



## Project

# California city becomes model for water stewardship with actionable water sustainability plan

**20%**

of city's irrigation water  
saved through improved  
management

**30%**

of previously wasted water  
saved by implementing leak-  
detection systems

**\$130,000**

captured in funding for the  
project

## Summary

- Chula Vista relied on our help to create a water stewardship plan that would sustainably meet its water demand in a drought-prone climate.
- Using Lean principles, we worked with internal stakeholders, local water authorities, and the community to develop a comprehensive picture of all prior efforts, and leveraged the best of those efforts alongside new ideas.
- We defined five key themes that addressed the city's water conservation, reuse, and stewardship vision, and then narrowed hundreds of stakeholder and community contributions to 26 actionable items that fit within those themes.

## Client challenge

Located south of downtown San Diego and just north of the Mexican border, the community of Chula Vista has an arid climate that makes it particularly vulnerable to the severe drought that has long plagued California. In fact, 85 percent of the region's water is imported from both the Colorado River and Northern California. As its population grows, water demand is expected to surge by 46 percent in the next 20 years, further increasing the city's dependence on outside water resources. Already a nationally recognized leader in sustainability, the city knew changes were in order. After obtaining a grant to develop a water stewardship plan, [the city tapped Haley & Aldrich](#) to help meet the grant's fast-approaching deadline and key requirement to create a program other cities could emulate.

## Our approach

While the city had already pursued a multitude of water stewardship initiatives, it had not organized or documented any of them in an actionable way. Using Lean principles, Haley & Aldrich worked with internal stakeholders, local water authorities and the community to develop a comprehensive picture of all prior efforts to co-create a path forward that leverages the best of those efforts with new ideas to address water scarcity across municipal, residential and commercial activities.

After engaging the community and gathering 200 additional suggestions, we helped the city define five key themes that addressed its water conservation, reuse and stewardship vision, and then narrowed hundreds of stakeholder and community contributions to just 26 actionable items that fit within those themes. Together, we created a water stewardship program that pair water conservation with graywater, stormwater, and waste water reuse opportunities that will serve as a framework for the city of Chula Vista and act as a model for other communities to emulate. We also compiled an easy-to-navigate list of funding sources to encourage widespread adoption of the plan by Chula Vista businesses and residents.

# Value delivered

- Using Lean principles, met the grant's short deadline and captured \$130,000 of funding for the project
- Created an actionable water stewardship plan with a clear implementation framework that can be replicated by other communities nationwide.
- Developed an easy-to-navigate directory of funding sources to ensure widespread adoption of the city's plan.
- Identified opportunities to save 20 percent of the city's irrigation water by using better management and auditing landscape irrigation.
- Identified the potential for another 30-percent savings in previously wasted water that can be captured by implementing leak detection systems.
- Recommended a simple change to the city's building code to require gray water reuse systems in all new construction.

For more information, contact:



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