



SPUR

San Francisco | San Jose | Oakland

February 27, 2018

TO: San Jose Mayor and City Council

Re: Agenda Item 7.1 (Climate Smart San Jose)

Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and Councilmembers:

SPUR strongly supports and recommends adoption of San Jose's draft new climate action and environmental resource strategy, **Climate Smart San Jose**. When realized, this strategy will help San Jose achieve a low carbon footprint and reduce per-capita water use, while growing in a smart way. SPUR staff participated in workshops to help scope and develop Climate Smart San Jose, and we have hosted the project team to present the plan to SPUR members. We believe the plan will not just improve resource efficiency and reduce climate-changing emissions, but it will improve mobility, air quality and health, and will help people save money – in short, it will make life better for residents and businesses in San Jose.

Climate Smart San Jose will help the city achieve many of the policy recommendations in SPUR's 2016 policy report, *Fossil-Free Bay Area*, that outlined nine key strategies for Bay Area cities to lead on climate. Many of those strategies – energy efficiency, compact land use, improving walkability, electrified mobility and buildings, and 100% renewable energy for all purposes – are directly reflected in San Jose's approach. Climate Smart San Jose also adheres to some of the recommendations in SPUR's 2016 white paper, *Future-Proof Water for Silicon Valley*, which called for cities to expand water efficiency rebate and retrofit programs, and to require new development to be highly water-efficient.

Because Climate Smart San Jose is tied to the city's General Plan and builds on the city's economic strategy, it will help San Jose grow strategically around transit corridors. Its emphasis on transit, walking, and biking for most trips – and using electric vehicles for the rest, including goods movement – will help San Jose reduce its most significant source of greenhouse gas emissions: gasoline and diesel fuels, which comprise nearly 60% of citywide emissions. Compact, dense land use in the right places within cities has broad sustainability benefits: reducing our future transportation carbon footprint, improving energy efficiency, and reducing demand for expensive new water supplies.

SPUR looks forward to continuing to support the city in its implementation of Climate Smart San Jose, and urges you to adopt this plan that lays the foundations for a stronger and more sustainable city.

Sincerely,

Laura Tam
Sustainable Development Policy Director

cc: Kerrie Romanow, Ashwini Kantak, Scott Green

Feb 26, 2018



Hon. Mayor San Liccardo
Members of City Council
City of San Jose

**Re: City Council Agenda Item: COUNCIL AGENDA: 02/27/2018
ITEM: 7.1**

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters San Jose/Santa Clara has been actively engaged in promoting the adoption of a San Jose Climate Action Plan. We are pleased to see that now such a document is subsumed under the new Climate Smart San Jose, which posits a goal consistent with the Paris Climate Agreement..

We urge adoption of the recommendations as outlined in the supplemental memo from Mayor Liccardo, and Councilmembers Jimenez, Peralez, Davis, and Arenas.

Together with the staff report and these recommendations, the City has a robust start to a sustainable future based on achieving specific programs for a transition to use of renewables and a low carbon future. We applaud the adoption of metrics as a filter for measuring outcomes and facilitating review and evaluation. We commend the plans for community engagement and look forward to supporting this commitment to community involvement and education. We support efforts to be fiscally responsible in funding these new programs and in offering services that are financially accessible to the many income levels that make up San Jose.

We support the recommendation for incorporating policies for carbon sequestration under a Natural and Working Lands [NWL] to further enhance our climate smart pathway.

We note with concern the lack of attention to greater coordination with other local agencies, in particular with the County of Santa Clara's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan or Silicon Valley 2.0, which puts emphasis on resiliency, and planning for the consequences of sea level rise. We plan to follow up on this recommendation for greater coordination on planning for the consequences of potential flooding due to climate change and plan to check in at future meetings to raise this issue.

We look forward to the forthcoming adoption of the various parts of the Climate Smart San Jose and will stay engaged in our review of the specifics. Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Mary Collins, President League of Women Voters, San Jose/ Santa Clara

cc- Office of the City Clerk
Kerrie Romanow, Director ESD



February 26, 2018

Mayor Liccardo and City Councilmembers
200 E. Santa Clara St., 18th Floor Tower
San José, CA 95113-1905
Via email

Re: Comments on Climate Smart San Jose, February 27, 2018 Agenda Item 7.1

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Councilmembers,

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (OSA) appreciates the opportunity provided to us by the City's Environmental Services Department to collaborate on the preparation of the Climate Smart San Jose Plan. We congratulate San Jose on the work its staff and consultants put into this monumental plan, and on the bold vision put forth by the City's leadership to set San Jose on a path to meet the Paris Climate Accord's goals.

As we, our partners, and outside climate experts expressed during several Climate Smart workshops, the climate benefits afforded by the Natural and Working Lands (NWL) within the City's jurisdiction and development of a spatially explicit model are crucial elements of a *comprehensive* GHG reduction strategy and should be incorporated into the next iteration of the Climate Smart Plan. We are pleased that the Plan and associated staff and leadership memos include recommendations for subsequent work on those important elements.

The language on page 48 of the Plan, under Topics for Future Consideration, calls for a "Spatially Explicit Analysis of NWL" and makes the case for evaluating climate benefits beyond those associated with carbon sequestration alone to include evaluating the tradeoffs of carbon emissions resulting from different future uses of natural and working lands in the City:

The City can partner with academia and other stakeholders to build upon research done by the state to quantify carbon dioxide emission impacts and benefits from NWL. This research could help further develop a spatially-explicit methodology to analyze potential uses of specific NWL and inform City decision-making and future updates to The Plan.

Another Topic for Future Consideration described on page 49 of the Plan calls for analysis of "Additional Co-Benefits" of NWL. Over the past several years, the OSA has completed groundbreaking work to better understand the ecosystem, climate resilience, quality of life and public benefits of incorporating NWL *as infrastructure* into the region's climate strategies and appreciates the inclusion of the language in the Plan that highlights these elements:



While framed around inclusivity and quality of life benefits, The Plan does not explore the full array of co-benefits that are associated with climate smart measures. These may include health and well-being benefits associated with NWL and trees.

The OSA strongly supports adoption of the “Next Steps” outlined in the Staff memo (February 5, 2018) that would incorporate NWL into the Climate Smart Plan, provide updates on progress to the City Council, and utilize the NWL analysis to inform the next General Plan update:

- 6) Work with external partners to secure funding to further research Natural and Working Lands and community-wide GHG emissions and report back to City Council with findings and recommendations
- 7) Provide semi-annual updates to the City Council on progress implementing the Plan
- 8) Update the Plan in tandem with the four-year major Envision San José 2040 General Plan updates

The OSA also supports the recommendations in the memo authorized by the Mayor and Councilmembers Jimenez, Peralez, Davis, and Arenas (February 23rd) that specifically calls for working with the State of California, OSA, and other partners to define the scope of work for this NWL element and to secure funding on the next phase of Climate Smart San Jose to both assess sequestration potential as well as assess carbon emissions associated with conversion of NWL to development:

Direct staff to work with the State of California, the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, and other potential funding partners to agree upon a defined scope, and funding plan, for a Climate Smart San Jose Phase II spatially explicit analysis of the Plan area and incorporation of natural and working lands that addresses carbon sequestration on those lands as well as other ways that building on those lands can impact carbon emissions. Staff should return through the budget process with funding plan, scope of work, and timeline.

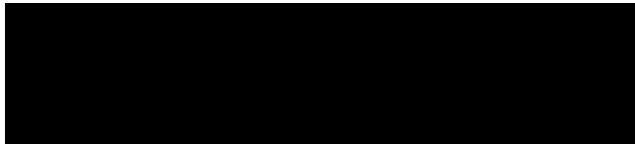
The Open Space Authority stands ready to immediately work closely with City staff on defining this scope of work, contribute financially to the analysis and help secure funding from State and other sources for this important next phase. As mentioned in the comment letter from Greenbelt Alliance and other partners, dated February 23, 2018, we suggest a match funding commitment by the City of San Jose in the amount of \$100,000 in Fiscal Year 2018/2019 for scoping and implementation of this second phase. We further recommend that the Council support beginning this next phase of work as soon as possible in Fiscal Year 2018/2019 to be able to inform the next update to the City’s General Plan.

We are confident that with the incorporation of Natural and Working Lands modeling that relies upon a spatially-explicit analysis, Climate Smart San Jose will serve as a model for cities around the state and the country. We applaud the City for its bold vision to meet the Paris Climate Accord GHG reduction goals, and for working with partners to develop a comprehensive Plan that commits to a more sustainable climate future for all City residents.



Again, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the City's Environmental Services Department on this effort that we hope will set a path for significant carbon reduction in the City. The Open Space Authority looks forward to partnering with the City on the next phase of Climate Smart San Jose.

Sincerely,



Andrea Mackenzie
General Manager

cc:
Kerrie Romanow, Director, Environmental Services Department
Attendees of the October 31, 2017 CSSJ technical session
Open Space Authority Board of Directors
Open Space Authority Citizens' Advisory Committee



COMMITTEE FOR
GREEN FOOTHILLS



KEEP
COYOTE
CREEK
BEAUTIFUL



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



February 23, 2018

Re: Joint comments on Item 7.1, Climate Smart San Jose Plan

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Councilmembers:

On behalf of the environmental organizations listed above, we congratulate San Jose on all the work done to date on Climate Smart San Jose (CSSJ) – and we completely agree with staff on all the additional work that needs to be done. The challenge is daunting but the importance of meeting that challenge is far greater. The determination of the people, the Council, and City staff of San Jose encourages us that this can be done, and we offer our help to make that happen.

We thank staff and City elected officials for the willingness to confer with us and consider a component that we think could provide a great deal of benefit to San Jose's smart-climate future, which is the role of what California's government calls "Natural and Working Lands" (NWL), the farmlands, ranchlands, and natural habitats that occupy one-third of the land under City jurisdiction. We very much appreciate the statement in the staff memorandum for this item that:

As a result of this engagement, **the Plan recognizes the value of conducting future groundbreaking work** to explore the carbon sequestration potential of Natural and Working Lands (areas with Open Space, Parklands, Habitat, Agriculture, and Open Hillside land use designations in the General Plan) and the impact that development of these areas could have on community-wide GHG emissions.

(Emphasis added.)

Page 48 of the Plan demonstrates this support for analyzing both carbon sequestration and the avoided carbon emissions from development of NWL discussed in the quoted paragraph from staff.

The staff memo recommendations for "Next Steps" also show how these future updates can work:

- 6) Work with external partners to secure funding to further research Natural and Working Lands and community-wide GHG emissions and report back to City Council with findings and recommendations

obligations under the Paris Agreement aspirations to keep the rise in average global temperature to below 1.5 degrees C.

Paragraph 5: Carbon Sequestration. Change heading to Carbon Sequestration *and Avoided Emissions*


Add to Spatially-Explicit Analysis of NWL: The City will partner with academia and other stakeholders to build upon research done by the state to quantify GHG emission impacts and benefits from NWL and include this information in the Plan.

- Finally, add to Additional Co-Benefits section at page 49. These may include health and well-being, *conservation of wildlife habitat, and economic* benefits associated with NWL, *adaptation, climate resiliency, green-infrastructure, and trees.*

We again congratulate the City of San Jose on taking the first step in mitigating the threat posed by climate change. Including a thorough and meaningful analysis of the importance of natural and working lands is critical in this effort.
We thank you for your attention,



David W. Poeschel
Open Space Committee Chair
Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter



Shani Kleinhaus, Ph.D
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society



February 24th, 2018

Re: Climate Smart San José Plan

Dear Mayor Liccardo and San Jose Councilmembers,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter and Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society recognize that San Jose's Climate Smart Plan (Plan) takes an important and significant step toward meeting the City's commitment to achieve climate goals articulated in the Paris Agreement. As described in the joint letter (February 23, 2018), we believe that meeting the Paris Agreement's challenging goals will take every strategy available to San Jose including strategies for conservation, restoration, and management of the City's natural and working lands (NWL), accounting for nearly one third of the City's landscape. We maintain that the Plan lays out a set of sensible strategies focusing on infill development, energy, water and mobility, but is incomplete in analyzing, identifying, and articulating strategies to avoid development on NWL.

In Section 1.2, Topics for Future Consideration, the Climate Smart Plan provides a starting point for addressing NWL as well as solid waste, wastewater, and water associated GHG emissions. We ask Council to make small but important changes to Section 1.2 to make clear the City's commitment to the remaining work necessary to complete the Plan and increase the certainty that the City meets its climate goals.

We request Council Support for the following changes to the section titled, 'Topics for Future Consideration', Pages 48 and 49 of the Plan:

Paragraph 1, page 48: change to paragraph 1 *to add* the following:

- Council *originally* directed that The Plan focus on reducing GHG emissions, related to energy and mobility, and ensuring sustainable water supply. *In the course of developing the Draft Plan, expert input underscored the importance of fully considering additional strategies associated with the conservation and management of the City's NWL, solid waste, wastewater, and potable water. While the plan puts the community on a pathway toward meeting Paris Agreement goals, additional strategies to reduce GHG emissions by avoiding development of NWL and preserving the opportunity to apply future advancements in carbon sequestration practices and improved technology associated with NWL will be required to ensure that the City meets its*

- 7) Provide semi-annual updates to the City Council on progress implementing the Plan
- 8) Update the Plan in tandem with the four-year major Envision San José 2040 General Plan updates

We strongly support these staff proposals for future action. The very first Next Step identified by staff, “Create a City-wide Climate Smart San José Steering Committee” should be involved with beginning NWL analysis as soon as possible.

To implement this, **it is appropriate and necessary for San Jose to also provide matching funding for NWL analysis**, which would then give the complementary analysis San Jose needs for its tens of thousands of acres of farmlands, ranchlands, wetlands, riparian areas, and forest and chaparral areas under the City’s jurisdiction. We believe that matching external funding up to \$100,000 would suffice to conduct an accurate analysis of San Jose lands and how they fit into San Jose’s climate planning. This has the potential to save money in the long run, identifying possibilities like adapting to climate change by flooding Coyote Valley’s open space and wetlands rather than the city’s urban core.

Finally, **this crucial work should be funded and begun as soon as possible and no later than in Fiscal Year 2019.** The next major General Plan update should happen no later than 2020, and as described in the staff memo, CSSJ updates can inform those General Plan updates, so a completion of the analysis in FY19 that could be integrated into both CSSJ and General Plan updates. We encourage the City to explore making funding available before FY19 if possible.

Our conclusion, which we hope you share, is that it is not possible to overstate the importance of action on climate change, including getting correct these crucial next steps. California is well into yet another low-rainfall year, preceded by disastrous floods last year, preceded by one of the worst droughts in California’s modern history. Climate change is happening now, our natural and working lands can help protect us, and we thank you in advance for enlisting San Jose’s farmland, ranchlands, and natural habitats in the fight.

Sincerely,

Brian Schmidt
Program Director
Greenbelt Alliance

Paul Ledesma
Legislative Advocate
Committee for Green Foothills

Shani Kleinhaus
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Linda Ruthruff
Conservation Chair
California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Deb Kramer
Executive Director
Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful

Sibella Kraus
President
Sustainable Agricultural Education (SAGE)

Dave Poeschal
Open Space Committee Chair
Sierra Club
Loma Prieta Chapter

Matt Quevedo
President
San Jose Downtown Residents Association