

# SOMO Village One Planet Action Plan Progress Review



October 2018

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Cover image: SOMO Village from the air

## 1. Message from Pooran Desai

SOMO Living is a pioneering project that committed to becoming a One Planet Community over 10 years ago. This was a far-sighted decision that helped ensure that the original vision is fresh and ambitious ten years later, and it explains why some of the targets need additional detail and definition. As expected there has been significant technological development in the last ten years, for example in terms of batteries and electric vehicles, as well as shifts in behavioural norms – especially in terms of water use. Furthermore in the past ten years the urgency of our environmental situation has become starker and this is reflected in the latest version of the One Planet Communities Goals and Guidance document.

SOMO has already seen some impressive successes – the installation of 13,333 solar panels generating 2.85Mw of electricity and the reuse of 600,000sf of buildings to name two. The project is attracting like-minded partners, such as Traditional Medicinals and Credo High School, which along with California State Policies on Climate are all driving the project forward.



SOMO is now at a critical juncture; once the site plan is approved the project will move forward quickly. Therefore while Bioregional is impressed and excited by what has been achieved to date we recommend that the One Planet Action Plan is reviewed in detail in the coming year. In this process more specific outcomes, indicators and targets can be set and more detailed opportunities and strategies developed.

SOMO Living made an ambitious commitment to One Planet Living ten years ago, and is still at the forefront of sustainable community development. Fortunately for the planet, technology and attitudes are shifting. SOMO's commitment to sustainability and actions on the ground will ensure they remain a leader in sustainability.



## 2. Message from the team at SOMO Living

We are most proud of our team's commitment to implementing actions that move us toward our One Planet goals. Our determination and commitment has allowed us to complete the installation of a 3.14Mw of rooftop solar, connected us to the regional rail system and attracted tenants who are also committed to health and sustainability.

We are optimistic and excited about exploring innovative ways to build our highly sustainable and healthy residential community. Many new technologies, materials and community models are now available that we can incorporate into our residential construction to reach our One Planet goals. We are proud to be part of such a vibrant and diverse global network of One Planet Communities. We are in this together!



### 3. Summary of progress

Most of the targets remain on track with some making very good progress. Overall, the plans for SOMO Village remain solid. Once the site plan receives approval the residential aspects of the project will move forward quickly. There has been good implementation of activities within the business community to date as SOMO Village attempts to connect employees with the local community. After the site plan has been approved it is recommended that the One Planet Action Plan is updated with more specific outcomes and indicators.

	Substantially or entirely completed, or a high degree of certainty over deliverability
	On track for a long term target
	Substantially incomplete, behind schedule or doubt over delivery

One Planet Principle	2020 Goal	Progress
<b>Health and happiness</b>	Promote health and happiness based on emerging findings from happiness research and residents' surveys	Residents not currently living at SOMO Village, but health and wellbeing services available to employees in the business park
<b>Equity and local economy</b>	Incubate, create and attract local businesses to provide economic opportunities for the diverse community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Over 1,500 permanent jobs on-site already representing approx. one job per proposed housing unit.</li> <li>- SOMO Village is continuing to attract and retain like-minded businesses to the campus.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and community</b>	Create a community-oriented culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three new local art installations to help enhance community culture.</li> <li>- On-going efforts to connect the business community with the local community. E.g. Credo High School is involved in various projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Land and nature</b>	Increase local biodiversity and natural resource stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A two acre farm for crops will be planted and maintained by the school.</li> <li>- 75 acres of land set aside to mitigate any impact of the development on the California Tiger Salamander</li> </ul>
	Restore wetland areas and protect Tiger Salamander Habitats	
<b>Sustainable water</b>	Promote water efficiency and recycling in line with country-specific best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 44% reduction in total water use from 2006 – 2015.</li> <li>- Non-potable water used for all irrigation.</li> <li>- Greywater systems for residential irrigation will be incorporated in plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Local and sustainable food</b>	Healthy diets should be promoted, and minimum targets achieved for supply of organic, low environmental impact food and local sourcing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress against quantitative targets not yet known.</li> <li>- Locally sourced, healthy food options available onsite.</li> </ul>

<b>Travel and transport</b>	Reduce CO2 emissions for travel	Target not yet set. SMART pathway finished September 2017 connecting SOMO Village with the SMART train station.
<b>Materials and products</b>	Use of local, reclaimed, renewable, recycled and low environmental impact materials in construction and property management should be increased and optimised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress against quantitative targets not documented.</li> <li>- Examples of reclaimed material use include fallen trees and river rocks.</li> <li>- Programme of building refurbishment and reuse a big win Progress in other areas not documented</li> </ul>
<b>Zero waste</b>	At least 70% of waste by weight to be reclaimed, recycled or composted and no more than 2% to landfill.	Organic food waste program being piloted. Progress against other targets unknown.
<b>Zero carbon energy</b>	All buildings must be energy efficient	Buildings designed to be compliant with Title 24 regulation. New buildings to exceed this standard by 15%.
	All buildings must be supplied by renewable energy	All buildings have PV panels installed except events centre. Additional electricity purchased contains 42% renewables in mix.



**Figure 1: Wine Festival at SOMO Village**



## 4. Introduction to SOMO Village

The award winning SOMO Village is an internationally recognised 200 acre redevelopment based in southern Sonoma County in the city of Rohnert Park, California. Situated on a former industrial estate, the developer SOMO Living is transforming the 30 acres of the existing industrial campus into modern office, retail and commercial space to form the 'business core' of the development. Currently over 40 business tenants reside in SOMO Village providing over 1,500 jobs. SOMO Village does not yet have any residents living onsite. The updated site plan allows for over 1700 homes in the Village and is currently being reviewed by the City of Rohnert Park. Once it has been granted approval SOMO Village will have a better understanding of what the residential community will look like and, in line with the One Planet Principles, can continue its progress in creating a social, economically resilient and environmentally strong community.

SOMO Village has been a One Planet Community since 2007. It has a One Planet Action Plan endorsed by Bioregional with its most recent update in 2016. The innovative sustainable design of the development has been recognised globally through various awards. It has been certified at the highest Platinum level by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED-ND).



**Figure 2: Raised beds at SOMO Village**

## 5. SOMO Village's One Planet Action Plan

In committing to their [One Planet Action Plan](#) SOMO Village is aiming to create a pioneering One Planet Community championing sustainable working and living in the 21st century. With the 40 business tenants and Credo High School that have relocated to SOMO Village sustainable working is already being practiced in the local community in line with the One Planet Principles.

Sustainability efforts have been focused on the commercial aspect of the development as there are not yet residents onsite. A strong vision for the residential community has been created with the One Planet Action Plan which will start to be implemented upon approval of the site plan.

By becoming a One Planet Community SOMO Village has pledged to operate within the global environmental limits of our planet where everyone can live happy, healthy lives leaving space for wildlife and wilderness. SOMO Village has been working on this pledge in a number of ways:

- Happy, healthy lifestyles
  - Biannual visit by the St Joseph's Health Clinic which offers health checks and biometric screenings for the business employees
  - Availability of local and sustainable food options such as Sally Tomatoes restaurant and local food trucks
  - Yoga classes and a gym are available to the local community
  - SOMO Concerts hosts live contemporary music festivals on-site – maximum of 18 per year.
- Protection and enhancement of local wildlife and habitats
  - 75 acres of land has been set aside to mitigate the impact on the endangered California Tiger Salamander
  - An additional area of wetland is included in the site plan
- Local Living
  - All residents will live within 5 minutes of amenities including shops, leisure facilities, an events centre, restaurants and a One Planet School
  - There are already 40 businesses at SOMO Village with over 1,500 people in employment
- Sustainable transport options
  - The pedestrian-bike path to the SMART train was completed in September 2017
  - 9 electric vehicle charging stations available onsite for the business employees, providing 16 charging ports
  - In line with California's Title 24 regulation all new homes in SOMO Village will have the infrastructure required for charging stations to be installed

Developing a One Planet Community requires partnership and collaboration, and a key ambition of SOMO is to attract partners who support their vision. In this regard the addition of Traditional Medicinals as a business tenant and the relocation of Credo High School, which also has its own One Planet Action Plan, to the site mark significant successes and are helping to deliver many of the actions and strategies in the Action Plan.



## 6. Review of progress against the One Planet Action Plan

This section reviews the progress against the targets set out in the 2016 One Planet Action Plan.

	Substantially or entirely completed, or a high degree of certainty over deliverability
	On track for a long term target
	Substantially incomplete, behind schedule or doubt over delivery

### 6.1. Health and happiness

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
HH1	Health and happiness of residents must be promoted based on emerging findings from 'happiness' research and periodic residents' surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A plan for promoting the health and happiness of residents must be produced.</li> <li>Residents' satisfaction levels and concerns must be regularly monitored.</li> <li>At least two examples of strategies to promote health and happiness must be showcased.</li> </ul>	Residents not currently living at SOMO Village, but health and wellbeing services available to the business community

#### 6.1.1. Key achievements and next steps

While the targets are aimed at the residential community, which is not yet onsite, significant steps have been taken to provide health and wellbeing services to the business community for example:

- St Joseph's mobile health clinic visits twice a year for wellness checks for the business employees. There is currently not a building or patient volume to pursue a community-supported health care clinic but this is something that could be developed once residents move in.
- Yoga of Health, is now located at SOMO Village. This is an open studio for the community as well as creates custom offerings to SOMO Village tenants for improved wellness and mindfulness.
- Pecoraro's Fitness Academy continues to offer daily fitness classes as well as personal training.
- The events centre continues to host festivals and concerts.

### 6.2. Equity and local economy

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
Eq1	Targets must be set to boost the local economy, notably in disadvantaged areas, and to ensure a set ratio of imported goods are fair trade certified.	25% affordable housing. Recruit retail businesses which agree to sell fair trade goods other than coffee and chocolate.	Remains in planning proposals
Eq2	Incubate, create and attract local businesses to provide economic opportunities for the diverse community	1.0 jobs available on-site for every new unit of housing sold with at least half continuing beyond 2025.	Over 1,500 permanent jobs on-site already representing approximately 1 job per proposed housing unit.

### 6.2.1. Key achievements and next steps

- Currently there are over 40 businesses onsite with over 1500 employees. New tenants have moved in since October 2017, already providing close to one employment opportunity per proposed housing unit. SOMO Village is building the local economy by attracting and retaining like-minded businesses to the campus: Traditional Medicinals, Morton & Bassett, Sally Tomatoes. Traditional Medicinals is a B (benefit) Corporation.
- With regard to next steps, once residents move in there will be a better understanding of the community needs for retail and community businesses.
- SOMO will explore co-working and co-housing as demand develops.

#### Case study: Engaging with SOMO Village community at Traditional Medicinals

Since moving into SOMO Village Traditional Medicinals has enjoyed engaging with and supporting the local community. The company has set a goal to engage the local community in sustainability practices and education. Activities have so far included:

- Engaging with Credo High School in One Planet, sustainability and herbalism topics;
- Hosting and speaking at business/other classes with Sonoma State;
- Engaging SOMO management on improving renewable power reporting.

In addition, Traditional Medicinals has provided support to the local community through organised product donations for fire relief stations and a company volunteer day with Daily Acts, a sustainability non-profit organisation.

## 6.3. Culture and community

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
CC1	Valuable aspects of local culture and heritage must be maintained, enhanced or revived.	A site specific action plan to maintain, enhance or revive valuable aspects of local culture and heritage must be produced. At least two case studies should be showcased.	- Three new local art works have been installed. - The events centre continues to host festivals and events. - Credo High School and SOMO Village involved in several projects together.

### 6.3.1. Key achievements and next steps

- Three new local art installation include works "Courtyard Ladies", "Tripod with Bells" and "ShadowPlay" to create culture and provide an amenity to the community.
- Going forwards, events happening in and around the community will be promoted to the business community creating many opportunities for outdoor interactions.
- Credo High School has become a prominent member of the local community. SOMO Village has worked closely with the school to set up several projects including a landscaping project and a School Yard Habitat Project. Local restaurant Sally Tomatoes provides fresh, healthy school lunches.



**Figure 3: Yoga at SOMO Village**

## 6.4. Land and Nature

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
LN1	Local biodiversity and natural resource stocks must be increased	Remove all invasive species onsite. Minimum park area = 15% and open space area = 5% of the total development footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A 2 acre farm for crops will be planted and maintained by the school.</li> <li>- 75 acres of land set aside to mitigate the impact of the development on the California Tiger Salamander.</li> </ul>
LN2	Restore wetland areas and create a Buffer Zone between developed areas and the California Tiger Salamander Habitat	Native habitat / water bodies / wetland areas $\geq 10\%$ of the development footprint.	

### 6.4.1. Key achievements and next steps

- SOMO Village with Credo High School have three projects to help improve biodiversity in the area and support wildlife:
  - A landscaping project involving 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students is replanting landscaping around the school site. Local experts, Allen Landscape Design, assisted to identify suitable plants as well as soil and irrigation needs.
  - A School Yard Habitat Project will work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife to supply food, water and shelter for native wildlife species.
  - A 2 acre farm of row crops will be planted on-site and maintained by students and faculty as an outdoor Credo classroom.
- 75 acres will be used to mitigate the impact of development on the California Tiger Salamander, an endangered species.
  - The permit application has been submitted to state agencies and is in process.
  - Mitigation plans will include constructing breeding ponds and wetland restoration.



## 6.5. Sustainable water

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
SW1	Water efficiency and recycling must be promoted in line with country-specific best practice.	New construction will meet a minimum 40% drinking water use reduction per LEED calculation for building usage and 50% for irrigation. All new residences will incorporate non-potable water systems for irrigation	- Between 2006 and 2015 total water use decreased by 44% and water use per m <sup>2</sup> by 2/3 <sup>rd</sup> s - Non-potable water used for all irrigation. - Greywater systems for residential irrigation will be incorporated in plan.
SW2	Water use does not compromise groundwater levels and natural uses in wetlands	Exceed storm water runoff/treatment standards required by government regulatory agencies and achieve LEED storm water credits for reduction in total suspended solids and phosphorus, and for reduction in the rate of runoff.	Remains in site plan. Permeable materials being explored.

### 6.5.1. Key achievements and next steps

While the reuse of a single site for multiple tenants has made detailed monitoring challenging a number of key achievements have been delivered:

- The number of gallons of potable water used on site increased just 14% between 2006 and 2015 while the amount of leased space increased 220% - equating to a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s reduction in water use per m<sup>2</sup>.
- While the number of people using and visiting the site increased significantly up to 2015, total water use (potable water and water for irrigation) decreased by 44%.
- Plans will incorporate new California regulations allowing greywater systems for residential irrigation.
- SOMO Village is exploring new types of permeable materials for the redevelopment.
- SOMO Village currently uses only non-potable water for all irrigation.
- Lawns have been and continue to be replaced with drought-tolerant landscaping. Irrigation systems have been upgraded to minimize outdoor watering.
- Water using appliances incorporate water efficient fittings to save water.

## 6.6. Local and sustainable food

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
LSF1	Healthy diets should be promoted and minimum targets achieved for supply of organic, low environmental impact food and local sourcing.	65% of food sourced within 300 miles 25% of food sourced within 50 miles ≥6 community farms onsite 10% of food consumed by residents organic or locally sourced by 2018	Specific information on progress not collated. Though there are healthy food options available e.g. Sally Tomatoes and food trucks.

### 6.6.1. Key achievements and next steps

- Sustainable food options are available for business employees in the short term including Sally Tomatoes and bi-weekly food trucks. Vegetarian, locally sourced and healthy meals are also offered. High level planning has begun for expanding culinary offerings onsite over the next 3 years. This will be fostered by residents moving in and neighbourhoods filling up.
- On-site garden beds installed spring 2018 to provide local, organic and fresh ingredients to Sally Tomatoes.
- Credo High School has leased 2 acres for a living farm classroom. Soil preparation and planning is underway.

## 6.7. Travel and transport

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
TT1	Reduce CO2 emissions for travel to, from and within the community relative to a regional benchmark	Target still to be set	Target still to be set, SMART train connection a positive step
TT2	Offset all unavoidable CO2 emissions with a certified carbon sequestration scheme.	Offset all transport emissions, ideally meeting WWF Gold Standard reference	Plan needs to be developed

### 6.7.1. Key achievements and next steps

- The pedestrian/bicycle pathway is complete from the Cotati SMART Train Station to SOMO Village, connecting SOMO Village directly to Santa Rosa and Sonoma County Airport. This encourages more walking and cycling and less reliance on vehicles for many commuters and students.
  - 9 electric vehicle charging stations have been installed offering 16 ports. The California Title 24 regulation will ensure that all new construction at SOMO Village will incorporate the required infrastructure for charging point installations.
- The food trucks which visit twice weekly reduce travel offsite by the business employees and students seeking lunch.



Figure 4: Bike fundraising event

## 6.8. Materials and products

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
MP1	Use of local, reclaimed, renewable, recycled and low environmental impact materials in construction and property management should be increased and optimized.	20% of materials manufactured onsite 30% manufactured within 50 miles 60% manufactured within 500 miles	Progress against targets not tracked. 600,000 sqft of buildings repurposed and reused

### 6.8.1. Key achievements and next steps

- Work on the SOMO Building Materials Guide will renew in earnest upon approval of the final site plans.
- Reclaimed materials have been used in several key projects in the community. Examples include the riser platform in the Event Center Courtyard, reuse of river rocks on site as Gabions, reuse of fallen trees for bench seating atop the Gabions.
- A key goal at SOMO Village is to reduce the amount of materials or avoid the use of materials altogether to support the design and aesthetic feel of the community.

## 6.9. Zero waste

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
ZW1	At least 70% of waste by weight to be reclaimed, recycled or composted and no more than 2% to landfill.	≥70% of waste by weight to be reclaimed, recycled or composted and ≤2% to landfill. ≥75% of construction materials recycled	- Some composting initiatives in place – progress on recycling targets unknown.

### 6.9.1. Key achievements and next steps

- There are a number of waste practices in place across SOMO Village to reduce waste sent to landfill:
  - SOMO Village now has 3 compost locations, each with 2-yard compost bins that are picked up twice per week. Landscape waste is incorporated into the compost bins.
  - An organic food waste/compost program is being piloted in the SOMO Office and Traditional Medicinals. This will help to create a plan for all tenants.
  - SOMO Village Event Center Use Agreements now include a large and small event waste plan with an introduction to the local waste hauler and zero waste specialist.
- It is now the policy goal of the state that no less than 75% of solid waste generated is recycled or composted by 2020, and annually thereafter.



## 6.10. Zero carbon energy

	2020 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress
ZC1	All buildings must be energy efficient	All buildings and structures are designed or retrofitted to be energy efficient to country-specific best practice standards.	Buildings designed to be compliant with Title 24 regulation. New buildings to exceed this standard by 15%.
ZC2	All buildings must be supplied by renewable energy	100% renewable energy	All buildings have PV panels installed except events centre. Additional electricity purchased contains 42% renewables in mix.

### 6.10.1. Key achievements and next steps

As with water use the adaptation of a single site and building for multiple tenants makes metering challenging. In spite of this significant progress has been made in reducing energy demand.

- SOMO Village installed PV panels that generate 2.85MW of electricity.
- The large renewable power generation capacity does not meet 100% of the power demands and additional electricity is purchased from Sonoma Clean Power (42% renewable) to ensure that all demand is met.
- There are plans to integrate a battery storage system in the village with a 1MW capacity. This is due to commence in Mid-2018.
- A deep energy audit is underway to reduce energy use short term and to guide next steps for efficiency measures and system upgrades.



Figure 5: Music concert at SOMO Village

## 7. Plans for the year ahead

The following strategies are set for implementation upon the updated site plan approval from the City of Rohnert Park.

One Planet Principle	2020 Goal	Key strategies
<b>Health and happiness</b>	Promote health and happiness based on emerging findings from happiness research and residents' surveys	Until residents move in happiness and satisfaction levels cannot be monitored. However monitoring worker satisfaction could be considered. There will also be limited demand for other services e.g. health clinic, Continuing Education Program. However SOMO will continue to promote healthy and happy lifestyles through other means including the events centre, yoga and fitness classes, provision of local and healthy food options etc.
<b>Equity and local economy</b>	Incubate, create and attract local businesses to provide economic opportunities for the diverse community	Continue to attract and retain business tenants to SOMO Village which provide job opportunities to the local community. Expand upon retail and commercial space plan once final site plans approved.
<b>Culture and Community</b>	Create a community-oriented culture	Festivals and concerts at the events centre, continue to attract businesses which contribute to the local community. Continue to work with Credo High School on the landscaping project and School Yard Habitat Project.
<b>Land and nature</b>	Increase local biodiversity and natural resource stocks	Support Credo High School in its landscaping project and the School Yard Habitat project.
	Restore wetland areas and protect Tiger Salamander Habitats	Develop mitigation plan on approval of permit application. Develop potential monitoring project with Credo High School.
<b>Sustainable water</b>	Promote water efficiency and recycling in line with country-specific best practice	Ongoing improvement such as monitoring of water use. Continue to investigate new types of permeable material for the redevelopment.
<b>Local and sustainable food</b>	Healthy diets should be promoted and minimum targets achieved for supply of organic, low environmental impact food and local sourcing.	Continue to provide locally sourced, healthy foods for the local community through restaurants, food trucks etc. Ongoing high level planning for expansion of culinary food offerings onsite.
<b>Travel and transport</b>	Reduce CO2 emissions for travel	Ongoing improvement
<b>Materials and products</b>	Use of local, reclaimed, renewable, recycled and low environmental impact materials in construction and property management should be	Develop SOMO Building Materials Guide once the final site plans are approved.

	increased and optimized.	
<b>Zero waste</b>	At least 70% of waste by weight to be reclaimed, recycled or composted and no more than 2% to landfill.	Ongoing engagement with businesses including the organic food waste program
<b>Zero carbon energy</b>	All buildings must be energy efficient	A deep energy audit is underway and will continue. It will aim to identify how energy efficiency can be improved.
	All buildings must be supplied by renewable energy	Develop the plans for a battery storage system.