

# 2020 Annual Report



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**





Julia Murphy,  
Deputy Chief Sustainability Officer



Golda Obinzu,  
Energy Management Manager



Gloria Scherzinger,  
Executive Secretary



Minerva Defee,  
Climate Program Manager



Harley Hubbard,  
Sustainable Transportation Manager



Murray Myers,  
Municipal Sustainability Manager



Andra Nava-Garcia,  
Senior Analyst



T. Adil Chowdhury,  
Climate Advisor, NRDC



John Bailey,  
Climate Advisor, NRDC

• Fiscal support provided by: Cynthia Dittrich •



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Inside this Annual Report, you'll find 2020 highlights of SA Climate Ready initiatives in clean energy, transportation, the circular economy, biodiversity and ecosystem services, education and empowerment, and climate equity. For a deeper dive, please visit [sanantonio.gov/sustainability](http://sanantonio.gov/sustainability) and [sasustainability.com](http://sasustainability.com).

# Content Overview



## ●●● 2020 AT A GLANCE

In 2020, a year unprecedented in recent memory, the City of San Antonio faced a number of unforeseen challenges resulting in a focus on addressing longstanding inequities in our community. As legislators grappled with choices to provide the programs and services most needed by San Antonians, the alignment of these efforts with climate action came into sharp focus. Read on to discover how the strategies outlined in our City's first climate action and adaptation plan balance the environmental, economic, and equity concerns of our residents while future-proofing San Antonio for new opportunities and challenges that may arise. Building on many impactful projects, we've collectively accomplished much in 2020 and are committed to continuing the work. This progress report highlights a number of successful initiatives.

### San Antonio's Special Recognitions:

\* Read more on page 6



American Planning Association  
Texas Chapter

*Creating Great Communities for All*



**CitiesWithNature**

LOCAL & SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABILITY

**TEXAN**  **by**  
**NATURE**™



### A WORD FROM OUR CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, **DOUGLAS MELNICK**

“It is with a somber, but hopeful heart that we look forward to what comes next in 2021. The toll of COVID-19, racial injustice, and a struggling economy are still with us; but, we have accomplished a lot. What COVID-19 has shown us is that we, in fact, can act given the severity of the challenge, and climate change is such a challenge.

Our primary indicator in tracking our mitigation progress is our greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, and between 2016 and 2019, our community's GHGs remained flat. Despite the closure of Deely 1 and 2, we experienced population growth, increased energy consumption, and warmer temperatures. We knew that addressing the climate crisis was not going to be easy or an overnight fix. We can and will do better. As we re-enter the Paris Climate Agreement, let's all work together on the expeditious implementation of the SA Climate Ready Plan to create a San Antonio that is equitable, healthy, and environmentally and economically resilient.”

# PACE



PACE, or Property Assessed Clean Energy, is a financial tool that incentivizes property owners to upgrade facility infrastructure with low capital outlay. PACE enables building owners to lower operating costs and use the savings to pay for eligible water conservation, energy efficiency, resiliency, and distributed generation projects.

On March 5, 2020, the City Council unanimously adopted a Commercial PACE program and chose the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) as its administrator. The City's Economic Development Department is coordinating with the AACOG, and its consultant Texas PACE Authority, to rollout a series of workshops for the business community on education and awareness of the opportunities through PACE.

[LEARN MORE](#)





## SHARE THE STREETS

Public Works Department

COVID Stay Home, Work Safe policies led to dramatic drop in vehicle miles traveled and growth in walking and biking. In an effort to retain healthy levels of physical activity and social distancing, and following a trend that was happening in various cities around the world, we began identifying under-utilized street space that could be used to expand opportunities for safe outdoor activity. Share the Streets took elements from projects found in Oakland, California, Austin, Texas, and Denver, Colorado to create partially closed streets for a period of one month. The streets chosen for this pilot were Cincinnati Avenue and Cesar Chavez Boulevard. Neighborhoods on the westside were prioritized based on the city's emphasis on equity, and due to community support and connections to major destinations. The Share the Streets pilot is a means not an end. Moving forward, we should concentrate on interventions that will have the goal of increasing the safety of transportation for the residents of San Antonio.

## EVSA – ELECTRIC VEHICLES SAN ANTONIO

To escalate the procurement of EVs, Building & Equipment Services and the Office of Sustainability have been working to modernize the City's Sustainable Fleet Management Policy. Once in place, the policy will ensure that EVs are the preferred option for sedans, small SUVs, and other qualifying vehicles. The Office of Sustainability has continued to educate City employees and the San Antonio community on electric mobility through the EVSA campaign. Even when hosting in-person events was not a possibility, the Office of Sustainability hosted a series of webinars on topics such as electric vehicle ownership and the evolution of electric fleets.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, the City is expected to add electric vehicles to the administrative fleet and will be installing new publicly-accessible EV chargers around town.

## ●●● 2020 RECOGNITIONS

### SAN ANTONIO NAMED U.S. PIONEER IN CITIES WITH NATURE NETWORK

In May of 2020, on International Day for Biological Diversity, San Antonio was chosen to join 9 other U.S. cities and counties as Pioneers to the international 'CitiesWithNature' Platform, endorsed by the UN Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity as the official mechanism for local governments to share policies and committed actions to protect nature, prioritize nature-based solutions to climate change, account for ecosystem services, and make sure residents have easy access to nature and the outdoors. The designation highlights San Antonio's record of prioritizing investments that elevate and regenerate the beauty and livability of the community as well as protecting their natural assets.



Mayor Ron Nirenberg



San Antonio is proud to join CitiesWithNature as a Pioneer City. Established on the banks of the San Antonio River over 300 years ago, our city continues to thrive by respecting our abundant natural resources. We know that caring for nature is essential to a sustainable future, and have prioritized biodiversity, green infrastructure and healthy ecosystems in our SA Climate Ready, Climate Action & Adaptation Plan. We celebrate this initiative and look forward to working together as stewards of our planet.



### CARBON DISCLOSURE PROJECT A-LIST DESIGNATION



San Antonio was graded an A by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and placed on an exclusive A-list that features international cities that have established ambitious emissions reduction targets and have begun taking action. CDP is an international nonprofit that benchmarks companies, municipalities, and states by managing a global environmental disclosure system. Each year, thousands of companies, cities, states, and regions measure their risks and opportunities on climate change, water security, and deforestation, CDP takes the information supplied in its annual reporting process and scores companies and cities based on the progress towards their emissions reduction targets. The Office of Sustainability has been reporting since 2014, this is the first year we have received an A.

## ●●● 2020 RECOGNITIONS CONT.



The SA Climate Ready, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan was a recipient of the 2020 Resilience Achievement Award – Gold by the American Planning Association-Texas Chapter, which recognizes a strategy that increases the ability of a community to recover from and adapt to things such as natural disasters, human-caused disasters, and climate change.



The City of San Antonio Office of Sustainability was named a ‘Texan by Nature 20’ honoree in the municipal services sector. Texan by Nature (TxN) is a non-profit founded by former First Lady Laura Bush that works to bring conservation and business together for the benefit of people, economic prosperity, and natural resources.

## American Cities Climate Challenge

San Antonio’s participation in the American Cities Climate Challenge has spurred

implementation of strategies in the SA Climate Ready Plan. Due to the unprecedented challenges that arose in 2020, Challenge support is continuing into the first half of 2021 with a continued emphasis on building energy and transportation initiatives. Priorities include advancing policies to ensure equity, efficiency, and expanded choices for how we travel and power our homes and businesses.

## ●●● CLIMATE EQUITY



Equity means that our policymaking, service delivery, and distribution of resources account for the different histories, challenges, and needs of the people we serve. Climate equity ensures that these communities play a central role in the just transformation of the systems that have established, and continue to perpetuate, the unequal burden of climate impacts. In 2020, Office of Sustainability initiated the following projects, advancing our commitment to climate equity:

- Racial and climate equity training for all Office of Sustainability staff
- Facilitation and racial equity training for both the Climate Equity and Technical and Community Advisory Committee
- Mandatory SA Climate Ready web-based educational training for City leadership and staff that included a introduction to climate equity

In fiscal year 2021, the Office of Sustainability will launch a Department Equity Assessment with the Office of Equity, which includes the development of a two-year equity action plan.



## CLEAN AIR FOR KIDS!

The Clean Air for Kids! Program aims to improve ground-level air quality surrounding San Antonio schools by empowering students, parents, teachers, and district support operations to reduce and eliminate vehicle idling in and around school parking lots.

Clean Air for Kids! will continue to partner with more schools to provide free education services and outreach materials to improve air quality for San Antonio's school children.

For more information and to access free content, visit our website.

[WEBSITE](#)

## MUNICIPAL BENCHMARKING REPORT

With 22% of all municipal GHGs attributed to energy use in City-owned buildings, the City of San Antonio has taken the initiative of benchmarking around 300 buildings since 2011. We captured how the buildings are performing in the City's first Benchmarking Report for 2019, giving us the opportunity to assess how each building is performing compared to other buildings of similar use in San Antonio and in Texas.

The report demonstrates the City's commitment to transparency, regardless of whether the buildings are performing well or need attention. The City of San Antonio is leading by example. The City is also actively discussing the merits of benchmarking and disclosure with key stakeholders in order to adopt a citywide practice to compete with the high-performing building stock of other large cities.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## ●●● ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND

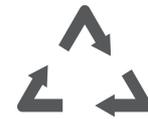
The Energy Efficiency Fund (EEF) was established by City Council in 2011 to fund energy conservation within municipal facilities that reduce utility expenditures. The fund was designed to receive utility saving dollars and utility rebates from completed energy projects. The Energy Efficiency Fund has completed 414 energy projects within 190 municipal facilities from fiscal year 2011 through fiscal year 2019. These projects have resulted in total cumulative avoided costs of \$1.6M. The fund has received over \$3.0M in CPS Energy rebates. [LEARN MORE](#)



**414 PROJECTS  
COMPLETED**



**\$1.6M  
COST SAVED**



**\$3.0M  
CPS REBATES**



## SA CLIMATE READY TRAINING UNDERWAY

Office of Sustainability has developed 3 training tracks to fortify City staff's knowledge of climate change and climate action in San Antonio. With a goal of challenging staff to consider ways they can personally and professionally participate in climate solutions, the City's Executive Leadership Team participated in 5 interactive learning webinars between November and January. Staff across the organization will also be participating in Delivery Teams to help deliver specific policy initiatives outlined in the SA Climate Ready Plan, including increasing carbon-free energy and reducing energy and transportation consumption. All City staff will begin a series of 5 mandatory climate training "bursts" through the City's Moodle training platform starting in February through June 2021.

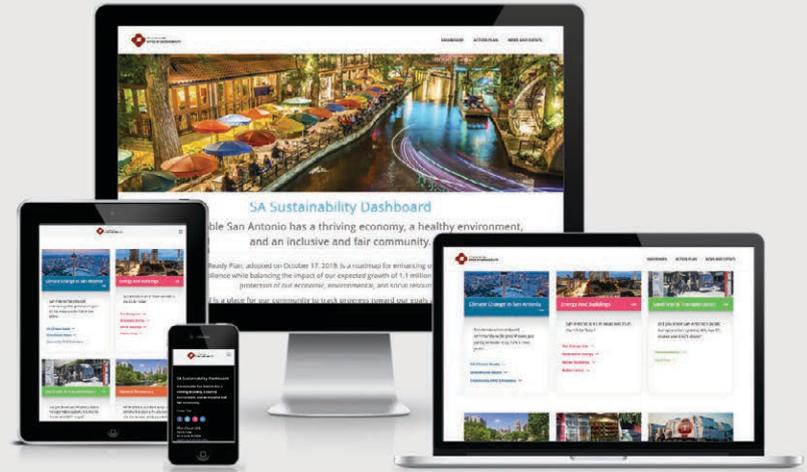


## ESTABLISHMENT OF CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The SA Climate Ready Advisory Committees were established to advise City staff and City Council on the implementation of the SA Climate Ready Plan as well as other long-term sustainability plans, and to ensure that implementation of all strategies continues to be centered on equity. On October 8, 2020, City Council approved the full slate of recommended candidates for both committees. The Committee members chosen have expertise in the following topics: energy, green buildings, transportation and mobility, food systems, land use, biodiversity, public health, neighborhoods, business and industry, higher education, military, and social/climate/racial justice.

Now that the committees have been established, they will be tasked with conducting research and providing feedback on implementation of the strategies in the SA Climate Ready Plan.

[LEARN MORE](#)



## WEBSITE + DASHBOARD

In 2020, the Office of Sustainability updated the information on the City website to more accurately reflect the themes surrounding our various initiatives, Municipal Sustainability, Sustainable Transportation, Community Sustainability, and Energy. Running parallel to the website update, the Office of Sustainability also revamped the SA Sustainability Dashboard to more closely reflect the contents of the SA Climate Ready, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, and provide updates on implementation.

City Website:

[SANANTONIO.GOV/SUSTAINABILITY](https://sanantonio.gov/sustainability)

Dashboard:

[SASUSTAINABILITY.COM](https://sasustainability.com)



## MAYOR'S YOUTH ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL FOR CLIMATE INITIATIVES

In the fall of 2020, the Mayor's Youth Engagement Council for Climate Initiatives (MYECCI) was launched, led by EcoRise. The inaugural council was set to have 25 students representing each council district; however, that number was increased to 32 due to the caliber and interest of local student applicants. The students are reading and dissecting SA Climate Ready, the Paris Agreement, and the UN's Sustainability Goals. They will also focus on the history of environmental justice and learn how to engage civically to advance community climate goals.

**ECORISE.ORG**



## CLIMATE IN THE CLASSROOM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

Through a partnership with EcoRise, experienced teachers and community partners have been invited to explore resources and student-driven grant opportunities that can be used to shape students' understanding of the causes and impact of climate change within their community. Through this interactive professional development series, local teachers are given the tools they need to help their students evaluate sustainability issues related to energy, transportation, waste, water, food, air, and public spaces to empower students to become a part of SA Climate Ready. In 2020, workshops were moved to a virtual format which allowed greater participation across the community.

## ● ● ● PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**PARKS & RECREATION**

### COMPASSION TREE PROJECT

Parks & Recreation Department

Led by the Parks and Recreation Department, and in coordination with the Compassion Tree Project core team, the Compassion Tree Project's main goal is to help return the Earth to its vibrancy by planting trees and greening local, regional, and national lands. In October of 2020, the City held an event at the headwaters of the San Antonio River, publicly planting trees as part of this global effort. Over 6,000 trees were planted in 2020.

▶ [Learn More](#)



### GARCIA STREET URBAN FARM

Located on 4.1 acres of land on the Eastside of San Antonio, Garcia St. Urban Farm is a partnership between San Antonio Housing Authority and San Antonio College's EcoCentro. The farm provides a source of fresh food in a community that does not normally have one, also maintaining a valuable green space in our urban core, and creating a heat and carbon sink in one of the hottest regions of the City. In 2020, the farm hosted markets on Wednesdays and Fridays, sold produce to local restaurants, and helped educate the community on growing healthy foods.

▶ [Learn More](#)



### NORTH AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

San Antonio was the first U.S. Monarch Champion City and is a U.S. Pioneer in the international CitiesWithNature network. In October 2020, the establishment of San Antonio's new trinational North American Friendship Garden was announced by Mayor Nirenberg and Consul Generals from the City of Guadalajara and Montreal, it will be unveiled in the spring of 2021. Incorporating education around the importance of biodiversity, pollination and other ecosystem services, the garden will be designed and maintained by the San Antonio River Foundation and the San Antonio River Authority.



## THE LIVING HERITAGE TRADES ACADEMY

Office of Historic Preservation

The Kelso House, located in the Monte Vista Historic District and currently owned by local nonprofit Power of Preservation Foundation (POP), houses the Office of Historic Preservation's Living Heritage Trades Academy. Through their partnership with POP, they utilize this home, which stood vacant for nearly 20 years, as a hands-on learning lab for trades education. To date, an investment value of more than \$250,000 has gone into the stabilization of the Kelso House.

► [Learn More](#)



## BUILD SAN ANTONIO GREEN (BSAG)

Build San Antonio Green (BSAG) is our local green building program founded in 2001 to reduce emissions in our community. This is accomplished by the certification of above code, resilient and climate ready buildings, and the unbiased technical resource tool, Bring Solar Home. Focused on energy and water efficiency, site, materials, indoor air quality, renewables, and EVs, BSAG has certified over 26 million sq. ft. of green buildings, including over 2,600 single family homes in 2020. These projects reduce electrical demand by 18.7 MW of peak demand reduction, reducing our emissions by saving over 300 Million Lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>, which is equivalent to taking over 25,000 cars off our roads each year.

► [Learn More](#)

## ADVANCEMENTS IN ORGANICS DIVERSION

Solid Waste Management Department

In 2021, Solid Waste Management will be partnering with Atlas Organics to provide new composting solutions in San Antonio. The new composting facility will recycle yard trimmings and food residuals, turning it into a valuable soil amendment to promote sustainable regional agriculture and landscaping. Atlas will also focus on enhancing community awareness and educating residents about the benefits of composting services.

► [Learn More](#)



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

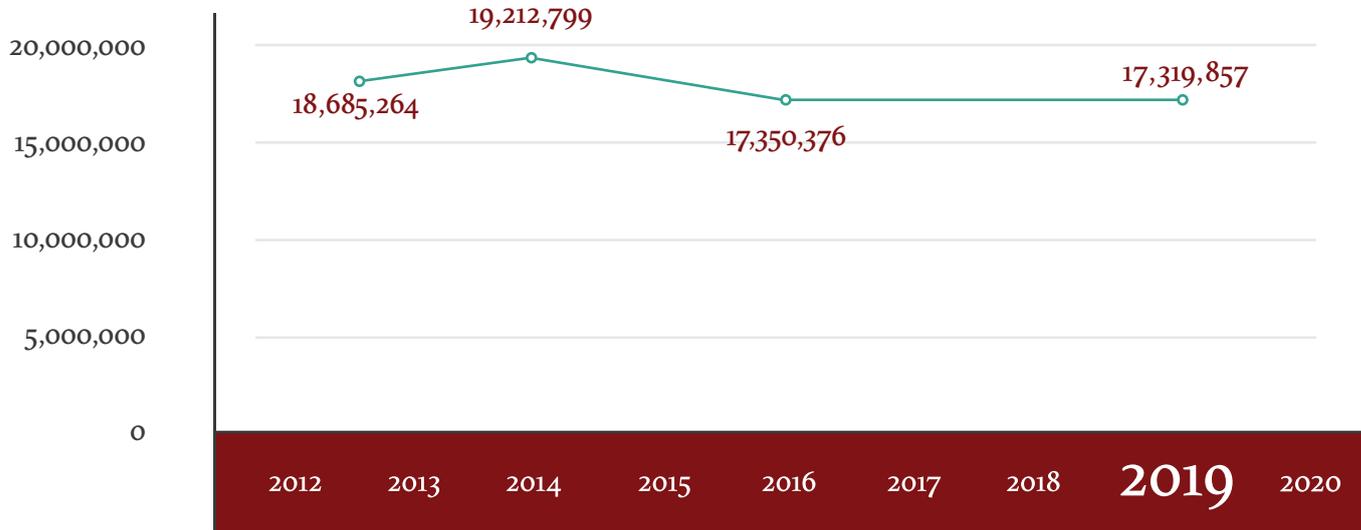
# ●●● GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) INVENTORY (+ TREND)

Current  
GHG Emissions

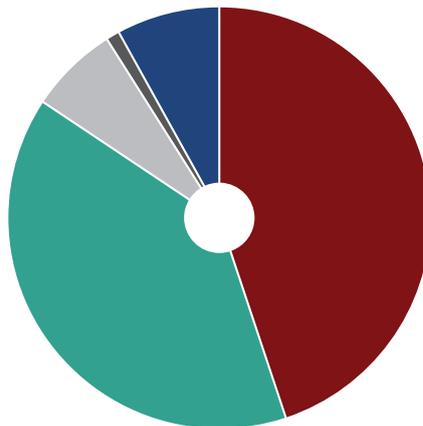
## HISTORIC COMMUNITY GHG EMISSIONS

GHG EMISSIONS

CO<sub>2</sub>e (MT)



## TOTAL 2019 COMMUNITY GHG EMISSIONS BY SECTOR



Industry (CO<sub>2</sub>e (MT) | % of Total)

- Energy Industries (108,785 | 1%)
- Industrial Processes (1,340,454 | 8%)
- Building Energy Usage (7,702,730 | 44%)
- Transportation (6,935,231 | 40%)
- Solid Waste (1,187,852 | 7%)
- CPS Natural Gas System Fugitives (31,286 | 0%)
- Water/Wastewater (13,519 | 0%)

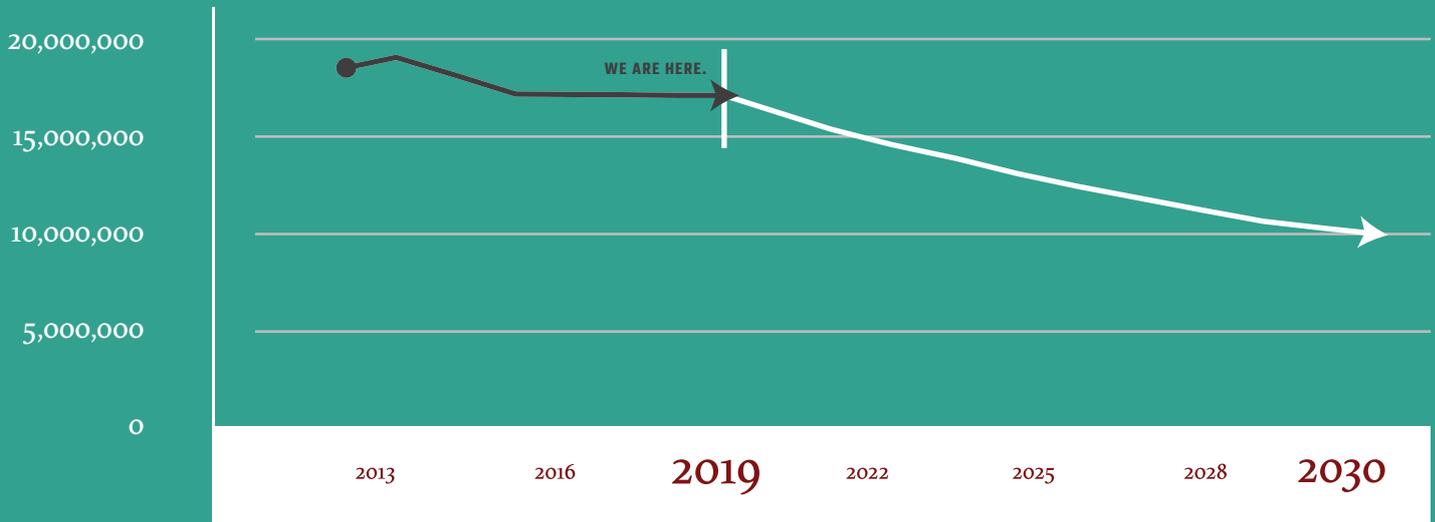
## ●●● GHG INVENTORY (CONT.)

## San Antonio's GHG Trajectory

### PROJECTED TREND TOTAL GHG EMISSIONS

GHG EMISSIONS

CO<sub>2</sub>e (MT)



Note: Reduction path may not be linear



### KEY INSIGHTS OF THE 2019 GHG INVENTORY

While population has increased by 4%, per capita emissions have decreased by 4%, largely evening out; overall emissions decreased marginally by 0.2%.

While there was a 10% reduction in CPS Energy's emissions intensity of electricity generation, there was an increase in energy consumption in both the transportation and building sectors.

Municipal GHG emissions decreased by 41%.



### MILESTONES

- 2030 - Reduction of 41%
- 2040 - Reduction of 71%
- 2050 - Reduction of 100%



[SASUSTAINABILITY.COM](http://sasustainability.com)

[SANANTONIO.GOV/SUSTAINABILITY](http://sanantonio.gov/sustainability)