



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY WINS DIGITAL RECOGNITION

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce it has been named the 6th-most digital friendly county in the nation by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties.

The Digital Counties Survey Awards recognize local governments that embrace and leverage technology to improve citizen services and government operations, including open government, citizen engagement, data-driven decision making, mobile applications and more. The County will receive its award at a July 14 ceremony in Nashville.

"In recent years, the Board of Supervisors has increased the use of technology to deliver efficient and effective services to residents," Board of Supervisors Chair Zach Friend said. "Santa Cruz County has worked to establish itself as a leader among Silicon Valley governments in creating digital connections with residents, and this award is a welcome recognition of those efforts."

Santa Cruz County's award was in the population category 250,000-499,999.

"Effective technology has proven to be a key tool for efficiency in many facets of county government," said NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase. "We applaud this year's Digital Counties Survey winners for showcasing the value of innovation and adaptation. Their embrace of cutting-edge approaches has benefited residents while ensuring good stewardship of taxpayer resources."

In recent years, the County has worked to leverage the digital environment to improve transparency and access to local government, including broadening the scope of its Citizen Connect app, creating a database of broadband needs to improve broadband access for residents, strengthening digital engagement through its strategic planning process and elsewhere; creating apps for law enforcement to use in the field to access



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services for mental health-related calls; creating an online cannabis licensing system; digitizing internal processes such as document signatures; expanding the use of ePlans and other document review processes; and more.

Beyond internal initiatives, the County is a participant in community-based efforts to leverage digital technology to improve the delivery of services to residents, including the Smart Path Coordinated Entry System for homeless persons and the Santa Cruz County Health Information Organization, a coalition of local medical providers which uses technology systems to exchange and integrate health and social information into the care process.

The Center for Digital Government is a national research and advisory institute focused on technology policy and best practices in state and local government. CDG is a division of e.Republic, the nation's only media and research company focused exclusively on state and local government and education.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) unites America's 3,069 county governments. Founded in 1935, NACo brings county officials together to advocate with a collective voice on national policy, exchange ideas and build new leadership skills, pursue transformational county solutions, enrich the public's understanding of county government and exercise exemplary leadership in public service.