



# County of Santa Cruz

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## COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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## PRESS RELEASE

Release: Immediately  
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### COUNTY WINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR DIGITAL EFFORTS

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce it has been named the 8<sup>th</sup>-most digital friendly county in the nation by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties.

The annual award recognizes innovation in local government by examining counties' overall technology programs and plans, including technology infrastructure, open government, citizen engagement, cloud-based services, data-driven decision making, application building and more. The County will receive its award at a July 23 ceremony in Long Beach.

"Technology is our future, with the potential to help inform and engage residents, tear down socioeconomic barriers and open up opportunities." Supervisor Zach Friend said. "This award shows our County is at the forefront e-government."

In recent years, the County has taken a number of steps to improve its technological profile, including adoption of a "Dig Once" ordinance to improve broadband infrastructure; moving to machine-readable PDFs, indexed video archives and online comments for Board of Supervisors' agendas and materials; offering online solar applications, electronic plan checks and other web-based services; improving its web and social media presence and citizen interactions; offering a free, one-stop "Citizen Connect" app to report local issues, research critical information and receive emergency notifications; offering remote payments for property taxes and planning fees; improved use of GIS mapping to track vector control and other issues; and much more.

"One of my objectives is to make government more user-friendly for everyone," Supervisor Ryan Coonerty said. "Whether it's online, at home or out in the field, we want to be there wherever residents need us. We have taken a number of steps in that regard,



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and this recognition is proof that Santa Cruz County is working to meet our constituents' expectations."

The County's Information Services Department helped facilitate many of the changes, and will accept the award on behalf of the County at the 2016 NACo Annual Conference and Exposition in Long Beach. Santa Cruz County competed in a category with mid- to large-sized counties with populations between 250,000 and 499,999.

"For several years, we have been working to upgrade all of our infrastructure to better support residents and County staff," Information Services Director Kevin Bowling said. "On behalf of my dedicated staff, it's an honor to see all that hard work pay off."

A full list of awardees is available at <http://www.govtech.com/dc/digital-counties>.