

# 2026 Climate Resilient Communities



## *Our Vision:*

A future where under-resourced communities are empowered to take action to stay safe in the face of climate change impacts. We seek to:

- Advocate for community-driven strategies and priorities
- Increase collaborative efforts with cities and community leaders
- Engage communities directly in climate change planning
- Secure financial support to implement community-based solutions providing opportunities for residents
- Mainstream environmental justice & climate change in schools and youth programs

## *Our 5 Programs:*

- Resilient Adaptation
- Resilient Education
- Resilient Homes
- Resilient Readiness
- Resilient Leadership

All of our programs are grounded in our Climate Change Community Teams (CCCTs), a once monthly meeting of community leadership.



# Community-led Vulnerability Assessments (CVA), A CRC methodology:

1. Be invited into the community;  
move at the speed of their trust.

2. Assess known data about the communities'  
social and environmental vulnerability for  
data gaps.

3. Collect observational data with resident-led  
storytelling to understand exposure and  
sensitivity.

4. Work with the community to ground truth  
the facts: Map their vulnerabilities-AND  
assets.

5. Co-design projects with the  
community, achieving both  
community buy-in and multi-  
benefit solutions.

“ CVAs are a part of CRC’s deepest belief: that those closest to the problem must be central to the solution. CRC’s model—anchored by Climate Change Community Teams (CCCTs), resident leadership, and cross-sector collaboration—translates this belief into practice.

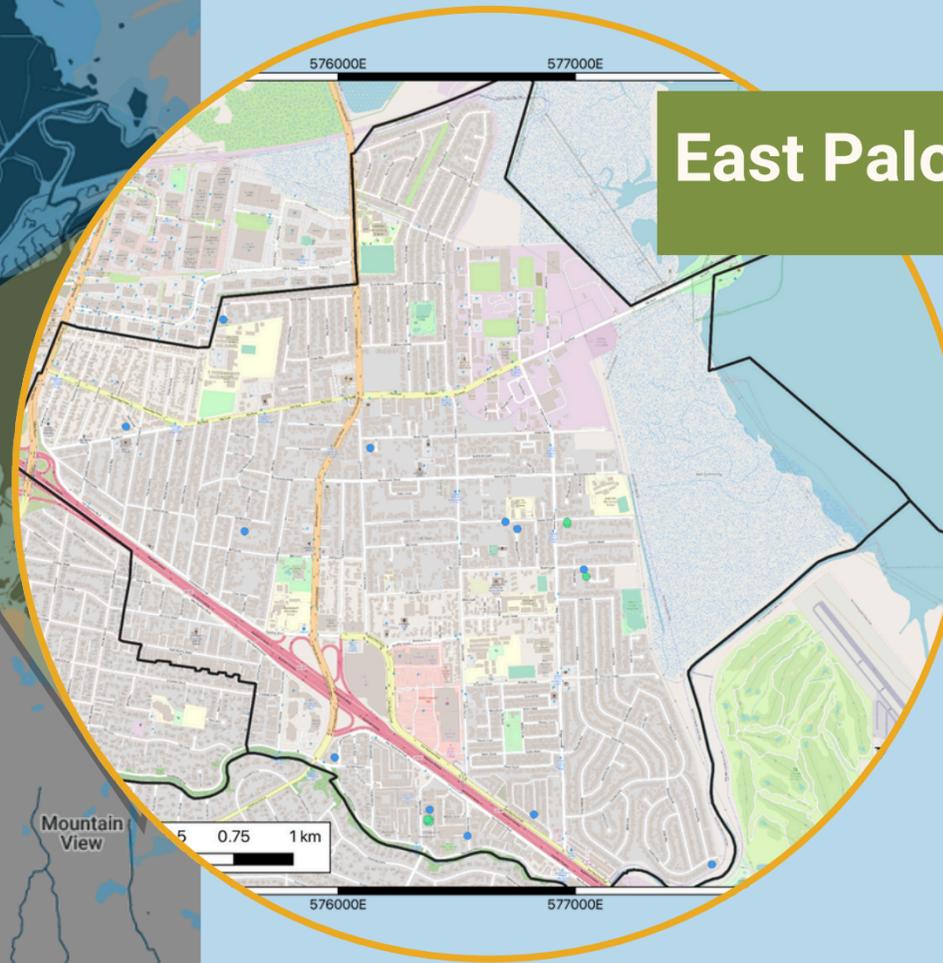
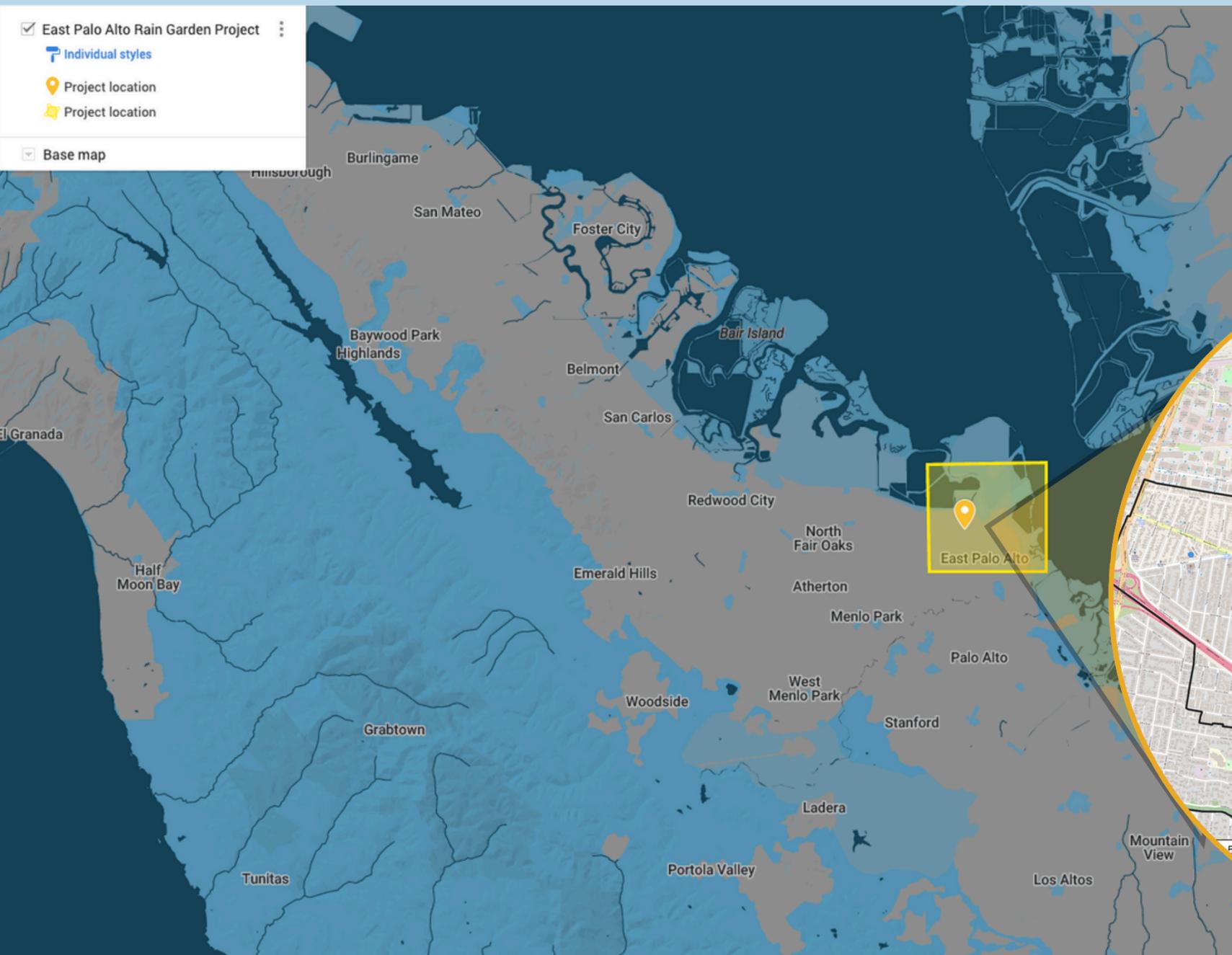
-CRC Strategic plan ”

*1<sup>st</sup> CVA piloted in 2019  
in East Palo Alto (EPA) →*

# What did the EPA CVA show?

→ **East Palo Alto (EPA) is exposed:**

- Exposed to coastal flooding from the Bay, as well as rainfall-induced (stormwater runoff) flooding and from San Francisquito Creek.
- In 1998, a deluge caused about \$40 million in property damage and impacted 1,700 homes across East Palo Alto, Palo Alto, and Menlo Park.



**East Palo Alto Social Vulnerability:**

Bordered by both the San Francisquito Creek and 2.2 miles of shoreline, East Palo Alto households face steep flooding costs; 51% of households face a high risk of displacement due to flooding, with this figure forecast to rise to 62% by 2060.

# The outcome of the 2019 EPA CVA:



**Mitigation & Education**  
Designed to intervene in displacement, flood risk; food and water security; and reduction in urban heat while providing education to over 500+ Residents

## COMMUNITY DESIGNED, NATURE-BASED FLOODING INTERVENTION: 2023-2025 RAIN GARDEN PILOT PROJECT



- Each installation was about **\$12,000 in value.**
- Each included a cistern system, gravity drip irrigation, and native California plants.



- **16 residents employed as community ambassadors**
- Each installation received **6 months of maintenance post installation.**



- Canopy maximized the **shade** and **food access** benefits through free **fruit trees.**



- Average water retention capacity: **207.55 gallons.**
- Analysis done with Hightide found **Rain Gardens are effective flood abatement when 1,000 or more are installed.**



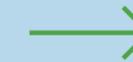
- **The project had no income eligibility criteria-** our audience focused on homeowners in residence in EPA within or close to the FEMA flood zone.

*The outcome of the  
2019 EPA CVA:*

# High Tide Modeling Study



## Scale Impact Modeling



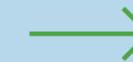
Model of rain gardens at flood prevention finding they are effective, but only have community wide flood protection benefits at the scale of thousands.

## Location Research

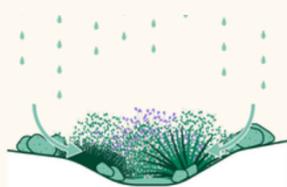


Locations in EPA where rain gardens produce 10 - 150x flood reduction benefits.

## Cost/Benefit Analysis



Within 5 years benefits outweigh the costs, return on investment: 1 year if tree is included with garden.



### Benefits to Homeowners:

- Collecting water saves money
- Reduce flood impacts on house
- Enhances landscape; reduces moisture



### Benefits to the Environment:

- Improves local water quality & pollution
- Provides water & food sovereignty
- Eliminates standing water
- Recharges groundwater



### Benefits to East Palo Alto:

- Climate action that is at no cost to the homeowner
- Filters polluted runoff from streets



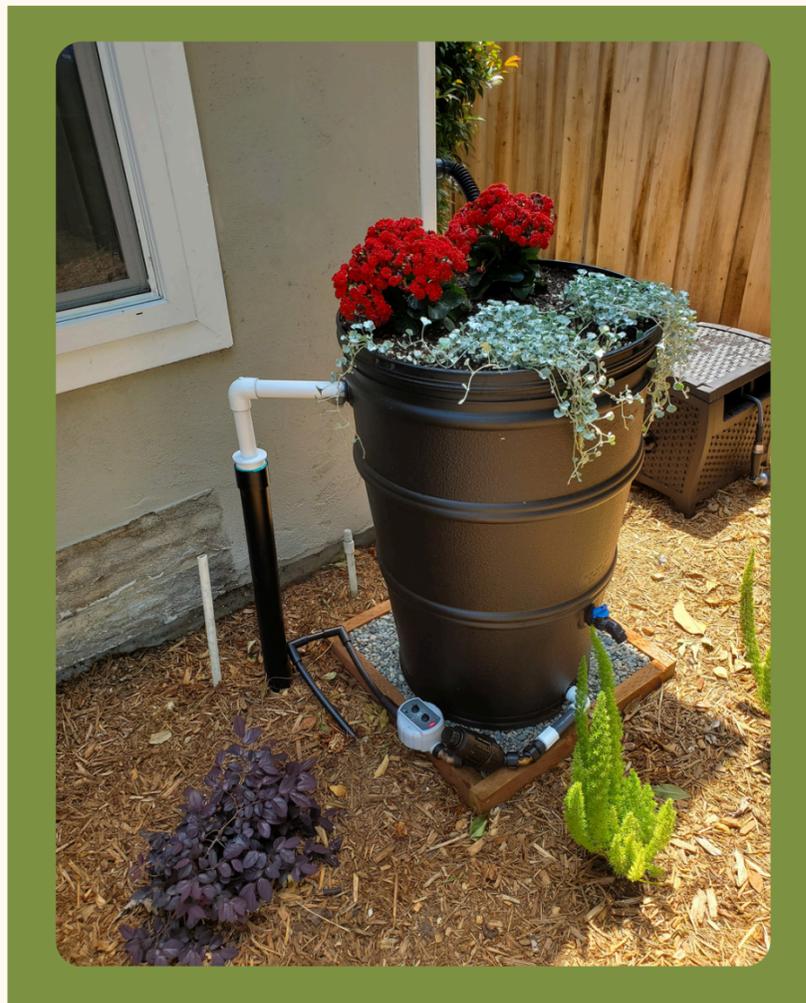
### Impact At Scale:

- Climate Resilient Communities is working towards scaling our number of installations into the thousands

*The outcome of the  
2019 EPA CVA:*

# Rain Gardens as Flooding Prevention in East Palo Alto

A project in review



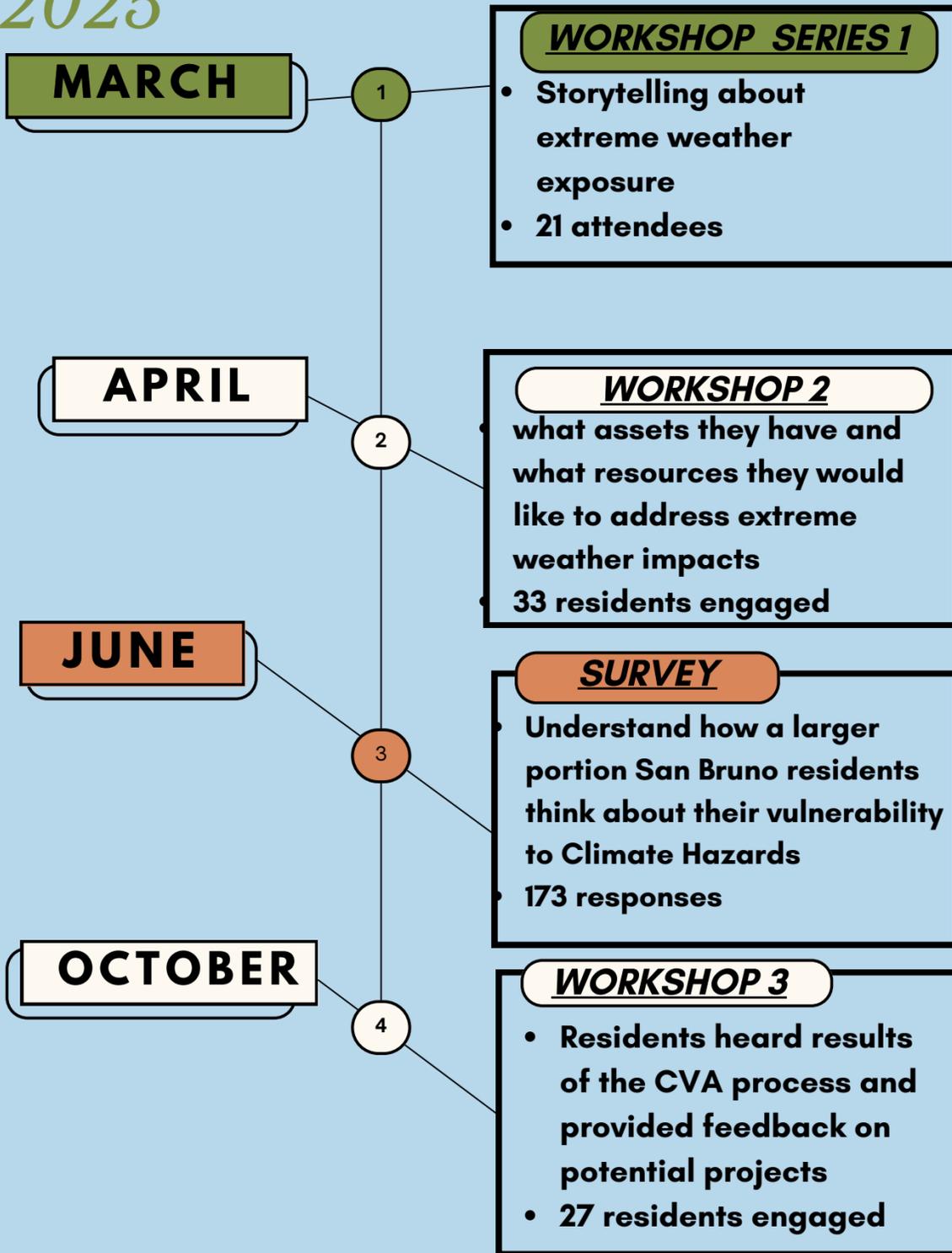
For the past 2 years, East Palo Alto residents have led Climate Resilient Communities, Grassroots Ecology, and Fresh Approach to design, install, and maintain 25 rain gardens as a nature-based solution to flooding, displacement, and green jobs. We've captured our successful methodology and quantified our impact. Rain gardens are effective localized interventions for flooding, but the needs are great, and to meet the urgency of the moment, we must scale up together.



**Read the  
full paper  
here**

# CVA engagement learnings in San Bruno:

2025



Which hazard poses the greatest threat?

**1** Air Quality

Which impacts are felt the worst?

- 1** Wildfire
- 2** Air Quality
- 3** Flooding

Resources San Bruno Residents HAVE by resource type:

**Informational:**

- Community meetings
- Emergency numbers
- Important documents to evacuate

**Services:**

- Pump stations
- Evacuation plans
- Local fire department

**Locations:**

- Public places with AC

**Physical:**

- Sandbags
- Fans
- Face masks
- Buckets for water
- Emergency Kits

Resources San Bruno Residents WANT by resource type:

**Financial:**

- Water bill discount programs
- Water rebates

**Informational:**

- Education about flooding
- Emergency alerts
- Neighborhood specific guides

**Services:**

- Street tree maintenance
- Trash clean up projects
- stormwater system maintenance

**Locations:**

- Cooling centers
- Shelters
- Emergency car parking

**Physical:**

- Tree canopy
- Air purifiers
- Air quality monitors
- Window insulation
- Water pumps

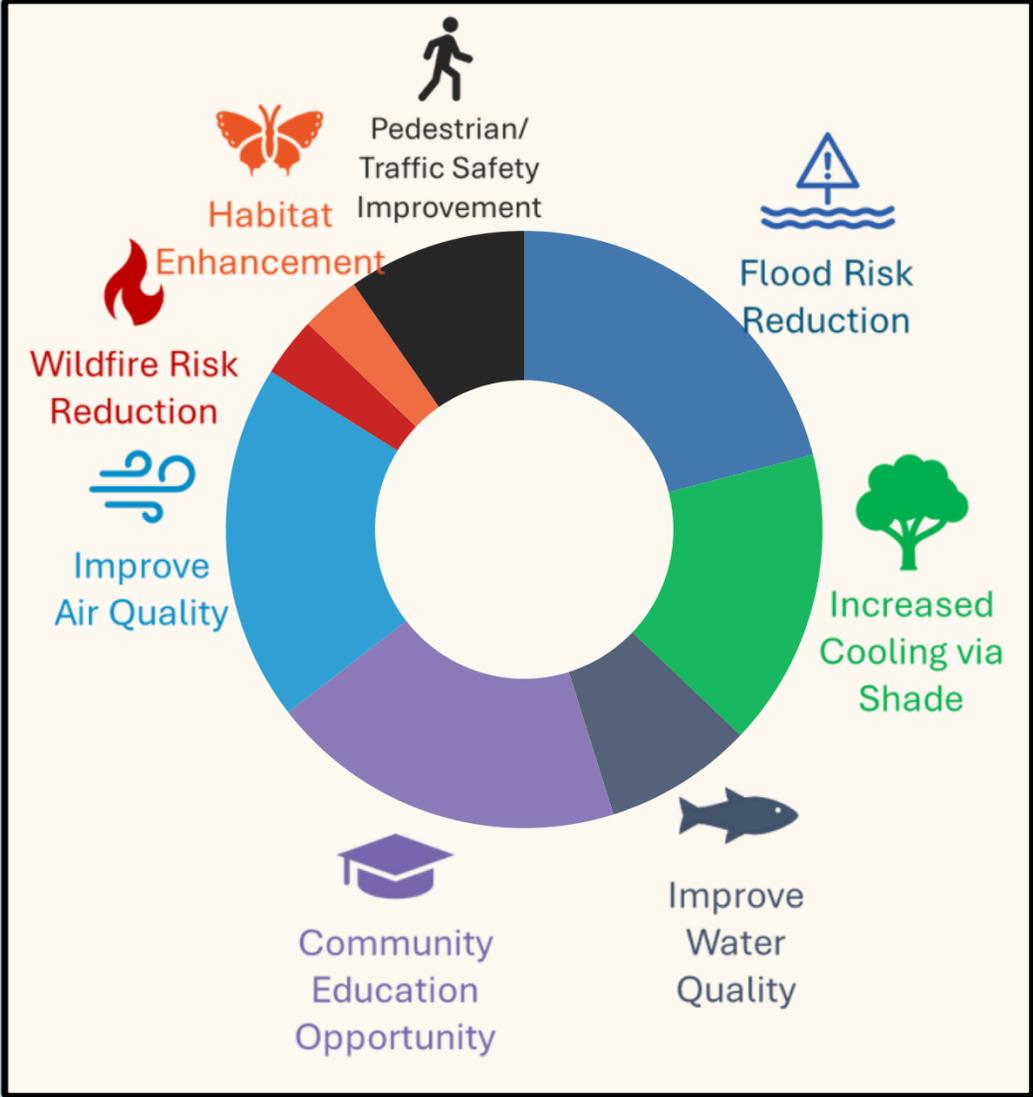
# San Bruno Community Project Priorities

*Opportunities for future work together.*

Projects viewed as having most direct impact on residents and addressing extreme weather concern

- 1** Low to No Cost: Air Quality Home Upgrades
- 2** Water Conservation & Supply Projects
- 3** Winter Flood Preparedness

Priority Benefits that residents would like to see provided by projects.



# *Opportunities for future work together:*



*CRC relies on our agency partners like CCAG to meaningfully address vulnerabilities through project development.*

*We invite you to work with our families on Rain Gardens across San Mateo county.*

# THE FIRST ANNUAL SAN BRUNO ROOTED IN RESILIENCE FAIR



A family friendly event celebrating community safety and health with free food, activities, and prizes!

- Join us for disaster preparedness and community gardening workshops
- Participate in fun activities for all ages, including a bike raffle!

Scan the QR Code  
or Visit:



[sanbrunofair2026.eventbrite.com](https://sanbrunofair2026.eventbrite.com)





# Thank you!

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