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Environmental Justice

The Environmental Justice Element establishes environmental justice goals, policies, and implementation programs to ensure all members of the American Canyon community (i.e., residents, workers, business owners, local organizations, and visitors) regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and socio-economic status feel valued, safe, respected, included, and secure.

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Environmental Justice

The State of California defines Environmental Justice as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Fair treatment means that no group should bear a disproportionate share of negative environmental impacts caused by industrial, governmental, or commercial activities.

Historically—and continuing today—communities with lower incomes, less access to education, and higher proportions of minority residents often face greater exposure to environmental hazards. These disparities largely stem from land use policies and zoning regulations, such as placing residential areas next to industrial zones.

The Environmental Justice goals, policies, and implementation programs outlined in this Element are designed to address these longstanding systemic inequities.

Introduction

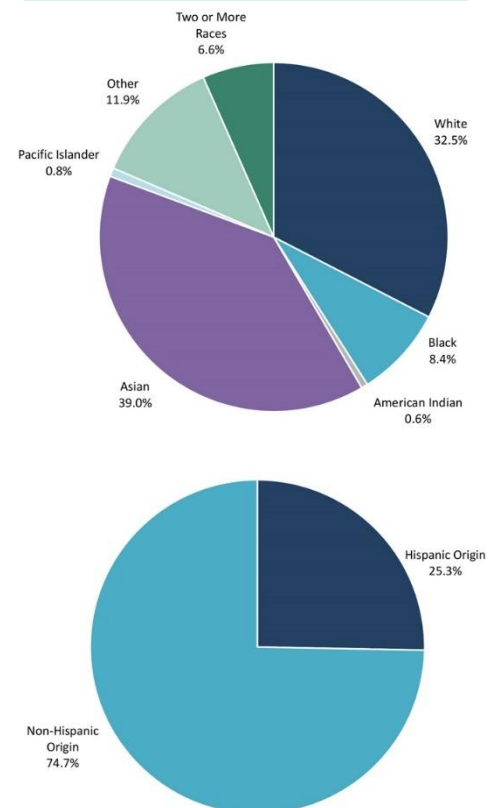
Legal Requirements

The Planning for Healthy Communities Act of 2016 (Senate Bill 1000) was enacted to promote environmental justice in local and regional planning. Under SB 1000, cities and counties must identify “disadvantaged communities” within their planning areas and include related goals and policies in their general plans. These environmental justice provisions may be integrated throughout the general plan or presented as a separate element. The City of American Canyon chose to create a standalone element to address environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives, in accordance with state law. As of 2022, there are no disadvantaged communities within American Canyon.

In addition, Government Code Section 65302.10 requires general plans to identify and analyze Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs) located outside city boundaries but within or adjacent to a city’s sphere of influence (SOI). DUCs are defined as inhabited unincorporated areas with at least 10 housing units and a median household income below 80 percent of the statewide median. As of 2022, there are no DUCs within or adjacent to American Canyon’s SOI.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

The city is home to a variety of races and cultures. Diversity is the representation of different groups, and in American Canyon no single US Census-reported race category makes up more than 40 percent of the local population total. About four in ten residents are Asian, three in ten are White, and almost one in ten are Black. About one quarter of residents’ report being ethnically Hispanic.



Source: US Census, 2019

Relationship to Other General Plan Goals, Policies, and Implementation Programs

Household Income Distribution

The 2019 median household income in American Canyon was about \$99,400, 12 percent higher than the Napa County median income of \$88,500. The median income in American Canyon grew by an average of about 2.4 percent per year over the past decade, a rate comparable to inflation in the economy.

By 2019, over 23 percent of American Canyon households had an annual income in the range of \$100,000 to \$149,999, compared to 19 percent countywide. About seven percent have an annual income below \$25,000, compared to nearly 10 percent in Napa County as a whole.

State law requires that the General Plan—and each of its individual elements—together constitute an “integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of policies.” The goals, policies, and programs of this Justice Element align with and build upon those in other elements of the General Plan.

This Element aims to reduce health risks in American Canyon by implementing strategies such as limiting pollution exposure, improving air quality, and supporting access to public facilities, nutritious food, safe and sanitary housing, and opportunities for physical activity. It also seeks to promote civic engagement in public decision-making and prioritize investments and programs that meet both current and future community needs.

Many existing policies across other General Plan elements already address environmental justice and help enhance the quality of life for American Canyon residents. EJ-Table 1 below outlines these relevant policies. The Environmental Justice Element builds on this foundation by identifying gaps and introducing additional goals, policies, and programs to ensure the General Plan fully reflects the needs of the community.

EJ-Table 1: Policies in Other Elements Supporting Environmental Justice Efforts

Policy Number	Policy Title	Page Number
Civic Engagement		
LU-15.7	Community Outreach	LU-33
U-8.1	Recycling Education and Information	U-17
ENV-6.6	Public Input	ENV-24
S-1.6	Public Training	S-10
S-1.7	Public Awareness	S-10
S-5.5	Safe Use and Disposal	S-28
S-7.13	Climate Change Impact Outreach	S-34
S-7.14	Monitoring	S-34
Pollution Exposure		
LU-5.3	Truck Access	LU-20
ENV-11.1	Regional Air Quality Efforts	ENV-38
S-5.4	Storage and Disposal	S-28
S-5.2	Cleanup Sites	S-28

EJ-Table 1: Policies in Other Elements Supporting Environmental Justice Efforts

Policy Number	Policy Title	Page Number
Physical Activity		
LU-1.4	Compact Development Pattern	LU-15
MOB-1.7	Promote Walking and Bicycling	M-30
Public Facilities and Services		
ENV-5.5	American Canyon Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Plans.	ENV-18
ENV-5.10	Urban Trails	ENV-18
ENV-6.3	Park System	ENV-24
ENV-10.10	Active Transportation	ENV-36
ENV-11.9	Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans	ENV-39
LU-7.1	Adequate Public Facilities	LU-22
MOB-1.24	Bicycle Facilities	M-32
MOB-1.25	Street Trees	M-32
S-1.2	Critical Facilities	S-10
Land Use and Development		
MOB-1.11	Reduce the Need to Drive	M-30
MOB-1.23	Pedestrian Connections to Employment Destinations	M-32
ENV-6.2	Parks Master Plan	ENV-24
LU-5.4	Industrial Operations	LU-20
LU-5.5	Prevent Adverse Impacts	LU-20
LU-12.14	Industrial Performance Standards	LU-30
ENV-1.6	Urban Forest	ENV-7
ENV-11.3	Separate Sensitive Land Uses	ENV-38
MOB-6.4	Location of Industrial Development	M-42
Managing Environmental Concerns		
ENV-5.12	Climate Adaptation	ENV-19
S-7.9	Resilient Hubs	S-34
LU-10.13	Climate Change Adaptation	LU-27
ENV-9.1	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions	ENV-34
ENV-9.5	Vehicle Miles Travelled Reduction	ENV-35
Infrastructure Accessibility, Design, and Maintenance		
LU-2.5	Active Transportation	LU-16
LU-10.14	Safe Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility	LU-27
MOB-1.5	Sidewalks	M-30
MOB-1.22	Non-motorized Circulation System	M-32
MOB-2.3	Bicycle Safety	M-34
U-2.3	Retrofits Existing Buildings	U-8

EJ-Table 1: Policies in Other Elements Supporting Environmental Justice Efforts

Policy Number	Policy Title	Page Number
ENV-6.1	Park Standards	ENV-24
ENV-6.13	Park Accessibility	ENV-25
Health and Safety		
MOB-2.1	Vision Zero	M-34
MOB-2.5	Speeds on Residential and Arterial Streets	M-34
Safe and Sanitary Housing		
LU-10.11	Property Maintenance Programs	LU-26
U-9.6	Residential Energy Efficiency	U-20
ENV-10.4	Energy Retrofit Program	ENV-36
S-2.3	Retrofit Strategy	S-16
S-2.9	Property and Building Improvements	S-17

Source: City of American Canyon, 2023.

Background

California law defines “disadvantaged communities” as areas disproportionately affected by a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens—factors that contribute to lower quality of life and heightened health risks. To assist in identifying these communities at the local level, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) recommends using the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen).

CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Methodology

Developed by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the CalEnviroScreen tool identifies disadvantaged communities across California. The latest version, CalEnviroScreen 4.0—released in October 2021—was used to inform the development of this Element. It evaluates census tracts using 20 indicators drawn from environmental, health, and socioeconomic data. These indicators are organized into four categories, which are then combined into two overarching data groupings. See EJ-Table 2.

Pollution Burden

- **Environmental Effects Indicators.** Based on the locations of toxic chemicals in or near communities.
- **Exposure Indicators:** Based on measurements of different types of pollution that people may encounter.

Population Characteristics

- **Socioeconomic Factor Indicators.** Based on conditions that may increase peoples' stress or make healthy living difficult and cause them to be more sensitive to pollution effects.
- **Sensitive Populations.** Based on conditions that measure the number of people in a community who may be more affected by pollution because of their age or underlying health.

EJ-Table 2: CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Indicators

Pollution Burden	
Exposure Indicators	Environmental Effect Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ozone Concentrations • PM2.5 Concentrations • Diesel PM Emissions • Drinking Water Contaminants • Children's Lead Risk from Housing • Pesticide Use • Toxic Releases from Facilities • Traffic Impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanup Sites • Groundwater Threats • Hazardous Waste • Impaired Water Bodies • Solid Waste Sites and Facilities
Population Characteristics	
Sensitive Populations Indicators	Socioeconomic Factor Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma Emergency Department Visits • Cardiovascular Disease (Heart Attacks) • Low Birth Weight Infants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Attainment • Housing Burdened Low-Income Households • Linguistic Isolation • Poverty • Unemployment

Source: California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen 4.0), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), 2022.

To identify potential disadvantaged communities, CalEnviroScreen assigns each census tract a percentile ranking that reflects the level of environmental and socioeconomic burden relative to other tracts across the state. This ranking is calculated by combining indicator scores, as shown in EJ-Table 2. Generally, a higher CalEnviroScreen score indicates greater pollution exposure and population vulnerability. For instance, a tract in the 80th percentile ranks among the top 20 percent of most burdened areas statewide. Communities scoring in the top 25 percent (with overall CalEnviroScreen percentile scores of 75 or higher) are designated as disadvantaged.

Census Tracts in American Canyon

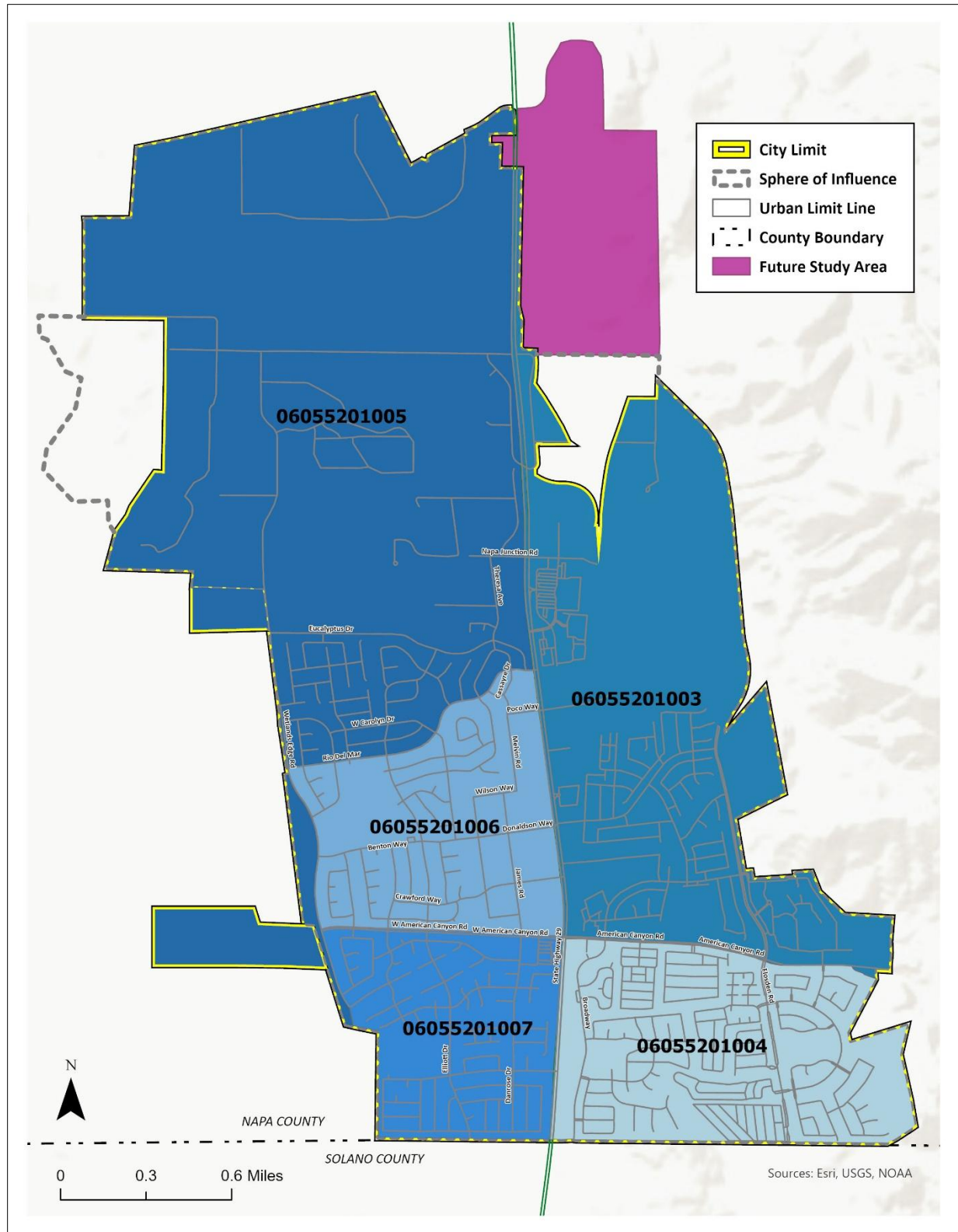
The American Canyon planning area includes five census tracts. Census tracts are geographic units used to collect and report population data. Some align with city boundaries, while others fall entirely within unincorporated county areas—or span both. Of the five census tracts in the planning area, three include portions of unincorporated Napa County. See EJ-Table 3, below, and EJ-Figure 1.

EJ-Table 3: American Canyon Census Tracts

Census Tract	Census Tract Location	
	Entirely Within SOI	Within City SOI and County
6055201003		X
6055201004		X
6055201005		X
6055201006	X	
6055201007	X	

Source: United States Census Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) 2020 database, 2022.

EJ-Figure 1: American Canyon Census Tracts



Environmental Justice in American Canyon

Disadvantaged Communities

Disadvantaged communities are those with an overall CalEnviroScreen 4.0 percentile score of 75 or higher (the highest 25 percent of census tracts across California).

Disadvantaged Community Analysis

Based on 2019 data, none of the census tracts in American Canyon fall at or below the statewide median household income¹. As shown in EJ-Table 4 and EJ-Figure 2, no census tracts in the planning area received an overall CalEnviroScreen percentile score at or above the 75th percentile—indicating that there are no designated disadvantaged communities within the city or its Planning Area.

Census tracts 6055201003 and 6055201005 had the highest CalEnviroScreen scores—62 and 63, respectively. As illustrated in Figure EJ-1, these tracts cover large areas outside the city limits and include industrial zones near Napa Airport as well as vineyards northeast of the city.

In contrast, census tracts 6055201004, 6055201006, and 6055201007—which are confined to areas within American Canyon’s city limits and the open space east of the La Vigne neighborhood—received the lowest scores, with an average CalEnviroScreen score of 31.

EJ-Table 4: American Canyon CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Score Overview

Census Tract	Pollution Burden Percentile	Population Characteristics Percentile	Overall CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Score
6055201003	74	48	62
6055201004	8	45	24
6055201005	73	50	63
6055201006	14	46	30
6055201007	13	63	39

Source: California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen 4.0), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), 2022.

¹ California’s median income for 2019 was \$41,870 Source: State of California Franchise Tax Board

Pollution Burden

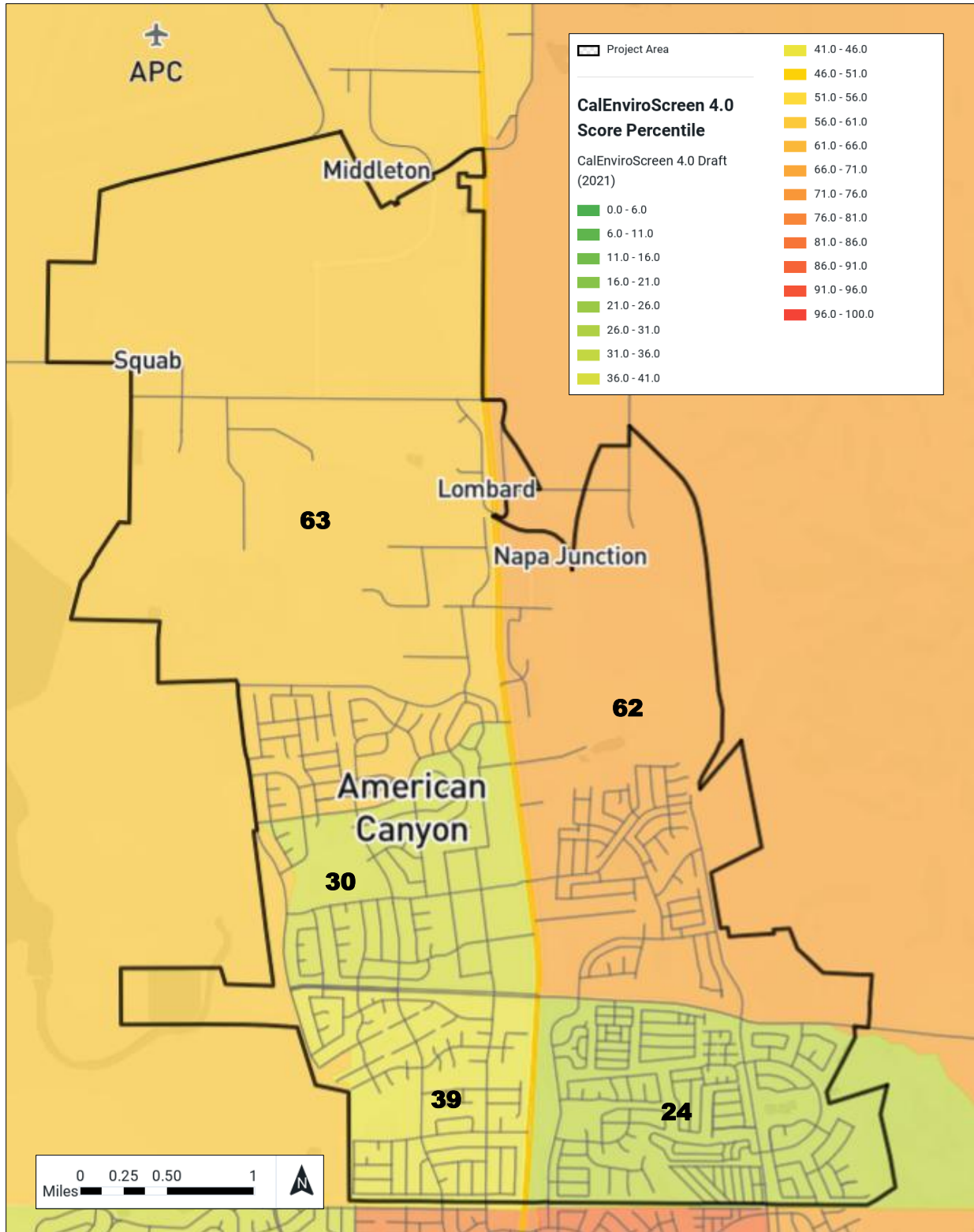
EJ-Table 4 presents the CalEnviroScreen pollution burden scores for each census tract within the American Canyon planning area. These scores are calculated based on a range of pollution exposure and environmental indicators that reflect potential risks in the surrounding environment (see EJ-Table 2 for a list of indicators).

Encouragingly, none of the census tracts in American Canyon received a pollution burden percentile score at or above the 75th percentile. Tracts with the lowest pollution burden are located primarily within the city, while the highest scoring tracts are situated in the northern areas that extend beyond the city limits into unincorporated Napa County. See EJ-Figure 2.

Population Characteristics

EJ-Table 4 presents the CalEnviroScreen population characteristics burden scores for all census tracts within the American Canyon planning area. These scores are based on a variety of indicators related to sensitive populations and socioeconomic conditions. Many of these factors—such as lower educational attainment, linguistic isolation, poverty, unemployment, and housing burden—are linked to increased risks of health issues like asthma, low birth weight, and cardiovascular disease (see EJ-Table 2 for a full list of indicators). None of the census tracts in American Canyon received a population characteristics burden score at or above the 75th percentile.

EJ-Figure 2: Overall CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Scores







Goals and Policies²


This section outlines goals and policies designed to ensure that all members of the American Canyon community—including residents, workers, business owners, local organizations, and visitors—feel valued, safe, respected, included, and secure, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status.

Goal EJ-1: Affordable Housing

Support equal and fair access to affordable housing options for all residents.

Policies



- EJ-1.1:** **Affirmatively Further Fair Housing.** Promote and affirmatively further fair housing policies and programs. 
- EJ-1.2:** **Review and Update of Housing Policies.** Periodically review and update, as necessary, local housing policies and procedures to ensure they do not pose impediments to furthering fair housing. 
- EJ-1.3:** **Housing Affordability and Access.** Support the development and preservation of affordable housing throughout the city for a variety of income levels. 
- EJ-1.4:** **Housing Element Implementation.** Support implementation of the Housing Element policies to address equal and fair access to affordable housing options for all residents. 

² Sustainable policies are noted with a green leaf. 

Goal EJ-2: Health and Safety

Ensure residents have healthy and safe living conditions.




Policies

- EJ-2.1:** **Education and Awareness.** Support and expand education programs that increase awareness among residents about property maintenance and neighborhood quality standards. 
- EJ-2.2:** **Safe and Sanitary Housing.** Through implementation of the Housing Element, the City shall provide standards for development that promote safe and sanitary housing. 
- EJ-2.3:** **Housing Support Services.** Through implementation of the Housing Element, continue support for regional and nonprofit agency efforts that provide housing support services.

Goal EJ-3: Land Use Equity

Ensure all land use decisions benefit American Canyon residents and do not create a disproportionate burden to any resident based on location, income, race, color, educational status, or national origin.

Policies

- EJ-3.1:** **Environmental Justice Considerations.** Consider potential adverse health and safety impacts associated with land use decisions and reduce negative impacts on residents from hazardous materials, industrial activities, facility locations, and design features. 
- EJ-3.2:** **New Incompatible Land Uses.** Avoid the introduction of new incompatible land uses and consider the potential impacts of adding uses with environmental hazards into existing residential areas. 
- EJ-3.3:** **Environmental Protection.** Evaluate and implement environmental protection measures within the City's authority that support equitable treatment of all neighborhoods. 

- EJ-3.4:** **Capital Improvements.** When preparing a Capital Improvement Program, consider reducing existing infrastructure deficiencies in lower-income neighborhoods. 🌿
- EJ-3.5:** **Vision Zero Mobility.** Support and fund a Local Road Safety Program that evaluates priority measures to improve the safety of trails and streets in all areas of the city. 🌿
- EJ-3.6:** **Accessible Pathways.** Implement a city-wide accessibility plan to improve accessible pathways throughout the city. 🌿
- EJ-3.7:** **Combat Heat Island Impacts.** Consider the addition of trees in new street and trail construction to reduce the heat island impacts of new paved surfaces. 🌿

Goal EJ-4: Policy Inclusiveness

Support meaningful and inclusive participation of all community members in the decision-making process.

Policies

- EJ-4.1:** **Accessibility to City Events.** Schedule City events using different days, times, and formats (i.e., virtual and digital accessibility) to encourage and facilitate participation among community members with work, school, and other obligations that conflict with more traditional scheduling. 🌿
- EJ-4.2:** **Innovative Communication.** Promote and implement new and innovative approaches to facilitate communication between members of the community and City-elected officials and staff members. 🌿
- EJ-4.3:** **Transparent Public Decision-Making.** Ensure transparent public decision-making processes through effective public outreach, engagement, and participation that is inclusive of socially disadvantaged individuals and groups. 🌿
- EJ-4.4:** **Leadership Development.** Promote and implement programs that educate local residents about the roles of each municipal department and local decision-making processes. 🌿

- EJ-4.5: Municipal Employee Recruitment.** Evaluate and implement “state of the art” employment recruitment procedures that reduce or eliminate opportunities for intrinsic bias in employment application and screening.
- EJ-4.6: Diverse Employment Opportunities.** Support measures to streamline the development review process to facilitate new development that will provide diverse employment opportunities from construction and ongoing business operations.
- EJ-4.7: Open and Inclusive Recreation.** Support municipal and private nonprofit recreation events that appeal to all segments of society.

Goal EJ-5: Healthy Environment

Ensure all residents have access to healthy foods, education, green spaces, and medical services.

Policies

- EJ-5.1: Community-Supported Agriculture.** Support community-supported agriculture/food production, such as community gardens and cottage food operations. 🌱
- EJ-5.2: Acceptance of Government-Issued Vouchers.** Coordinate with farmers market vendors and local food retailers to continue to accept payment through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), which allows residents in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to purchase food with their program benefits. 🌱
- EJ-5.3: Access to Community Assets.** Identify and address gaps in access to residential, commercial, recreation facilities, natural open space areas, and physical and mental health resources, to help ensure that these resources are equitably available to all residents. 🌱
- EJ-5.4: Integrated and Accessible Park System.** Continue to develop an integrated park system that is safe and accessible. 🌱




















Goal EJ-6: Education and Lifelong Learning

Support exceptional variety and quality of education and lifelong learning opportunities that reach community members throughout their lives.














Policies

- EJ-6.1:** **Joint Ventures.** Support policies, projects, and programs that facilitate shared use and joint development of resources with education providers and nonprofit organizations that provide recreational facilities, and cultural, intellectual, and artistic opportunities.
- EJ-6.2:** **Recreation as Education.** Seek opportunities to include educational lessons in recreation programs.
- EJ-6.3:** **Education Partnerships.** Support awareness of education and lifelong learning service providers who operate autonomously from the City.
- EJ-6.4:** **American Canyon Library.** Support policies, projects, and programs that recognize the American Canyon library as a central element in American Canyon’s citywide educational system.

Implementation Programs

Programs	Implements Which Policy(ies)	Responsible	2025 – 2030	2031 – 2035	2036 – 2040	Annual	Ongoing
		Supporting Department(s)					
A Implement Housing Element Policies Implement and enhance Housing Element goals and policies to ensure that future improvements in the environmental justice community do not result in a net loss of affordable housing or displacement of existing residents.	EJ-1.1 EJ-1.3 EJ-3.1  EJ-3.5  EJ-3.6 	Community Development <hr/> Planning Division					
B Review and Update Housing Related Policies Review and update, as necessary, local housing policies and programs to ensure they support and do not pose impediments to furthering fair housing.	EJ-1.1  EJ-1.2  EJ-3.1  EJ-3.3  EJ-3.4  H-5.16	Community Development <hr/> Planning Division					
C Establish Best Practices Explore and implement best practices for innovative housing options such as tiny homes, cooperatives, and community land trusts, that prioritize community ownership and support resident efforts to build intergenerational wealth.	EJ-1.1  EJ-1.2  EJ-1.3  H-5.12 H-7.1  H-7.2 H-7.3 H-7.4  H-7.5 H-7.6 H-7.7	Community Development <hr/> Planning Division					
D Educational Resources for Housing Maintain and update information on the City website that contains resources related to affordable housing, rental assistance, tenant rights, homeownership, homelessness services, and other special needs resources.	EJ-2.1  H-5.11 H-5.12	Community Development <hr/> Planning Division					
E Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Outreach The City shall prepare and use clear and inclusive outreach materials, expand media campaigns, and implement other strategies (i.e., translation services) to increase and advance racial, social, and environmental justice initiatives.	EJ-4.1 EJ-4.2 EJ-4.3	City Manager <hr/> Community Development					

8. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Programs	Implements Which Policy(ies)	Responsible	2025 – 2030	2031 – 2035	2036 – 2040	Annual	Ongoing
		Supporting Department(s)					
F Community Engagement The City shall prepare and implement programs that include new and innovative mechanisms to communicate and engage members of the community who are not typically active in civic issues to foster stronger relationships with the City such as mobile device surveys, community meetings, and community roundtables.	EJ-4.2 H-5.11 H-7.1 	City Manager <hr/> Community Development					
G Constraints to Healthcare Evaluate and remove local governmental constraints that might hinder the provision of high-quality healthcare services and resources are accessible and near residential neighborhoods.	EJ-3.7  EJ-5.1  EJ-5.3  H-3.5  H-3.6  H-7.4 	Community Development					
H Park and Open Space Access Establish procedures which encourage the development of urban open space and recreation opportunities such as plazas and public community gathering spaces provided by both non-residential and residential development.	EJ-5.1  EJ-5.4  H-3.5 	Parks Department <hr/> Community Development					

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