

# (d) 3. ELECTRIC LEAF BLOWER OUTREACH RESULTS STATUS REPORT

Transportation & Environment Committee

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# BACKGROUND

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- State Assembly Bill 1346: Effective January 1, 2024, new gas leaf blowers cannot be sold in California.
  - However, dealers are allowed to sell equipment manufactured pre-2024, so you will still find gas equipment on the shelves.
- Electric leaf blowers are the alternative equipment.
- Staff conducted research and stakeholder engagement since the City Council requested this report in April 2024.

# GAS LEAF BLOWER IMPACT ON WORKERS' HEALTH

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- Toxic compounds and pollutants
  - High concentrations of carbon monoxide and particulate matter, carcinogens, and ozone.
  - Cause headaches, dizziness, weakness, nausea, airway constriction, coughing, sore throat, shortness of breath, asthma, lung cancer, and cardiovascular disease.
- Noise
  - Hearing loss. Just 2 hours of exposure can cause damage.
  - Continual exposure can cause stress, anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, and heart disease.



# LANDSCAPING BUSINESSES IN SAN JOSE

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- 1,377 landscaping businesses with active licenses in San Jose.
  - 1,286 have 5 or fewer employees.
- Largely Latino demographic



# ECONOMICS OF SWITCHING TO ELECTRIC

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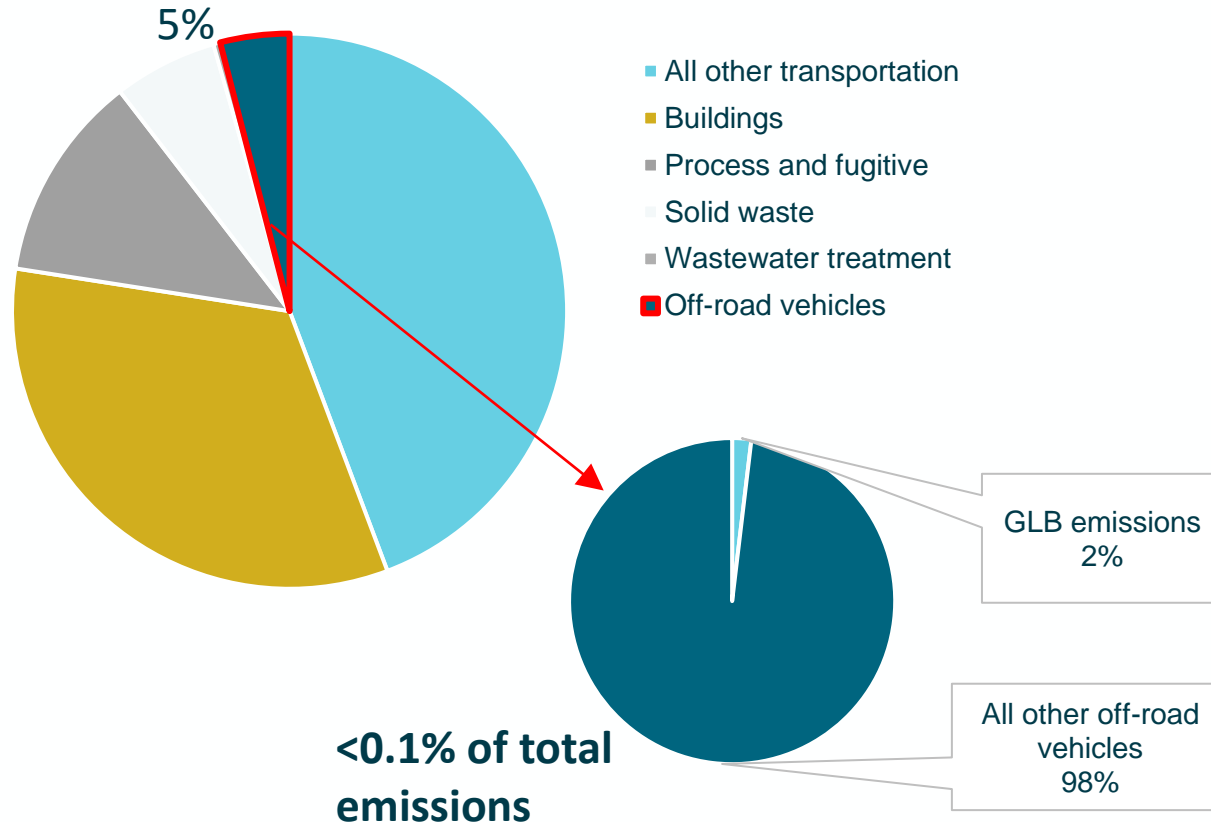
	Equipment Costs	Annual Fuel & Maintenance Costs	Total cost of ownership (5 yrs.)
Electric	\$2,261 (includes batteries and charger)	\$126	\$2,889
Gas	\$590	\$2,708	\$13,541

Source: Santa Cruz Coalition for a Healthy and Safe Environment

# EMISSIONS IMPACT

## Greenhouse gases

2021 San José Community-Wide GHG Emissions



## Smog

- Smog emissions produced by a single GLB operating for one hour are equivalent to those generated by a car traveling over 1,100 miles (LA to Denver).

# ORDINANCES AND PROGRAMS IN THE REGION

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- Many California cities and towns have implemented bans on gas leaf blowers citing noise, environmental, and health concerns.
  - Nearby Los Gatos, Los Altos, Palo Alto, and Menlo Park; Oakland
- Several Bay Area cities have programs to aid the adoption of electric leaf blowers.
  - Post-purchase rebates for businesses and residents are most common

# PROGRAM OPTIONS

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	Addresses upfront cost barrier	Guarantees use of equipment and emissions reductions	Ease of implementation
Post-purchase rebate	No	No	Easy
Voucher	Yes	No	Medium
Trade-in voucher	Yes	Yes	Hard

- Residential incentive
- Education and training



# PROGRAM COST-EFFECTIVENESS

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	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Electric technology	100 ELBs used for 10% of jobs	50 heat pump water heaters (residential)	100 ELBs used for 25% of jobs	50 ELBs used for 100% of jobs	40 electric vehicles
Incentive	\$1,000 rebate	\$2,000 rebate	\$1,000 rebate	\$2,000 trade-in voucher	\$2,500 rebate
Lifetime emissions reduction (MT CO2e)	259	371	648	1,295	2,347

# NEXT STEPS

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- Staff will continue to conduct stakeholder engagement and analysis to determine whether an electric leaf blower incentive should be included in the suite of SJCE programs and how to design such a program. Specifically, staff will examine:
  1. Likelihood and drivers for professional landscapers to participate in a trade-in voucher program and surrender their gas leaf blowers.
  2. A pathway to recycle traded-in gas leaf blowers.
  3. A residential program design that could incentivize homeowners to purchase an electric leaf blower for their landscaper to use at their homes, to reduce the burden on the small businesses.
  4. Other program design options, like a post-purchase rebate.

# QUESTIONS?

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- Recommendation: Accept this staff report on the status of the leaf blower market in San José.
- Staff
  - Zach Struyk, Acting Director
  - Kate Ziemba, Senior Environmental Program Manager
  - Sarai Rojas, Power Resources Specialist II