

Developing a Framework for Strategic Conservation Investments
By Further Exploring the Barriers to Accessing Nature and Addressing Community Needs

UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY PHASE II





Understanding Our Community Phase II

A Community Assessment Project

Developing a Framework for Strategic Conservation Investments
By Further Exploring the Barriers to Accessing Nature and
Addressing Community Needs

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

www.openspaceauthority.org

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Executive Summary

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority conserves the natural environment, supports agriculture, and connects people to nature. It does this by protecting open spaces, natural areas, and working farms and ranches for future generations.

To achieve this mission, the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (Authority) is committed to taking the necessary steps to better understand the communities we serve. By recognizing and striving to address the negative social and environmental burdens that are disproportionately affecting communities within the jurisdiction, the Authority can advance efforts and bring resources to reduce negative impacts. This community assessment project provides vital information that will enable the Authority to more meaningfully engage with residents, community leaders, and partner organizations – both inside and outside of the conservation field – to create programs and opportunities that are more equitably delivered across the community and reflect the rich diversity that defines this region and the 1.4 million people who call it home.

Project Background

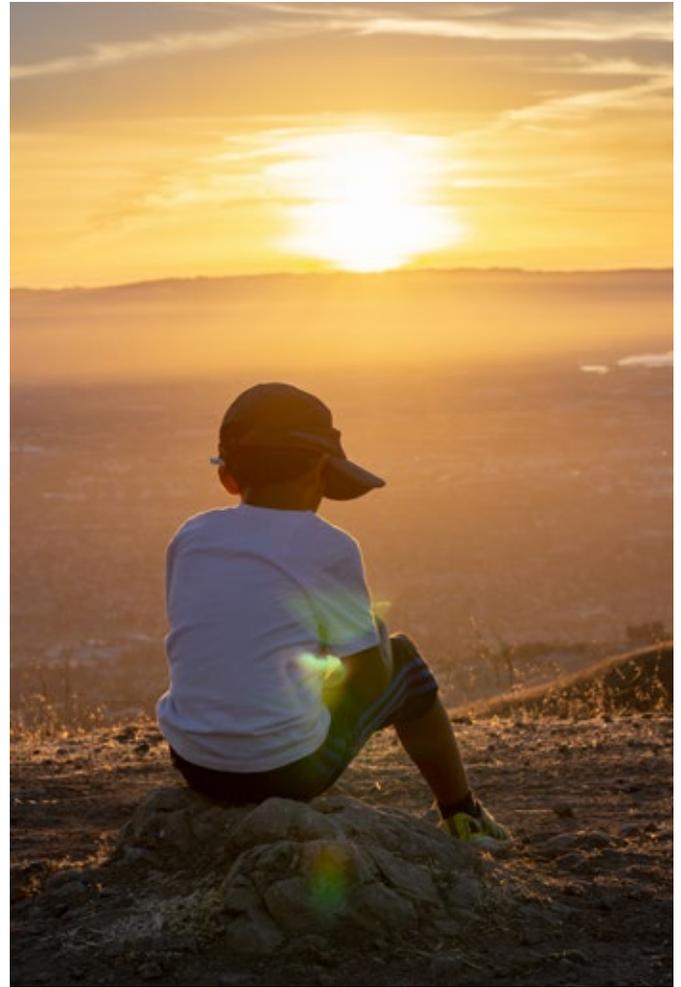
In Understanding our Community Phase I, published in 2015, the Authority laid the foundation for a new community engagement approach to increase the enjoyment of open space and nature in our local communities. The project resulted in a deeper understanding of the demographic makeup of the communities served by the Open Space Authority. Data related to race and ethnicities, languages spoken, linguistic isolation, income level, and CalEnviroScreen scores enabled the Authority to better understand the barriers local communities face when accessing the outdoors. Using single and multi-layer maps to highlight geographic areas where environmental burdens and other disparities are disproportionately higher, the Authority identified six areas as Deep Engagement Communities (DECs). This information will continue to be in service of both the agency's outreach and engagement efforts and its Urban Grant Program (UGP) which aims to inspire and implement programs and opportunities that are relevant to the needs and interests of the local community.

Exploring the Needs of Our Community Through Data

Understanding Our Community Phase II builds on the analysis in Phase I and utilizes additional research and partner input to illuminate the needs of the area's residents that can be addressed, in part, by improved access to nature. Additionally, a few adjustments to Phase I maps have been made to reflect the new data, including an expansion of four of the six DEC boundaries, in order to incorporate communities where additional focus and support can result in significant impact. By further exploring the needs of these communities, the Authority hopes to better understand the opportunities where the Authority can play a role in reducing barriers and expanding access.

This report aims to increase understanding of community needs by addressing these two leading questions:

1. What do local communities need in order to more easily access and enjoy nature and open space?
2. How can increased access to natural spaces positively impact the health and well-being of residents in our local communities?



To further explore these questions, the Authority has considered:

Proximity and Access: Where do residents live more than a 10-minute walk from a park or trail? Where are there high levels of individuals with ambulatory difficulty or who lack access to vehicles?

Food and Nutrition: Which neighborhoods lack nearby access to community gardens or urban farms? Which communities have fewer healthy food options such as community gardens or farmers markets?

Health: Which communities report disproportionately high rates of obesity, heart disease, or diabetes?

Safety: How does access to nearby natural spaces relate to the frequency of vehicle/pedestrian injuries? Which areas need more resources to prevent avoidable accidents that could be mitigated by increasing access to dedicated lanes or trails?

Community Engagement: How can open spaces better respond to and engage nearby communities in a manner that is consistent with the cultural context and values of those communities in terms of location, amenities, features, and programming?

Urban Biodiversity: What can be done to increase the prevalence of natural spaces (areas of native vegetation and wildlife) in the urban realm while simultaneously boosting human well-being and biodiversity?

Inspiring New Pathways for Engagement

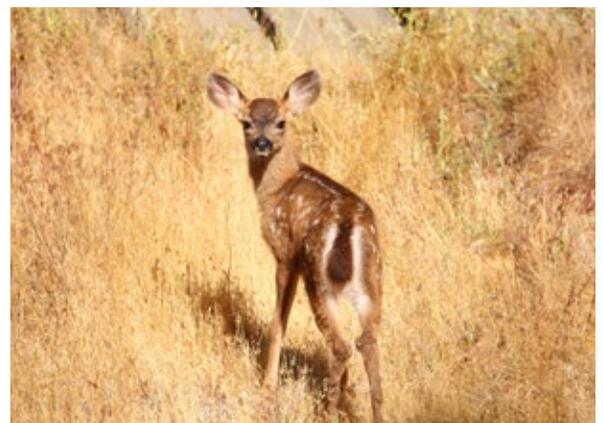
The new maps presented in Phase II are resources to inform the creation, by the Authority and its partners, of new or expanded programs and projects that address the unique needs of communities within the jurisdiction. These maps can provide insights and spark inspiration to address some of the region's most challenging barriers to increasing equitable access to the outdoors.

The Authority makes this report available to the community in order to promote many different interpretations or applications of this data. Through strategic partnerships and by combining knowledge and specializations, the Authority and its partners can effectively bridge the current gaps that are inhibiting collaborative efforts to increase access to natural spaces and the benefits they provide.

The information is organized by the four categories of the Authority's Urban Grant Program: Parks, Trails, and Public Access; Urban Agriculture and Food Systems; Environmental Education; and Environmental Stewardship and Restoration. Each category features feedback provided during a focus group luncheon hosted by New America Media (NAM) to gather qualitative feedback from ethnic media professionals on the various park and open space needs within the South Bay communities.

Conclusion

The Authority will utilize Understanding Our Community Phase II as a strategic investment prioritization tool to inspire new projects and strategic partnerships that will provide meaningful opportunities for community engagement. The Authority hopes that, with the help of partners, the information gathered will propel efforts to expand opportunities and reduce barriers to accessing nature and all of its benefits. In doing so, the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority will serve its community while also acting as a model to conservation organizations across the country.



Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Looking Back at Phase I

With the impacts of climate change becoming more and more evident, and with an increasing understanding of the human footprint on our natural world, the need for collaborative efforts and strong leadership is more pressing than ever. In order to make a meaningful impact, engagement is needed from residents, community leaders, local organizations, and everyone else across the region. [The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority](#) is committed to this collaboration and to leading the way for conservation and community engagement initiatives that recognize, celebrate, and reflect the rich diversity of peoples and communities within the jurisdiction and greater Bay Area region.

The original [Understanding Our Community](#) report, released in September 2015 and now referred to as Understanding Our Community Phase I, pursued two key questions: What is the demographic makeup of the community served by the Open Space Authority? And, what barriers exist to serving this community? The Authority posed these questions to lay the foundation for a new community engagement approach as part of a long-term commitment to meaningful engagement.

Phase I delivered a detailed picture of the Authority's jurisdiction and the barriers, faced by some communities more than others, to accessing open space and taking advantage of programming and other opportunities being provided by the Authority and its partners. The concept of Deep Engagement Communities (DEC), which has been adopted and referenced by Authority partners since its release, was defined in Phase I. Each DEC boundary was formed through a subjective review process that took into consideration key factors including income, CalEnviroScreen scores, linguistic isolation, age, vehicle access, and overall opportunities for community engagement. By identifying and working to better understand the barriers to access that exist in the community, the Authority can more meaningfully shape its own outreach and engagement strategies to ensure that opportunities are being provided for all. The report also provided a thorough list of recommendations and possible action items which acted as a launching point for several initiatives including laying the groundwork for Phase II of the report.

Moving Towards Phase II

In Phase II, the Authority moves beyond identification of barriers to focus on the needs that improved access to nature can help mitigate. By pursuing these questions, the Authority will gain an increased understanding of the factors that need to be considered when designing, investing in, and implementing new projects.



This report expands upon the questions in Phase I by introducing new data sets that expand beyond the breadth of traditional conservation-based areas of focus. After overlaying multiple data sets, four main categories were developed in order to analyze patterns and correlations that could provide deeper insight into the aforementioned barriers to access and opportunities for enjoyment. The four categories include: Proximity and Access, Food and Nutrition, Health, and Safety.

As expected, these new observations produced new questions. Phase II aims to increase understanding of community needs by addressing these two leading questions:

1. What do local communities need in order to more easily access and enjoy nature and open space?
2. How can increased access to natural spaces positively impact the health and well-being of residents in our local communities?

How Will This Data Be Used?

The information from Phase II will have a wide variety of potential applications, and one of the main opportunities is within the [Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program](#) (UGP). The report will support the UGP by offering grant applicants information and inspiration for how to design or refine their projects to better meet the needs of the communities they are seeking to serve. The information can also guide decisions on program site locations and program type for environmental education proposals. Additionally, the Authority will utilize the report to inform grant program guidelines, and to ensure that the grant-making and evaluation process is resulting in projects relevant to local communities. The report presents data that could be useful to grant applicants and other partners by including suggestions for how the data might apply and interact, simply for illustrative purposes. The intent here is to spur new thinking about potential programs and projects, and not to limit creativity or novelty, as readers formulate their ideas.

The Authority also intends to utilize this report to help guide community outreach, engagement, and partnership planning and development. By understanding the needs and interests of communities within the jurisdiction, Authority staff can better design events and programming that reflect that values, interests, and needs of those it hopes to include. Additionally, by building partnerships with organizations that are already embedded in the communities they serve, the Authority can build off of existing networks and pathways of communication to effectively and genuinely reach new audiences.



Collaboration with Project Partners

This report could not have happened without the generous and collaborative spirits of the Authority's key partners, including: The Trust for Public Land, Health Trust, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department, New America Media, and the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI).

Proximity and Access: The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) works towards a vision in which everyone lives within easy walking distance of a well-maintained park (www.tpl.org). For this project, TPL provided key information related to proximity and access by performing a ParkScore® analysis (see www.tpl.org/parkscore for information) for parks and open spaces within the

Authority's urban boundary. For this project, the areas that qualify as parks must offer reasonable points of access and some type of passive or active recreational opportunities (therefore industrial areas, universities, cemeteries and golf courses have been excluded for the sake of this analysis). The analysis provides a Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based method for exploring the proximity and access to parks and open spaces especially for residents living in urban communities. This analysis was conducted by identifying Ten-Minute Walk (or half-mile) Service Areas which helps to estimate how many residents are being served, or have reasonable access to, a given park or open space. TPL was then able to generate Impact Analysis charts to analyze which demographic groups are being most-served versus least-served by the region's parks and protected lands. This information will help the Authority, partners, and future grant applicants to better recognize gaps in access and service and which can hopefully be addressed through new projects and funding opportunities.

Food and Nutrition: Health Trust

Health Trust provided the Authority with important information related to food and nutrition. In September of 2016, Health Trust released Food for Everyone, an assessment of healthy food access among low-income seniors and homeless individuals in San Jose. Data gathered was applied to maps that illustrate the current state of food assistance in San Jose and the gaps in healthy food access that many low-income seniors and homeless individuals face. Health Trust staff shared relevant data from that report with the Authority as a factor for agriculture and food systems project opportunities. For example, to better understand priority site locations for new community gardens, the Authority has extracted Health Trust's data on CalFresh recipients and current community garden and urban farm locations.

Health and Safety: Santa Clara County Public Health Department

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has collected a vast amount of data to assess the health status of Santa Clara County residents. The County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) provides a framework for addressing issues identified through these assessments to improve the health of residents.

Related to this phase of our work, the County's data will inform many of the Authority's considerations around health and community well-being as it relates to open space access. Data regarding obesity, diabetes, and heart disease will be considered as the Authority and its grantees determine locations, features, and amenities of parks, trails, community gardens, environmental education opportunities, and other open space programs and projects.

Community Engagement Roundtable: New America Media

New America Media leveraged their long-time relationships with ethnic media partners in the South Bay to help inform this report. They did so through a focus group/luncheon and subsequent survey aimed at gathering qualitative data on park and open space needs and barriers among diverse South Bay communities. The luncheon had the complementary goals of information gathering and relationship building between the Authority and ethnic media leaders.

The outcomes of this partnership are captured in a final report from NAM (Appendix B) and interspersed throughout this report. The input helps us understand how residents access and build connections to the natural world. Unlike the goals from our other partnerships in this phase, the Authority has not included data layers to the maps in this report as a result of our work with New America Media. Data has been synthesized under the major categories of (1) Parks and



Creek Trails, (2) Agriculture and Food Systems, and (3) Environmental Education. Within each category, a cultural relevancy section highlights the feedback from the luncheon and the survey. This data will be not only useful for UGP applicants as they design projects, but it will also be used by the Authority to inform the grant-making process, to increase the cultural relevancy of Authority projects, and to inform community outreach and engagement efforts.

Urban Biodiversity: San Francisco Estuary Institute

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority partnered with the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) to produce the Urban Ecological Planning Guide for Santa Clara Valley, which serves as a companion piece to this report. The guide supports biodiversity across the urbanized landscape of Santa Clara Valley by offering tools and best practices for urban greening projects, such as street trees, green infrastructure, and corporate landscaping. When used by multiple stakeholders to coordinate urban greening projects across the region, this approach will ultimately help cultivate a sense of place and provide much greater benefits to nature, communities, and the health and well-being of residents, than if the projects were conducted independently.

Integrating urban biodiversity science, landscape history, and analysis of local setting, the Urban Ecological Planning Guide provides a set of tools to design for local ecology. As such, the Authority anticipates that as local nonprofits, public agencies, city planners, applicants to the Authority’s Urban Grant Program, and the Authority itself plan for and design projects and programs, this guide will be an invaluable resource to support urban natural spaces that simultaneously boost human well-being and biodiversity.



Chapter 2: New Data, New Questions

As in Phase I, the Open Space Authority has mapped a variety of indicators and analyzed how the information may be beneficial to the execution of the Authority's mission. This analysis included the layering of multiple data sets to better understand the needs facing residents and communities within the Authority's jurisdiction. Data sets from Phase I, such as the CalEnviroScreen score, vehicle access, and population density were also considered as the Authority added new data that would provide increased understanding. Updates to these Phase I indicators are outlined here.

The Original Deep Engagement Communities

Approximately 1.4 million individuals live within the Authority's jurisdiction. The data and maps in this report are inclusive of the entire jurisdiction, unless otherwise noted. The Authority's jurisdiction is not the same as the County boundary, therefore the data that follows is unique to the population within the Authority's jurisdiction. For jurisdiction demographics and other data that could indicate barriers to accessing open space, see Phase I report: Understanding Our Community: A Community Assessment Project. In Phase I, the Authority used the following four indicators to identify six Deep Engagement Communities (DECs):

Population

Through data analysis, the Authority highlighted areas within the jurisdiction with high-density populations in order to consider how to maximize the impact of future investments by reaching the most people.

Income and CalEnviroScreen

By considering low income and high CalEnviroScreen scores, the Authority hoped to capture areas that lacked resources and were disproportionately impacted by environmental burdens.

Linguistic Isolation, Age, and Vehicle Access

Linguistic isolation, age, and vehicle access can have a tremendous impact on the ease with which a resident can access the natural spaces in their community. Therefore, they can also create significant barriers to accessing programming, events, and/or other opportunities to engage.

New Partnership Opportunities

While there are opportunities for new partnerships in every area within the Authority's jurisdiction, the Authority feels as though the areas within the DECs present especially important opportunities for building new relationships with individuals and organizations that are deeply embedded within their own communities.



Updates to DEC Boundaries

In this second phase of Understanding Our Community, the Authority has made slight revisions to the boundaries of the Deep Engagement Communities based on new and/or updated information. Map 1 illustrates the Authority's jurisdiction with the revised boundaries. Four of the six DEC boundaries have been slightly expanded to incorporate areas where data suggests the need for prioritized focus and support. The revisions include:

- **DEC2:** A census tract adjacent to the southern border of DEC2 has been incorporated based on meeting state and county median income designation as a disadvantaged community, as well as significant numbers of seniors with ambulatory difficulty, households with lack of access to vehicles, and rates of heart disease deaths.
- **DEC3:** An area on the north end of DEC3 encompassing two additional census tracts has been added based on the high rating of state and county disadvantaged communities, as well as high rates of diabetes.
- **DEC4:** A census tract has been added to the western border of DEC4 based on rating of disadvantaged communities and significant numbers of households that lack vehicle access.
- **DEC5:** A census tract has been added along the southern border of DEC5. This community rated as a disadvantaged community and shows significant rates of heart disease with little access to open space.

Map Notes:

Scale

Most of the maps included in this report show a slightly zoomed in scale of the Authority's jurisdiction. This has been done when a closer view of data would be beneficial and does not exclude significant amounts of data. When the data is distributed across the entire jurisdiction, the full map is shown.

Natural Breaks

In a few of the maps, we split up the data into the most manageable groupings. However, in most of the maps, we used a classification method called Jenks natural breaks. It is designed to determine the best way to split up ranges of values into different classes.

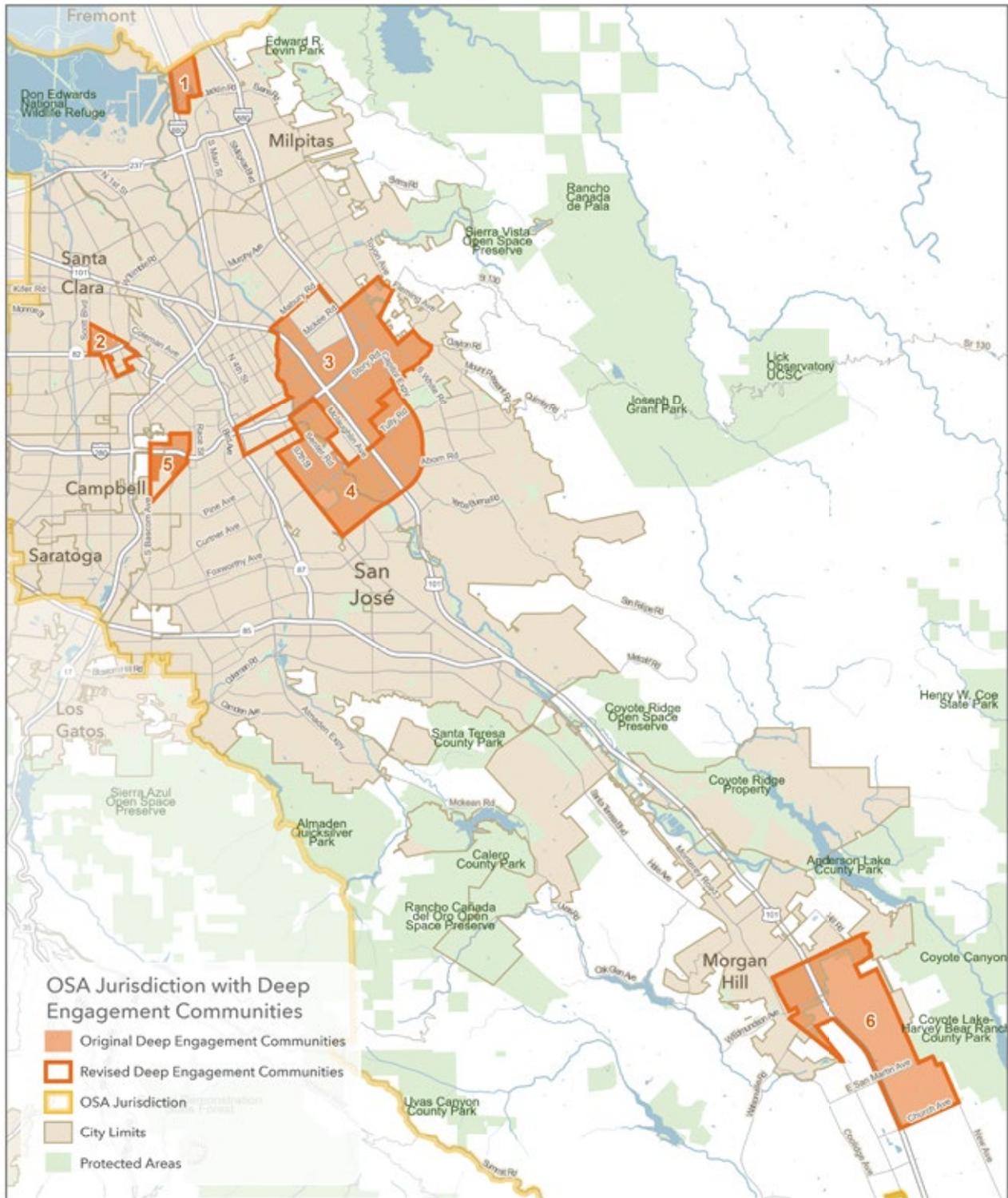
Census Tracts and Block Groups

- [Census Tracts](#) are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or equivalent entity, updated by local participants prior to each decennial census. Census tracts generally have a population size between 1,200 and 8,000 people (optimum size of 4,000) and usually cover a contiguous area. However, the spatial size of census tracts can vary depending on the density of the settlement.
- [Block Groups](#) (BG) are statistical divisions of census tracts that are generally defined to contain between 600 and 3,000 people and are used to present data and control block numbering. A block group consists of clusters of blocks within the same census tract that have the same first digit of their four-digit census block number. Each census tract contains at least one BG, and a BG is uniquely numbered within the census tract and usually covers a contiguous area.



UPDATED DEEP ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES

Map 1



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, California Protected Areas Database (CPAD) Updated 8/3/2020



Map 1. Updated Deep Engagement Community Boundaries: Deep Engagement Community boundaries expanded to reflect new data in Phase II.

Updates to Population and Income Data

In both Phase I and Phase I, data related to population and income was gathered from the [United States Census](#) (conducted every 10 years) and [American Community Survey](#) (an ongoing survey that provides information on a yearly basis) conducted by the [United States Census Bureau](#). Whereas Phase I reflected data from 2009-2013, Phase II reflects data from 2013-2017.

In [Phase I](#), the Authority identified low-income households as those with income below half of the County Median Household Income (MHI) of \$91,702. The Authority has provided more context for this data in Phase II by identifying communities as disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged in relation to both the County Median Household Income and the State Median Household Income, of \$63,783 (as defined by the [California Department of Water Resources Integrated Regional Water Management Guidelines](#), 2015).

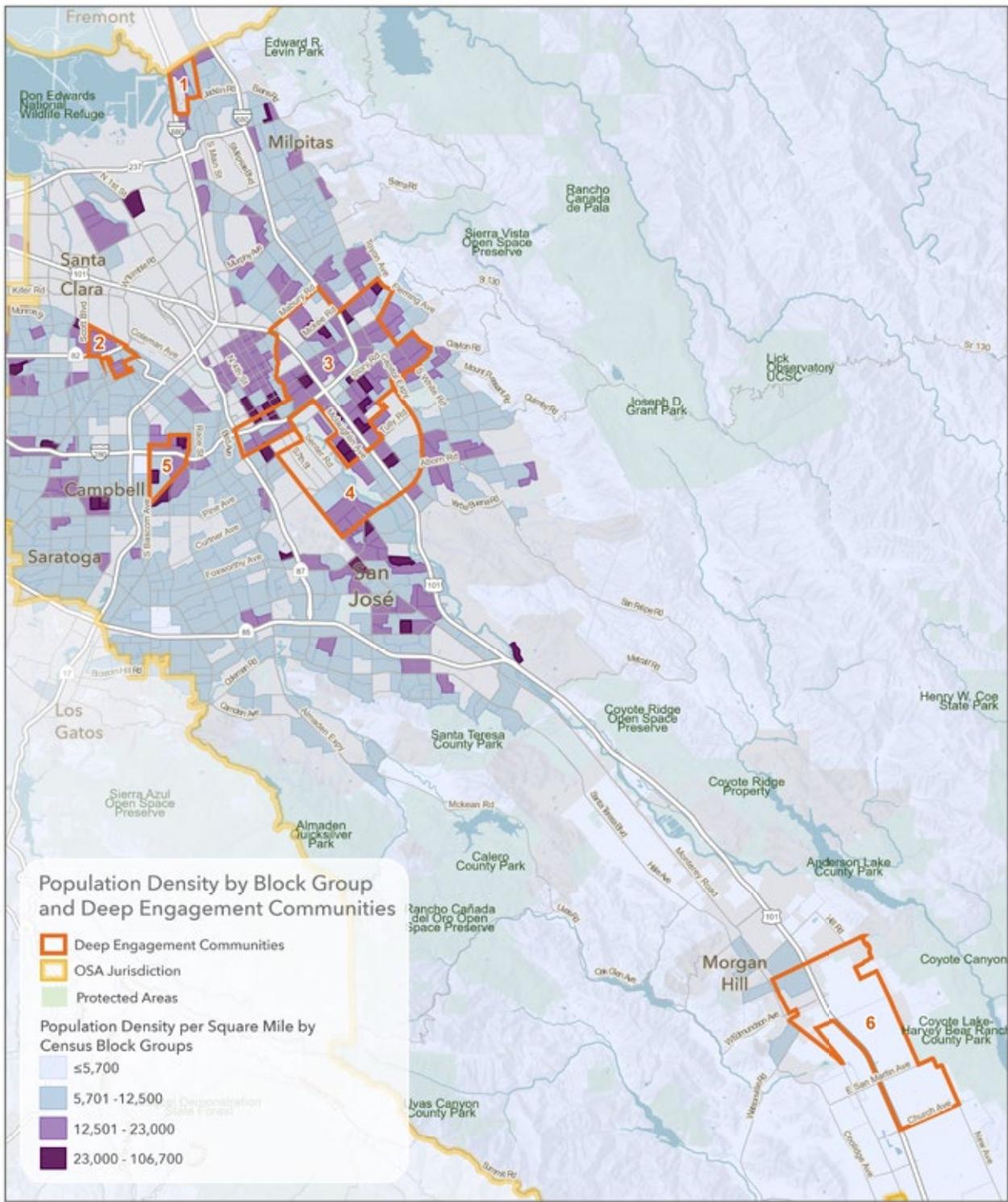
The Authority chose to focus on data relative to the county, versus the state, in order to focus on better understanding the barriers and needs specifically facing community members within the agency's jurisdiction. While it is impossible to illustrate the full story through one map, the County-based data more clearly conveys the relative impact of costs such as park fees, equipment costs, school program expenses, and other expenses that stand in the way of accessing outdoor opportunities.

FIGURE 1

Severely Disadvantaged and Disadvantaged Communities: OSA Jurisdiction			
	Census Tracts	Population	% of Jurisdiction
Severely Disadvantaged by State Median Household Income (60% of state MHI)	9	29,506	2%
Disadvantaged by State Median Household Income (80% of state MHI)	25	117,590	8%
Severely Disadvantaged by County Median Household Income (60% of state MHI)	45	204,164	15%
Disadvantaged by County Median Household Income (80% of state MHI)	59	503,753	36%

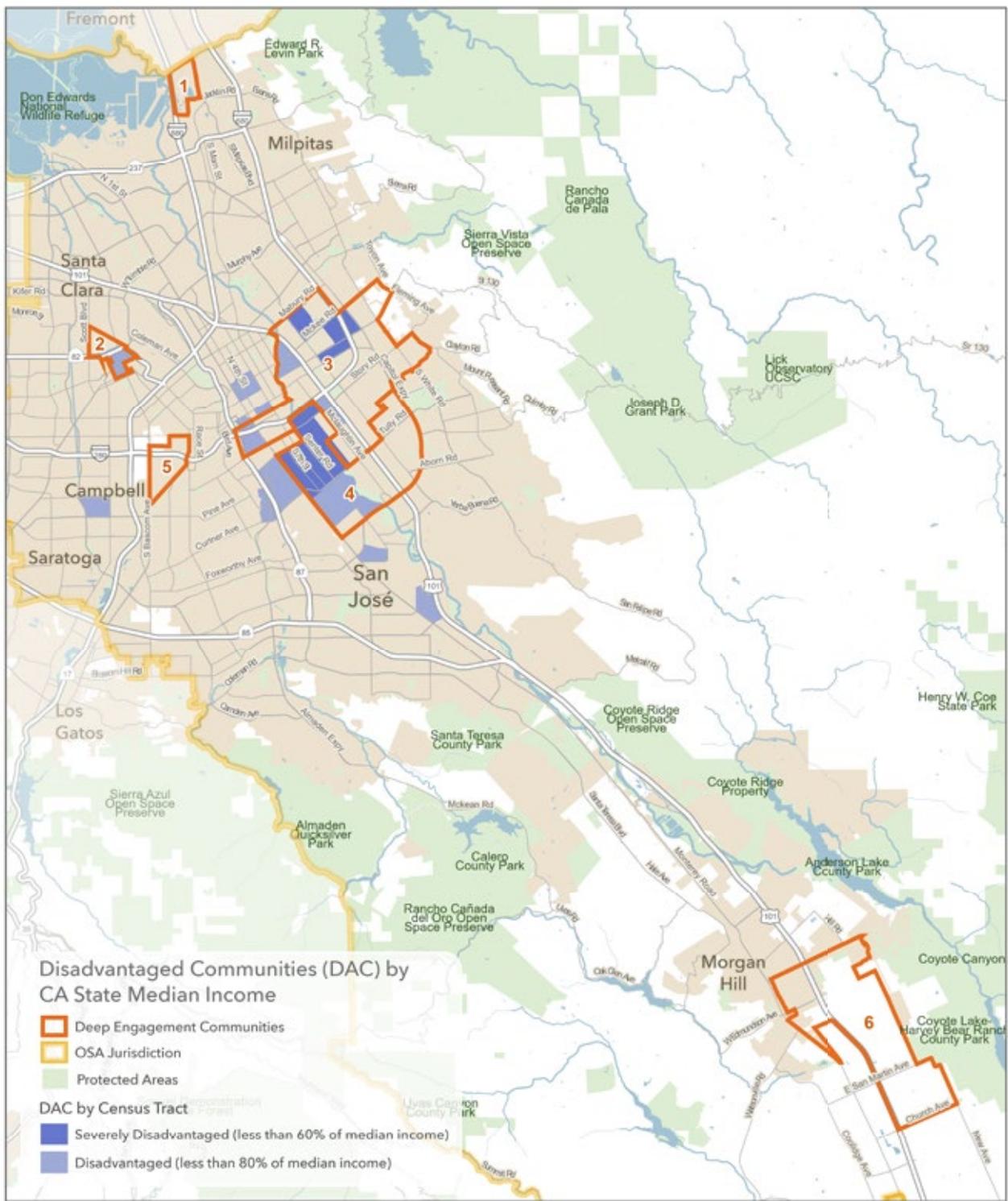


POPULATION DENSITY AND DEEP ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITIES Map 2



Map 2. Population Density and DEC Proximity to Protected Areas: Population density across the Authority’s jurisdiction relative to Deep Engagement Community boundaries and protected areas.

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES (CA STATE MEDIAN INCOME) AND DECS Map 3A



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Survey 2013-2017 American Community (Census Tracts)
 CA Median household income: \$71,805 in 2017 (Census ACS 1-year survey), CPAD
 Updated 8/3/2020

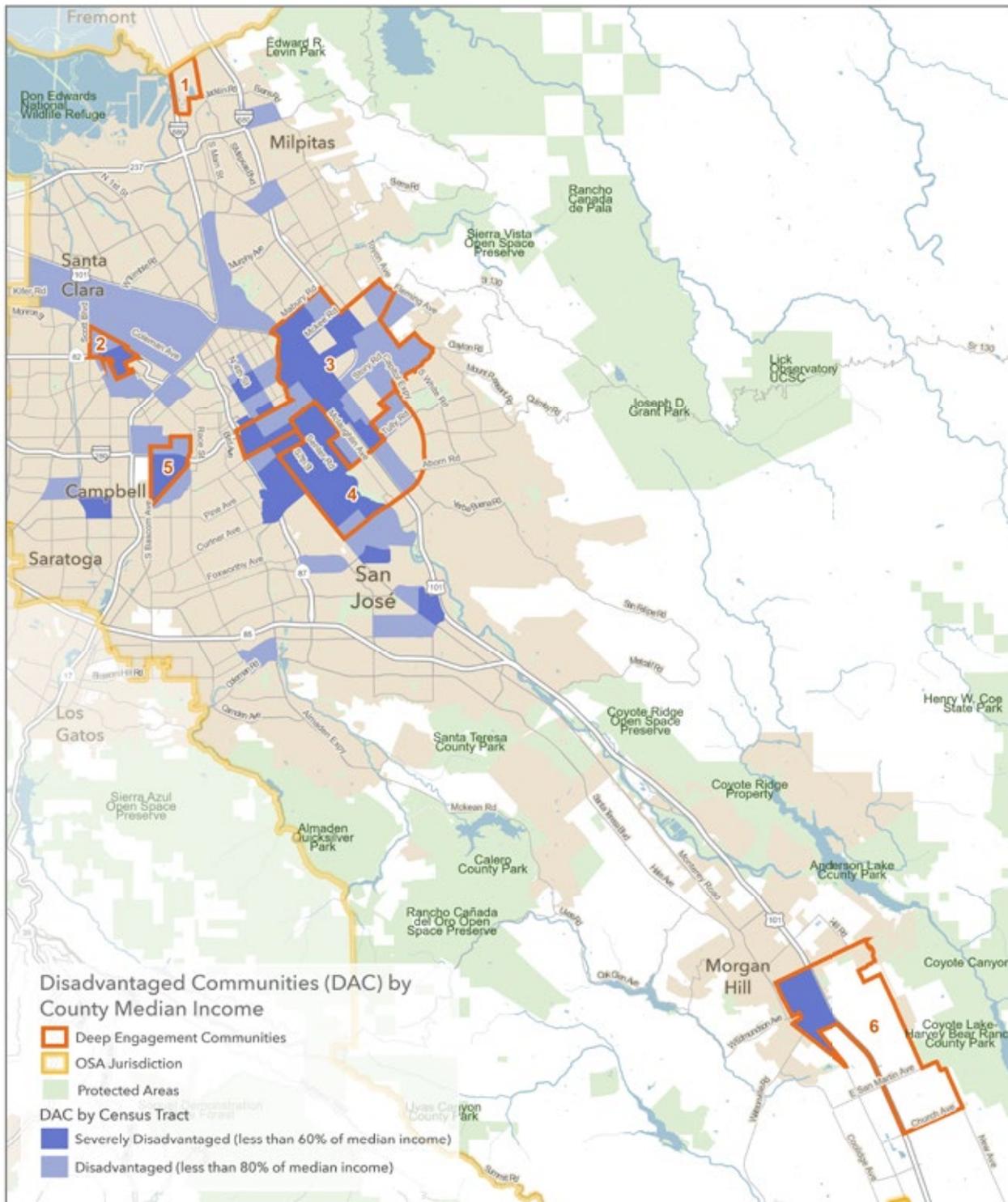


Maps 3A and 3B. Comparison of State MHI to County MHI: Disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities based on State Median Household Income (MHI) of \$63,783 versus Santa Clara County’s MHI of \$91,702 (2015).

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES (SANTA CLARA COUNTY MEDIAN INCOME) AND DECS

Map 3B

MAP 3B



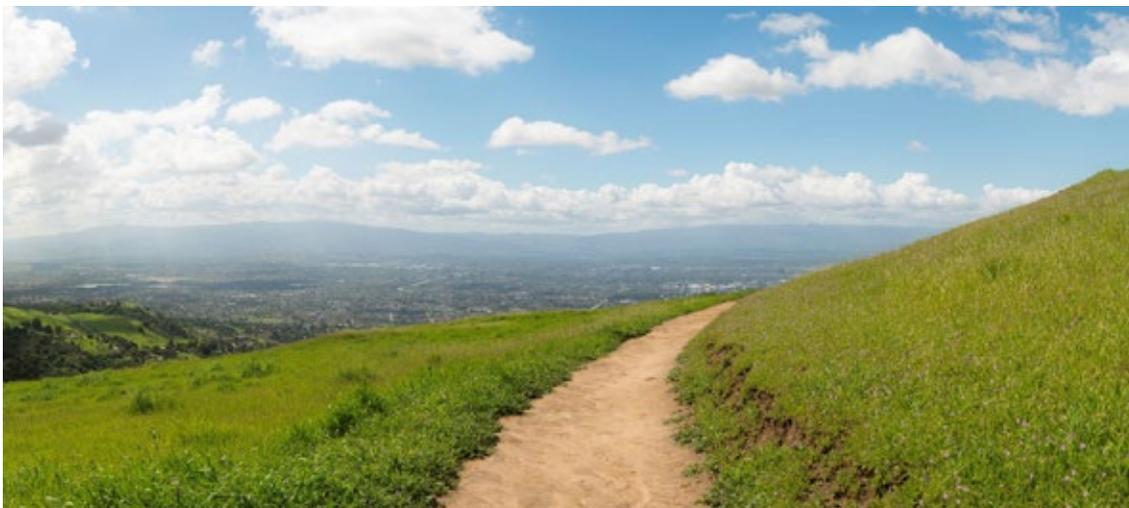
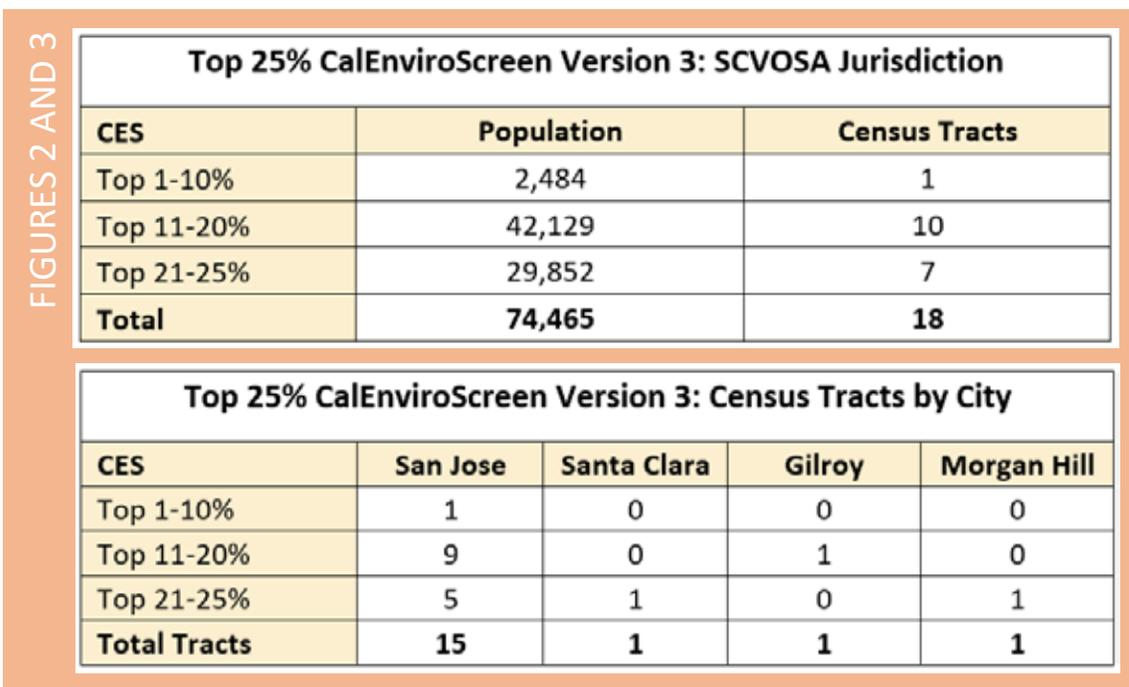
Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Tracts)
 Santa Clara County Median Household Income: \$119,035 in 2017 (Census ACS 1-year survey), CPOD
 Updated 8/3/2020



Updates to CalEnviroScreen Data

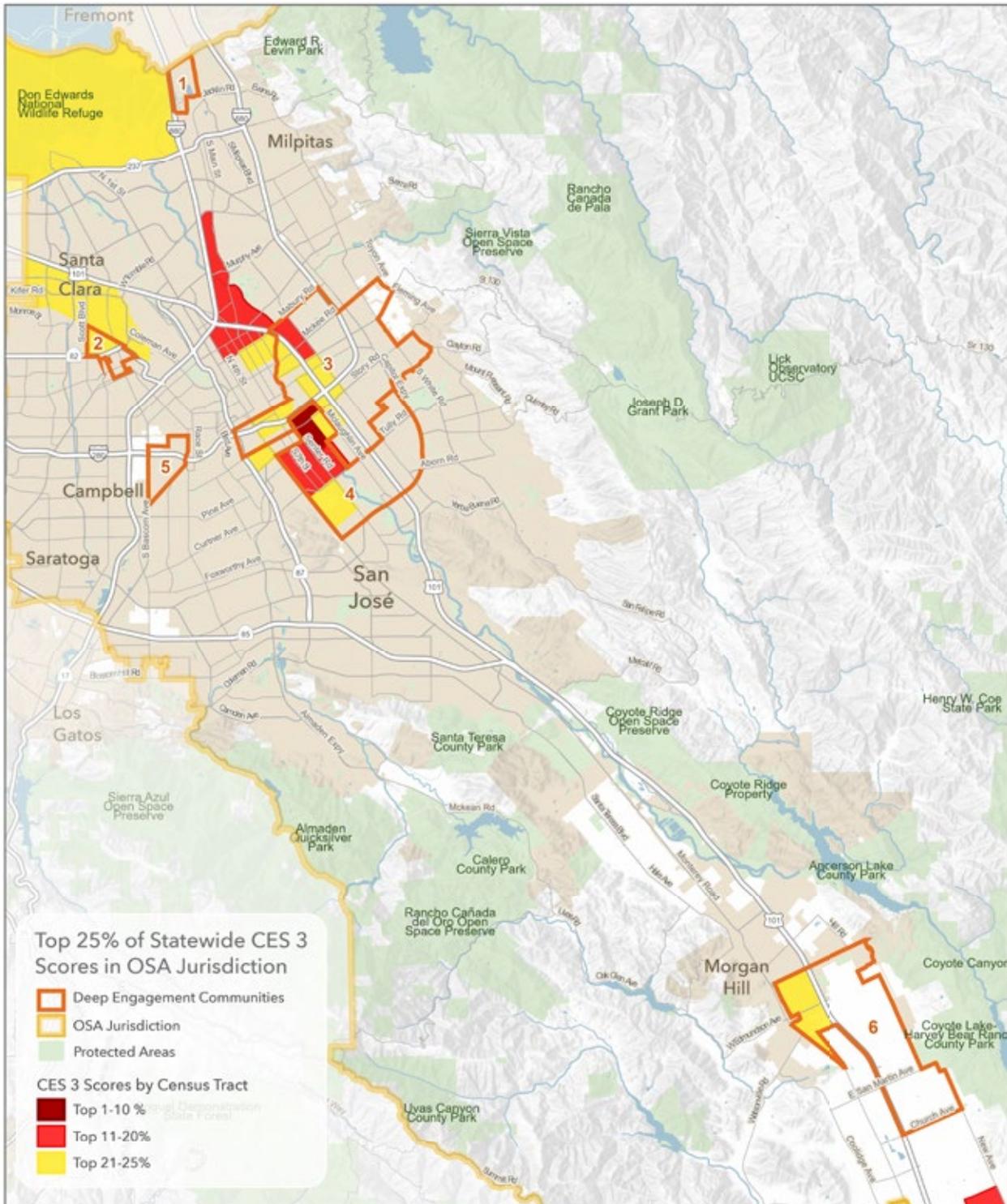
CalEnviroScreen is a tool developed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to evaluate pollutants, stressors, and other factors burdening communities.

The tool uses environmental, health, demographic and socioeconomic data to create a screening score for communities across the state. There are eleven pollution burden indicators including ozone concentrations and traffic density and seven population characteristics made up of health characteristics and socio-economic factors. Together, the pollution burden indicators and population characters formulate a score. (For more information on CalEnviroScreen, please see pages 11 - 12 of the Phase I report.) Since Phase I, OEHHA has released an updated version of CalEnviroScreen, referred to as CES 3, and therefore data in Phase II has been updated accordingly. While only one census tract in the Authority's jurisdiction falls within the top 10% of disadvantaged communities in the state, 18 census tracts fall within the 25%.



ENVIRONMENTALLY BURDENED COMMUNITIES AND DEC'S

Map 4



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, CalEnviroScreen 3.0, OEHHA, CPAD Updated 8/3/2020



Map 4. Environmentally Burdened Areas: Areas within and around Deep Engagement Communities considered most environmentally burdened according to CalEnviroScreen (CES) scores.

Chapter 3: Mapping the Data

With the help of essential partners, the Authority has collected data that can help generate new questions for further exploration, as well as understand how the agency can address barriers facing the community. The Authority chose to prioritize four main categories for deeper consideration:

- Proximity and Access
- Food and Nutrition
- Health
- Safety

For each of these four categories, staff proposed and reflected on a series of questions that helped to help determine what information is missing when trying to understand the needs of local communities. Not only did these questions help to inform the mapping process of the given data, but they also helped the Authority draw connections to the Urban Grant Program (UGP) and areas of high need and ample opportunity.

The [Urban Grant Program](#) is divided into four categories:

- Environmental Stewardship and Restoration
- Parks, Trails, and Public Access
- Environmental Education
- Urban Agriculture/Food Systems



Category 1: Proximity and Access

Proximity and Access are two essential areas of focus when striving for equitable opportunities and access to nature. Therefore, they are key considerations for the Authority when it seeks to invest in parks, trails, and other projects and programs as they will have significant potential to make a positive impact. The Authority asked the following questions (among many others) when shaping this report:

Questions We Asked

- Which residents currently live within a 10-minute walk to open space? And, more importantly for purposes of our work, which do not?
- Where are there high levels of individuals with ambulatory difficulty or who lack access to a vehicle?
- Where are there high numbers of young people, an important user group for outdoor programming and parks?
- Where are there high numbers of over-crowded households, one indicator for outdoor and open space needs?
- In which communities are low numbers of adults riding or walking to work, a possible indicator for a lack of safe pedestrian and biking paths?

FIGURES 4 AND 5

Santa Clara Open Space Authority - Impact Analysis
 10-minute walk (half-mile) park service area
 Santa Clara County, California
 June 29, 2017



Demographic Category	Total Population	Population Served *	Percent Served *	Population Not Served	Percent Not Served
Total Population	1,359,718	899,883	66%	459,835	34%
Age 19 and Younger	359,474	236,622	66%	122,852	34%
20-64 Years Old	838,909	558,010	67%	280,899	33%
Over 64 Years Old	161,335	105,251	65%	56,084	35%

Demographic Category	Total Households	Households Served **	Percent Served **	Households Not Served	Percent Not Served
Under 75% Median Household Income	188,659	124,457	66%	64,202	34%
75%-125% Median Household Income	55,457	36,629	66%	18,828	34%
Over 125% Median Household Income	191,911	126,746	66%	65,165	34%

* Inside 1/2 mile dynamic park service area
 Santa Clara County Median Household Income \$94,301
 2016 Forecast Census Block groups
 Provided by Esri

Santa Clara Open Space Authority - Impact Analysis
 10-minute walk (half-mile) park service area
 Santa Clara County, California
 June 29, 2017



Demographic Category	Total Population	Population Served *	Percent Served *	Population Not Served	Percent Not Served
Total Population	1,359,718	899,883	66%	459,835	34%
White	557,733	361,967	65%	195,766	35%
Black	40,870	27,421	67%	13,449	33%
American Indian/Alaska Native	10,263	6,901	67%	3,362	33%
Asian	476,777	322,698	68%	154,079	32%
Pacific Islands	5,621	3,639	65%	1,982	35%
Other Race	196,045	129,228	66%	66,817	34%
Two or More Races	72,409	48,029	66%	24,380	34%
Hispanic Origin**	417,552	275,697	66%	141,855	34%

**U.S. Census captures Hispanic Origin separate from race
 * Inside 1/2 mile dynamic park service area
 2016 Forecast Census Block groups
 Provided by Esri

Mapping the Data

Map 5: Park Access Half-Mile Park Service Area

Relevant Grant Program Categories: Parks, Trails, and Public Access

Analysis:

Map 5A displays the results of the GIS-based ParkScore® analysis conducted by TPL within the urban area of the Open Space Authority's jurisdiction. The analysis identified Ten-Minute Walk (or half-mile) Service Areas and parks with public access. The Authority recommends the consideration of Ten-Minute Walk Service Areas and parks with public access when considering future opportunities for funding and community engagement.

Map 6:

6A: Persons with Ambulatory Difficulty, Proximity to Open Space, DECs

6B: Persons with Ambulatory Difficulty, Without Vehicle Access, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories: Parks, Trails, and Public Access

Analysis:

According to the Census, ambulatory difficulty is defined as "having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs." Map 6A shows the distribution of persons living with ambulatory difficulty in the Authority's jurisdiction, along with their proximity to protected spaces, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. Map 6B shows these same data sets except replaces the Ten-Minute Walk Service Area with the percentage of households, by Census block group, without vehicle access. Experiencing ambulatory difficulties, not living within close proximity to protected lands, being outside of a 10-Minute Walk Service Area, and having no vehicle access are all significant barriers to accessing natural spaces and the opportunities that they can provide. The Authority recommends the consideration of these factors when considering the dispersal of grants and other sources of funding related to accessibility, transportation, and other means for mitigating these issues.

Map 7:

7A: Density of Children, School Locations, DECs

7B: Overcrowded Households, School Locations, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories: Parks, Trails and Public Access, Environmental Education

Analysis:

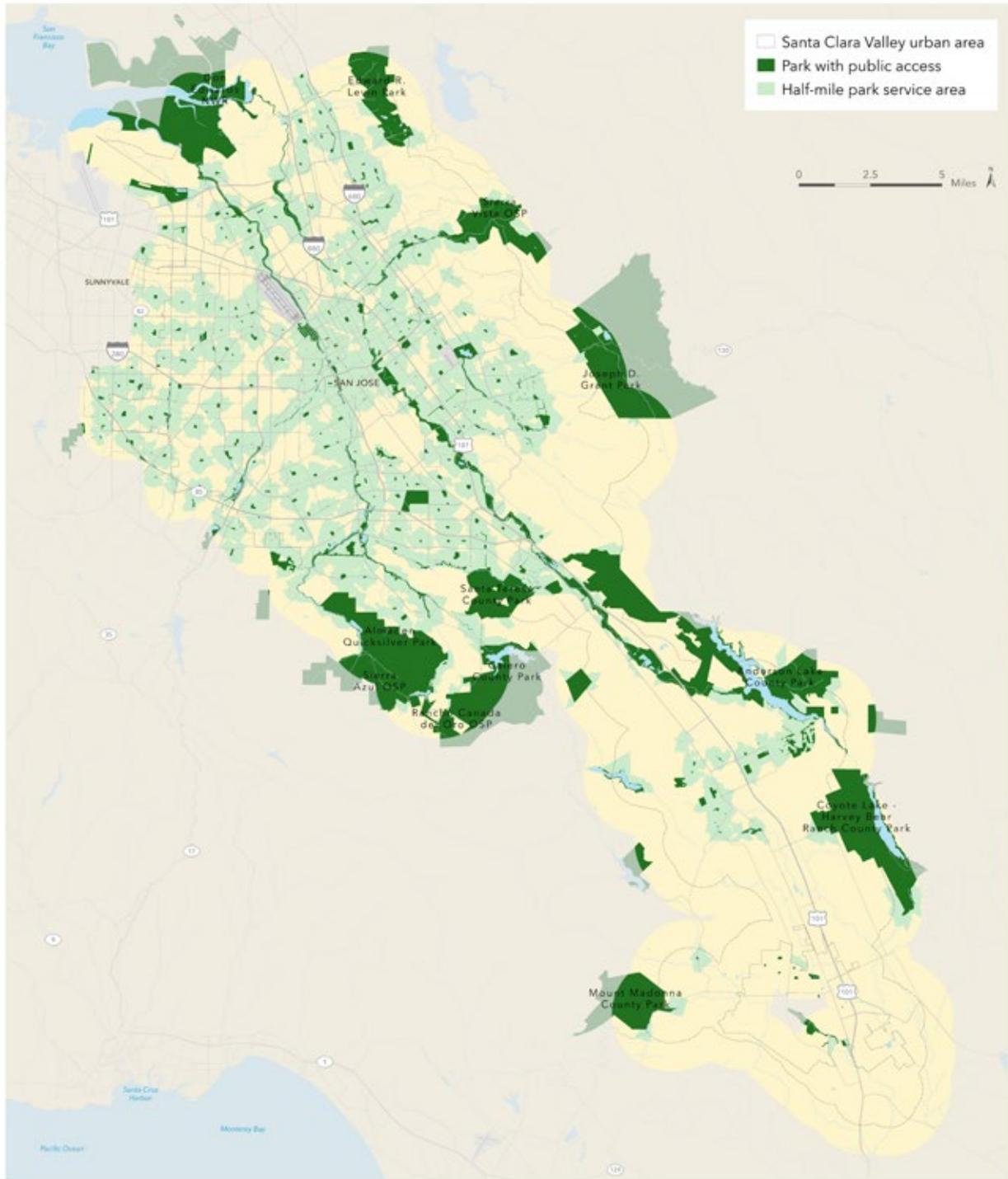
Map 7A shows the distribution, by Census tract, of individuals under age 18 and their proximity to community colleges, universities, elementary, and secondary schools relative to Deep Engagement Community boundaries. According to this data, areas such as DEC4 have high numbers of youth residents. This could be a key consideration when assessing need and determining where new youth-focused programs could have the most impact. Additionally, these areas could be strong candidates for incorporating pedestrian and bike trails that act as neighborhood linkages and provide access to other amenities such as schools and libraries. Map 7B shows the distribution, by neighborhood, of overcrowded households and their proximity to these same locations. According to the Census, an overcrowded household is one in which there is more than one person per room. According to this data, DEC3 has the highest concentration of overcrowded households.

Map 8: Ability to Walk/Balk to Work, Proximity to Open Space, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories: Parks, Trails and Public Access

Analysis:

Map 8 shows the distribution of persons age 16+ who bike or walk to work and their proximity to protected spaces, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. This information could be used when considering the development of new pedestrian and bike corridors and other types of infrastructure that could provide key linkages to different areas in the community. Not only could these types of investments lessen the barriers to access for households without vehicle access, but they could also serve as a way to incentivize residents to utilize more sustainable modes of transportation and lessen their carbon footprint.



Park Access Half-Mile Park Service Area

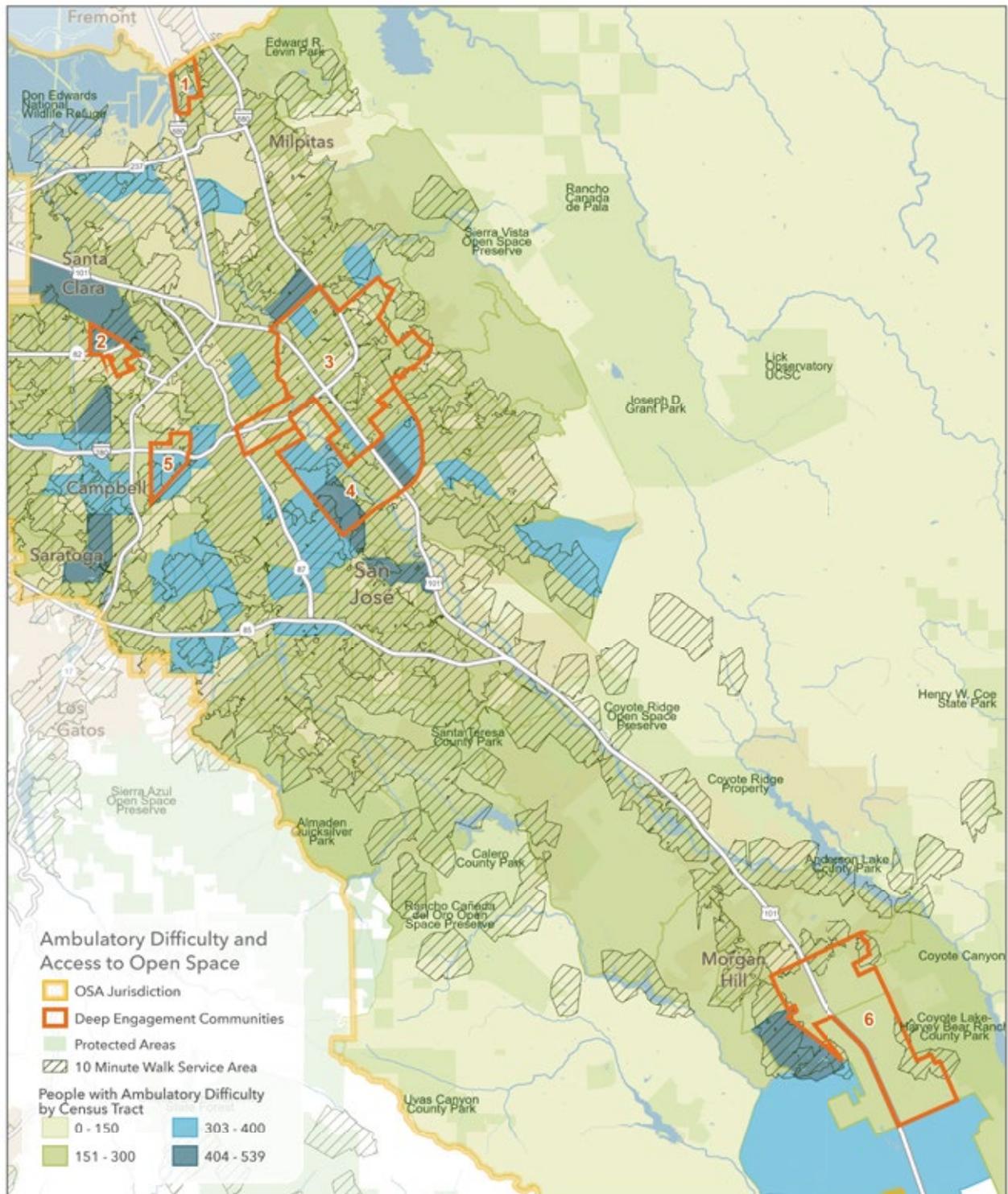
SANTA CLARA VALLEY OPEN SPACE AUTHORITY-URBAN AREA

August 21, 2017. Data providers: CIPAG, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority. Copyright © The Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



Map 5. Park Access Half-Mile Park Service Area: Half-Mile Park Services Areas and parks with public access. Created by The Trust for Public Land.

PERSONS WITH AMBULATORY DIFFICULTY, PROXIMITY TO OPEN SPACE, DEC S



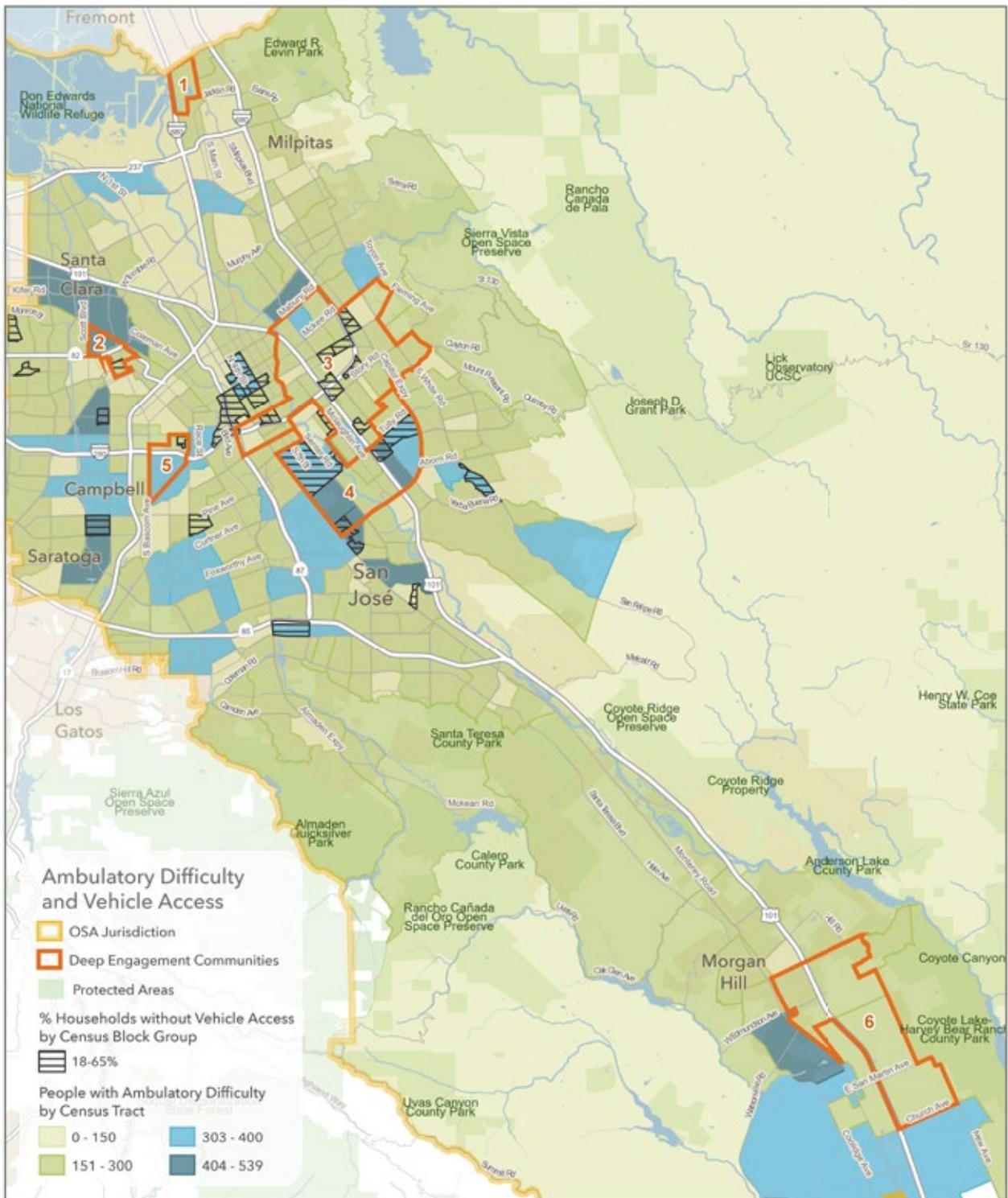
Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Tracts), Trust for Public Land (Service Areas), CPAD
Updated 8/3/2020



Map 6A. Persons with Ambulatory Difficulty, Proximity to Open Space, DECS: Percentage of individuals living with ambulatory difficulties and individuals' relative to protected spaces, 10 Minute Mile Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries

PERSONS WITH AMBULATORY DIFFICULTY,
WITHOUT VEHICLE ACCESS, DECS

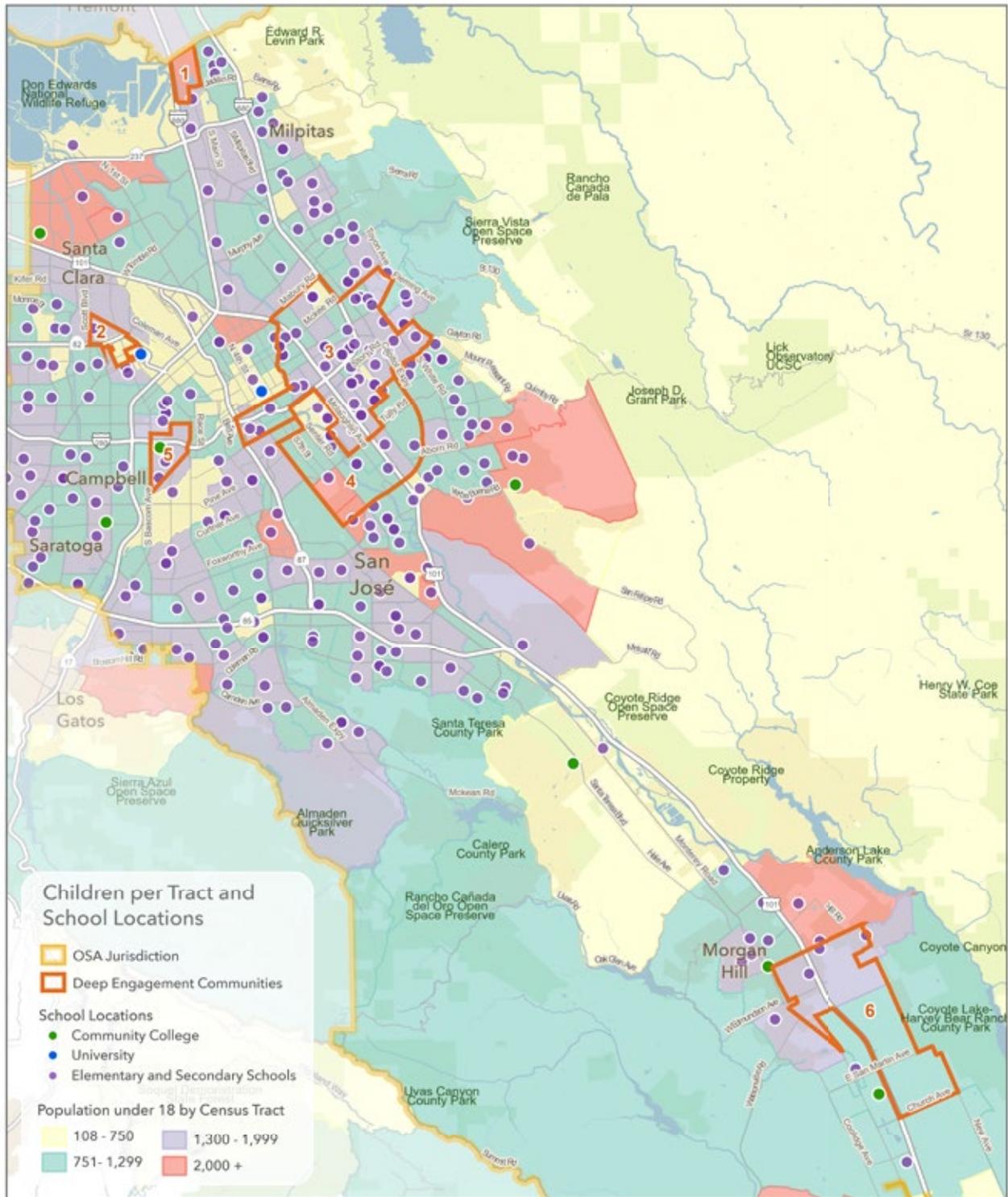
Map 6B



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Tracts, Block Groups), The Health Trust, CPAD
Updated 8/3/2020



Map 6B. Persons with Ambulatory Difficulty, Without Vehicle Access, DECS: Percentage of individuals living with ambulatory difficulties, percentage of households without vehicle access relative to protected spaces, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.



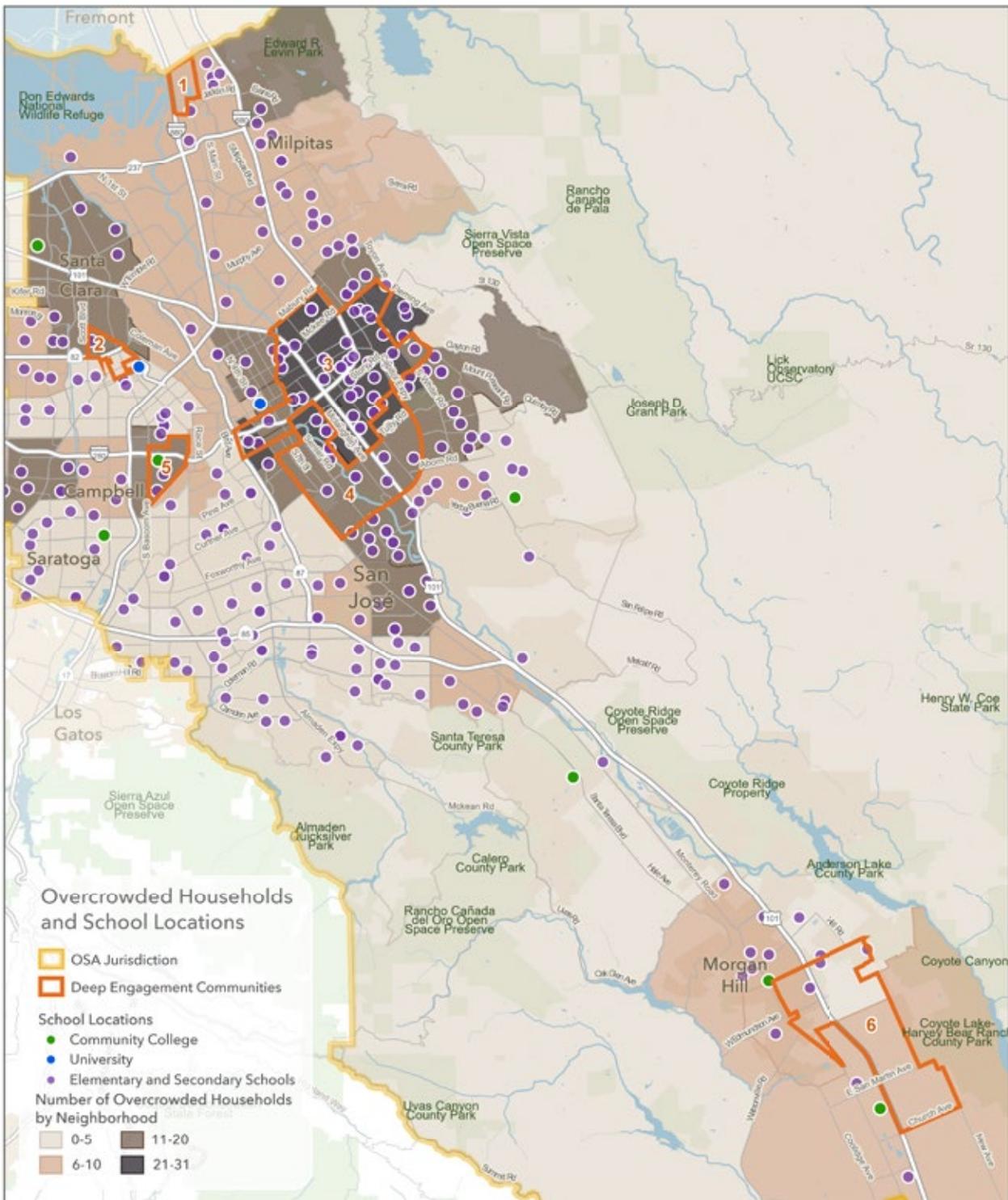
Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Tracts), California Schools Campus Database 2018 Updated 8/3/2020



Map 7A. Density of Children, School Locations, DECS: Distribution of individuals under 18 relative to elementary and secondary schools, community colleges, universities, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS, SCHOOL LOCATIONS, DECS

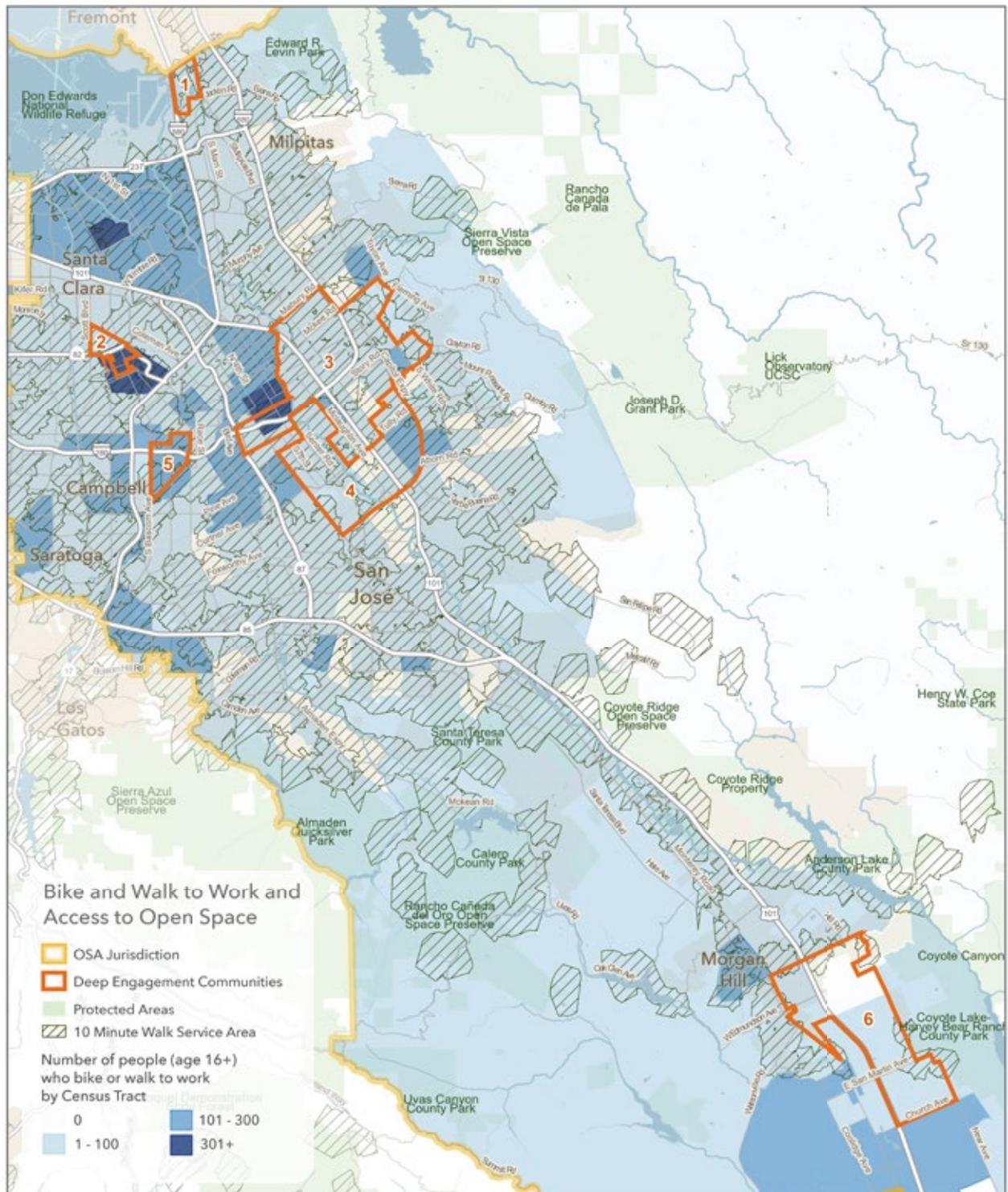
Map 7B



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Santa Clara County (Neighborhood level data), California Schools Campus Database 2018
Updated 8/3/2020



Map 7B. Overcrowded Households, School Locations, DECS: Distribution of overcrowded households relative to elementary and secondary schools, community colleges, and universities relative to Deep Engagement Community boundaries.



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Tracts), Trust for Public Land (Service Areas), CPAD Updated 8/3/2020



Map 8. Ability to Walk/Balk to Work, Proximity to Open Space, DECs: Distribution of individuals age 16 and above who bike or walk to work relative to protected spaces, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

Category 2: Food and Nutrition

In addition to increasing access to natural spaces for more traditional recreational purposes, the Authority and partners in the environmental community recognize the inextricable link between access to lands such as community gardens and urban farms, and public health and nutrition. Increased access to these spaces can also foster a deeper connection to the land itself.

The establishment of community gardens and urban farms increases not only the access to healthy food, but also the opportunity for physical activity and venues for environmental learning. When community garden and urban farm locations are layered with open space access, health, food/nutrition, and school indicators, the Authority and our partners can leverage current garden and farm sites, and consider the potential community health and wellness benefits to be gained by new locations in strategically situated locations.

Questions We Asked

- Which communities lack access to community gardens or urban farms, particularly those where a significant number of residents receive CalFresh benefits?
- Where do children lack access to community gardens and urban farms?
- Does access to community gardens and urban farms correlate to access to opportunities such as school garden programs or family-oriented farm activities?

Mapping the Data

Map 9: Unhealthy Retail Food Environment Index

Relevant Grant Program Categories:

Urban Agriculture/Food Systems

Analysis:

Map 9 shows the modified Retail Food Environment Index (mRFEI) which provides a ratio for the number of healthy food retailers (e.g. gardens, farmer's markets, community-supported agricultural program opportunities, etc.) compared to the number of less healthy food retailers (e.g., fast food restaurants, convenience stores, etc.). This data could be utilized when considering the placement of new community gardens, urban farms, or school garden programs that could help lessen the negative impact of the lack of healthy food retail options.



Map 10:

10A: CalFresh Recipients, Proximity to Community Gardens and Urban Farms, DECs
10B: Density of Children, Proximity to Community Gardens and Urban Farms, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories:

Urban Agriculture/Food Systems, Environmental Education

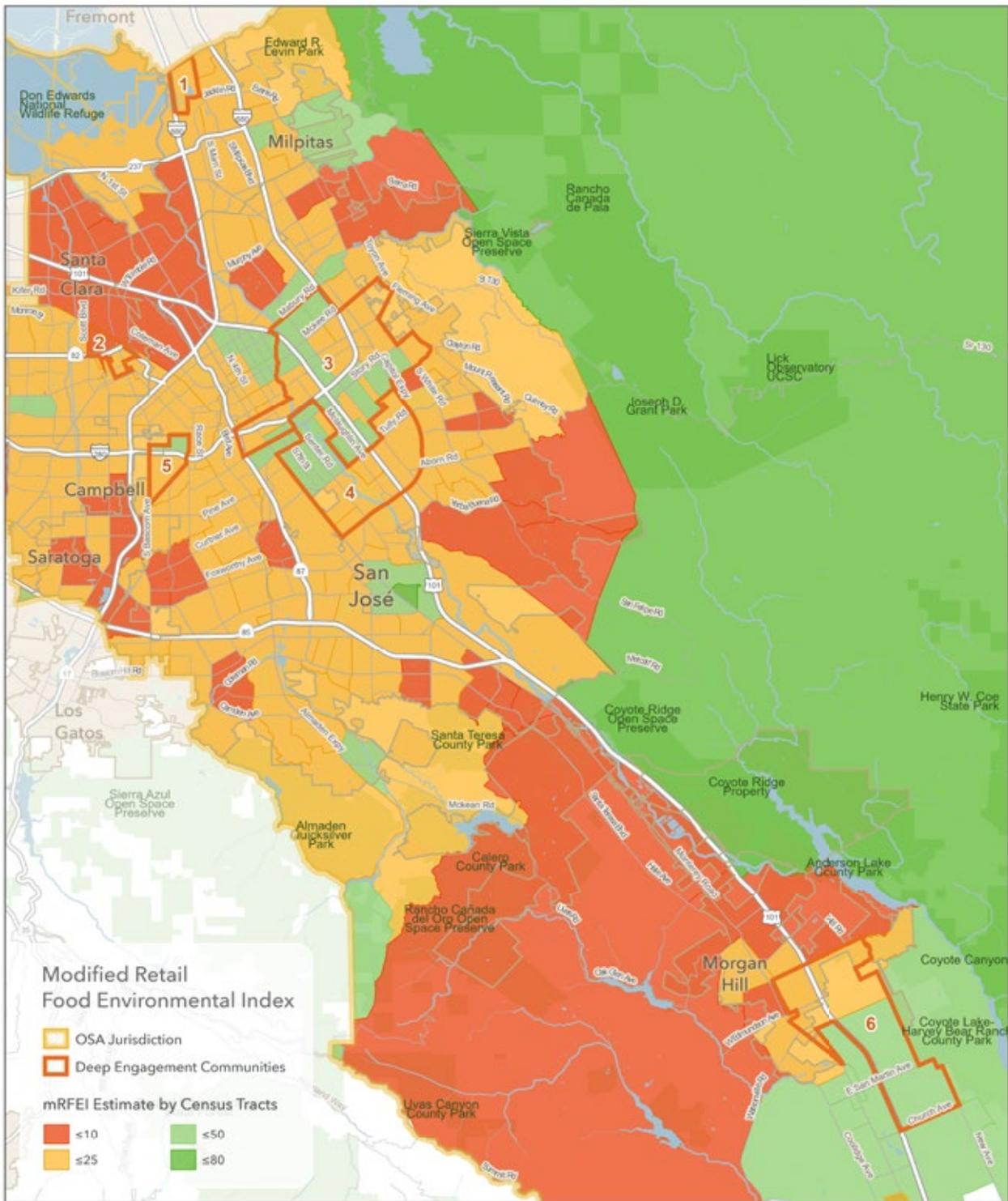
Analysis:

Map 10A shows the various densities of households receiving CalFresh and their proximity to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. Map 10B shows the distribution, by census block groups, of the population under 18 years of age by in relation to those same sites. These areas could be further explored as sites where the placement of a community gardens or urban farms could have significant impact by increasing access to healthy food, as well as residents' access to nutrition education and growing one's own food. Similarly, in communities where there are high numbers of children but no community gardens or urban farms, school garden programs could be particularly valuable. In addition to providing fresh fruits and vegetables, school gardens can also provide an opportunity for students to connect with the land, learn about sustainable food systems, and foster a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the natural places that provide for them.



UNHEALTHY RETAIL FOOD ENVIRONMENT INDEX (MRFEI)

Map 9

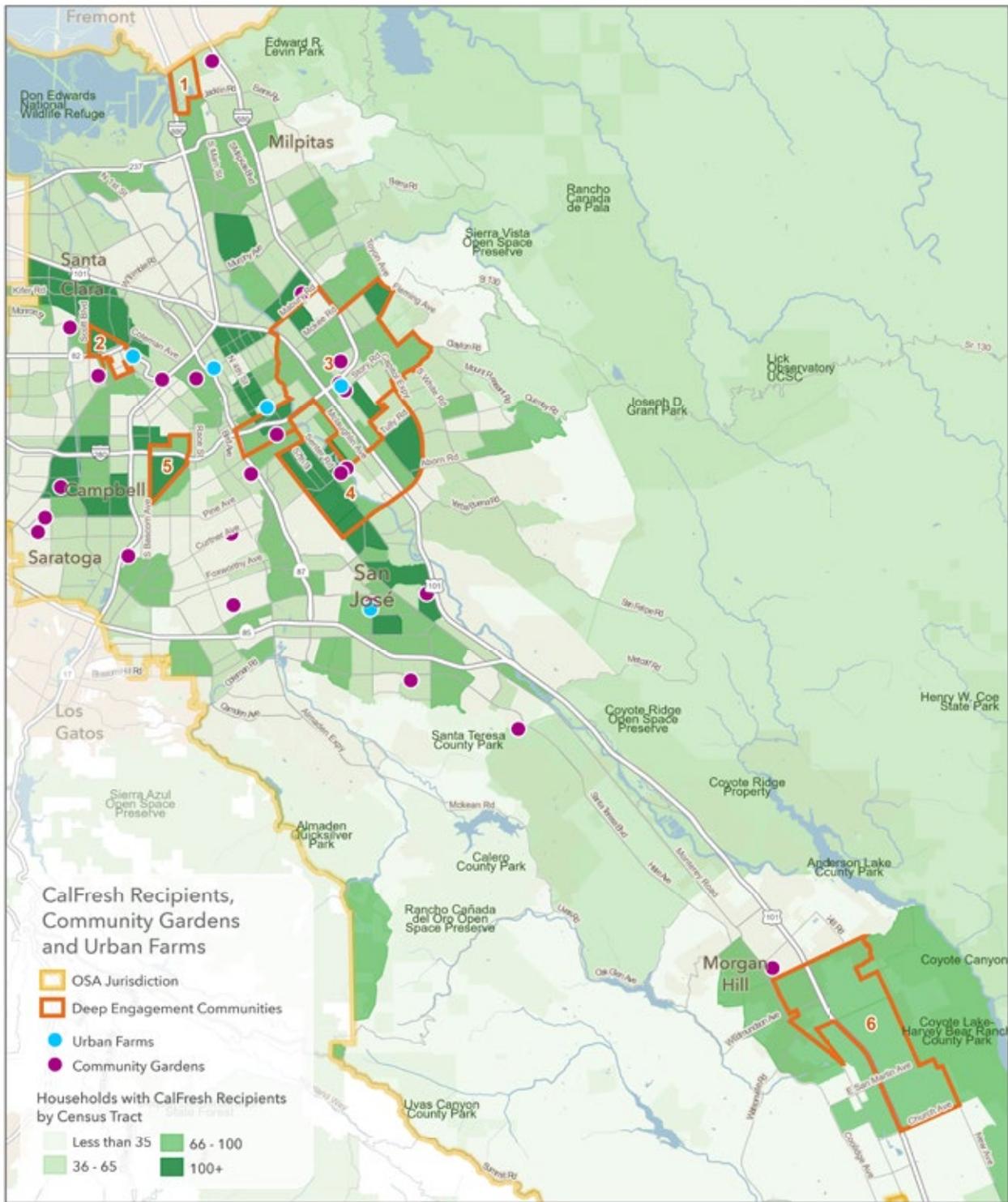


Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, California Department of Public Health (data.chhs.ca.gov/dataset/modified-retail-food-environment-index) Updated 8/3/2020



Map 9. Unhealthy Retail Food Environment Index: Modified Retail Food Environment Index (mRFEI) relative to the Authority’s jurisdiction and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. The mRFEI provides a ratio for the number of healthy food retailers (e.g. gardens, farmer’s markets, community-supported agricultural program opportunities, etc.) compared to the number of less healthy food retailers (e.g., fast food restaurants, convenience stores, etc.).

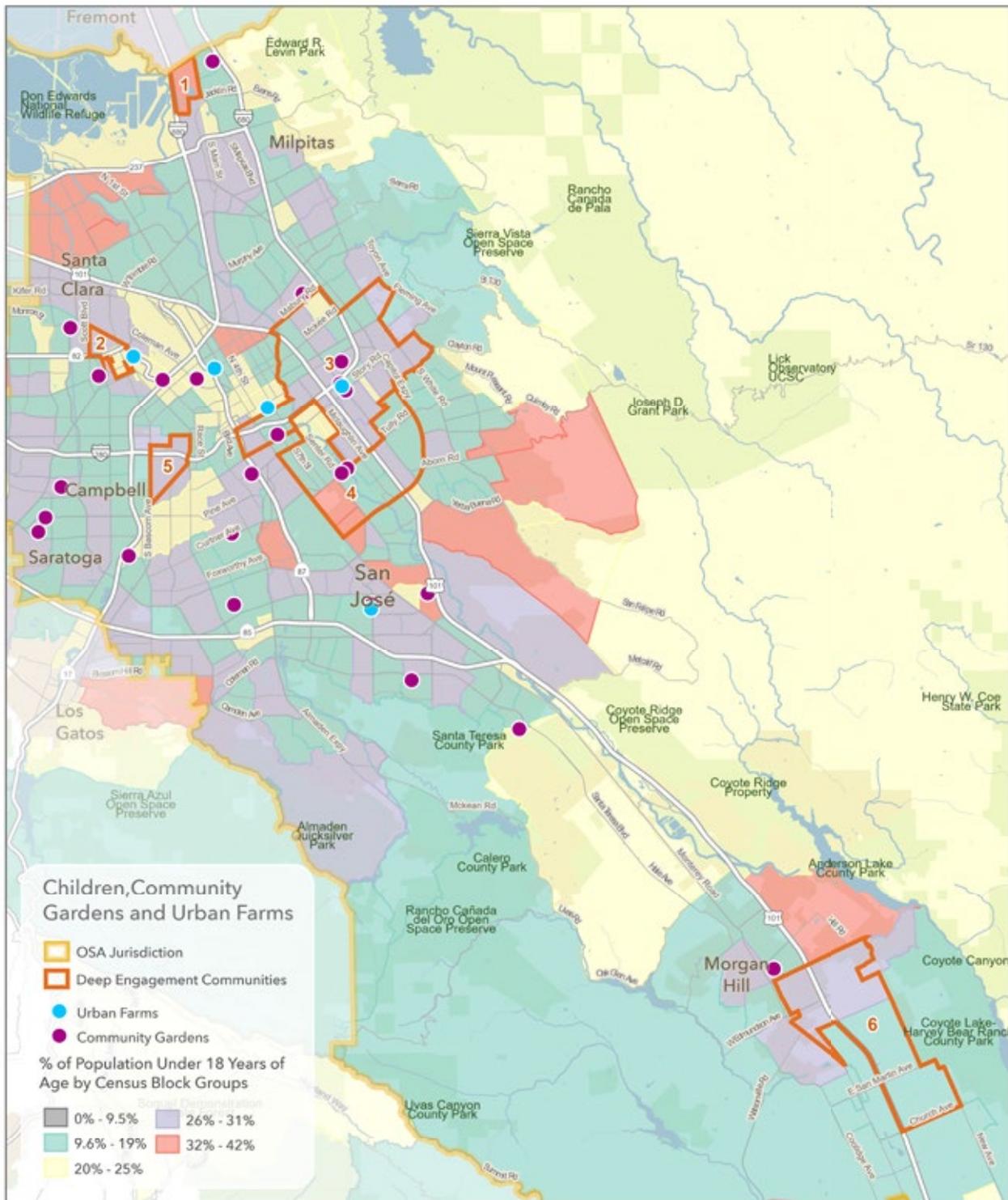
CALFRESH RECIPIENTS, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS



Map 10A. CalFresh Recipients, Proximity to Community Gardens and Urban Farms, DECS: Various densities of households receiving CalFresh relative to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

DENSITY OF CHILDREN, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS

Map 10B



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2017 (Census Block Group)
Updated 8/3/2020

Map 10B. Density of Children, Proximity to Community Gardens and Urban Farms, DECS: Distribution of populations of individuals under 18 relative to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

Category 3: Health

Parks, trails, and gardens can provide opportunities that promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Due to the correlations between inactive lifestyles and weight gain, heart disease, and other health problems, the Authority can play a role in lowering this risk factors by increasing access to spaces that promote activity.

Questions We Asked

- Are there correlations between heart disease and proximity to open space?
- Which communities report disproportionately high rates of obesity in youth and adults?
- Which communities rank highest for heart disease and diabetes?

Mapping the Data

Map 11:

11A: Childhood Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECs

11B: Teenage Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECs

11C: Adult Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories:

Urban Agriculture/Food Systems, Environmental Education

Analysis:

Map 11A, 11B, and 11C display the varying percentages, by neighborhood, of children, teenagers, and adults who are considered to be obese, and their proximity to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. Investing in outdoor recreational opportunities and programming can incentivize individuals and families to establish more active lifestyles. Similarly, new bike and pedestrian trails can provide both a means for recreation as well as an opportunity for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise be expended when traveling by car or bus is the only option.

Map 12:

12A: Heart Disease, Proximity to Urban Farms/Community Gardens and Open Space

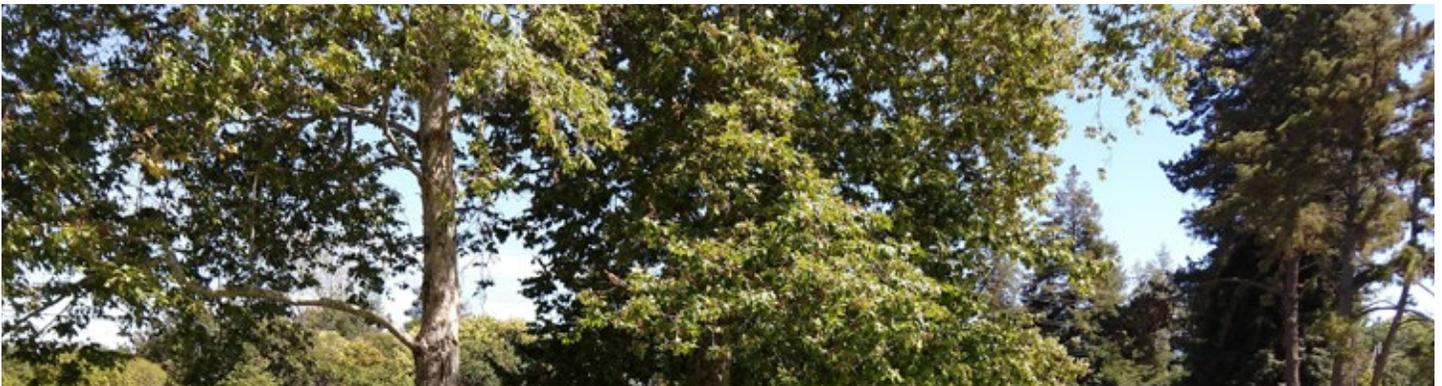
12B: Diabetes, Proximity to Urban Farms/Community Gardens and Open Space

Relevant Grant Program Categories:

Parks, Trails, and Public Access, Urban Agriculture/Food Systems

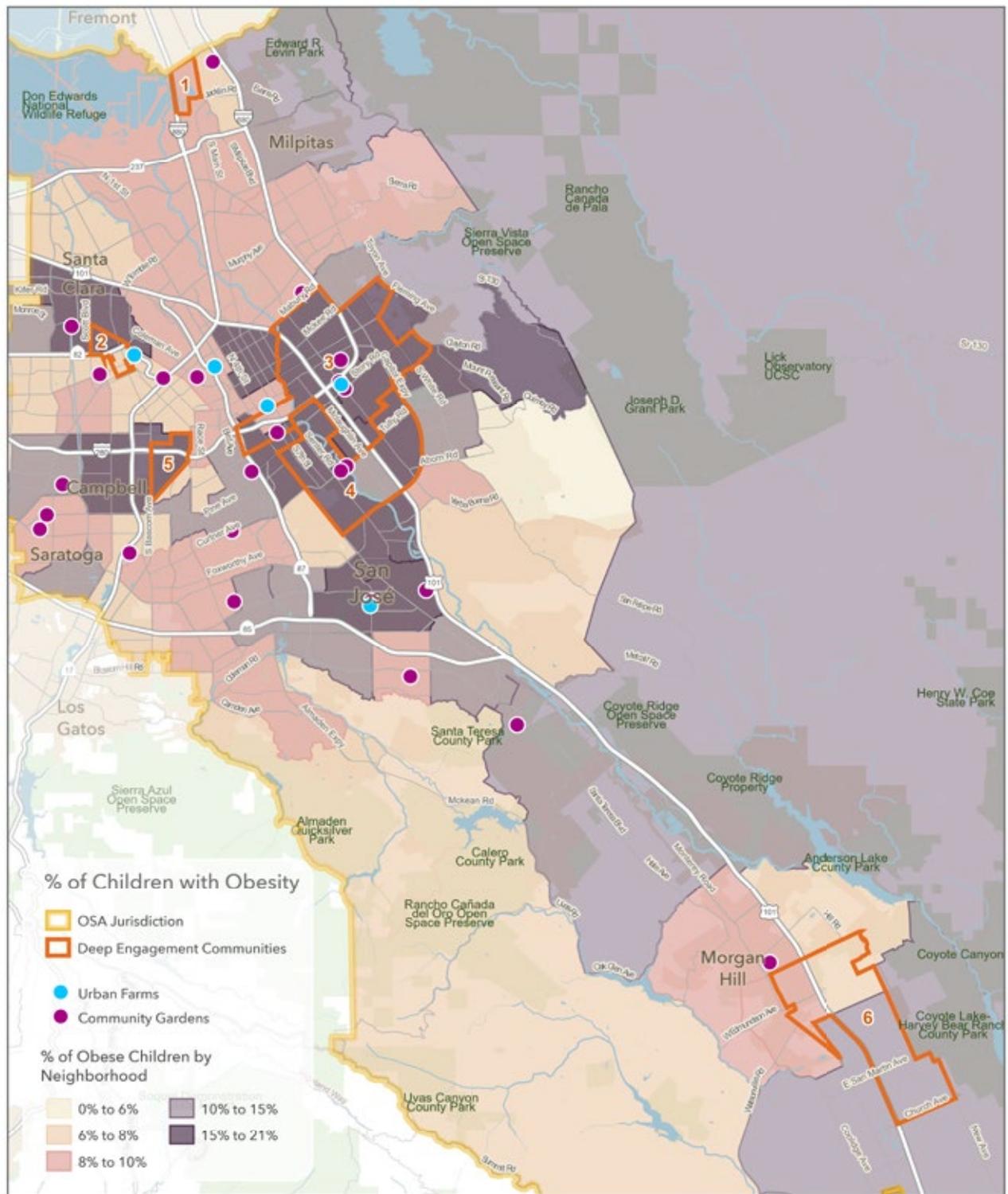
Analysis:

Map 12A and 12B show the distribution, by neighborhood, of heart disease and diabetes-related deaths per 100,000 people, relative to the locations of urban farms, community gardens, protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. This information can be used to identify areas where the development of new trails, parks, community gardens, urban farms, or any other type of program or opportunity that is rooted in engaging in natural spaces could have a significant impact.



CHILDHOOD OBESITY RATES, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS

Map 11A

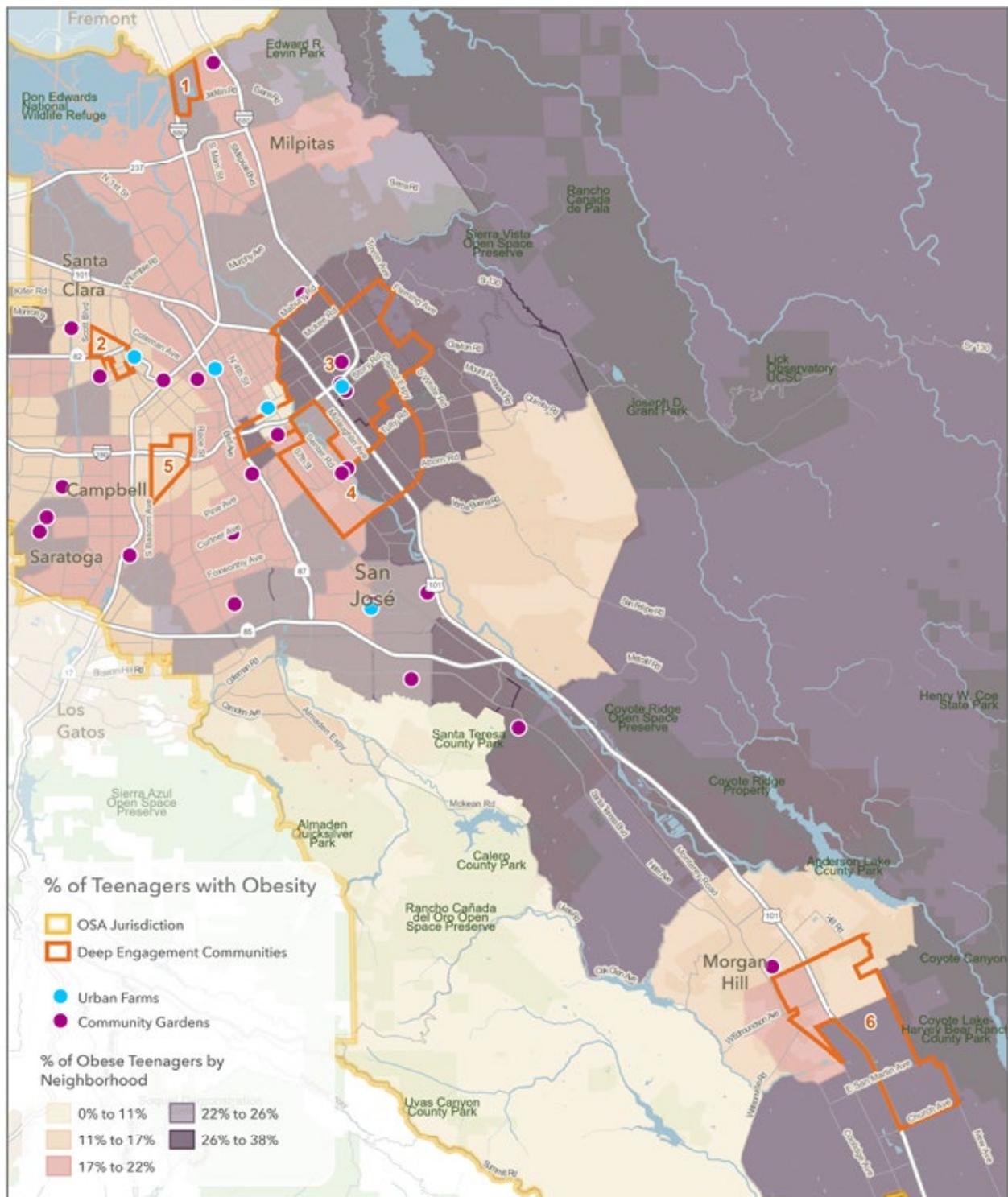


Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Santa Clara County (Neighborhood level data)
Updated 8/5/2020

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Map 11A. Childhood Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECs: Percentages of children considered obese relative to urban gardens, community farms, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

TEENAGE OBESITY RATES, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS



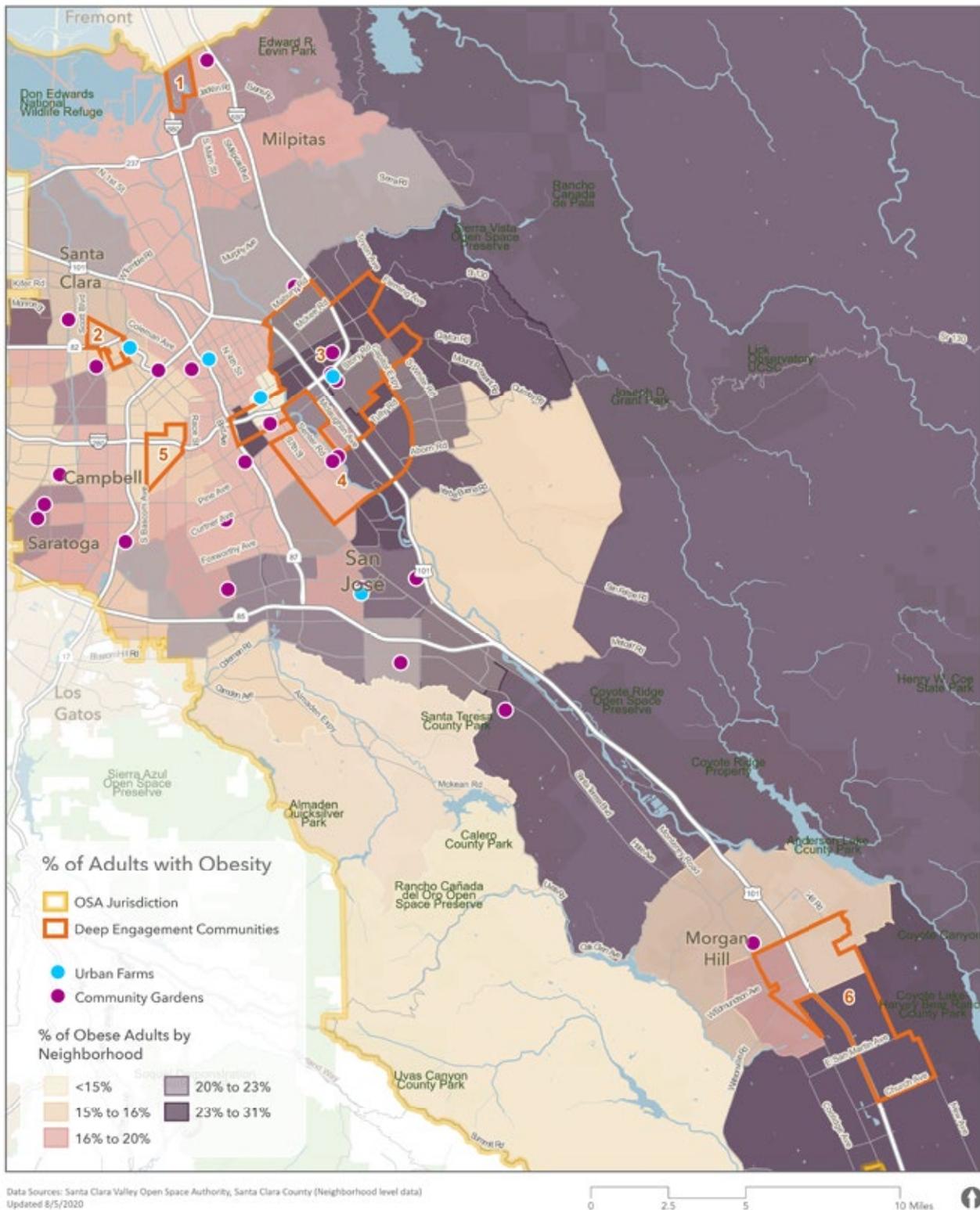
Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority; Santa Clara County (Neighborhood level data)
Updated 8/5/2020



Map 11B. Teenage Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECs: Distribution of teenagers considered obese relative to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

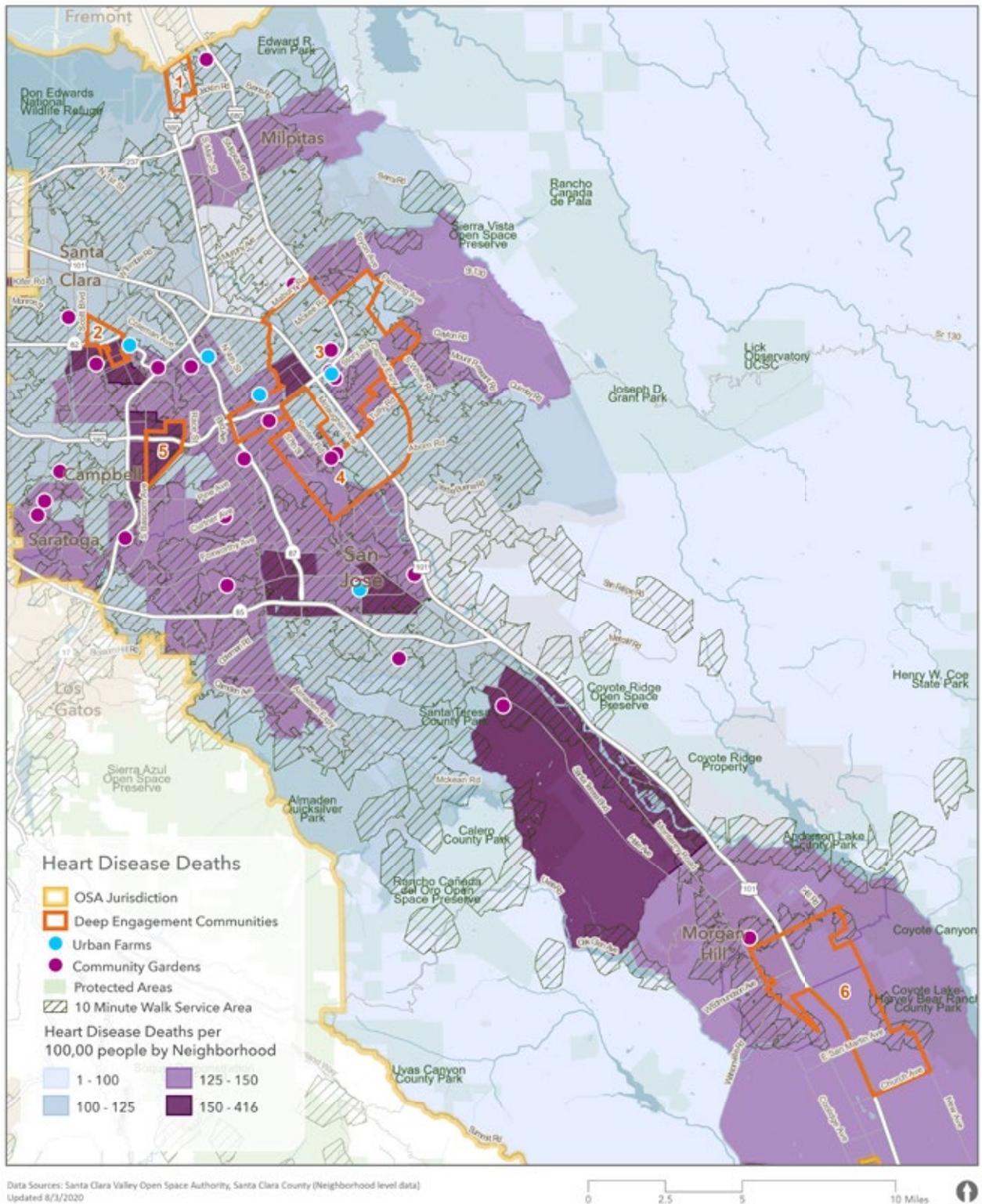
ADULT OBESITY RATES, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS

Map 11C



Map 11C. Adult Obesity Rates, Proximity to Urban Gardens/Community Farms, DECS: Distribution of adults considered obese relative to urban farms, community gardens, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

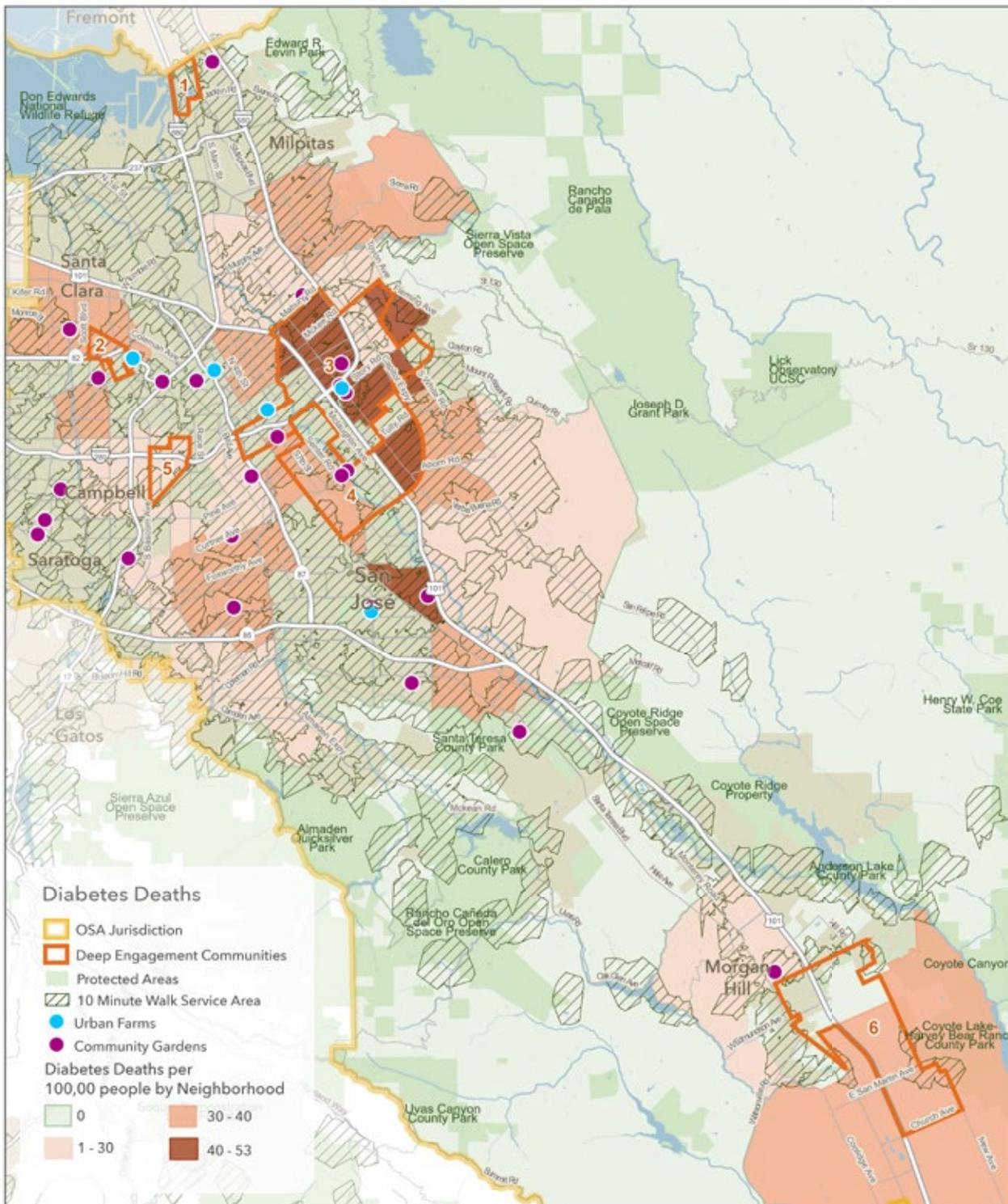
HEART DISEASE, OBESITY RATES, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS



Map 12A. Heart Disease, Proximity to Urban Farms/Community Gardens and Open Space: Distribution of heart disease deaths, per 100,000, people relative to urban farms, community gardens, protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

DIABETES, PROXIMITY TO COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN FARMS, DECS

Map 12B



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Santa Clara County (Neighborhood level data), Trust for Public Land (Service Areas), CPAD Updated 8/3/2020



Map 12B. Diabetes, Proximity to Urban Farms/Community Gardens and Open Space: Distribution of diabetes deaths, per 100,000 people, relative to urban farms, community gardens, protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

Category 4: Safety

Santa Clara County residents consider safety a top concern when thinking about visiting local parks, trails, and other natural spaces, as demonstrated in analysis in Phase I. Because of this, the lack of a sense of safety can create a significant barrier when it comes to accessing natural spaces. The Authority focused on two safety factors (that could be reflective of other factors across the region): vehicle/pedestrian and vehicle/bicycle injuries.

Questions We Asked

- Does access to nearby natural spaces correlate with vehicle/pedestrian injuries?
- Does access to dedicated bike lanes correlate with vehicle/bicycle injuries?
- Which areas need more resources to mitigate avoidable accidents caused by safety hazards?

Mapping the Data

Map 13:

13A: Vehicle/Pedestrian Deaths, Proximity to Open Space, DECs

13B: Vehicle/Bicycle Deaths or Injury, Proximity to Open Space, DECs

Relevant Grant Program Categories:

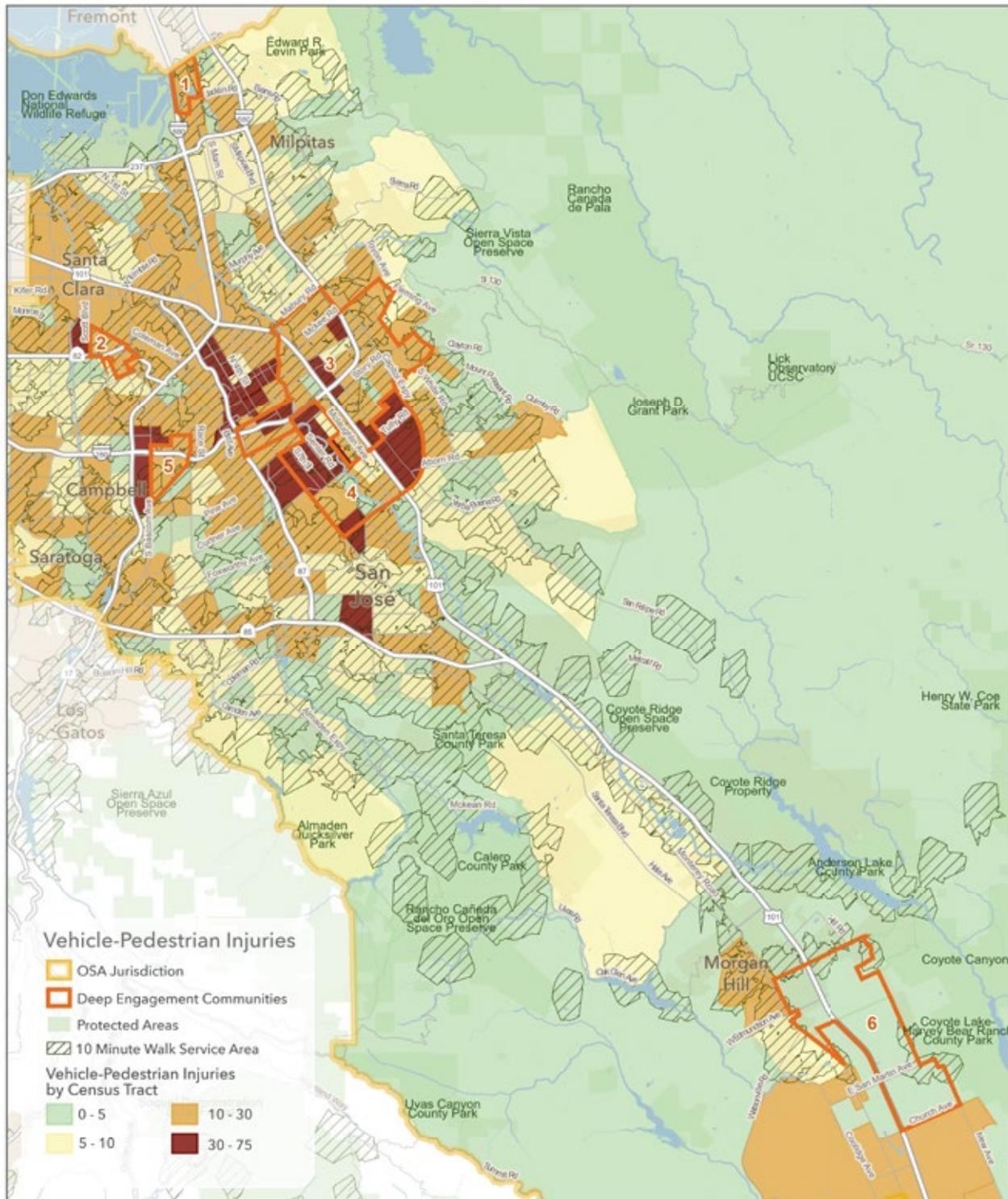
Parks, Trails, and Public Access

Analysis:

Maps 13A and 13B shows the distribution, by Census tract, of recorded vehicle-pedestrian injuries and vehicle-bicycle deaths or injuries and their proximity to the locations of protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries. While numerous factors contribute to the pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety, this data could be used when considering areas where resources are needed in order to lessen the frequency of dangerous collisions or other accidents.



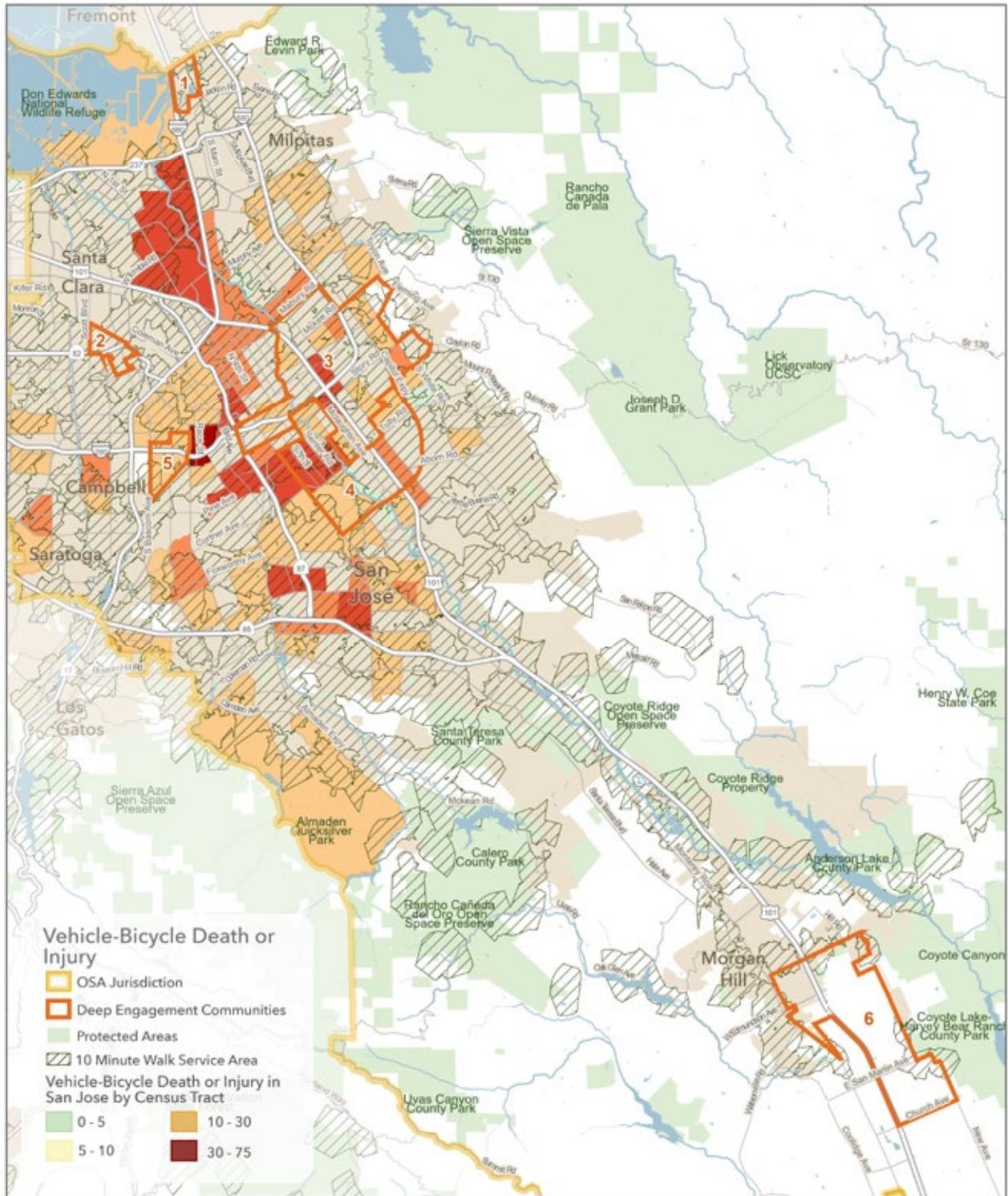
VEHICLE/PEDESTRIAN DEATHS, PROXIMITY TO OPEN SPACE, DECS Map 13A



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2015 (Census Tract), Trust for Public Land (Service Areas), CPAD
Updated 8/3/2020



Map 13A. Vehicle/Pedestrian Deaths, Proximity to Open Space, DECS: Distribution of recorded vehicle-pedestrian injuries relative to protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.



Data Sources: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, American Community Survey 2013-2015 (Census Tract)
Trust for Public Land (Service Areas), CPAD
Updated 8/3/2020



Map 13B. Vehicle/Bicycle Deaths or Injury, Proximity to Open Space, DECs: Distribution of recorded vehicle-bicycle deaths or injuries relative to protected areas, 10 Minute Walk Service Areas, and Deep Engagement Community boundaries.

Chapter 4: Access for All

New America Media

New America Media (NAM), a key Authority partner, leveraged their long-time relationships with ethnic media partners in the South Bay, and convened a focus group luncheon aimed at gathering qualitative data on park and open space needs and barriers among diverse South Bay communities. The media professionals were asked to provide feedback that could inform this report and, subsequently, the Authority’s community engagement and Urban Grant Program. Input from the attendees of NAM’s lunch convening and the subsequent on-line survey is detailed below in the designated categories.

Roundtable Feedback and Online Survey Results

Topic: Parks

Summary of Feedback:

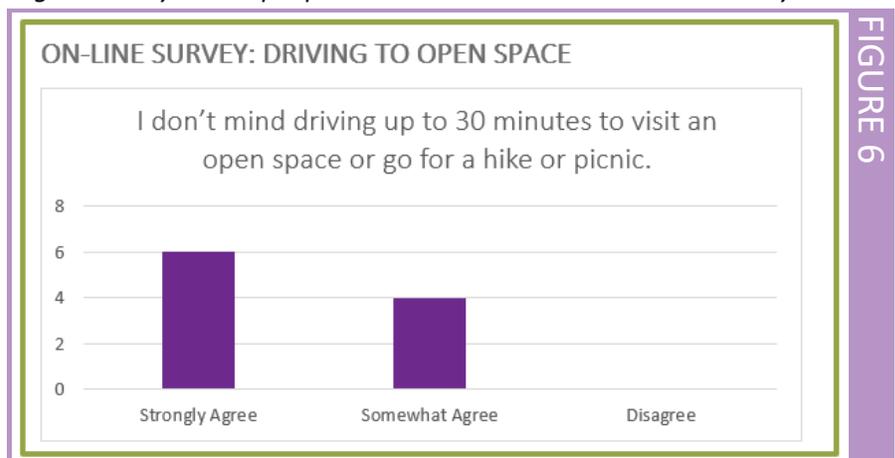
- **Gatherings:** Urban parks are places to be with family and friends. Unfortunately, many people do not have access to nearby parks and don’t take advantage of these opportunities like they did as children.
- **Photo Ops:** Unique park features for photo ops and free wi-fi would enable young people to share their experiences through social media.
- **Awareness:** Trails must be publicized, including difficulty levels and distances.

Direct Quotes:

“Many of my life-long memories in parks are around birthday parties in urban parks – this is really common. For me, hiking and getting outside to preserves outside the city came later, that wasn’t part of my childhood. This is why urban parks—accessible urban parks—are so valuable to my community.” - El Observador, Focus Group

“People drive so much, commutes are so long in the Bay Area—people don’t want to add to the amount they drive by getting in the car on the weekends.” - India Currents, Focus Group

“For me, it’s not about proximity. Young people will get there somehow if there’s enough of a draw. You need some kind of landmark, a photo-op. Then people can ‘check-in’ to the place on social media and show it off to their friends. Another idea for getting more people into open space/parks is to have art from artists from an ethnic background, then people want to go there and see the art and take photos with it.” - Philippine News, Focus Group



Topic: Creek Trails

Summary of Feedback:

- **Amenities:** Restrooms, lighting, benches, and free wi-fi would all be helpful for making trails more comfortable to people.
- **Awareness:** Trails must be publicized, including difficulty levels and distances.
- **Connections:** The ability to use trails to get places people need to go would be valued.

Direct Quotes:

"I've never used a creek trail. I prefer to go somewhere outside the city when I can. But I think people are scared they'll get lost." - Philippine News, Focus Group

"More bike paths and skate parks, with connectivity of course! It's hard to keep teenagers and cell phones apart, connected is the key, so give them that and get them out there, leave the rest to Mother Nature." - Siliconeer Magazine, On-line Survey

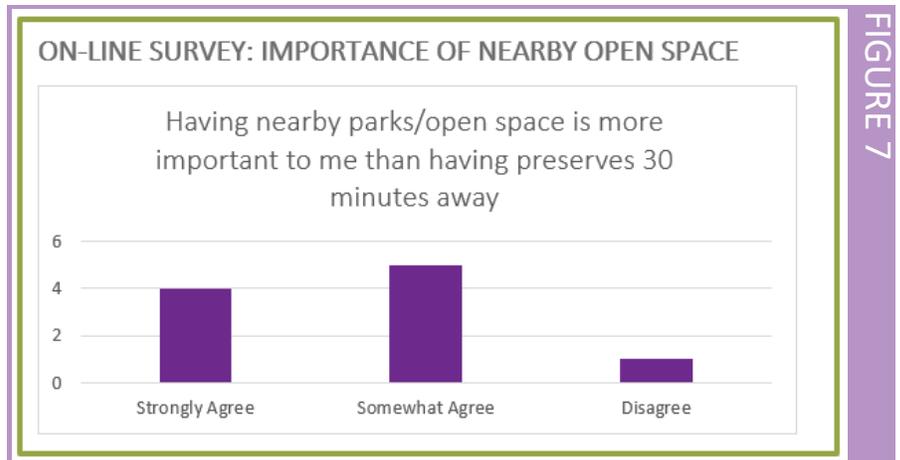


FIGURE 7

Topic: Safety

Summary of Feedback:

- **Lighting:** The lack of lighting is a major concern and must be considered in park and trail design.
- **Familiarity:** Unmarked paths, fear of getting lost, and remote areas that feel threatening are all concerns that need to be addressed through increased safety measures, signage, and on-site programming.
- **Strangers and Crime:** Many people are concerned about encountering strangers or experiencing crime and theft in parks, on trails, or in parking lots. Spaces must feel safe, whether that's with visible security or neighborhood watch-type groups. Safety is a critical factor in decision making.

Direct Quotes:

"Safety is a huge concern. In the past, safety has kept me from taking my kids to certain parks." - El Observador, Focus Group

"Well, now it is the fear of hate crimes. Our single biggest concern is finding our loved ones in trouble because some stranger decides 'this is not their country and that they need to go back to their country' and harms them. What really needs to be done is to ensure safety and assistance quickly in the event something unfortunate happens." - Siliconeer Magazine, On-line Survey

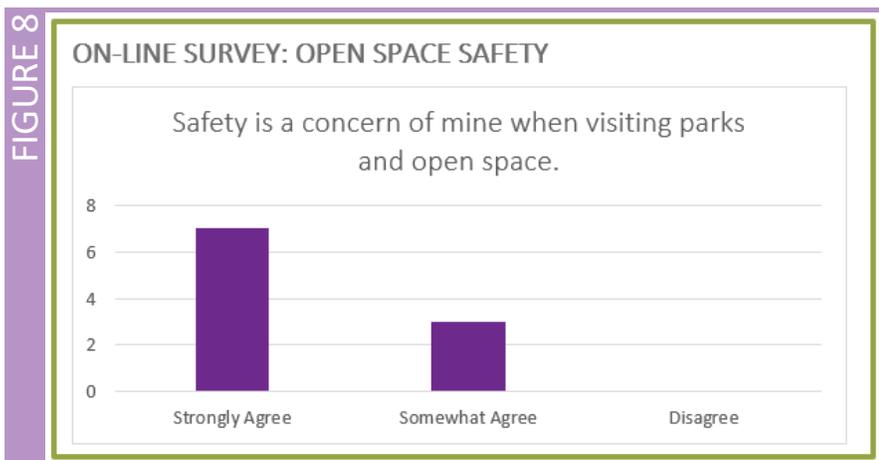


FIGURE 8

"Health is so important—safe places to walk should be available for everyone, for health reasons." - India Currents, Focus Group

Topic: Community Gardens

Summary of Feedback:

- **Awareness:** Location of community gardens needs to be advertised to communities.
- **Community Engagement:** Classes, events, and community-related programming will attract residents. Display local artwork, invite the

community to visit.

- **Community Ownership:** The community should be involved in the planning process (i.e. design plans, management, and oversight).
- **Families:** Incorporate water features or other interactive activities for kids (i.e. painting murals, creating tiles). When kids are involved, families will continue to come.
- **Health:** Gardening helps with both physical and mental health. Spread the word about these benefits to all ages.
- **Benches:** Provide benches for multi-generational families to visit gardens together.
- **Parking:** Lack of parking is a deterrent.

Direct Quotes:

“It’s important to make all gardens learning places. Chinese people have a huge interest in gardening. For example, I have a weekly gardening radio show with a hotline, and lots of people call in every week.” - Sound of Hope Radio, Focus Group

“Diabetes is a huge issue in the Latino community. With gardens, you can engage young people in healthy eating and build good habits from early stages.” - El Observador, Focus Group

Topic: Environmental Education

Summary of Feedback:

- **Water:** Field trips and programming should include opportunities to learn about water—where it comes from, how it’s managed, and how to conserve it.
- **School partnerships-** Offering field trips and school-time programming is very important. We need to reach kids when they’re young. Partnering with schools is a more systematic way to approach this.
- **Families:** Support organizations that have family engagement strategies. For example, programs and field trips that provide incentives for kids to return with their families are more likely to build habits for repeat visits and more outdoor experiences.
- **Incentives and creativity:** Embrace the interests of the new generation by providing contests, goals, and rewards in programs at parks and along trails. Contests could be focused around writing or drawing to encourage creativity in the outdoors.
- **Locally focused:** Lessons about local plants and wildlife are relevant. Kids get excited when they identify a local bird or flower.
- **Community-specific programming:** Offering regular environmental education segments on ethnic community media could be combined with periodic on-site events (i.e. at a park or community garden). Bi-lingual programming could be offered.

Direct Quotes:

“Health is really important— we are battling technology and gadgets to keep kids healthy. That’s why it’s so important to expose them to nature at an early age, so they have an appreciation and respect for the outdoors and for exercise.” - El Observador, Focus Group

“The challenge is to entice kids away from their gadgets. It takes 90 days to build a habit. One way to build a habit is through reoccurring events.” - Manila Mail, Focus Group

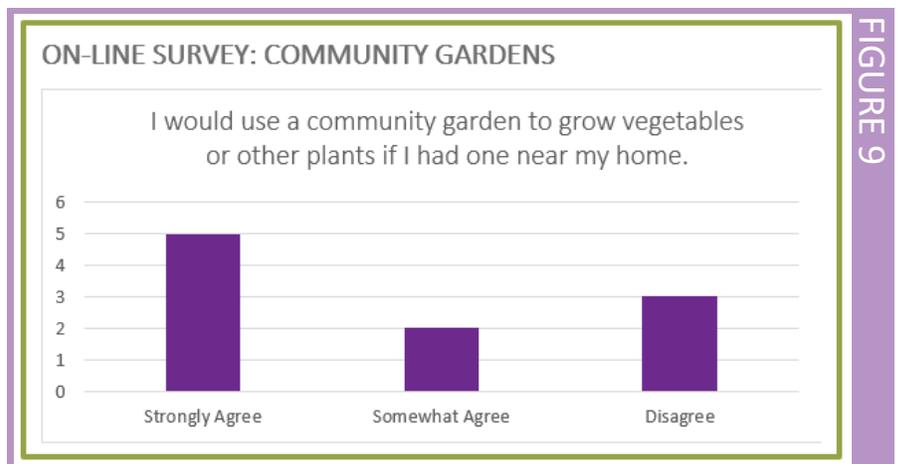


FIGURE 9



Chapter 5: Urban Biodiversity

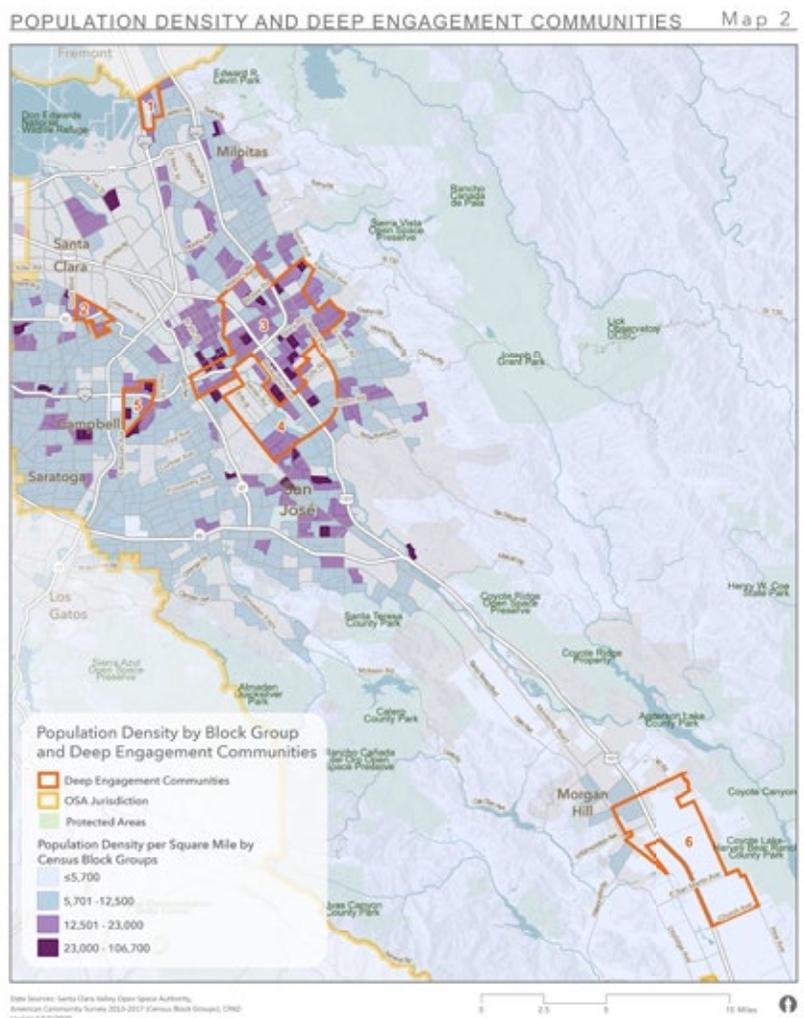
Designing Urban Open Space for People and Nature

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority partnered with the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) to create a guide for supporting biodiversity across the urbanized landscape of Santa Clara Valley. As the Authority and its partners design and implement urban greening projects, and when combined with data from this report, the Urban Ecological Planning Guide will support a more coordinated effort to build greater benefits for biodiversity while supporting the health and vibrancy of our local communities.

[The Urban Ecological Planning Guide for Santa Clara Valley](#) integrates urban ecology, landscape history and analysis of local setting, to support the design, placement and implementation of projects to build biodiversity in urban Santa Clara Valley. Intended for a broad audience, this report can help public agencies, nonprofits, city planners, and others design projects with ecology in mind.

The guide outlines approaches to coordinate and implement projects across land uses and stakeholders--at the site scale and programmatic level. It identifies how to use historical and contemporary information to select habitat goals, provides locally relevant plant lists, and highlights other factors that may impact plant selection and sourcing, such as climate change and plant pathogens.

“Like most cities, the urbanized region of Santa Clara Valley is a challenging place for plants and animals to make a home. Largely covered with pavement, crisscrossed by major freeways, and



Map 2. Population Density and DEC Proximity to Protected Areas: Population density across the Authority’s jurisdiction relative to Deep Engagement Community boundaries and protected areas. See Page 15 for full map and description.

fragmented by a variety of land uses, the urban landscape creates barriers to the movement of wildlife and hostile environments for plants. While a small set of species tolerant of cities (such as pigeons and raccoons) can tolerate these difficult conditions, our cities have the potential to support much greater biodiversity.” - Excerpt from the Urban Ecological Planning Guide (Hagerty et al. 2019)

As the Authority and its partners undertake new urban open spaces for people to enjoy, this guide can support efforts to simultaneously enhance biodiversity. Whether we are designing or planning rain gardens beside roadways; green roofs or green schoolyard; bike trails with vegetated medians; riparian vegetation along stream corridors; or landscaping in corporate campuses, municipal parks and private gardens, biodiversity can be achieved along with primary goals such as public enjoyment, storm-water capture, public safety, shade, education, or beautification. For example, wildflower plantings along bike trail medians can offer commute safety and habitat for native insects; schoolyard trees can shade students and provide acorns for birds and squirrels; and stream re-vegetation can provide a quiet place for people to enjoy while strengthening corridors for regional species movement.

Strategically designing these features to advance ecological benefits and, where possible, coordinating across the landscape, can provide value for humans and nature alike. The guide can be used to envision the ecological potential for individual urban greening projects, and to guide their siting, design and implementation. It also can be used to guide coordination of projects across the landscape with the cooperation of a group of stakeholders (such as multiple agencies, cities and counties). The guide is not intended to inform all aspects of site-specific planning. Rather, it is intended as a companion to existing materials to inform a broader vision of how such site-scale projects can fit into the larger fabric of the Santa Clara Valley landscape.

Some of the specific information and resources found in the guide are:

- **Local Setting:** the ecological patterns prior to extensive development and how they have changed over time (Chapter 1).
- **Coordinated Planning and Implementation:** an outline of approaches for coordinating projects to support biodiversity across the landscape on a project and programmatic level (Chapter 2).
- **Planting Considerations:** historical and contemporary information to select habitat goals, provide plant lists to guide the building of these habitats, and consider other factors that may impact plant selection and sourcing (Chapter 3).
- **Practical Considerations:** planning and policy considerations that may affect on-the-ground implementation (ranging from community input, approved species, infrastructure and site management) and supporting resources to address these (Chapter 4).



Chapter 6: Conclusion

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority is committed to working towards a future in which inclusion and accessibility are prioritized, and each and every member of the community feels welcome and safe in their natural spaces. The Authority recognizes that this work will require the recognition of injustices, past and present, that have directly or indirectly infiltrated environmental conservation efforts. Increasing access to nature, especially for those who face any of the barriers referenced in this report, is an undertaking that must be addressed through partnership, collaboration, and an openness to redefining what it means to be an environmentalist. The Authority is grateful for the community partners and leaders who have not only shown their support for this project but who have also committed to collaborating in new and innovative ways.

Through this report, the Authority hopes to provide new perspectives, spark new conversations, and fuel innovative ideas. Through the Urban Grant Program, the Authority continues to invest in the innovators and leaders in the community who are walking-the-walk and creating positive change. Through the agency's various community engagement and strategic partnership plans, staff can continue to ask, "Who is not at the table right now, and how can we change that?" Through the work of the administrative team, opportunities continue to be provided for staff to consider how these values are being reflected through their day-to-day work, and where there are areas for improvement. Only through working to better understand our community can we effectively work towards helping build a better community, for all.

