



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Councilmember Dev Davis

SUBJECT: CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSE **DATE:** November 13, 2020

APPROVED

DATE 11/13/20

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Climate Smart San José status update with the following recommendations:

1. Through the budget process, return to Council with a long-term strategy to fund staffing for Climate Smart San José implementation. This direction should align with prior Council direction to pursue philanthropic and regional, state, and federal funding – to ensure our climate action work persists beyond the American Cities Climate Challenge grant timeline. Work with the Mayor’s Office of Strategic Partnerships and other partners to identify and pursue foundation funding opportunities.
2. Pursue agency funding (BAAQMD, MTC, and CARB among others), and/or other revenue, to support a Transportation Demand Management coordinator to manage the City employee transportation benefits program, and make campaigns to reduce single-occupancy commute trips within the City of San José’s employee population, and that of other San José based large employers.
3. Explore the development of a zero-emission neighborhood (ZEN) pilot focused on the nexus of climate and equity where we can rapidly design and demonstrate whole neighborhood climate mitigation and adaptation strategies that are scalable in neighborhoods throughout the city. This effort should include:

- a. Review of similar programs in other cities, funding sources, and impacts and lessons learned;
 - b. An approach for community engagement that leverages the Climate Smart Community Engagement Roadmap adopted in June 2020 that includes equity-focused strategies for residents, community-based organizations, and businesses;
 - c. A neighborhood that has historically suffered disproportionate impact from environmental pollution, e.g., pollutants from a nearby industrial zone, airport, or freeway;
 - d. Explicitly include the development of a neighborhood microgrid with sufficient scale to provide resilience against PSPS, wildfire, and other emergencies that interrupt electricity transmission or distribution for a significant duration.
4. Explore leveraging the recent Climate Action Corps partnership with the Governor's Office—announced earlier this Fall—to support community engagement and data management efforts for Climate Smart San José implementation, and climate adaptation and mitigation strategies – like tree planting to address urban heat island effects and provide green stormwater infrastructure, and providing energy-savings measures for low-income families. Further, collaborate with the Mayor's Office to explore partnerships with San José State University, local community colleges and career oriented high schools to offer opportunities for service learning students to volunteer and participate in local climate action work that is being led by the Climate Action Corps fellows throughout the city.

BACKGROUND

In response to the growing threat of climate change, San José adopted Climate Smart San José (CSSJ). This ambitious 2-degree Paris Agreement-compliant climate action plan speaks to the severity of the impacts we are now seeing in the way of firestorms, floods, and increased temperatures and drought. Since the adoption of CSSJ, San José launched San José Clean Energy, adopted reach codes, banned natural gas in new residential construction, adopted a micro-mobility framework and Better Bike Plan 2025, passed Measure T, and conserved Coyote Valley for future generations. But this work is only the beginning; we must continue to lead in our effort to combat climate change.

San José's current municipal greenhouse gas inventory shed light on how employee commute remains a significant piece of our carbon emissions as an organization. While we recently adopted the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's (BAAQMD) "Cut the Commute Challenge," there is more we can do to catalyze change in our organization -- as well as employee commutes for other large employers in San José. To that end, staff should actively pursue funding with regional and state agencies to support a Transportation Demand Management coordinator to develop and manage transportation benefit programs, including but not limited to: transit passes, micro-transit rideshare, micro-mobility credit programs, leading

program tracking and analysis, and providing recommendations to reduce drive-alone rates further.

Silicon Valley has long been at the forefront of climate solutions, particularly when it comes to rapidly scaling innovations that can have an immediate impact. We recommend staff explore developing a zero-emission neighborhood (ZEN) pilot, where climate mitigation and adaptation strategies can be rapidly implemented and ultimately scaled in other neighborhoods. Pathways to engage hard to reach, under-resourced, diverse communities, and low and modest-income families - especially in multi-family housing - should be top-of-mind as staff works at the intersection of climate and equity - and develops a process to identify a pilot neighborhood.

With the recent Climate Action Corps announcement by the Governor's Office, the City of San José, along with Fresno, Stockton, Los Angeles, and Redlands, will be accepting fellows focused on community climate action. Through CivicSpark - a program of the Local Government Commission (LGC) implemented in partnership with California Volunteers - the San José city-team, and non-profit partners, are seeking fellows to focus on strengthening San José's climate-centered community engagement and data sharing, as well as benchmarking edible food recovery efforts by commercial generators. We recommend leveraging this partnership with San José State University, local community colleges and career oriented high schools for students to volunteer and participate in local climate action work, led by the Climate Action Corps fellows throughout the city.

Finally, thank you to city staff - specifically Kerrie Romanow, Lori Mitchell, John Ristow, Matt Cano, Rosalynn Hughey, Ken Davies, Jessica Zenk, our fabulous Climate Advisor Elena Olmedo, our partners at NRDC, and others who are committed to this critical work. Thankfully, the infusion of American Cities Climate Challenge funding and technical assistance positioned us well to make significant progress on our climate work. Through the budget process, staff should bring forward a long-term strategy to fund this critical work that we've begun.

We have a great story of climate leadership to tell, which opens the door to more partnerships that can build on our success. Our partnerships must begin with our residents, but expand to include philanthropy, universities, business, regional and state agencies, and to our incoming Administration in the White House.

Brown Act Disclaimer

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