

# FACT SHEET

Voting in the General Election | November 13, 2020



## UNPRECEDENTED VOTER TURNOUT FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION

Eligible voter turnout at 71%, compared to 62% in 2016

Absentee voting rates above 90%

74% of Silicon Valley voters go for Joe Biden

Silicon Valley’s eligible voter turnout for the November 3 General Election, based on results reported to-date, was at unprecedented levels. Preliminary numbers suggest an eligible voter turnout of 71 percent, compared to 62 percent in the 2016 General Election.

“We haven’t seen a turnout like this in at least 50 years, if ever,” said Joint Venture’s Institute for Regional Studies Director of Research, Rachel Massaro. “The 2016 and 2008 Presidential General Elections both saw turnout at around 62 percent. But other than those, our region has never seen a number above 60 percent.” *\*References to Silicon Valley include Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties combined.\**

### Voter Turnout: Share of Eligible Voters Who Cast Ballots

Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties, San Francisco, and California  
2016 & 2020 General Elections

	2016	2020*
<b>Silicon Valley</b>	62%	71%
<b>San Francisco</b>	64%	67%
<b>California</b>	59%	58%

\*preliminary

Likewise, San Francisco voters turned out for the election at record levels. Preliminary eligible voter turnout for the 2020 General Election indicates approximately 67 percent — two percentage points higher than the 2008 Presidential General Election, and three percentage points higher than the 2016 eligible voter turnout of 64 percent.

Preliminary absentee voting rates are also higher than ever before, due in large part to the pandemic. In San Mateo County, 92 percent of ballots cast were either sent by mail, dropped off in a ballot box, or hand-delivered to a polling location. This compares to a rate of 72 percent in the 2016 Presidential General Election, and has been exceeded only once (in the 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election for which around 160,000 county residents voted absentee – less than half of the more than 334,000

### Absentee Voting

2016 & 2020 General Elections

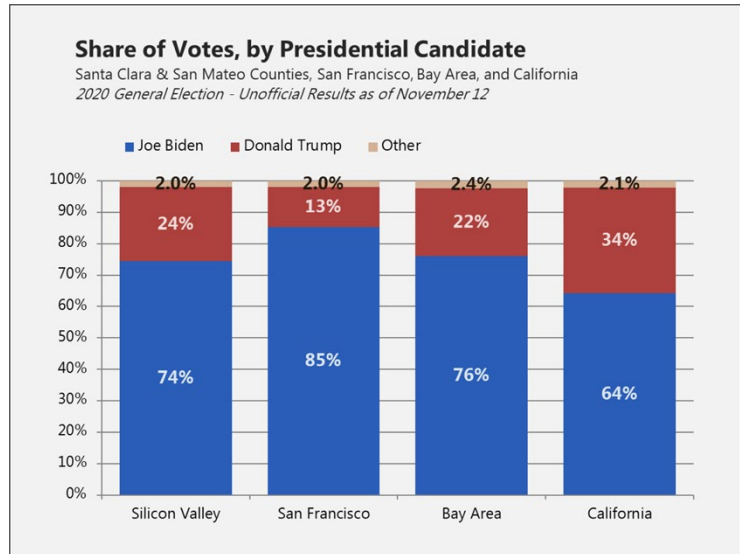
	2016	2020*
<b>San Mateo County</b>	72%	92%
<b>San Francisco</b>	63%	91%

\*preliminary

counted in this election thus far). In San Francisco, the preliminary absentee voting rate stands at 91 percent. The Santa Clara County unofficial election results posted yesterday do not include a vote-by-mail total; however,

based on early voting totals alone, the absentee voting rate will definitely exceed 79 percent (and will likely be much higher).

The most up-to-date reporting indicates that 74 percent of Silicon Valley voters cast ballots for Joe Biden – the same share that cast votes for Hillary Clinton in 2016. Likewise, 85 percent of San Francisco voters, 76 percent of Bay Area voters, and 64 percent of California voters cast ballots for Biden (compared to 85, 74, and 62 percent, respectively, in 2016).



Nearly all of the ballots have been counted as of this posting. According to the latest data posted by Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, as well as the California Secretary of State, nearly all ballots have been counted. As of “unofficial results” updated November 12, Santa Clara County stands at 95 percent counted (leaving approximately 44,000 left to go), San Mateo County reported 10,000 left (placing it at essentially 100 percent counted), and statewide approximately 1.05 million ballots remain outstanding. As a result, ballot counts across California’s 58 counties is at an average of 95 percent complete. *\*San Mateo County is set to update results today at 4:30 pm; Santa Clara County has a planned update today at 5:00 pm\**

**Data Sources:** California Secretary of State, Elections Division; Individual County Elections Websites

**Analysis:** Silicon Valley Institute for Regional Studies

**Note:** Data are from the California Secretary of State Elections Division and individual Bay Area county websites (accessed November 12 and 13, 2020) and include unofficial results for the 2020 General Election. Silicon Valley includes Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. The Bay Area includes the 9-County region. Other includes Howie Hawkins, Jo Jorgensen, Roque ""Rocky"" De La Fuente Guerra, Gloria La Riva, Brian Carroll, Jesse Ventura, Mark Charles, Joseph Kishore, Brock Pierce, or other write-ins. Eligible voter data were from the 15-day Report of Registration.

**Silicon Valley Institute for Regional Studies**

*The Silicon Valley Institute for Regional Studies provides research and analysis on a host of issues facing Silicon Valley’s economy and society. The Institute is housed within Joint Venture Silicon Valley.*

**Joint Venture Silicon Valley**

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