CHAPTER 2
Planning Context

STATE AND SYSTEMWIDE FACTORS IMPACTING THE PLAN

A variety of local, regional, and state- or nationwide factors bear on the college's planning efforts. From seemingly routine California legislative impacts (such as AB 1705) to the rise of artificial intelligence to the rising cost of local housing, Santa Monica College must continually navigate a changing landscape for higher education providers. The factors described below represent the most salient concerns for SMC as the college works to develop academic programs and facilities over the next decade.

The California Community College System

The California Community College (CCC) system is the largest system of higher education in the United States, with 116 colleges that annually serve over 1.8 million students. Although community colleges have existed in California for more than 100 years, the California Community College as a system was established in 1967 under the California Master Plan for Higher Education. The CCC system plays an essential role in providing accessible, affordable, and high-quality education to a diverse student population spread across California. The CCC system's mission is threefold:

- Provide academic and career technical education,

- Prepare students for transfer to four-year universities, and

- Offer basic skills instruction and lifelong learning opportunities.

The CCC system is governed by the Board of Governors, which sets policy and provides guidance to local districts. However, each community college district operates autonomously through its locally elected Board of Trustees. This decentralized structure allows individual college districts to address the unique needs of their communities while adhering to statewide policies and initiatives.

At the same time, California state representatives frequently pass legislation designed to regulate or reform the community college system. Those new laws are implemented across all colleges through the interpretation of the Board of Governors and systemwide guidance by the Chancellor's office. Recent significant examples of state law impacting Santa Monica College include AB 1705, AB 928, and AB 1111, among many others.

Vision 2030

The California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 plan — Chancellor Sonya Christian's roadmap for the next five years — outlines a comprehensive strategy to enhance educational access, equity, and success across the state's community college system. The plan sets bold goals for all colleges and relies on a set of key metrics to hold colleges accountable to the plan. Key components of the plan include:

- **Proactive Student Engagement:** The plan emphasizes bringing educational opportunities directly to students, rather than waiting for them to enroll. This involves expanding dual enrollment programs for high school students, offering credit for prior learning to veterans and working adults, collaborating with community-based organizations to provide workforce training to low-income adults, and delivering instruction through flexible modalities.

- **Inclusive Access:** Vision 2030 aims to create a more inclusive higher education system that ensures access points for every learner, regardless of race, ethnicity, or background.

- **Climate Action and Sustainability:** The plan guides the community colleges' efforts in climate action, focusing on facilities and operations, workforce and curriculum development, community engagement, and resource development.

- **Policy and System Reforms:** Vision 2030 calls for bold actions in policy reform, fiscal sustainability, systems development, and process improvements to support students, communities, and the environment.

Service Area of Santa Monica College

The nearest community college at the time of SMC's founding was Los Angeles City College on Vermont Avenue in the East Hollywood area. SMC immediately drew students from the greater Westside area. At the time, districts had the authority to restrict the ability of their residents to attend other colleges. SMC and Los Angeles entered into interdistrict attendance agreements in recognition of the large distance students would need to travel from Santa Monica to attend Los Angeles City College. The renewal of the agreements was often contentious. In some cases, SMC would need to pay Los Angeles a set amount of money for every Los Angeles student above a designated number attending SMC.

A 1987 bill sponsored by SMC's local assemblymember Tom Hayden was approved by the state Assembly to prohibit these restrictions, promoting the idea that students have a right to a voice in a decision affecting their life. "Free flow" — the name given to the practice — provided students choosing a community college with the same opportunity they would have in attending a CSU or UC — the ability to attend any public college or university in California without regard to their home district.

Free flow coincided with the start of robust marketing of SMC programs through radio, outdoor media, and print. It also provided the opportunity for SMC to expand its dual enrollment program — SMC faculty teaching college-level classes at selected high school campuses — to more than 35 high schools in the surrounding area.

SMC is no longer able to serve the many high schools that it once did. A 2003 state law (SB 338) gives community college districts the ability to limit dual enrollment agreements with high schools in their district. SMC continues to offer dual enrollment programs to the high schools within its district and through College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) agreements, a separate process.

SMC continues to be the college of choice for much of Los Angeles County and beyond, drawing students from nearly every zip code. Over time, the college has expanded the options for students to attend SMC: in person through its Big Blue Bus Any Line Any Time program and the Metro GoPass program providing free transit for students, and online through a major expansion of online offerings.

Funding Models for Santa Monica College

Prior to the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, Santa Monica College was funded by local property taxes at a rate set by the Board of Education through 1969 or by the Board of Trustees serving also as the Board of Education from 1970 through 1978. Of historical interest, the property tax rate set by the Santa Monica-Malibu school district was lower than that set by the Los Angeles school district. About two-thirds of the students at Santa Monica College resided in the Los Angeles school district at the time, and brought with them the higher revenues, in effect subsidizing the local school district.

Proposition 13. Proposition 13 is a 1978 California constitutional amendment that limits property taxes by rolling back property assessments to 1975 market values, capping the property tax rate at 1%, and allowing annual increases in assessed value of no more than 2%. Property assessments are generally only

updated to market value upon a change in ownership or new construction. This "acquisition value" system locks in tax bases for long-term owners.

Proposition 13 transformed the landscape of K-14 funding in California from a locally controlled system heavily reliant on property taxes to a state-centric model, leading to increased state responsibility, reduced local autonomy, and a greater dependence on state general funds for education. With Proposition 13, local school boards and city councils lost the ability to raise property taxes by board vote.

State Funding at Local Apportionment Rate. After Proposition 13, funding of school districts and community college districts shifted to the state. The state determined how property taxes would be allocated, and additionally chose to augment property tax collections with other state revenue, primarily from income and sales taxes. The state used the locally set tax rate for Santa Monica College to determine apportionment for Santa Monica College. This led to significant hardship for SMC, as the college had the lowest locally determined tax rate in the state.

Overcoming Inequitable Funding. SMC embarked on a series of actions to overcome its inequitable funding position. These efforts included a concerted effort to grow its student population, utilizing outreach, advertising, and dual enrollment; the active recruitment and serving of international students; and a robust summer offering. From 1978 to 2005, the state used different models to determine apportionment, including program-based funding, but it was not until the shift to access-based funding (i.e., "equalization" funding) starting in 2005, and fully implemented in 2006 through SB 361, that SMC would be relieved of its pre-existing inequity.

Equalization. Access-based funding — also known as "equalization" funding — had been a 25-year goal of the college. Unlike the K-12 system, the community colleges had no court mandate for equality in funding. Equalization was structured to not take away any funds from any of the community college districts, and apportionment became largely based on the number of full-time-equivalent students (FTES) served.

Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). California began using the Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) in the 2018-19 budget, replacing access-based funding. The intent of SCFF is to support student access, equity, and success through enrollment-based funding by prioritizing funds for districts serving students of low-income, and providing districts with additional resources.

SCFF bases general apportionments — discretionary funds available to community college districts — on three calculations of varying weight:

- A base allocation, which largely reflects enrollment. (70%)
- A supplemental allocation based on the numbers of students receiving a College Promise Grant, students receiving a Pell Grant, and students covered by AB 540. (20%)
- A student success allocation based on outcomes that include the number of students who are earning Associate degrees and credit certificates, transferring to four-year colleges and universities, have completed transfer-level math and English within their first year of college, have completed nine or more career education units, and have attained the regional living wage. (10%)

When adopted, SCFF included a hold harmless provision, which provided a community college district the option to receive its prior year's apportionment plus a Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA). Hold harmless was in place for seven years, from 2018-19 through 2024-25.

Beginning with the 2025-26 year, districts may use a modified form of hold harmless, which makes them able to receive the prior year's apportionment, but without COLA.

The Student-Centered Funding Formula at Santa Monica College. SMC's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. Because the summer session at SMC starts in one fiscal year and ends in the next fiscal year, SMC has had the option to claim the summer session apportionment in either the concluding year (the earlier year) or the new year (the later year). Typically, SMC would claim summer session for the later year. In those times when SMC claimed some or all its summer session apportionment in the earlier year, this represented a "borrowing" of FTES for which special rules would apply. SMC had borrowed FTES in the several years before 2018-19 and had reached the maximum amount allowed. The special rules meant that in the normal course of events, SMC would only be able to claim its actual FTES in 2018-19 and would experience a corresponding significant drop in revenue.

The switch from access-based funding to the SCFF funding model provided SMC an option to sustain the revenue it had received in 2017-18 and not experience any drop in revenue. This was by using the hold harmless option offered by the SCFF. Originally, hold harmless would last for two years, but was extended twice, and instead lasted seven years.

SMC has only used the hold harmless provision of the SCFF to claim apportionment. The temporary relief offered to SMC by using the hold harmless option has now ended. There is a new formula, which provides SMC the option to claim the apportionment funding it received in 2024-25, but denies SMC the additional COLA provided to the system for the 2025-26 year.

The SCFF Challenge. To become eligible for COLA in future years, SMC must concentrate its planning on reaching metrics within the SCFF so that the funding provided by the SCFF is at least equal to, and preferably better than the apportionment funding SMC received in 2024-25. This will be one of the challenges ahead.

Capital Funding

The largest sources of capital funding have been local, voter-approved general obligation bond measures. Four bonds (in 1946, 1950, 1957, and 1966) funded the acquisition of the land and the initial buildings of the main campus. Since becoming its own district with a separately elected Board of Trustees, the Santa Monica Community College District has passed six more bonds (in 1992, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2016, and 2022). At the present time, bond measures can pass with 55% yes support. Typically, a privately formed committee assists with the information campaign essential to gaining voter approval.

SMC also competes for limited state funds. The most recent funded projects are the Math & Science Building and the new Art Building.

SMC also receives on an annual basis capital charges paid by nonresident students.

AB 705 and AB 1705: Reshaping Placement and Developmental Education

California Assembly Bill 705 (AB 705) was signed into law in 2017 with the goal of improving student access to — and success in — transfer-level college courses at California Community Colleges. The bill requires that community colleges use high school performance data (e.g., GPA and coursework) and/or self-placement as the primary method for placing students in math, English, and ESL courses, rather than relying on standardized placement tests, and that colleges maximize the likelihood that students enter and complete transfer-level coursework in math and English within one year of enrollment, or in ESL within three years of enrollment.

Assembly Bill 1705 (AB 1705) built upon AB 705 and has dramatically reshaped developmental education by requiring that all students be placed directly into transfer-level English and math courses, eliminating remedial prerequisites. While this move increases access to degree pathways, it also raises concerns about student preparedness and success rates. Many students who previously would have taken foundational courses are now expected to succeed in college-level coursework with little transitional support. In response, colleges are expanding co-requisite models, which provide additional support such as embedded tutoring, supplemental instruction, and extended class time. Faculty training in inclusive and differentiated instruction is also a priority, ensuring that instructors are equipped to support a diverse range of learners. Colleges must also refine assessment tools to accurately identify students who need additional resources and interventions.

Implementation of AB 705 and AB 1705 at SMC has included:

- Elimination of the College's Assessment Center, which previously administered standardized assessment tests in math, English, and ESL;

- Creation of new placement mechanisms based on student high school work and self-placement systems developed by faculty in the impacted disciplines;

- Development of co-requisite companion courses to provide added support for students enrolled in transfer level math, English, and ESL courses, as identified via the new placement processes; and

- Elimination of most pre-transfer-level credit course offerings from the schedule of classes.

SMC's implementation of AB 705 and AB 1705 has resulted in the intended increase in rates of completion of transfer level math and English in the first year of enrollment across student demographic groups, but has simultaneously increased racial equity gaps in these rates of completion. Further work is needed to effectively address and close the racial equity gaps in first-year math and English completion.

Transfer Reform and the Implementation of Cal-GETC

The transfer process has long been a source of confusion and inefficiency for community college students navigating the pathways to CSU and UC campuses. The introduction of the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) seeks to simplify transfer requirements and unify general education standards across both university systems. However, challenges remain in aligning major preparation courses and streamlining Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) pathways. To ensure a smooth implementation, colleges must update counseling materials, train faculty and advisors on the new framework, and proactively communicate changes to students. Ensuring that students understand how Cal-GETC integrates with their educational and career goals will be crucial to increasing transfer rates and reducing excess unit accumulation.

The California State Auditor's September 2024 report underscores the importance — and complexity — of the transfer process from community colleges to four-year public institutions within the state. The audit highlights that while transfer pathways exist, significant barriers remain: Only about 21% of transfer-intending community college students successfully transfer within four years. These outcomes are influenced by variations in transfer requirements among institutions, inadequate student support structures, and limited access to highly competitive campuses and majors.

For Santa Monica College, this statewide context presents both challenges and opportunities. SMC already serves as a leader among the California Community Colleges in transfer success; however, the college

must further refine and expand its efforts to meet evolving state goals and address persistent transfer disparities. Critical strategies include broadening the availability of Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) pathways, deepening strategic relationships with local UC and CSU campuses, enhancing targeted student outreach and advising — particularly for historically underrepresented groups — and using data-driven methods to proactively support students intending to transfer.

Additionally, recent legislative developments, including the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) and pilot expansions of the ADT pathways, offer a robust framework for improving student transfer success. By aligning closely with these statewide initiatives and strengthening collaboration with partner institutions, SMC can effectively position itself to address persistent barriers to transfer, increase equitable access to Bachelor's degrees, and fulfill California's broader educational attainment goals.

This strategic alignment will ensure that SMC continues to be at the forefront of efforts to streamline transfer pathways, reduce disparities, and significantly contribute to California's higher education goals over the next five years.

Common Course Numbering Initiative

California Assembly Bill 1111 (AB 1111), also known as Common Course Numbering or CCN, was signed into law in 2021. The bill requires California Community Colleges to rename and renumber transfer and general education courses to align among all 116 colleges, with the intent to streamline and improve the rates of transfer between community colleges and to four-year institutions. Additionally, use of CCN is expected to decrease the number of units required for completion of both degrees and transfer by simplifying student-facing course details and information.

The launch of the CCN initiative includes three "phases" of renaming and renumbering, impacting approximately 70 courses. While SMC offers ENGL 1 for English composition credit, Pasadena City College offers ENGL 0001A, and Mt. San Antonio offers ENGL 1A, they are all basically the same course. The Common Course Numbering project changes the designation of all English composition courses — across all 116 colleges — to ENGL C1000. The CCN for the first six courses was implemented in fall 2025, with future phases to be implemented in future fall semesters.

SMC's implementation of AB 1111 has included significant contribution from the impacted academic departments, the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Academic Affairs, MIS, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Marketing, and the web team to ensure streamlined activation of the changes across all systems. Multiple departments have worked together to announce the changes to students, faculty, and staff to ensure a shared understanding of the course numbering changes across the college.

Evolving Career Education Needs

California's economy is rapidly evolving, and community colleges must ensure that their workforce training programs align with emerging job market needs. Industries such as healthcare, cybersecurity, renewable energy, and data science are in high demand, yet many students lack access to affordable, high-quality training. The Strong Workforce Program (SWP) and various grant-funded initiatives aim to address these gaps by expanding career education offerings and creating direct pipelines from education to employment. Partnerships with industry leaders help integrate work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships and internships, giving students hands-on experience while earning credentials. Colleges are also adopting competency-based education models, allowing students to gain credit for prior work experience, accelerating their entry into high-paying jobs.

Noncredit and Adult Education

As workforce demands shift, noncredit and adult education programs have become increasingly important for career mobility. These programs provide opportunities for upskilling, reskilling, and literacy development, often at no cost to students. Community colleges are expanding noncredit-to-credit pathways to ensure that adult learners can transition into degree or certificate programs seamlessly. Funding for these programs is growing, with a greater emphasis on meeting the needs of English language learners and displaced workers.

Equity and Closing Achievement Gaps

Despite various statewide efforts, significant achievement gaps persist for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and other underrepresented students. Many of these students face systemic challenges, including limited access to college readiness resources, financial instability, and a lack of culturally responsive support systems. To address these challenges, community colleges are intensifying their focus on equity-driven policies through Student Equity Plans (SEPs), embedding equity into institutional decision-making, and ensuring accountability for student outcomes. The Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program provides crucial funding to support initiatives such as expanded tutoring, embedded counseling, and targeted intervention programs. Colleges are also investing in professional development for faculty and staff to implement anti-racist and culturally responsive teaching practices, ensuring that the curriculum reflects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students.

Addressing the Cost of Attendance

While California Community Colleges have some of the lowest tuition and enrollment costs in the nation, the total cost of attendance — including housing, food, transportation, and textbooks — remains a significant barrier. Many students must balance work and school, leading to increased dropout rates. In response, colleges are expanding Zero-Textbook-Cost (ZTC) degree programs, which leverage Open Educational Resources (OER) to eliminate textbook expenses. Financial aid reforms, including expanded Cal Grant eligibility, aim to provide more direct financial assistance to community college students. Additionally, institutions are investing in emergency grants and wraparound services that address unexpected financial hardships, helping students stay enrolled and focused on their studies.

Technology, Online Learning, and Artificial Intelligence

The digital transformation of education continues to reshape how community colleges deliver instruction and support services. While the rapid expansion of online and hybrid learning has increased flexibility and access, it has also underscored serious digital equity challenges. Many students still face barriers to accessing reliable internet service, laptops, and digital literacy support — particularly low-income, first-generation, and older adult learners. Colleges have responded by distributing technology resources, expanding tech support services, and investing in faculty training on effective online pedagogy.

The California Virtual Campus (CVC) Exchange has further enhanced access by allowing students to enroll in online courses offered by other colleges across the state, increasing enrollment options and accelerating degree completion. In parallel, artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging as both a transformative tool and a complex challenge for higher education.

On one hand, AI technologies — such as adaptive learning platforms, automated tutoring systems, and predictive analytics — offer tremendous potential to personalize learning, identify at-risk students early, and streamline student services like advising and enrollment management. On the other hand, colleges must grapple with new ethical, pedagogical, and logistical concerns. These include the impact of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) on academic integrity, the need for faculty development in AI literacy, and questions about student data privacy and algorithmic bias.

Forward-thinking institutions are beginning to integrate AI into curriculum design — particularly in fields like computer science, business, and health technology — and to experiment with AI-powered tools to enhance instructional delivery and administrative efficiency. However, there is growing recognition that colleges must also teach students how to critically engage with AI, including understanding its societal implications and developing skills for the evolving labor market.

As AI reshapes the nature of work and learning, community colleges are uniquely positioned to provide equitable access to AI literacy, workforce training, and ethical engagement with emerging technologies — while ensuring that innovation does not deepen existing disparities.

Basic Needs and Mental Health Services

An increasing number of community college students face housing insecurity, food instability, and mental health challenges, which directly impact student retention and completion rates. To address these issues, California has mandated the establishment of Basic Needs Centers on every community college campus, providing students with access to food pantries, housing assistance, and financial counseling. Additionally, mental health services are being expanded through telehealth options and peer support programs. Colleges are also integrating mental health resources into student orientation and academic advising to normalize seeking help and reduce any stigma for making the effort to do so.

Climate Change and Sustainability

Community colleges play a vital role in promoting sustainability and preparing students for careers in the rapidly developing Green Economy and the expanding and modernizing Blue Economy. Many institutions are implementing climate action plans, upgrading infrastructure to improve energy efficiency, and incorporating sustainability into the curriculum. Programs in environmental science, renewable energy technology, and climate resilience are being developed and expanded to train students for jobs in California's growing green workforce. Additionally, colleges are working to reduce their carbon footprint by implementing zero-waste initiatives and actively promoting public transportation options. SMC's new Aquaculture program and leadership of the Blue Economy and Climate Action Pathways regional initiative are examples of our leading-edge contributions to this emerging field.

Governance and Fiscal Stability

California's community colleges rely heavily on state funding, making them vulnerable to economic downturns and fluctuations in student enrollment. With many colleges facing budget shortfalls, advocacy for stable funding models is a top priority. Efforts are underway to refine performance-based funding mechanisms to ensure they do not disproportionately impact underserved students. Colleges are also exploring alternative revenue streams, including grant funding and private partnerships, to maintain financial stability while continuing to provide high-quality education.

Enrollment Declines and Rebuilding Student Populations

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, California Community Colleges have experienced significant enrollment declines, particularly among low-income students, students of color, and working adults. Many students cite financial pressures, family obligations, and a lack of flexibility as barriers to enrollment or re-enrollment. In response, colleges are adopting multifaceted strategies, including dual enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn college credit early, marketing campaigns targeting adult learners, and re-engagement efforts for students who previously stopped out. Additionally, institutions are increasing course offerings in short-term, hybrid, and online formats to accommodate the diverse variety of student needs. Colleges are also addressing students' basic needs — food security, transportation, and housing — through direct aid programs and expanded student services, to help ensure that external factors do not become insurmountable barriers to education.

SANTA MONICA COLLEGE PLANNING LANDSCAPE

Planning at SMC is multifaceted and inclusive. The summaries below provide a bird's-eye view of the various planning documents in use at Santa Monica College, including their respective purposes, areas of focus, and interconnectedness. All college plans are rooted in SMC's mission, vision, and values statements, as well as the Board of Trustees' goals and priorities. Two key plans — the Master Plan for Education and the Strategic Plan — serve to drive other, more focused planning efforts at the college.

Board of Trustees Annual Goals 2025-2026 and Ongoing Priorities

The Future of the College

1. Initiate the search process for the Superintendent/President

2. Complete a reorganization of the college by December 2026

3. Increase enrollment by 5%.

Educational Advancement, Quality, and Equity

4. Continue to decrease equity gaps, using appropriate data and controls including on measuring the effects of interventions, and increase:

   • Successful enrollment for first-time applicants;

   • Persistence from first term of enrollment to subsequent term;

   • Course success in equitized gateway courses;

   • Transfer level English and transfer level Math successful course completion in Year One;

   • Units successfully completed in Year One; and

   • Completion for Vision For Success and Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) for all populations (Bachelor Degrees, Transfers, AAs, ADTs, Chancellor's Office Certificates).

   A report on # 4 will be provided by the Office of Institutional Research to be used in the Board's Annual Appraisal of College Performance.

Student Life

5. Continue working on the student housing initiative.

Fiscal Stewardship

6. Stabilize the fiscal structure of SMC and meet the requirement for a 5% fund balance.

7. Work with state and federal allies and legislators to increase and stabilize funding and the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) at a level that sustains the work of the College.

Facilities

8. Complete the Facilities Master Plan to support the vision for SMC's future.

Community Relations

9. Continue to work with the Santa Monica Unified School District and feeder high schools to increase concurrent enrollment.

10. Conduct an annual meeting of the Board of Trustees at the SMC Malibu Campus.

Regular updates/progress reports on the Board's Goals will be provided throughout the year.

Ongoing Board of Trustees Priorities

The Future of the College

1. Develop new programs and partnerships that support the strategic vision and plan for the future of the College.

Educational Advancement, Quality, and Equity

2. Hire and support a diverse and innovative faculty and staff, while seeking to increase the percentage of full-time faculty over time.

3. Ensure a supportive, inclusive, safe, and collegial environment for students and staff.

4. Support participatory governance in College decision-making.

Student Life

5. Infuse anti-racist, equity-minded academic and non-academic support in all areas of the College.

6. Implement initiatives that overcome barriers based on students' financial resources, unmet basic needs and federal policies.

7. Devote resources to assist students with personal circumstances that negatively affect student success.

Fiscal and Facilities

8. Seek opportunities for improved revenue generation, cost control, re-organization, and enrollment strategies to ensure a sustainable budget and efficient operations.

9. Continue commitment to environmental sustainability in light of the continuing climate crisis.

Community and Government Relationships

10. Promote special programs that serve local students by increasing College readiness and success.

11. Continue support of the Emeritus Program.

12. Support the Malibu Campus to help rebuild the Malibu community.

Approved by the Board of Trustees: October 7, 2025

Master Plan for Education

The Master Plan for Education (MPE) lays the groundwork for other college planning. Updated every five years, the MPE provides the results of internal and external environmental scans and the resulting identification of factors influencing the future of college. Creation of the plan includes analysis of recent and projected trends in enrollment, student success outcomes, labor market projections, systemwide initiatives, student demographic trends, innovations in technology impacting higher education, and how all of these factors are expected to impact growth and decline in the college's instructional and instructional support programs. This comprehensive report on the state of the college then serves as a foundation for more focused planning efforts, including plans for student equity, enrollment management, campus facilities, information technology, and human resources.

Strategic Plan

Development of the Strategic Plan follows immediately after completion of the Master Plan for Education. Using the information provided in the MPE, the Strategic Plan identifies specific, measurable, shared goals for the college, as well as timelines for achievement of those goals. Achievement of these common goals then becomes the work of the entire college community, and progress must be tracked and shared on a regular basis so that all SMC stakeholders may participate in the planning process.

Focused Planning Documents

Several key planning documents inform or are informed by the Master Plan for Education, Strategic Plan, and Board Goals and Priorities. These key planning documents include:

- **Prior Facility Master Plans**

  - The original main campus design dates from the late 1940s, conceived of as a community park. The vocational trades were not included in the planned campus, as these were taught at the "North Campus" on the site of what is now Virginia Avenue Park. The Board of Education sold that campus and moved the vocational programs in the late 1960s to what is now Drescher Hall. Subsequent changes to the main campus occurred on an individual basis.

  - The 1998 Master Plan addressed the addition of two new on-campus parking structures, changes due to the Northridge earthquake, and the addition of other satellite campuses. The 2002 Master Plan Update incorporated several property additions, including the 10.4-acre Bundy Campus. A separate Bundy Campus Master Plan was adopted in 2007. The 2010 Master Plan Update provided for the orderly implementation of facility projects as identified in the 2008 Measure AA.

  Each of the prior facility master plans is posted online and may be found here.

- **2024 Main Campus Master Plan Update**

  The 2024 Main Campus Master Plan Update is the principal planning document for the SMC Main Campus. The document defines and sets the direction for the ongoing development of the campus environment to support the mission, core values, and heritage of the college. The plan's goal is to create a physical environment that supports the college's academic mission and represents a collective vision for an inspiring future campus. The campus facilities planning effort originally kicked off in 2019 with extensive engagement and visioning. The significant uncertainty around the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on education modalities delayed the master plan project by several years. This updated plan documents both the initial engagement and analysis efforts from 2019 and 2020, and updated information and context from the 2023-24 academic year.

  Because the 2024 Main Campus Facilities Master Plan Update was completed ahead of the forthcoming Master Plan for Education, implementation can proceed as an intentional two-step process: the facilities plan supplies the physical framework — demolishing outdated modulars, replacing critical buildings along Pico Boulevard, and reserving adaptable "white-box" spaces — while the MPE now layers on the academic programs, student-success initiatives, and equity goals that will occupy those spaces. The master plan update explicitly calls for "parallel planning processes" and "built-in flexibility" to adjust building use as academic needs evolve, making it straightforward to align MPE priorities such as expanded STEM pathways, supervised tutoring and new workforce programs with the phasing already approved for construction and state-funding requests. Rather than a sequencing flaw, publishing the facilities plan first gives SMC shovel-ready projects and a clear cost baseline; the MPE can now inform space assignments, utilization targets, and assessment metrics, ensuring the built environment and educational vision advance in lockstep.

- **2022-2025 Technology Master Plan**

  The 2022-2025 Technology Master Plan aligns with the strategic initiatives and objectives established by the college in its most recent strategic planning cycle. The intention of this plan is to establish strategic IT priorities and initiatives to support the Strategic Plan and the Master Plan for Education, as well as to inform decision-making and planning efforts over the next five years as the college continues to invest in IT infrastructure, services, and functions to support student success. Via a collaborative process that engaged participants from across the college community — including leadership, faculty, students, and staff — the plan provides a broad understanding of current IT operations, challenges, opportunities, and priorities.

- **2022-2027 Strategic Enrollment Master Plan (SEM)**

  The 2022-2027 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEM) seeks to clearly articulate goals and strategies designed to maximize enrollment and student success. As such, it serves as both a component of SMC's fiscal planning, since enrollment and student success metrics are the drivers of the college's annual revenue, and a complement to the Master Plan for Education focusing on how student support services can increase student success, close equity gaps, and remove barriers for students.

- **2025-2028 Student Equity Plan (SEP) 2.0**

  The Santa Monica College 2025-2028 Student Equity Plan (SEP) 2.0 is a strategic document designed to systematically address and eliminate racial equity gaps in student success. It builds upon years of equity-driven programming, focusing particularly on the experiences and outcomes of Latinx and African American students, who represent a significant portion of the student body, yet experience persistent disparities. By establishing explicit goals, utilizing equity-minded data analysis, and providing comprehensive professional development, the SEP guides SMC's institutional practices toward racial parity in enrollment, retention, course completion, degree attainment, and transfer success. The SEP also serves as an essential component of SMC's broader institutional planning efforts, integrating equity into all facets of decision-making, hiring, teaching practices, and student support services to create a culturally responsive, inclusive campus committed to equitable outcomes for all students.

  The 2025-2028 Student Equity Plan (SEP) 2.0 continues Santa Monica College's commitment to eliminating equity gaps, aligning closely with the California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 objectives, emphasizing racial equity, transfer success, and comprehensive education planning. Building on previous efforts, the new plan requires the college to clearly identify and address the root causes of disproportionate impact among specific student groups, notably Latinx and African American students, who have historically experienced persistent inequities. The SEP 2.0 mandates an intensive, student-centered approach that integrates academic and student affairs, enhancing pathways to transfer and removing structural barriers to student success. Additionally, the SEP emphasizes early and equitable access to comprehensive student education plans, fostering strategic enrollment management and improving timely completion rates. This cycle challenges Santa Monica College to implement innovative, collaborative, and race-conscious strategies, advancing its institutional culture toward sustainable, transformative change aimed at achieving full equity across all student success metrics.

- **Guided Pathways Work Plan**

  The Santa Monica College Guided Pathways Work Plan braids the SEP 2.0 and the "Guided Pathways Framework" in an effort to systematically address and eliminate racial equity gaps in student success, bolster student completion rates, and reduce excess unit accumulation. The plan builds upon several years of equity-driven efforts in support of the four pillars of the Guided Pathways Framework (Clarify the Path, Get on the Path, Stay on the Path, and Learn on the Path). The Guided Pathways Work Plan is centered on the principles of continuous improvement and recognizing the impact of institutional structure on student progress. Additionally, the Work Plan proposes integrating seemingly disconnected efforts which, when viewed in synthesis, create a more holistic, comprehensive redesign of the institution in the interest of today's students. These include efforts related to Associate Degrees for Transfer, Zero Textbook Cost to Degree, the California Adult Education Program, and the Strong Workforce Program.

Santa Monica College Planning Crosswalk

The Santa Monica College Planning Crosswalk (see next page) is a tool created to integrate and align the numerous planning efforts currently guiding the college. Each of SMC's major active planning documents — including the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2022-2027, the Student Equity Plan 2022-2025, the Guided Pathways Workplan, the Technology Master Plan, and the Facilities Master Plan 2024 Update — contains goals, objectives, and strategies that often overlap or converge with one another. To provide a clear, coherent overview, each of these individual elements has been organized into a shared framework built around a common strategy heading called a "Focus Area," developed from the plans themselves. Within this structure, the mid-level and detailed goals of the various plans are cross-referenced and grouped under broad institutional aims related to access, engagement, success, and infrastructure.

The Santa Monica College Planning Crosswalk – Summary provides a high-level view of this alignment by listing where to find these elements within each planning document, while the companion document, Santa Monica College Planning Crosswalk – Details by Focus Area, offers a fully elaborated version that cites the original planning documents and subsections for each entry. The detailed version, included as an Appendix to the Master Plan for Education, serves as a comprehensive reference for understanding the interconnections among SMC's planning efforts. The planning crosswalk is a critical first step toward the creation of a more focused and accountable strategic plan informed by the Master Plan for Education and the Student Equity Plan 2025-2028.

SANTA MONICA COLLEGE PLANNING CROSSWALK – SUMMARY
FOCUS AREA I: ACCESS
Goal 1: Increase, with Equity, Enrollment Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.1.1-11; A.3.1-4; A.4.1-5, 8; A.6.1-5; A.7.1-4; B.1.1-8; H.2.4-7; H.3.2-3; H.4.1 Student Equity Plan Strategies: A.1.1-3 Guided Pathways Workplan Strategies: A.1.1-4
Goal 2: Expand, with Equity, Financial Aid Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.6.6; C.1.1-7; C.2.1, 3-5; C.4.1-3; C.5.1-2; C.6.1-2; C.7.1
Goal 3: Expand Support Services for Basic Needs Including Mental Health Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: B.2.1-4; E.1.5; E.2.5; E.3.5; E.4.5
Goal 4: Refine Class Scheduling Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: F.2.1
Goal 5: Increase Community Partnerships Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.4.7; A.5.1-3
FOCUS AREA II: ENGAGEMENT
Goal 1: Improve Instructional Effectiveness Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: D.1.9; D.2.9; D.3.9; D.4.9; F.1.8; F.2.1 Technology Master Plan Strategies: 3.1 Campus Master Plan Strategies: 1.2
Goal 2: Expand, Clarify and Promote Curricular Offerings Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.7.5; B.1.9-10; F.1.1-6, 9; F.2.1; G.1.3, 5, 8; G.2.3, 5, 8
Goal 3: Increase, with Equity, Student Sense of Belonging Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: C.2.2; D.1.1,6; D.2.1,6; D.3.1,6; D.4.1,6; H.2.1-3
Goal 4: Refine, with Equity, Student Access to Counseling Services Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.4.6; D.1.2; D.2.2; D.3.2; D.4.2; E.1.1,3; E.2.1,3; E.3.1,3; E.4.1,3; F.1.7; G.1.2; G.2.2
Goal 5: Improve Collaboration Among College Areas Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: D.1.4,5,7; D.2.4,5,7; D.3.4,5,7; D.4.4,5,7; H.4.2
Goal 6: Increase, with Equity, Term-to-Term Persistence Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: A.2.1-4; B.2.5 Student Equity Plan Strategies: C.1.1-2; C.2.1-2 Guided Pathways Workplan Strategies: B.1.1-13; C.1.1-2; D.1.1-6; E.1.1-6
FOCUS AREA III: SUCCESS
Goal 1: Increase, with Equity, Course Success & Retention Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: F.2.1; F.3.1
Goal 2: Increase, with Equity, Completions of Transfer Level Math and English Student Equity Plan Strategies: B.1.1-7; B.2.1-7 Guided Pathways Workplan Strategies: B.1.1-2, 14-15; C.1.1-10; D.1.1-2; E.1.1-2
Goal 3: Increase, with Equity, Transfer to Four-Year Institutions Student Equity Plan Strategies: D.1.1-2; D.2.1-2 Guided Pathways Workplan Strategies: B.1.1-6; C.1.1-2; D.1.1-15; E.1.1-13
Goal 4: Increase, with Equity, Degree and Certificate Awards Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: G.1.1; G.2.1
Goal 5: Increase, with Equity, Vision Goal Completion Student Equity Plan Strategies: D.1.1-3; D.2.1-3 Guided Pathways Workplan Strategies: B.1.1-6; C.1.1-2; D.1.1-13; E.1.1-18

FOCUS AREA IV: INFRASTRUCTURE
Resource 1: Campus Facilities Campus Master Plan Strategies: 1.1, 3-7; 2.1-3; 3.1-3; 4.1-6; 5.1-6; 6.1-5; 7.1-6; 8.2-3
Resource 2: Human Resources Technology Master Plan Strategies: 4.2
Resource 3: Digital Presence and Communication Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: E.1.2; E.2.2; E.3.2; E.4.2; G.1.9; G.2.9; H.4.3
Resource 4: Professional Development Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: D.1.3; D.2.3; D.3.3; D.4.3; E.1.4; E.2.4; E.3.4; E.4.4
Resource 5: College Planning Campus Master Plan Strategies: 8.1, 4
Resource 6: Technology/Student Information System/ERP Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Strategies: C.3.1-4; D.1.8; D.2.8; D.3.8; D.4.8; E.1.6; E.2.6; E.3.6; E.4.6; G.1.4, 6, 7; G.2.4, 6, 7; H.1.1; H.3.1, 4-6 Technology Master Plan Strategies: 1.1,2; 2.1-3; 3.2-4; 4.1