



TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL



FROM: CITY MANAGER

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office

DATE: APRIL 23, 2007

CMR: 211:07

SUBJECT: CLIMATE PROTECTION PLAN UPDATE AND RESPONSE TO GREEN RIBBON TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that Council:

1. Direct staff to recommend revisions to the City Sustainability Policy to incorporate Climate Protection and return to Council in May 2007.
2. Direct staff to complete development of a Climate Protection Plan as discussed below and return to Council in November 2007.

BACKGROUND

Responding to the challenge of global warming, Mayor Judy Kleinberg stated in her 2006 State of the City address that she would establish a Green Ribbon Task Force on Climate Protection (GRTF), serving the Palo Alto/Stanford community, to “better galvanize our community to work on the problem of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, and to recommend tangible steps and local actions by all stakeholder groups, including the City, to reduce global warming and encourage sustainable practices.”

The recommendations of the GRTF were presented to Council in a study session on December 18, 2006, and the report is available on the City’s website. Since then, Council adopted Climate Protection as one of the Top Four Priorities for 2007.

DISCUSSION

In order to develop a detailed outline for the City of Palo Alto’s Climate Protection Plan, staff has reviewed a number of Sustainability Plans and Climate Action Plans from other jurisdictions and organizations. The basic formats of existing plans tend to use the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Campaign milestones, with each entity adopting varying action plans to achieve the milestones. The ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Campaign’s five milestones to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the community are listed below:

1. Conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast to determine the source and quantity of greenhouse gas emissions in the jurisdiction

2. Establish a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target
3. Develop an action plan with both existing and future actions which when implemented will meet the local greenhouse gas reduction target
4. Implement the action plan
5. Monitor and report progress; and update plans

In terms of the first milestone, the City has already inventoried its CO₂ emissions through its participation in California Climate Action Registry (CCAR), is continuing to do so again this year, and is working with several agencies to streamline and standardize protocols for estimating and tracking emissions so that community-wide emissions can also be assessed.

For the second milestone, the GRTF report recommends two specific targets, and staff will develop action plan recommendations with these targets as the main guiding reference point.

- Meet or beat the Governor’s greenhouse gas emission-cutting goals of 2000 levels by 2010, 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Achieve climate neutrality in utilities operations by 2020, where “climate neutral” means as close as is feasible and practical to zero, similar to the goals of the Zero Waste Strategic Plan.

The GRTF has provided a basic outline for the third milestone, development of an action plan. The GRTF identified the main areas whereby the City may be able to take tangible steps “that are feasible, effective, and affordable to come as close as practicable to climate neutrality in City government operations; facilitate community-wide activities to reduce emissions; and influence regional, state, and federal agencies to address climate change.” Staff envisions including specific steps within each of the eight core recommendation areas identified in the GRTF report, namely:

- a. Report: Lead by example by continuing to report greenhouse gas emissions inventory for City operations and encourage/challenge businesses to participate.
- b. Measure: Develop tools to measure progress in achieving community-wide emissions reductions.
- c. Utilities: Develop and implement a climate action plan for the City utilities department with the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2020.
- d. Purchasing: Revise City purchasing policies and practices to incorporate environmental costs.
- e. Vehicles & Commuting: Incorporate City vehicle fleet and employee commuting in the City’s climate action plan.
- f. Regional Transportation: Work with regional transportation agencies to advance the availability and ridership of public transportation and low-emissions transportation alternatives.

- g. Green Building: Incorporate green building practices into construction review process and building codes to evolve green building from exception to mainstream.
- h. Education: Investigate a public-private partnership with the mission to actively raise awareness of and motivate actions to avert global warming.

In addition, although the Waste Reduction Committee disbanded, based on the conclusion that the best way to reduce emissions from waste is to reduce waste itself, deferring to the City's Zero Waste efforts, staff envisions including greenhouse gas reduction implications of waste reduction and recycling as an additional key element of the Climate Protection Plan.

Development of the City of Palo Alto Climate Protection Plan will require an iterative process with the Council, as it will need to choose from alternatives based on emissions reduction potential, feasibility, measurability and verifiability, cost effectiveness, funding and personnel requirements, and community support. The Climate Protection Plan will seek to tie together the many actions that are already underway with new initiatives that could best achieve the goals of the Plan, as well as to leverage Palo Alto efforts with those of neighboring communities, regional and state agencies, and county, state and federal government.

In terms of milestone 4, implementation, staff does not expect to wait until a comprehensive Climate Protection Plan is approved to begin or continue with specific efforts that support Climate Protection priority, but rather will seek Council approval to proceed as required for individual programs. As described in this report, implementation is already underway in areas such as enhanced energy efficiency and solar programs, green building policies, and local transportation programs.

Milestone 5, monitor and report progress and update plans, is also already under way. The City is working with several agencies to streamline and standardize protocols for estimating and tracking emissions specific to municipal government operations, and for community-wide estimates and tracking. In many cases, precise links between actions and greenhouse gases are problematic, and tracking may instead depend on indirect measures such as number of people using the train, number of bicycle-friendly traffic lights, number of old refrigerators removed from service, total green building "points" accumulated, and so on. Measurement, verification, and tracking ability of new initiatives will be an important consideration in deciding which alternatives should be implemented under the Climate Protection Plan.

RESOURCE IMPACT

The development of a Climate Protection Plan is included in the proposed budget. Resources for some specific implementation initiatives that address many of the GRTF recommendations are contingent on approval of the proposed budget, such as enhanced utilities energy efficiency, solar, and cogeneration incentive programs and development of a proposed Environmental Purchasing Policy. Resource impacts of individual elements of the Plan that are not already included in the proposed budget will be addressed as they are presented to Council for consideration.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The report addresses Climate Protection, identified as one of the Top 4 Priorities for 2007 (CMR:163:07). Development of a Climate Protection Plan supports the City's Sustainability

Policy adopted April 2, 2001 (CMR 175:01), and the Green Government Pledge adopted July 19, 1999 (CMR 284:99). The report supports the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Campaign milestones (CMR:426:06) and the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and is consistent with and complement the California Publicly Owned Electric Utilities' Principles Addressing Greenhouse Reduction Goals endorsed by Council August 7, 2006 (CMR:315:06).

An effective Climate Protection Plan should serve to support specific Council policy objectives as embodied not only in the ICLEI milestones, but also in the Comprehensive Plan, various land use Master Plans, Sustainability Policy, CMUA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Principles, U.S. Mayors' Agreement on Climate Protection, National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, Utilities long-term resource plans, the Awahnee Principles, and other policy statements. There are numerous other environmental policy objectives in addition to climate protection, such as wildlife and habitat protection, biodiversity, other air pollution such as ozone-depleting compounds and local criteria pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, particulates, and volatile organics compounds, environmental justice, clean water supply, water and aquifer pollution, resource reuse and recovery, hazardous materials, and others.

TIMELINE

Staff proposes to continue to follow the same basic timeline submitted to Council for the Top 4 Priority discussion (CMR:163:07), which is reproduced below with a few additions.

Climate Protection Milestones	Original Estimated Completion Date	Updates
1. Prepare Climate Action Plan Development Recommendations		
a. Identify City or community initiative wherein each recommendation/idea will be addressed and those that have already been or need to be addressed.	Mar 2007	Mostly identified in this report. Some Education ideas still to be addressed.
b. Explore Public-Private Partnership opportunities fir education & motivation.	Apr 2007	Delayed to Summer 2007.
c. Prepare draft outline for proposed Climate Action Plan	Apr 2007	Basic structure included in this report.
d. Develop City Climate Action Plan	Nov 2007	
2. Baseline Inventory		
a. Greenhouse gas inventory report	Apr 2007	Included in this Report.
b. Identify regional or joint efforts for estimating transportation emissions	Jul 2007	
c. Evaluate tools for emission tracking	Nov 2007	
d. Climate Action Registry Certification 2006	Dec 2007	

Climate Protection Milestones	Original Estimated Completion Date	Updates
3. Built Environment		
a. Final Green Building Policies (private sector)	Jan 2008	ARB Recommendation 2/17/07
b. Urban Forest Master Plan	Dec 2007	Tree ordinance adopted 3/8/07. Colleague's memo update April 2007
4. Waste		
a. Construction & Demolition Reuse & Recycling	Apr 2007	Colleague's memo update April 2007
b. Zero Waste Operational Plan	May 2007	Policy & Services May 2007
c. Commercial composting and recycling	Apr 2007	Colleague's memo update April 2007
d. Explore recycled content, source reduction and other waste-related purchasing policies	Sep 2007	ESSC project
5. Energy		
a. Long-term electric plan (LEAP) Objectives & Guidelines. Includes goals for accelerated renewable portfolio, enhanced energy efficiency, expanded solar incentive program, and climate action plan.	Mar 2007	Approved by Council January 2007.
b. Ten-year Energy Efficiency Plan. Includes activities that dovetail with Green Building Policies.	Apr 2007	UAC April 4, 2007. Council agenda April 23, 2007
c. Expanded Solar Incentive Program	Apr 2007	Draft plan completed. July 2007 startup.
d. Ultra-clean distributed generation program	Jul 2007	On Schedule
e. City PV Demo Project with Public Works	Sep 2007	On Schedule
f. Explore energy-star and other energy-related purchasing policies	Sep 2007	ESSC project
g. Explore alternatives for GHG reduction projects, credits and offsets	Nov 2007	ESSC project
6. Transportation		
a. Reopening of Bike Station and Palo Alto Depot	Feb 2007	Done.
b. Maybell/Donald Bike Boulevard and walkway project	Aug 2007	
c. SVLG Cool Commute Challenge	Oct 2007	
d. Explore city vehicle & fuel alternatives	Ongoing	

Climate Protection Milestones	Original Estimated Completion Date	Updates
7. Education & Motivation		
a. Implement Public-Private Partnership from April update	Nov 2007	Partnership recommendations not yet complete.
b. PAUSD “Green teams” overlaps with Waste, Energy and Transportation)	TBD	Ongoing

ATTACHMENTS

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