.
- Adjust parking costs according to demand, for example, costlier parking during the evening dinner window.

- Invest in mass public transportation that puts fewer cars on the road, so that people who have no other choice than to drive do not disproportionately face the repercussions of paid parking.
- Make parking safer by converting side parking to parallel parking.
- Meters would lead everyone to believe they must pay.
- Educate communities on the benefits of decreased parking.
- Bolster safety by including security in parking areas.
- Develop more parking:
  - Repurpose empty lots in SMC and Redwood City to create more parking.
  - Build parking garages with multiple floors.
- Make bikes, scooters, and transit hubs available in further locations, so that people who have to park far away can take public transit to their final destination.
- A couple interview participants said that nothing could alleviate their concerns, and to instead use parking program/curb management funds towards affordable housing and community projects.

A few interview participants spoke to the possible benefits of a parking program/curb management, including:

- Pedestrian only downtown areas
- More bike lanes
- More available parking
- Incentive to purchase an EV, although EVs are not affordable to all

## Rankings

After learning more about and discussing the eight strategies, interview participants were asked to rank which strategies would be most, somewhat, and not beneficial to their communities. Some interview participants built off of existing strategies or added their own:

Organization	Most beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not at all beneficial
<b>Coast</b>			
Ayudando Latinos a Soñar	Affordable housing, transit enhancements, first/last mile services, subsidy programs, universal basic income	EV charging facilities, biking/walking paths, community travel planning, parking program/curb management, carpool line	Parking program/curb management
Boys and Girls Club of the Coastside	Transit enhancements, community travel planning, first/last mile services	Biking and walking paths	EV charging facilities, subsidy programs, parking program/curb management, affordable housing

Senior Coastsiders	None	EV charging facilities, transit enhancements, biking/walking paths, affordable housing, subsidy programs, community travel planning	First/last mile services, parking program/curb management
Pacifica Resource Center	Transit enhancements, subsidy programs, affordable housing, EV charging facilities	Biking/walking paths, first/last mile services, community travel planning, parking program/curb management	None
Farmworker Advisory Commission	Transit enhancements, community travel planning, biking/walking paths, affordable housing	Subsidy programs, first/last mile services	Parking program/curb management, EV charging facilities
Viviendas Justas (ALAS)	Affordable housing, biking/walking paths, subsidy programs, parking program/curb management	Transit enhancements, community travel planning, first/last mile services, EV charging facilities	None
<b>North County</b>			
Rise South City	Affordable housing, subsidy programs, first/last mile services, community travel planning, biking/walking paths	Transit enhancements	Parking program/curb management, EV charging facilities
Peninsula Family Service	Affordable housing, community travel planning, EV charging facilities, first/last mile services, transit enhancements, partner with schools, invite private industries and nonprofits to give incentives	Subsidy programs, biking and walking paths	Parking program/curb management

Pilipino Bayanihan Resource Center (PBRC)	Affordable housing, transit enhancements, subsidy programs, biking and walking paths, parking program/curb management, EV charging facilities	Community travel planning, first/last mile services	None
<b>Central County</b>			
Casa Circulo Cultural	Transit enhancements, biking/walking paths, subsidy programs, affordable housing, first/last mile services	Affordable housing, first/last mile services, community travel planning, parking program/curb management	EV charging facilities
CORA - Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse	Affordable housing, subsidy programs, first/last mile services, transit enhancements, community travel planning	Parking program/curb management, EV charging facilities, biking/walking paths, EV car program/affordability	None
Saint James AME Zion church	Community travel planning, affordable housing, subsidy programs, walking paths, first/last mile services, transit enhancements	Parking program/curb management	Biking paths, EV charging facilities
Samaritan House South	Affordable housing, first/last mile services, biking/ walking paths, community travel planning, subsidy programs	Transit enhancements, EV charging facilities, parking program/curb management	None
Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center	Affordable housing, first/last mile services, transit enhancements	EV charging facilities, biking and walking paths, community travel planning, subsidy programs	Parking program/curb management
<b>South County</b>			
	<b>Most beneficial</b>	<b>Somewhat beneficial</b>	<b>Not at all beneficial</b>
Youth United for Community Action (YUCA)	Subsidy programs, community travel planning, transit enhancements	First/last mile services, affordable housing, EV charging facilities, biking/walking paths	Parking program/curb management



The Primary School	Affordable housing, subsidy programs, first/last mile services, biking/walking paths	Community travel planning, transit enhancements	EV charging facilities, parking program/curb management
El Concilio of San Mateo County	Affordable housing, biking and walking paths, community travel planning, subsidy programs	Transit enhancements, first/last mile services, EV charging facilities, community travel planning	Parking program/curb management
East Palo Alto Community Alliance and Neighborhood Development Organization (EPA CanDo)	Affordable housing, biking and walking paths, first/last mile services, EV charging facilities	Subsidy programs, transit enhancements, community travel planning, parking program/curb management, transit programs that work/support small businesses	None
<b>Countywide</b>			
Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities	Walking paths, transit enhancements, parking program/curb management	Community travel planning, subsidy programs, affordable housing, EV charging facilities, first/last mile services	Biking paths
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	Subsidy programs, transit enhancements, first/last mile services, biking and walking paths, parking program/curb management, public information about how to ride transit	EV charging facilities, affordable housing, community travel planning. How do we reduce VMT/GHG from Doordash, Uber Eats, Lyft, etc? Invest in bikes.	None

The table and activity screenshots below lay out the data from the brief activity participants completed at the end of their interviews. Each strategy was considered for a category if it was fully or partially included in a category during the interview activity.

Strategies (original and added)	Most beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not at all beneficial
<b>Affordable housing</b>	15	2	0
<b>Biking/walking paths</b>	13	3	1
<b>Transit enhancements</b>	11	4	0
<b>First/last mile services</b>	11	4	1
<b>Community travel planning</b>	10	5	0
<b>Subsidy programs</b>	9	6	0
<b>EV charging facilities</b>	6	5	3
<b>Parking program/curb management</b>	2	3	7
Public information about how to ride transit	1	0	0
Partnerships with schools	1	0	0
Invite private industries and nonprofits to give incentives	1	0	0
Universal basic income	1	0	0
Transit programs that work/support small businesses	0	1	0
Biking paths only	0	1	1
Carpool lane	0	1	0
Affordable EV car program	0	1	0

Among the most beneficial strategies for San Mateo County’s communities were affordable housing (15), biking/walking paths (13), transit enhancements (11), first/last mile services (11), and community travel planning (10). Subsidy programs were also top of mind (9), as were EV charging facilities (6). All strategies were labeled as “somewhat beneficial”, with subsidy programs tallying to 6 and community travel planning to 5. Biking/walking paths (1), EV charging facilities (3), and parking program/curb management (7) were considered “not at all beneficial”. The other strategies were added by individual interview participants, and therefore do not present significant data regarding their benefits.

## Conclusion

When presented with the eight VMT/GHG mitigation strategies, interview participants provided their nuanced perspectives, revealing crucial guidance to implement the strategies effectively and equitably. Overall, interview participants request that their communities are better mobilized with these strategies, rather than left behind. To empower communities to travel without gas powered cars, alternative travel must work seamlessly for them. Interview participants appreciated that they were consulted regarding the CCAG VMT/GHG mitigation project, but ask that conversations also be held with their communities, who will be most impacted.