

Project

As a Compost and Recycling Associate at Alameda County, I work to make waste programs for internal government operations more sustainable. This includes day-to-day operations, employee engagement, and long-term planning. A focus of my fellowship has been integrating more upstream solutions into the recycling program.

Gather Input and Data

- Interviewed janitorial supervisors across 15 County facilities to understand opportunities to improve to the recycling and compost programs.
- Quantified the emissions of County waste across 62 facilities as a part of the Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2019.
- Designed a survey and received feedback from 96 employees about their waste generation, sorting, and recommendations for the recycling program.

Engage Employees

- Refreshed the recycling trainings to focus on reduction and reuse and trained over 50 County employees.
- Updated design of recycling signs.
- Expanded compost collection to serve an additional 50+ employees & clients.



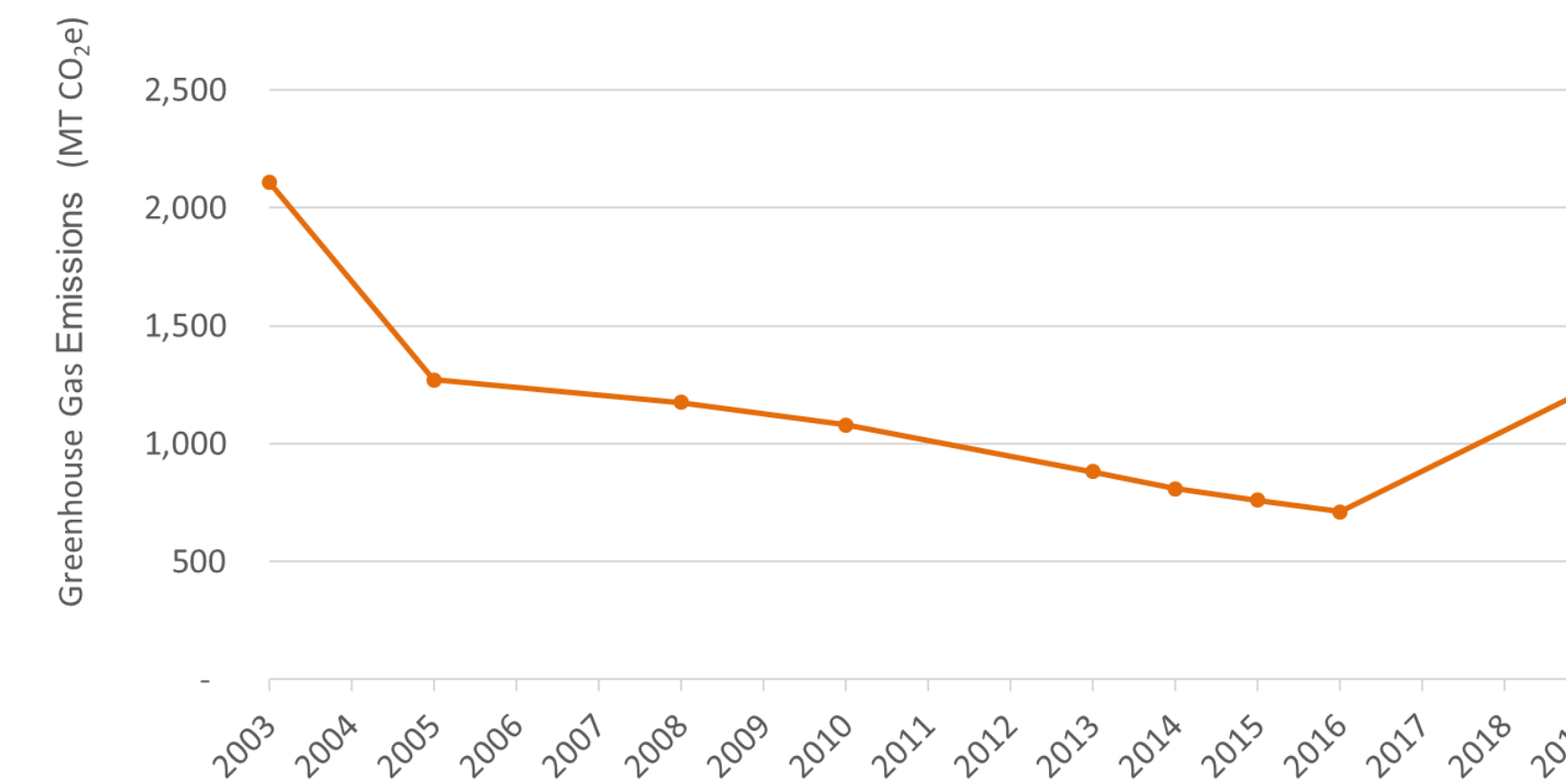
Reuse slide from recycling training presentation

Plan for the Future

- Reframed waste targets in Climate Action Plan to shift from landfill diversion to waste reduction and circular systems.
- Researched opportunities for the County to create an online reuse tool to streamline the process of circulating surplus County furniture.
- Identify high-emission purchased goods from the Supply Chain Inventory to focus on high-impact materials management strategies.

Results

Alameda County Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Waste



Emissions from organic material sent to landfill from government facilities.

Compost & Recycling Roll-Out



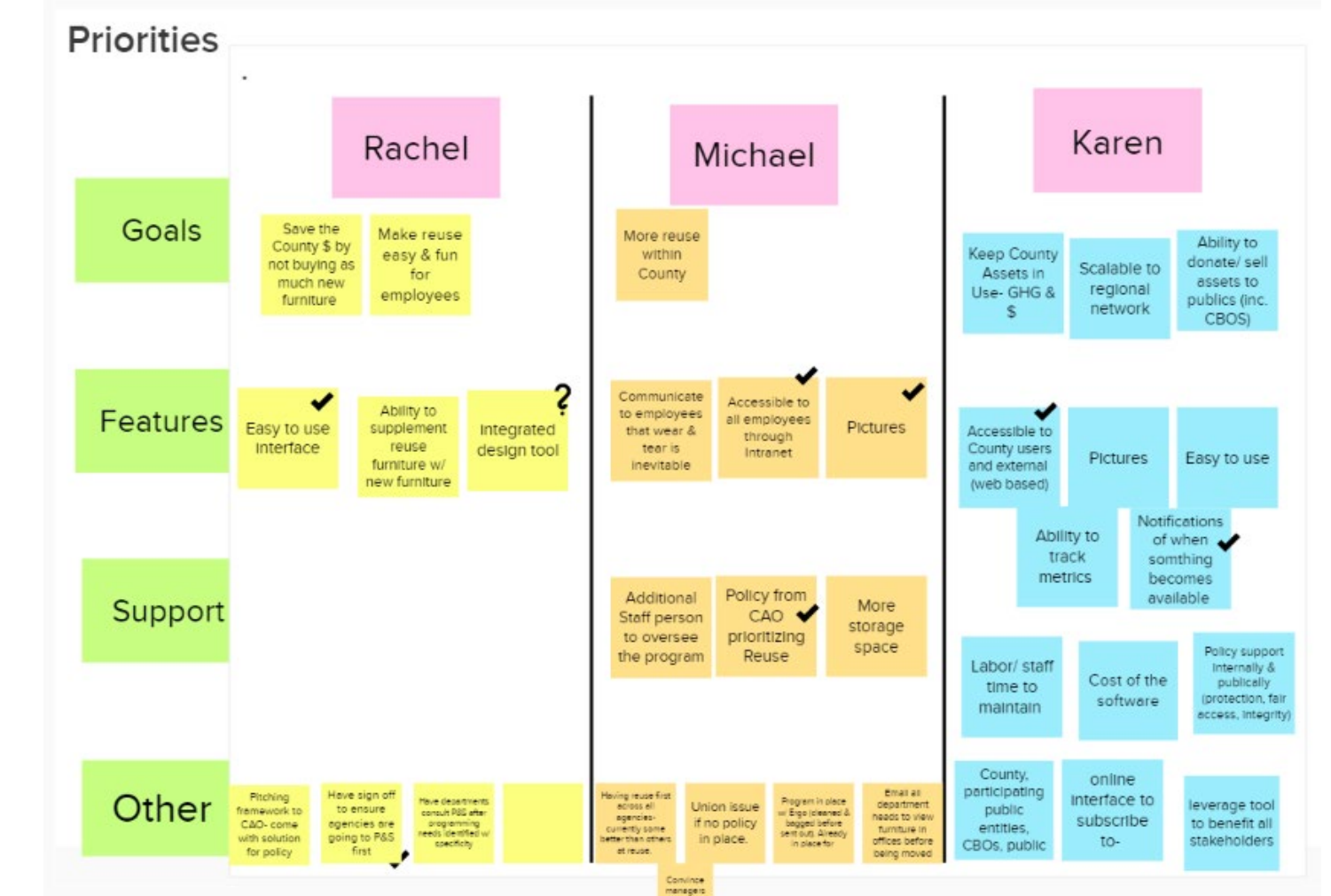
One of four new clusters of recycling, compost, and landfill bins I set up at the Sobering Center facility.

Strategies

Focused Conversations including objective, reflective, interpretive, and decisional questions are a great way to structure discussions with stakeholders to reach actionable outcomes.

Consensus Building by centering conversations around stakeholder input at every stage of the process is valuable in ensuring decisions take all perspectives into account.

Project Planning is important in identifying key stakeholders, establishing goals, assigning responsibility, and creating a roadmap of key milestones to accomplish a project.



I facilitated collaboration on planning an online reuse marketplace with County partners remotely, using Mural to capture perspectives.

Shona Paterson, 2020-2021 Climate Corps Fellow

Shona graduated UC Davis with a B.S. in Environmental Science and Management. After working towards Zero Waste on campus, Shona joined Alameda County to work on waste reduction in local government. Inspired by her experience at the County, she will pursue an Masters in Urban and Regional Planning to continue advancing sustainable policy at a local level.



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