



we dream

valley palms neighborhood association

big

#SoccerForLifeVP

our vision



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Building a synthetic soccer field in the Valley Palms Apartment Complex will **change lives for decades to come**, potentially improving both short and long term health outcomes for thousands of children, youth and families. Our goal is to achieve 100% health equity in the Valley Palms Neighborhood.



the opportunity

As the income gap in the United States continues to grow, exacerbated on the lines of race, ethnicity, and immigration status, these differences lead to a profound disparity in education, human services, and life trajectories. Our solution, however, begins with us. We are building local coalitions of resident leaders. We are advocating for the transformational improvement of our built environment, so that our children and families may thrive.

We are determined to transform our community from a known, decades-old entrenched gang territory, to one that welcomes families of all races, ethnicities, and immigration status. A community where all families have access to live healthy lives. By standing with community, we are helping to build a broader coalition of community leaders, government agencies, and non-profit organizations embracing to support this resident led effort.

Acknowledgements

County of Santa Clara,
Board of Supervisors

Dave Cortese, President of the Board of Supervi-

Santa Clara County,
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Laura Garnette, Chief Probation Officer

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Kathy McCarrell, CEO

Bay Area Women's Soccer Initia-
tive,

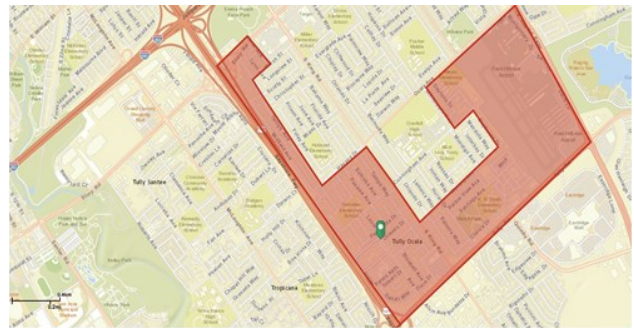
Jennifer Smith, CEO

the basics

why

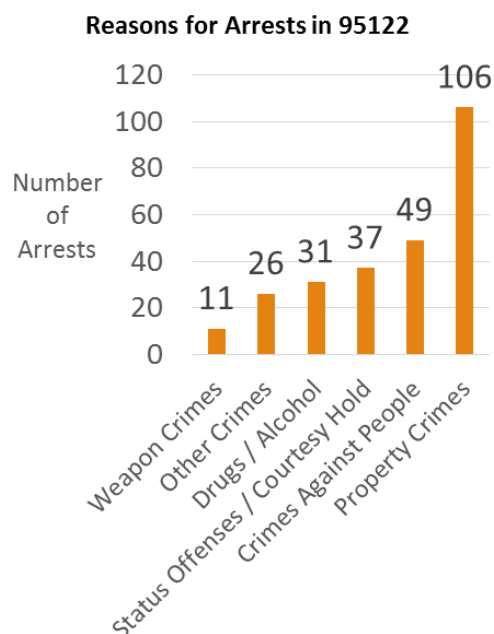
In early 2015, under the leadership and direction of Dave Cortese, President of the Board of Supervisors, the Neighborhood Safety Unit (NSU) was formed in an effort to implement a place-based, violence prevention program to serve neighborhoods with the highest juvenile crime rates in the county.

With a broad coalition of county and city government agencies, including law enforcement, human services agencies, child-welfare, public health, behavioral health and others, along side non-profit and advocacy organizations, the NSU uses a public health lens to implement violence prevention strategies. Two neighborhoods were selected to be served by the NSU, one of which, the Valley Palms neighborhood, lies within the 95122 Zip Code.



Area of Focus: Total Square Miles: .93

In 2015, 95122 had more youth arrests than any other county zip code, with 260.

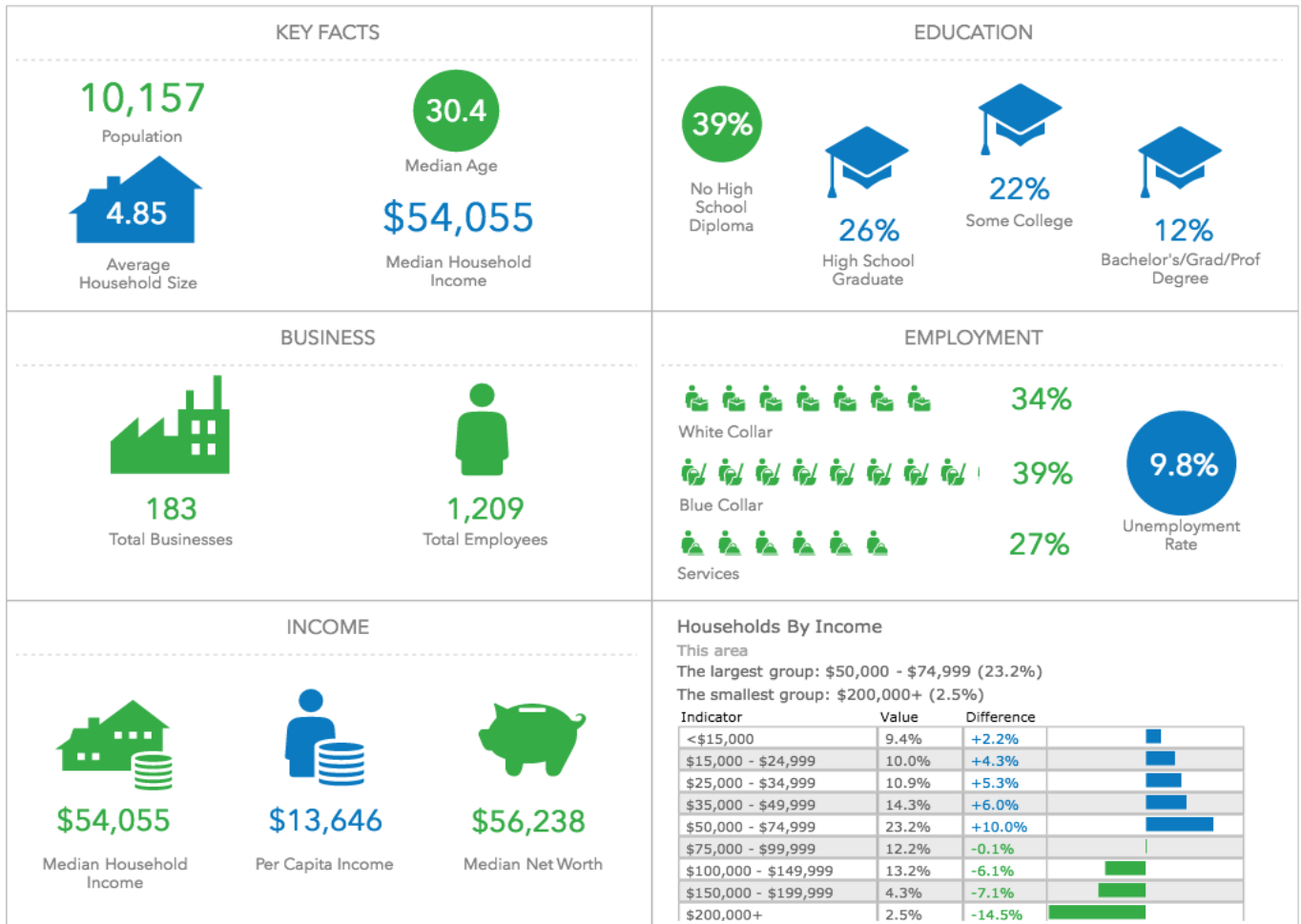


A key partner in this effort is Project Access, a place-based, non-profit agency already providing on-site programming to youth and families living in the complex. In 2015 alone, Project Access, Inc. has served over 13,000 residents, operating over 47 family resource centers and 16 senior centers nation-wide.

With the foundational work of building trust with residents already in tact, the infusion of additional resources into the neighborhood allowed for a more intentional focus on helping residents organize a coalition to combat violence in their neighborhood.

why this matters

- Valley Palms Apartment Complex is a 354-unit housing complex located in the 95122 zip code of East San Jose. It is one of the more affordable housing complexes located in East San Jose.
- An estimated 3,000+ residents live at Valley Palms.
- Majority Latino, with 80% of adults reporting Spanish as their primary language.
- Families served by Project Access have annual households at or below 60% of the area median income level, and a substantial number are earning less than \$10,000 per year.
- The Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force has identified the complex itself as a hot-spot for gang-related crime and activity.





alex's story

At the age of 18, Alex, a lifetime resident of the Valley Palms Apartment Complex, began supporting his family by working at a local McDonald's when his mom was diagnosed with cancer and could no longer work. While still in high school, he excelled in both academics and sports, and received a full scholarship to UC Merced. In order to care for his mother and stay close to home, Alex turned down the opportunity to attend UC Merced and is now attending Evergreen Community College. He still supports his family by working at Denny's, and is continuing to pursue his goal of becoming a mechanical engineer.

Alex was a major reason why the VPNA decided to set their sights on building a soccer field. Featured below in the YouTube Link, Alex reflects on how soccer changed his life trajectory:

“ They'll want to be more active and play more soccer, just like I did .”

MEDIA CORNER

COURTESY OF DEBUG

Please visit our YouTube video on this project:

[https://
www.youtube.com/
watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?)

“Three weeks before my graduation my mom became very sick. She stayed in the hospital for two months because she could not breathe on her own and her muscles and bones were weaker than ever. My responsibilities grew immensely: I went school, to track practice, to work and after getting out work—often around one in the morning—I drove to the hospital to stay with my mom. Those three weeks were the most stressful ones in my life. My mom couldn't attend my graduation ceremony but I graduated and went to the hospital right after in my gown. Her smile filled my body with joy because it was her sacrifices that brought me to this point. The following two months were full of tests where three cancerous tumors were found: in her head, in her ovaries, and in her chest. Each one has to be removed through various surgeries, the first of which is in December. With this, my family and I made the decision to deny UC Merced's full scholarship offer so I could stay close and care for my mom. I'm currently attending Evergreen Community College and with the support of Project Access, I hope to transfer to San Jose State's Engineering Program by Spring semester.”

Despite facing immense challenges, Alex continues to volunteer and mentor other young teens in the community, and is spearheading the Valley Palms Neighborhood Association's Youth Council at the Project Access Family Resource Center. Alex is indeed a leader in his neighborhood and a strong role model for the other youth in the program who are pursuing pathways out of poverty despite facing significant challenges.

project overview

how it works



Through a collaborative community process and under the leadership of the Valley Palms Neighborhood Association, community members (including both youth and adults) identified neighborhood cohesion, resident safety and wellbeing as their three highest priorities to achieve by 2017.

The NSU is currently in the process of identifying key partners in developing a funding strategy and partnership plan to move this project forward.

For more information on becoming a partner, contact Aundraya Martinez at Aundraya.Martinez@pro.sccgov.org.

who

To achieve neighborhood cohesion and wellbeing, the residents of the Valley Palms Apartment Complex decided they would like to convert an existing tennis court located within the Valley Palms Apartment Complex into an artificial turf soccer field.

A broad coalition of government and private sector businesses will be needed, in partnership with community members, to build a safe place to play for the Valley Palms residents.



Brandi Chastain, two-time FIFA Women's World Cup champion, two-time Olympic gold-medalist, and Victoria, 6 year old resident of Valley Palms Neighborhood in San Jose, CA.

when

The total estimated project timeline is 10-13 months. The first 3-4 months will focus on fundraising, and the following 7-10 months will focus on planning, permitting, and construction. Partnerships will be leveraged to activate the space on an ongoing basis.

estimate cost

The total estimate cost to construct and activate the artificial turf soccer field at the Valley Palms Apartment Complex is approximately \$175K - \$377K.

take action

- get involved
- Join the vision team: contact Aundraya Martinez, Project-lead at Aundraya.Martinez@pro.sccgov.org
 - Donate to the Synthetic Turf Field Project fund. Contact Khassandra Whitehead kwhitehead@project-access.org.
 - Connect us with somebody who can support this project. Contact Charmayne Moran at Charmayne.Moran@pro.sccgov.org.



“you don’t have to leave your neighborhood to have a better one” - Valley Palms Resident

