2001 All-America City Award Application

We encourage applications from neighborhoods, towns, cities, counties and regions

Community Information

Community name and state:

City of Santa Clara, California

Your Community is applying as:

___ Neighborhood ___ Town _X_ City ___ County ___ Region

If applying as a Region, name participating communities:

If applying as a neighborhood, name city:

Contact Information

All-America City Award contact (primary contact person available throughout competition and for follow-up):

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List the 3 individuals who most actively participated in filling out this All-America City Award application (add additional lines if needed):

[Provide Name and title; Organization; Phone; E-mail address]

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If we are designated an All-America City, we agree to follow NCL's rules regarding use of the All-America City Award logo, a registered trademark of the National Civic League.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Community Statistics

Note: Use the most up-to-date statistics possible for your neighborhood, town, city, county, or region (***source suggestions:*** U.S. Census Bureau, State Department of Economic Security, State Department of Finance, Department of Public Health, and local school statistics)

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, if applicable:

   X   **Council-Manager**

_____ **Mayor-Council**

POPULATION *(in year 2000 or most recent):* __102,895__

Source: California State Department of Finance

Source Date & Year: January 2000

POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1990-2000 (indicate + or -): __+10__ **%**

Source: US Census and California State Department of Finance

Source Date & Year: April 1990 and January 2000

RACIAL/ETHNIC POPULATION BREAKDOWN *(percentage)*:

White (non-Hispanic)	55.8 %
Black	2.6 %
Hispanic (of any origin)	18.2 %
Asian	22.9 %
Native American	0.5 %
Other	0.0 %

Source: US Census and California State Department of Finance

Source Date & Year: April 1990 and January 2000

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: $_____ 87,000 (for a household of four persons)_____

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Source Date & Year: July 1, 2000

PERCENTAGE of FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL: __3.7__ **%**

Source: US Census

Source Date & Year: April 1990

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: __1.5__ **%**

Source: State of California Employment Development Department

Source Date & Year: November 2000

POPULATION BREAKDOWN by AGE GROUP *(percentages, if available)***:**

Below 18 years	18.8 %
18-24	13.4 %
25-44	39.9 %
45-64	17.9 %
Over 65	10.0 %

Source: US Census

Source Date & Year: April 1990

PERCENTAGE OF HOME OWNERSHIP: 47.1   **%**

Source: US Census

Source Date & Year: April 1990

WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION -- **Name the three largest employment sectors in your community and provide the percentage of total employed in each:**

Manufacturing (including over ? in high tech)	48 %
Services (including over ½ in business services)	31 %
Retail	11 %

Source: Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) Projections 2000 and State Employment Development Department

Source Date & Year: December 1999 and November 2000

Part I:
COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

1 (A) Community Background (700 words) *Set the background for your community. Tell its story. Summarize your community's history, successes and struggles. Describe how your community got to where it is today and your community's current state of affairs.*

Santa Clara is preparing to celebrate its sesquicentennial in 2002, making it one of the oldest cities in California. The area was originally settled in 1777 as one of the mission colonies established by Spain and operated by Franciscan padres for the Ohlone Indians who populated the region. With the influx of new arrivals in the 1800s, many of whom came to California for the Gold Rush and stayed because of the agricultural richness of the area, Santa Clara developed into a larger community and was incorporated as a city in 1852.

The town was surrounded by small farms and orchards and became famous for its acres of flowers and vegetable seed farms, and abundant fruit crops and canning operations. Santa Clara University, a private Jesuit university, drew students from throughout the U.S. Santa Clara grew rapidly after World War II in both population and land. Residential and commercial areas outside the historic core developed further in the 1950s and '60s. Industrial growth followed in the 1970s, '80s and '90s.

The City of Santa Clara is located in the midst of Santa Clara County which was once known as the "Valley of Heart's Delight," but now has international recognition as Silicon Valley, the worldwide center of technology and the New Economy. By harvesting the fruits of technology, Santa Clara has become a prosperous and progressive city that is the home of some of America's largest corporations including Intel, Sun Microsystems, 3Com, Applied Materials and National Semiconductor.

Santa Clara, with a population just over 100,000, cannot be considered a small town by quantifiable standards but it is proud of the all-American look and feel of the community that goes beyond appearance to include many examples of grassroots democracy in action. Decision-making by the City Council is aided by 10 citizen commissions. Public input at City Council meetings, which are televised live and in repeat broadcasts, is robust and the weekly meetings frequently last more than three hours because of active public discussion of issues.

Community events, of which there are many and most are free, are heavily attended. The annual Art & Wine Festival, for example, which is operated by volunteers from 25 community groups with profits going to local charities, attracts more than 50,000 people each year. An annual melodrama by the Santa Clara Women's League to raise funds for a senior health program is a sell-out each year, as is a holiday tour of historic homes. An Arts & Historical Consortium includes more than two dozen groups ranging from museums to performing arts and antique auto enthusiasts. Significant local historical sites such as the Santa Clara Railroad Depot, the last farm in the City, and one of the oldest adobes in Northern California are maintained by local citizen nonprofits.

With this degree of civic participation, it is not surprising that Santa Clara was designated a Millennium Community in 2000 and several of its events honored by the White House Millennium Council. Every four years, Santa Clara also receives worldwide recognition as a training ground for summer Olympians. Dozens of aquatic athletes go on to win gold, silver and bronze medals after spending hundreds of hours training and competing at the Santa Clara International Swim Center.

Santa Clara clearly is part of the 21st century, but is unwilling to give up the traditional charming aspects of American community life. At the same time that Santa Clara receives a national award for its outstanding use of technology in delivering local government services, its annual Victorian fashion show and spring tea has overflow crowds. Teddy, a stuffed bear, has sat atop the City holiday tree since 1911 even as the City is among the first in the nation to use a thermal imaging camera to patrol the streets and detect potentially dangerous power line problems.

A citywide public opinion poll conducted by a research firm in 2000 found that Santa Clara residents believe they live in one of the best areas anywhere in the U.S. They point with pride to the community's livable neighborhoods, friendly people, peace and quiet, convenient location and great weather. In their minds, there is nothing more all-American than Santa Clara, California.

1 (B) Community Challenge #1 (200 words) *Based upon your community's current status, describe your community's two most pressing challenges.*

Housing – an insufficient inventory and extremely high costs – is a major problem in our community. Success of the local economy and growth of jobs have increased housing needs but new home and apartment construction is not able to keep up with demand at all income levels. The scarcity of vacant land, high cost of that land, relative low density of existing housing and neighborhood preservation concerns have all limited the supply of housing.

Housing vacancies are extremely low (residential vacancy rate is less than 1%), resulting in bidding wars by buyers and renters anxious to find shelter. Housing costs have increased dramatically in the last five years. In Santa Clara, the median price for a single-family home is now $400,000. Average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is $1652 per month. Particularly hard hit are lower- and middle-income households, and those on a fixed income such as seniors and the disabled. Many have been forced to double or triple up in overcrowded housing to afford the costs. The number of homeless families has doubled and the average age of a homeless person in Silicon Valley is 9 years old.

Community Challenge #2 (200 words)

Santa Clara is a largely built-out community with little vacant land (about 313 acres of the total 19.3 square miles) with many competing uses for what land is available – expansion of current industry, new office and R&D facilities, much-needed housing, parkland, and space for identified community needs. The high cost of land and redevelopment give corporate developers a financial advantage in pursuing new projects, and the City struggles to maintain a balance in making land use decisions.

Like many communities throughout the U.S., Santa Clara is home to a surplus public facility that offered an opportunity to reuse a large parcel of valuable land in new ways. The 300 acres of a former state mental institution, Agnews Hospital, was attractive to many groups in the community who had different priorities for this prime property. There were historic preservation and environmental concerns, traffic issues, as well as vocal demands to use the land for industry, housing, retail, and public facilities. This would be the last opportunity to decide the use of a large, mostly undeveloped property. The subject threatened to become controversial and emotional, the type of issue that creates hard feelings throughout the community for many years to come.

1 (C) Community Celebration (300 words) *Why should your community be selected as an All-American City? Describe what makes your community a great place to live, work and play.*

Santa Clara is a microcosm of the evolution of America's cities. Originally an agricultural community with a large immigrant population, it became after World War II a popular site for traditional manufacturing industries and suburban housing. The advent of high technology brought knowledgeable workers from all over U.S. and the world into the community.

Now Santa Clara is a highly-educated, highly-diverse community of residents who spend their days developing products and services that literally change the world, but who still want to come home at night to quiet, friendly neighborhoods where children play safely in the front yard, dogs are walked along tree-lined streets, and people see neighbors they know at the library.   Santa Clara blends the best of a modern, urban metropolis with the comfortable charm of small town, USA.

This unique combination of America past and present is evident throughout the community from the way government serves its residents to the grassroots activities that draw thousands of citizens into active participation in community life. The City has one of the most technologically advanced city websites in the U.S., but it also sponsors an old-fashioned July 4th picnic and dozens of other traditional all-American activities throughout the year. The community enjoys ethnic diversity and it is not unusual to see at one of the City's many festivals, for example, a family dressed in traditional Indian saris eating homemade Portuguese linguica while watching folklorico dancing or taiko drumming performed by fellow residents.

The close working relationship of municipal government, schools, nonprofit clubs and organizations, local business and industry, the community college and Santa Clara University results in many joint

programs and services. With such a diverse population to serve, it's important to all stakeholders in the community to identify the varied needs and interests of all segments of the community.

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Part II:
COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROJECTS

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Project 1: Affordable Housing Programs

1. Project summary, name and brief description (150 words)

Over the past few years, a variety of programs to improve the access of middle and low income residents to affordable housing have been launched by cooperating stakeholders in the Santa Clara community including municipal government, school districts, local industry, and nonprofit organizations serving the poor, homeless, and disabled. Community housing programs include:

• First Time Homebuyers Program (no interest second loans from the City)
• Below-market-rate units in new home and apartment developments
• Intel Teacher Housing Fund (teachers buy local homes and receive $500 monthly mortgage payment contributions by the school district, using Intel money)
• Below-market-rate apartments for teachers
• Transitional housing projects for homeless families, homeless teens, battered women operated by a consortium of nonprofit service providers with partial funding from the City
• Shared housing for seniors
• Affordable housing options for developmentally disabled
• City grants and low-interest rehabilitation loans to maintain current homes

2. Describe the relationship between this project and your first challenge, the project's history, and how it is being sustained. (300 words)

In almost anywhere in the U.S. a family income of $66,000 is enviable. In Santa Clara, it categorizes a family of four as "low income." This means the people who work as teachers, police officers, retail clerks, bank tellers and many other occupations necessary for any city to function have difficulty living in the community they serve. The spirit of innovation that has made Silicon Valley the technological center of the universe has been applied by the Santa Clara community to find inventive ways to increase housing accessibility to middle- and low-income residents.

The Intel Teacher Housing Fund is one example of this "out-of-box" thinking.   Intel purchased a $10 million bond from the Santa Clara Unified School District and agreed to receive below-market interest. The district uses the difference between what it pays Intel and what it can earn on the money to contribute $500 a month towards the mortgage payment of teachers who buy a local home. Another company, Linear Technology, reimburses the teacher for closing costs. At the end of five years, the homeowner repays the district and the funds are reused to help another teacher. The goal is to retain talented teachers in Santa Clara, many of whom are tempted to relocate to other areas where housing costs are more reasonable for a teacher's salary.

The school district is also building its own 40-unit apartment complex where rents will be one-half the market rate for new teachers in the district.

Affordable housing programs of the Santa Clara community are designed to offer residents an alternative to relocating to lower cost areas many miles from their jobs. The community does not want to lose these residents and the individuals do not want commutes of several hours that take a daily toll on family and quality of life.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development, and implementation of this project. (300 words)

Each of the affordable housing programs serving the Santa Clara community involves a partnership of two or more entities. The $5+ million First Time Homebuyers Program is a cooperative venture involving the City of Santa Clara, private financial institutions and the real estate community. City government also financially supports two programs with local nonprofit organizations, Catholic Charities and Project Match, which set up shared housing arrangements for seniors and struggling single parents. Other nonprofits in the community who focus on serving homeless families, homeless teens and battered women have worked together and with City government to develop cooperative housing programs.

The City of Santa Clara was one of the first jurisdictions to commit funds to the Santa Clara County Housing Trust Endowment Fund, a public/private partnership that encompasses 79 Silicon Valley organizations, local governments and corporations. The Trust Fund expects to reach $20 million this year. It will be a revolving fund that replenishes itself as loans are paid. Every $1 contributed by the City of Santa Clara (which has now committed $500,000 to the Fund) or by Santa Clara corporations such as Intel, Cisco Systems, and Applied Materials, which donated over $1 million, will generate $10 in funding for new affordable housing in our Valley.

Altogether, the City of Santa Clara alone has invested more than $50 million over the past nine years to a variety of affordable housing programs for low and very low income families as well as middle income households. We consider this a wise investment because of the long-range benefits for the community – pride of ownership, strong neighborhoods, and more commitment to the community.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last three years and explain how this project has been a success. (300 words)

In the past seven years, 217 individuals or families have been able to buy their first home in Santa Clara with the assistance of a First Time Homebuyer's Loan. In the past year, seven Santa Clara schoolteachers were able to purchase a home in the community through the Intel Teacher Housing

Fund. Over the past few years, the City has added 72 apartments and two shared homes for low-income seniors and rehabilitated another 101 senior apartments. The many affordable housing programs also added 50 apartments for homeless families, a 20-bed facility for homeless teens, nine transitional apartments for teen parents. The developmentally disabled who are able to live independently were served with the introduction of two shared homes and 23 apartments. The community also opened 24 transitional apartments for domestic violence survivors.

In the past 10 years, the Santa Clara community has set aside 283 homes and apartments for below market rate housing. Soon an additional 271 apartments, including 100 dedicated to seniors, 148 efficiency studio apartments, three shared assisted living facilities, and six homes will be constructed and guaranteed to the community at below market rates.

But numbers only tell part of the story of affordable housing efforts in Santa Clara. "My family in Iowa has always owned our own home, but I was discouraged that I would ever be able to have my own place in California," said one citizen who could only afford a home 75 miles away from his job in Santa Clara until a First Time Homebuyers Loan allowed him to purchase a townhome in the community.

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Project 2: Reuse of state surplus property

1. Project summary, name and give a brief description (150 words)

The Santa Clara community was divided in its opinions of the best ways to use state surplus property in the City. Strong lobbies formed for historical preservation, environmental, Native American, business, and community service concerns. Through an extensive, free and open public participation process, grassroots community groups came to consensus. What was once a blighted area is now corporate headquarters of a major company, restored historical buildings that are available for public use, carefully preserved open space and wildlife habitat, and new facilities for day care and shelter for homeless families. The process was not easy and not always pleasant, but in the end it demonstrated democracy at its best. If individual interests in the community had not come together to consider innovative approaches to the use of this land, the community could have been left with a vacant eyesore instead of the attractive, useful community asset it has become.

2. Describe the relationship between this project and your second challenge, the project's history, and how it is being sustained. (300 words)

In 1996, the State of California put up for sale 90 acres of surplus state land (the former site of Agnews Developmental Center). Intense community interest in the future of the site made decisions about the development of the land a challenge. Agnews Hospital was a National Register Historic Property but was so unsafe that the City Fire Department issued an official notice that it would not be able to respond to a fire on the site. The property included 100-year-old trees and was a habitat for burrowing owls, a protected species. A temporary homeless shelter and day care facility on the property did not want to lose their leased sites. There was concern about increased traffic if the site was converted into a major corporate campus, while other segments of the community strongly believed that the last remaining large parcel of land in Santa Clara should be used for new housing.

The experience of the Santa Clara community in deciding the future of the state surplus land epitomizes the challenge of any community to maintain balance among competing interests and the need to look for creative ways to make projects serve many community needs.

The development of the first phase of the Agnews land was followed by the sale of the remainder for a master planned community. Now under construction, this project followed a similar process that encouraged public input to ensure community needs were accommodated. Consequently, this portion of the state surplus land will not only be used to build up to 3000 housing units and 15 acres of retail commercial space, it will be the home of a new K-8 public school, branch library, public park, fire station and police substation. An adjacent 41 acres are being converted into a natural preserve.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development and implementation of this project. (300 words)

This project was a first-of-its-kind model in which a city, community and corporation share, in an interactive way, a work environment and a public environment. Sun Microsystems invested $10 million in the restoration of key historic buildings on the property where it built its corporate headquarters and office/R&D space for more than 3000 employees. Two of the restored historic buildings, the auditorium and mansion, are available for cultural and social events by community groups on evenings and weekends. Most of the major stands of heritage trees around the historic buildings were preserved and the park-like grounds beautified and maintained for use of local residents. Local historical groups worked with Sun to refurbish a small local history museum inside the auditorium, the historic Agnews cemetery, and a monument to victims of the 1906 earthquake. Smaller residential structures from the original Agnews Hospital complex are being relocated and will become part of an affordable housing project on another portion of the state surplus land.

The fate of the temporary facilities for day care and homeless family shelter was another important concern of the community. Through cooperation among independent nonprofit organizations, the City and Sun, new facilities were built on the parcel for each of these uses.

Worries about the burrowing owl population on the site were overcome by a cooperative effort among environmentalists, the City, Sun and the State of California. The State agreed to purchase a suitable habitat for the owls and deed it to Fish & Game for perpetual management. Both Sun and the City helped to finance the acquisition of this new home for burrowing owls.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last 3 years and explain how this project has been a success. (300 words)

The lengthy and complex decision-making process related to the development of the Agnews property represents an excellent example of democracy in action. Five of the City's commissions held public meetings on the future of this property. The matter was discussed in numerous City Council meetings where approximately 1,900 residents testified in person or offered comments in writing. More than 4,500 signatures of local residents were gathered to place the issue on the ballot and 65% of the voters endorsed the idea of using this portion of the state surplus land for this innovative public-private partnership.

The auditorium and mansion have been used for many public events since their restoration was completed including performances by the community ballet, chorale, symphony and drum & bugle corps.

Although Sun is still constructing the second half of its corporate campus, the company has already generated $4.5 million in revenue for the City's general fund. The newly built day care center is able to accommodate 70 children of working parents every day and the Emergency Housing Consortium's Family Living Center provides 33 apartments to homeless families. Both of these facilities were funded by a combination of government, corporate and individual donations. Space was also set aside on the property for a 30,000-square-foot office and warehouse facility for Hope Rehabilitation Services, which provides programs for developmentally disabled.

Instead of a nasty fight, the Santa Clara community came together in a spirit of cooperation and innovation to make the important decisions about the use of the last large piece of vacant land in the City. What has resulted is the best possible use of the land in a way that serves many interests and needs.

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Project 3 (Youth): Skatepark

1. Project summary, name and give a brief description (150 words)

Children and youth have two responsibilities as youngsters: to learn and to play. The development of a youth skate park in Santa Clara, a joint project between the municipality and the school district, not only provides a safe, appealing facility for skateboarding and in-line skating, it taught the youngsters a valuable lesson in how to use grassroots efforts to accomplish change. In 1995, skateboarders frustrated with the lack of a location where they were welcome appealed to the City Youth Commission to find a solution. This body of 15 local teenagers took on the project and worked with the City Council, the Parks and Recreation Department and a local school district to find a convenient site for a skatepark and to fund its construction and operation. It opened in 1999 and now, in its third year of operations, provides a convenient, fun play area for skateboarders and inline skaters.

2. Tell us how this project has affected the lives of children and youth in your community. Describe the challenge it is addressing, the history, and how it will be sustained. (300 words)

The cooperative effort to build and operate a skatepark for Santa Clara youth demonstrates the community's proactive response to a direct request from an important population of the City, its next generation of civic leaders.

The fun of skateboarding is not gliding quietly down the street. It's in staying on your feet while you make your skateboard jump on ledges, kick flip over stairs, and nose slide along a curb.   Skating is not just good exercise, it adds to self-esteem as skaters master new tricks and gain confidence in their abilities to meet a challenge.

Skaters are going to skate, whether they have a safe place to do it or not. Without a designated skatepark, they use public and private parking lots, benches, steps, planters or anything else they can find to "rip it up" in a skateboard "sesh". Property is damaged, kids are at risk of injury, parents are worried, citizens are angry.

The 15,000-square-foot skatepark facility meets all of the needs of youngsters, their parents, and the community in general. The kids think it's fun. Parents know it is convenient, safe and supervised. The community is happy to have skaters practicing their skills in an area that is not damaging private and public property or putting the children or others around them at risk.

3. Describe the partnerships and collaborations involved in the creation, development, and implementation of this project. (300 words)

Historically, skaters had no place to go in this community. We had facilities to practice sports like softball, basketball, tennis and soccer, but no place for alternative sports like skating. Skaters would congregate and move from spot to spot as they were chased from public shopping center lots, parks and other public places.

In 1995, the youngsters brought their concerns to the Youth Commission, which studied the issue and met with dozens of youth in the City to ascertain their needs. The Youth Commission made a proposal to the City Council in 1996 for a skatepark that would be a cooperative effort by the City and the school district. Teen representatives of the Youth Commission and other youngsters from the community shepherded approval of the project through public hearings before the City Planning Commission, City Council and the Santa Clara Unified School District Board of Trustees.

Skaters and their parents helped contractors to design the rails, curbs and bowls of the skatepark that accommodates all levels of ability, from beginning to advanced. It is located adjacent to a local school, Cabrillo Middle School, on land owned by the Santa Clara Unified School District. Construction was paid for by City funds and the fenced facility is open every day under the supervision of staff of the City's Parks and Recreation Department. The skatepark is not open when school is in session and closes one-half hour after sunset. Helmets and safety pads are required of all park users.

The young people of Santa Clara are "heroes" and role models to many local youth for what they have accomplished.

4. Describe the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this project in the last 3 years. Tell us how this project has been a success. (300 words)

From the first day it opened, the Santa Clara skatepark has been a tremendous success. Currently in its third year of operation, the facility is used by an average of 2300 skateboarders and in-line skaters per month.

But the Santa Clara skatepark is not just a project about forming concrete – it's about forming character and encouraging youth to work hard to achieve a dream. The experience of the young people involved with this project taught them many things – how to get organized and prepare and present a proposal for community action . . . how decisions are made in a public process . . . how to acknowledge and work with the concerns of many groups of citizens . . . and how to work together to create a lasting legacy. They learned valuable new skills that will help them do better in school, in the workplace, and in the communities in which they live as adults with children of their own. They grew as individuals while contributing to the community as a whole in a positive, long-lasting way.

Members of the Santa Clara Youth Commission have presented this project to other interested groups all over the state, including League of California Cities Conferences and conferences for parks and recreation departments. Other cities in the region are visiting the Santa Clara facility as a model of how to involve the youth of their community in solving an identified need. When queried by other jurisdictions about the process for developing a skatepark, the City's Recreation staff responds this way: "If you are getting frustrated about getting your Skate Park off the ground, just stop by this facility and your spirits will be lifted. It's worth it in the long run!"

Primary Contact for the Project

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Part III:
CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

I. What is our community vision for the future? (300 words)

The 2001 cover of the annual calendar that is published for the Santa Clara community is a montage of photos of children. The headline "Faces Of Our Future" reflects this community's biggest priority for the coming years – ensuring that our youngest citizens have every opportunity to develop their full potentials.

This community shares with the region, and much of the entire state of California, some difficult challenges ahead. Traffic congestion, air quality, water and energy resources, housing-jobs imbalance, protection of a fragile ecosystem, economy fluctuations – all of these issues will be important subjects for community consideration and action in the next few years.

But equally as important to the Santa Clara community is the goal to achieve, in parallel, two major accomplishments: 1) the effective use of technological advances to improve the delivery of programs and services to every segment of the community; and 2) the preservation of the quality of life characteristics that are so appealing and pleasing to our residents.

Santa Clara is blessed with more than 300 days of sunshine a year. The community is centered in the middle of one of the most naturally beautiful valleys in America. The businesses and industries located here are changing the way the world works, lives, plays and learns. The vision for Santa Clara is to leverage these abundant attributes in ways that extend their benefits to more people who live here today and, always, to protect and nurture the generations to come.

II (a). What roles do nonprofits play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 words)

There are approximately 300 clubs and nonprofit organizations serving the residents of Santa Clara. Each provides its members and the public with activities, programs and services related to its mission. Representatives of nonprofits are frequent speakers at public hearings, and the City seeks them out for ideas and information when considering issues affecting their targeted populations.

Many joint projects increase understanding, knowledge and respect among representatives of municipal government and nonprofit groups in the community. The annual Camellia Show, for example, one of the largest flower shows in Northern California, is a joint project of the Camellia Society and the City's Parks & Recreation Dept. The City provides direct funding to many independent performing arts and cultural organizations and charges just $1 a year in rent to three organizations who use publicly-owned and maintained buildings to house their museums.

As the wealth of Silicon Valley has grown so has the size and number of the nonprofits serving this community. A unique municipal program "Give a little, help a lot" was designed to allow community residents to donate to specific nonprofit organizations along with their utility bill payments. Another community nonprofit, the Mission City Community Fund, has a board of 21 members representing local businesses, nonprofit organizations, community leaders and everyday residents.   Its administrative costs are kept very low so that 95% of the bequests and donations it receives can directly benefit the residents of the Santa Clara community.

II (b). What roles do businesses play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 words)

Decision-making in the Santa Clara community strongly involves local business and its leaders, especially those working in the technology companies of Silicon Valley.   Fortunately, many local firms have come to realize that they can only prosper in the context of the entire community. Through the Business Outreach program, City staff and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce meet periodically with large and small companies to discuss mutual concerns like proposed expansions, infrastructure, utilities and public safety. The City Council created an economic development committee to review ways to enhance our local economy.

About 20 years ago, large technology companies joined together as the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group to develop consensus positions. It has become an active participant at all levels of state and local government and focuses on direct business issues and broader, community-wide issues such as transportation, housing and education.

The Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce is also an active player in community decision-making. Chamber committees develop position recommendations and City staff makes regular presentations to these committees on pending issues such as utility pricing, new development and proposed legislation. Each year, the Chamber Board goes on a retreat to develop the next year's program for the business community and invites City Councilmembers and staff to participate in the process.

Good corporate citizenry is important to businesses located in Santa Clara and most businesses – whether small, medium or large in size – "give back" to the community through direct and in-kind donations and volunteer activities by their workforce. To cite just one example, Intel Corporation donates thousands of dollars each year to local community endeavors, with special emphasis on scholarships and programs for K-12 schools. Through a program that matches employees with community needs, the company provides more than 15,000 hours of volunteer time each year to local nonprofit organizations.

II (c). What role does government play in community-wide decision-making and how do they contribute to improving the community? (300 words)

Government and the democratic process play an integral part of our community's decision-making. As the government with a locally elected legislature and the most services affecting our citizens, the City of Santa Clara sees itself as the focal point for our constituency. It works hard to reach into the community to encourage citizen participation and to reach beyond the community to work cooperatively with neighboring communities.

There are 10 commissions in Santa Clara and they serve a critical function in government decision-making. The 70 citizen volunteers who serve on these bodies gather, analyze, and recommend options to the City Council. Their meetings provide an important avenue for determining the community's feelings about an issue.

A major challenge to government decision-making is working cooperatively with overlapping agencies and governments. Operating within the City of Santa Clara there are three school districts, a community college district, a transportation district and a flood control/water district. The County of Santa Clara operates an expressway system and many health and welfare functions. Regional issues are addressed by a voluntary planning agency, the Metropolitan Transportation Agency and several environmental control agencies. Members of our Council and staff serve on many different agencies and committees in order to represent the City and be part of the larger regional governance.

One example of the way that government in Santa Clara goes beyond its traditional role in serving community needs is the HOMESAFE project. A local nonprofit organization wanted to build a safe house for battered women and their children. The group was not able to meet its fundraising goal so the City contributed a parcel of land next to the main police station and funds to help build it. Working together, the City and community have identified a need and found a cooperative solution.

II (d). What is the extent and nature of citizen participation in community improvement efforts? (300 words)

Citizen participation in Santa Clara is extensive, but could always be better. Residents who are new to the area, who have limited English skills, or who work 12 to 14 hour days are often reluctant to commit to involvement in community programs. Several programs in Santa Clara encourage residents to become involved in their communities in a variety of ways.

The Neighborhood Connections program develops innovative neighborhood revitalization strategies that maintain the neighborhood's character while improving the quality of life of its residents. With the help of government representatives, residents identify public safety concerns and improvement needs such as traffic calming, street beautification, graffiti abatement, noise control, etc. Appropriate City departments

and nonprofit organizations related to the services needed work together with neighborhood leaders and volunteers from throughout the community to develop and implement an action plan.

When more in-depth citizen recommendation is needed on a specific topic, ad hoc groups are often formed. A recent example is the Franklin Square Task Force, which brings together residents and business owners to look at ways of revitalizing an older commercial area adjacent to the historic Old Quad neighborhood.

Leadership Santa Clara is a City-funded annual program in which about 25 residents participate in a six-month program to become more familiar with the community and issues affecting quality of life in Santa Clara. The goal is to prepare and empower future community leaders and inspire them to become more active in their neighborhoods or community-wide activities.

A popular new program is the Citizens Police Academy where residents become more familiar with the operations of the Police Department and learn how they can assist in reducing crime in the community. Santa Clara is fortunate to have more than 700 citizens regularly volunteer for City-sponsored programs.

III (a). How does our community recognize and celebrate its diversity (300 words)

From its very beginning as a Mission community and destination of Gold Rush entrepreneurs, Santa Clara has had a diverse population. Californio, American emigrants, German, Portuguese, Mexican, Filipino, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Indian and others have all contributed to the unique mix that is our community. El Camino Real, Santa Clara's main commercial street, now supports a wide variety of ethnic restaurants and retail shops that attract patrons from throughout Silicon Valley.

In recent years, the diversity of Santa Clara's population has grown even more as a result of the dependence of Silicon Valley businesses on skilled labor from overseas to meet their expanding needs. The public library has increased its already-large collection of foreign language and English as a second language materials and expanded its literacy programs.

Native Americans in the community are active in the American Indian Alliance, which is currently involved in the City's development of the Ulistac Open Space Preserve. Artifacts and art objects of tribes of California, the Southwest and the Pacific Northwest are contained in a permanent display at the Triton Museum.

When Santa Clara's large Portuguese community wanted Portuguese language programming on TV, the City negotiated for Portuguese Public Television to be broadcast over the Santa Clara cable system. The needs of the Muslim community were accommodated by the City when its growth overwhelmed the small building and parking lot of the only mosque in Santa Clara. The City and the Muslim Community

Association worked together to find a new location that is large enough for a new school and community center.

The City's International Exchange Commission and Sister Cities Association promote understanding among Santa Clara and our two sister cities: Coimbra, Portugal and Izumo, Japan. Delegations of adults and students regularly travel among the cities to experience the different cultures and exchange information.

III (b). How does our community work with neighboring communities to address shared challenges? Is there a shared regional vision? (300 words)

Santa Clara is one of 15 communities in Santa Clara County. Nine counties comprise the San Francisco Bay Area, which has a total population of 6.9 million. Because so many individuals work and live in different cities and counties, there is tremendous cooperation among all the local communities to work on regional issues.

One of the unique approaches to bringing neighboring communities together is an area-wide organization, Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, which was formed to promote the overall health and vitality of the region and to preserve the area's quality of life. Santa Clara was one of the original members and remains an active participant. In the past few years Joint Venture has brought together representatives of business, governments, schools and nonprofits to create a shared vision for the future of the Valley and to sponsor initiatives that seek innovative solutions to such issues as streamlining the development permit process, workforce recruitment and retention, education programs, and the future economic viability of the region. Joint Venture is now more visible as a model for other regions as a result of the appointment of its CEO as a Deputy Assistant to President Bush, responsible for domestic intergovernmental relations.

Santa Clara also works with neighboring communities through participation in more than two dozen organizations involving representatives of city and county government, K-12 and community college school districts, transportation agencies, special interest groups, local universities, and water, flood control and sanitation boards. Santa Clara's City Manager meets monthly with counterparts from all cities in the County to work collaboratively on common issues. City Councilmembers and department heads also participate in regional and statewide organizations.

One example of the cooperation among neighboring cities in the recent development of a 12-mile creek trail involving two cities and eight additional regional agencies and nonprofit organizations.

IV. How does your community strengthen its ability to solve problems (300 words)

The City of Santa Clara has developed, in conjunction with Santa Clara University's Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, a "living" Code of Ethics & Values to help the individuals who solve problems in the community by making decisions and implementing policies and programs.

A committee formed in 1998 of City Councilmembers, City commissioners, residents, and City staff worked with representatives of the Markkula Center to identify eight core values and to describe in specific language what behaviors and attitudes would exemplify each value. The Code was adopted by the City Council and has become the basis for a series of training sessions of elected officials, candidates for elected office, citizen members of City commissions, City staff, and volunteers. Each training session introduces the concept of the Code and has participants work in small groups to relate the values to their roles and responsibilities in municipal government.

The Ethics Program in the City of Santa Clara has two long-range goals: (1) to make Santa Clara a better community, built on mutual respect and trust; and (2) to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in the City's government.

Specific objectives of the Ethics Program are:
• Provide practical strategies for addressing ethical questions
• Heighten awareness of ethics and values as critical elements in local government
• Improve ethical decision-making by elected officials in setting policy and by City staff and   volunteers in handling day-to-day tasks

The Ethics Program in Santa Clara not only helps the community solve problems, it helps to fulfill the City's mission: "To promote a living and working environment that allows for the best quality of life by serving the community with resourceful, efficient, progressive and professional leadership."