

## Strategic Plan for the San Francisco Department of the Environment 2013 – 2017

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- Environment Commissioners:  
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### Purpose of the Plan

This plan sets the direction for the San Francisco Department of the Environment for the next four fiscal years (2013-2014 through fiscal 2016-2017) and will inform the formulation of the Department's annual budget. Developed by the Department Director, Deputy Director, Senior Staff, Environment Commissioners and community stakeholders, this plan is the culmination of forums with Department of the Environment staff and key stakeholders representing other City agencies, community partners and private sector allies. It builds on the Department's 2012 Strategic Plan and 2012 Annual Report.

The Department will update the objectives and strategies of this plan annually to reflect progress and changes at the beginning of each fiscal year. In addition, the Department will submit an annual report to the Commission on the Environment at the end of each calendar year for the prior fiscal year to report on the Department's progress.

## **Foreword**

From **Chair of Commission on the Environment Joshua Arce**

On behalf of the Commission on the Environment, we adopt this Strategic Plan. This plan promotes San Francisco's long-term sustainability through interconnected strategies of policy, partnership, and promotion. It will serve as a reference point to track progress each year when the Department of the Environment issues its annual report. The plan outlines cutting-edge, innovative programs that not only protect the environment, but spur the green economy and promote social equity and environmental justice. Supporting emerging green economies and providing new opportunities for San Francisco residents has city-wide impacts. Workers across the city—from Bayview Hunters Point to the Financial District—benefit from new good-paying green jobs that utilize a range of skill and education levels.

The Commission looks forward to working with the Department of the Environment to successfully deliver this plan and uphold San Francisco's role as a national and global leader in environmental sustainability.

From **San Francisco Department of the Environment Director Melanie Nutter**

Due in large part to our City's forward-thinking policies and programs, San Francisco has made significant environmental strides which have had both local impacts and have set a global example. The Department of the Environment has designed this four-year strategic plan to build off of our community's successes and to guide our continued path toward a sustainable future.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions has been a core priority for our City for the past decade. Already, we have reduced our emissions 14.5 percent below 1990 levels while the population has grown by 11% and GDP has increased by over 35% during the same period. Throughout the next four years, our city will move closer toward achieving zero waste, provide cleaner transportation options, and invest further in clean energy – all which will help make progress toward the City's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2017.

The strategies included in this plan, when successfully executed, will help make the community healthier, more livable and more resilient. The innovative yet practical programs and policies described here will help safeguard the environment and people from pollutants and toxins. And because a thriving local environment and a thriving local population are interlinked, we will seek opportunities to connect the economy and the environment. Through our work on biodiversity, urban agriculture and urban forests, we will continue to collaborate with community stakeholders to enhance our city's local ecosystems and preserve green space.

We know that a healthy environment is directly connected to economic well-being, quality of life, and social equity in San Francisco. Toward that end, an additional focus will be to ensure that our work builds community capacity. By engaging residents and businesses throughout the city's neighborhoods and by providing them with tools, education, and job opportunities, we will make sure that the places where our residents live, play, learn and work are healthy, safe and supportive of both the environment and the economy.

Climate change is upon us, and our department is dedicated to helping communities face this new challenge. By boosting community resilience and increasing awareness, we are expanding our communities' capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

We look forward to working with our local elected leaders, businesses, and residents to advance our collective goal of making San Francisco a thriving, sustainable city now and for generations to come.

## **Who We Are**

The Department of the Environment was created in July 1996 by a voter-approved charter reform which also established our commission. The seven-member Environment Commission is appointed by the Mayor and sets policy and oversees programs for the Department. Initially the Department was supported entirely by the City's General Fund and the staff of six focused on three program areas - Green Building, Integrated Pest Management and Outreach. In 2000, the Department received a \$13 million dollar appropriation to set up an Environmental Justice Program. The Department subsequently added a Clean Air Program and an Energy Efficiency Program in the mid 2000s. As of 2013, the Department has 110 staff, a \$19 million budget and 11 program areas.

The Department of the Environment helps meet the City's ambitious environmental goals through the interconnected strategies of policy, programs, partnership, and promotion. The staff is responsible for a wide range of programs that constitute the core of the City's vision for sustainability, particularly in preparing for the impacts of climate change. Through our work, the City has moved aggressively to reduce toxics and waste, promote renewable energy and efficiency, and reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs). The Department's innovative and practical programs and policy mandates affect the municipal, commercial, and residential sectors, and include Climate, Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, Zero Waste, Toxics Reduction, Environmental Justice, Green Building, Clean Transportation, Biodiversity, and Urban Forest, all supported by a robust outreach and education program.

The Department develops cutting-edge, yet practical, wide-ranging environmental programs, develops ground-breaking legislation, works collaboratively with key partners inside and outside of City government, and fosters sustainable behavior change by residents, businesses and institutions in San Francisco through education, collaboration and support.

The Department is a one-stop resource for people who want to learn how to access resources to protect the environment locally. We field inquiries from residents, elected officials, other City departments, businesses, and institutions. Our commission and staff provide the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, City agencies, the public and the media with expert information about environmental initiatives, programs, policies and incentives. We respond to inquiries about a wealth of environmental topics, many of which are in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Tagalog and other languages. The Department's website serves as a portal to a range of environmental issues and contains links to other City agencies and environmental nonprofit organizations. To promote behavior change and distribute information about environmental issues to the people who want and need it most, the Department works in every neighborhood in San Francisco, going door-to-door and participating in street fairs, neighborhood meetings, farmers markets, concerts and other events. On average we participate in 270 public events a year. In 2013, over 45% of our outreach staff and volunteers are bilingual.

## The San Francisco Department of the Environment Values

As the environment department for one of the most dynamic cities in the world, our values reflect the city we serve:

Community engagement. We recognize that the decisions and actions of San Francisco residents, workers, and visitors will determine progress toward our goals—and this requires us to engage and educate the community and remove barriers to behavior change.

Collaboration and coordination. Our government and public-private partnerships in the city, region, nation and internationally amplify and accelerate our work and impact, while leveraging additional resources.

Measurement and monitoring. Our system for tracking performance of programs helps determine progress toward goals and potential areas for improvement.

Innovation. Urban environmental solutions require new ideas and taking risks in order to move us toward a more sustainable future. The Department of the Environment is committed to identifying and piloting these innovations to ensure success.

### Strategic Plan Framework & Related Plans

The development of this strategic plan integrates all the plans that the Department has developed or contributes to, including:

- San Francisco's Sustainability Plan (1997)
- San Francisco Climate Action Plan (2004)
- Electricity Resource Plan (2011)
- The Zero Net Energy Homes Report (2011)
- The Value of Green Labels in the CA Housing Market Report (2011)
- Healthy Homes Project Report (2012)
- Urban Forest Master Plan (2006)
- Updated Climate Action Strategy (coming in Fall 2013)

The elements in this strategic plan are defined as follows:

- Vision: What we, as a city, want to be in the future
- Mission: What the Department of the Environment does
- Goals: Key areas on which to focus the Department's efforts to achieve the vision
- Objectives: Specific ways the Department can accomplish the goals
- Key Performance Indicators: How the Department will monitor implementation of the plan
- Major Strategies: Primary ways the Department can achieve objectives

## **Vision**

San Francisco is a model low impact, livable, green and healthy city that is also a national and global leader in environmental sustainability.

The Department of the Environment is reducing harmful impacts—carbon emissions, pollution and resource consumption—on our City’s residents as well as natural systems by innovating to solve problems, incubating new ideas and programs, and partnering with the community.

With a steadfast commitment to the triple bottom line – environment, economy and equity – the Department of the Environment is helping ensure equal access to clean air, greener energy, healthy commuting options and a safe environment.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Department of the Environment and the Environment Commission is to improve, enhance, and preserve the environment and to promote San Francisco’s long-term environmental sustainability.

## **Strategic Goals:**

1. Reduce Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions
2. Achieve Zero Waste
3. Safeguard Environment and People from Pollutants and Toxins
4. Protect Nature and Enhance the city’s Ecosystems
5. Increase Awareness and Capacity to Foster Sustainable and Resilient Communities

**Goal 1: Reduce Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions**

Climate change is the most pressing environmental issue of the twenty-first century. The Department of the Environment is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices that protect our environment, residents, businesses and visitors from the worst impacts of climate change. Since climate change is a complex issue, the Department prioritizes cross-sector collaboration and works with experts and other City agencies to develop effective strategies to reduce GHG emissions. Since more than 50% of the city’s GHG emissions come from buildings, we have several efforts focused on reducing energy use in commercial and residential buildings with the dual goals of increasing efficiency and the use of renewable resources. Our Green Building program works to ensure that all new and existing buildings in San Francisco are built and operated according to third-party verified standards such as LEED, GreenPoint Rated, or EnergyStar. The Department is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices that help meet the City’s emissions reduction goals, including 25% reduction below 1990 levels for 2017, 40% by 2025, and 80% by 2050. The overarching goals that will lead to these reductions are Zero Waste, 50% of all trips made outside personal vehicles and 100% renewable electricity.

Objective	Key Performance Indicators	Major Strategies
Increase use of transportation modes with lower GHG emissions	Aggregated Transportation GHG Emissions by sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote increased use of public transit, carpool and van pooling, biking and walking</li> <li>• Install more electric vehicle infrastructure</li> <li>• Support the switch to lower emission fuels</li> <li>• Assist with greening the City’s vehicle fleet</li> </ul>
Increase number of Zero Net Energy residential and commercial buildings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) % of buildings with energy or green building ratings including Zero Net Energy ratings</li> <li>2.) Number of buildings with Zero Net Energy ratings</li> <li>3.) Square footage of each rating: LEED; Energy Star; Zero Net Energy</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate production and installation of renewable technologies including solar and wind and others as economically viable</li> <li>• Work with Tax Assessor to implement green labeling on property records</li> <li>• Amend the Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance</li> <li>• Conduct pilots that integrate EV's, energy storage, and demand response capability</li> </ul>

	<p>4.) Total energy use by residential sector (year over year)</p> <p>5.) Total energy use by commercial buildings by square footage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support audits and retrofits for commercial and residential buildings</li> <li>• Implement Commercial Building Ordinance requiring benchmarking and auditing</li> <li>• Establish district-scale energy systems and smart grids through Eco-Districts framework</li> <li>• Administer financing mechanisms for local renewable energy such as PACE for commercial and residential sectors</li> </ul>
Increase use of renewable low-carbon energy	% of renewable energy of total energy supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate development of local solar, wind, biomass and wave power</li> <li>• Enable and support regional renewable resources dedicated to serving San Francisco</li> <li>• Support rebate programs for renewables like GoSolarSF and innovative financing mechanisms such as PACE</li> </ul>
Reduce carbon emissions for municipal agencies	<p>1.) % reduction of GHG emissions for municipal agencies</p> <p>2.) Number of LEED Gold certified buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion and organize City department climate action plans, data collection and produce score cards</li> <li>• Track, monitor and support LEED certification for new municipal buildings</li> </ul>

**Goal 2: Achieve Zero Waste**

San Francisco has instituted a wide array of leading policies and convenient services to achieve the City’s goal of zero waste by 2020. The Department encourages all sectors (municipal, commercial, and residential) to comply with the City’s solid waste reduction policies and use services properly. The primary focus is securing citywide compliance with our Mandatory Recycling and Composting Ordinance. We promote waste prevention and environmentally preferable purchasing. The Department continues to advocate for local and state legislation increasing consumer and producer responsibility.

Objective	Key Performance Indicators	Strategies
Promote waste prevention	Annual solid waste generation tonnage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize checkout bag and foodware ordinance compliance</li> <li>• Develop food waste prevention and textile reuse programs</li> <li>• Promote environmentally preferable purchasing</li> <li>• Manage grant program to incentivize waste prevention</li> </ul>
Expand recycling and composting	Annual recycling and composting tonnage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand service and participation for mandatory recycling and composting</li> <li>• Increase construction and demolition debris recovery</li> <li>• Increase options for redemption for recyclables</li> <li>• Develop new trash processing</li> </ul>
Reduce landfilling	Annual landfill tonnage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase participation in diversion programs</li> <li>• Reduce generation of trash</li> </ul>

### Goal 3: Protect People and Environment from Toxics and Pollution

San Francisco was the first city in the nation to adopt the Precautionary Principle as a foundation for its environmental and public health initiatives, requiring City government to seek out the safest alternatives when making choices on topics ranging from products and services to building designs and landscape management. We implement the Toxics Reduction program through efforts in green purchasing, green business, Integrated Pest Management and safe disposal for hazardous waste. The Department is also actively involved in regional, national and international policy efforts to reduce exposure to toxic chemicals in the San Francisco area and beyond.

Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Major Strategies
Increase purchase of safer, more sustainable products	1.) # of City government green contracts (dollar value of green city purchases vs. conventional) 2.) (Dollar value of green city purchases vs. conventional) 3.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify safer products for City agencies through an analysis of alternatives</li> <li>Increase adoption of safer products for target businesses and residential sectors through incentives, outreach and policies</li> </ul>
Reduce exposure to toxics	% of pesticides used on City property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the City's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Technical Advisory Council to exchange information on low toxic pest control options</li> <li>Support creation of IPM plans and track pesticide use on City property</li> </ul>
	1.) % of businesses participating in the Department's toxics reduction programs per business sector 2.) # SF employees trained 3.) lbs of toxic chemicals reduced 4.) # of sectors that have plans in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify SF businesses that use toxic products and assist with reduction plans</li> <li>Create customized programs for each business sector to increase adoption of less toxic products and practices</li> </ul>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) % of businesses participating in the Green Business program</li> <li>2.) lbs of toxic chemicals reduced</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify target business sectors based on interest from the business community</li> <li>• Set standards for green practices</li> <li>• Provide technical support to implement standards</li> <li>• Conduct outreach to increase awareness</li> </ul>
Increase safe toxic waste collection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) % of residents participating in safe household hazardous waste disposal programs</li> <li>2.) # of disposal sites</li> <li>3.) Pounds of toxics collected by category</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase convenient opportunities for safe disposal of household hazardous waste</li> </ul>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) % of leftover batteries, lamps and paint captured through City and Recology's recycling/disposal programs</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure a baseline capture rate for unwanted paint, batteries and lamps</li> <li>• Work with Recology to increase capture of unwanted paint, batteries and lamps through outreach and policy development</li> </ul>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) % of brownfields sites remediated</li> <li>2.) Square footage of brownfields remediated</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory and assess brownfields sites</li> </ul>

**Goal 4: Enhance the City's Ecosystems and Increase the Extent and Value of Our Green Spaces**

Green spaces—natural and planted by humans— provide a broad spectrum of benefits to the environment and to our quality of life. The Department of the Environment is dedicated protecting and restoring our indigenous natural areas and maximizing the value of all of our vegetated resources, including parks, street trees, green roofs, open spaces, streetscapes, and community gardens, both for people and wildlife. We support increasing public access to and stewardship of our parks and other green spaces.

Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Major Strategies
Increase the size, health and value of our streetscapes	% of street trees that are in good health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Urban Forestry Council, the Department of Public Works and other City agencies to implement programs that increase the number and health of street trees</li> <li>• Support new funding mechanisms for care and maintenance of existing and new street trees</li> </ul>
Expand green spaces	% of land dedicated to open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with core partners to pursue policies to incentivize and encourage green space in new developments and in other areas</li> </ul>
Protect and enhance biological diversity	Approval of the Significant Natural Resources Area Management Plan and the completion of a Biodiversity Plan with biological diversity metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Recreation and Park Department’s Natural Areas Program</li> <li>• Coordinate with City departments to develop and implement a Biodiversity Plan for the City</li> </ul>
Expand opportunities for participation in urban agriculture projects	1.) # of hours devoted to urban agriculture projects 2.) % of urban land used for agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Recreation and Parks Department and other City agencies and non-profit entities to strengthen urban agriculture infrastructure</li> </ul>

**Goal 5: Increase Awareness and Capacity to Foster Sustainable and Resilient Communities**

In the face of climate change and other environmental threats, the ultimate source of San Francisco’s sustainability and resilience is the awareness, capacity, and cohesion of its citizens. It’s important that we design the city’s infrastructure to withstand extreme weather and other potential disasters. But we can’t ignore the importance of the city’s “soft” infrastructure, its people. Only if they feel the need and urgency to engage in environment-saving behaviors, only if they develop the mindset and habits to enact these behaviors, and only if they recognize that when it comes to environmental protection we must all be in it together—only then will we be able to effectively address the opportunities and challenges we face. The Department of the Environment recognizes the importance of building awareness and capacities along these lines and is increasing programmatic efforts to do so.

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Major Strategies
Inspire K-12 students behavior change	Recycling and composting rate at schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in <i>Food to Flowers</i>, provide assemblies &amp; trainings for bin monitors and faculty</li> </ul>
Increase capacity for neighborhood leadership for environmental programs	Number of Eco-Districts programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partner agencies in conjunction with neighborhood leaders to take ownership of sustainability projects</li> </ul>
	Number of Environment Now staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and train SF residents to represent the Department of the Environment as outreach ambassadors</li> </ul>
	Number of Resiliency Project Plans that incorporate renewables created in conjunction with neighborhood leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partner agencies in conjunction with neighborhood leaders to develop plans</li> </ul>
	Number of volunteers/volunteer hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit SF residents at community events, via news</li> </ul>
Develop online engagement platform for SF community to discuss and share information	Number of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote online tool, develop feedback loops for new projects and activities</li> </ul>
Promote ecological stewardship and biodiversity activities	# of community groups dedicated to caring for our natural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with community partners to promote local neighborhood ecological stewardship</li> </ul>

### **Monitoring & Assessment of the Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan will serve as the foundation on which the Department develops specific policies, programs, and initiatives, in conjunction with the Department's budget. The plan will inform the work plans for each section of the Department - this "closed loop" process will result in accountability for performance at all levels of the Department.

The Department will assess each proposal brought to the Commission on the Environment for the value it may add to the strategic plan.

### **Moving Forward**

We are excited to be creating a city that allows our residents to thrive while ensuring there will be a prosperous future. We look forward to working with our local elected leaders, businesses, residents and stakeholders to continue creating and implementing policies and programs that have earned San Francisco the title of Greenest City in North America.

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