



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Liccardo
Councilmember Jimenez
Councilmember Perez
Councilmember Davis

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: November 5, 2021

Approved:

Date: 11/5/21

SUBJECT: Climate Smart San Jose Study Session

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the *Carbon Neutral San José by 2030* resolution, establishing San José as America's first major city to establish a 2030 carbon neutrality standard, with the following direction:

1. Return to the Transportation and Environment Committee by June of 2022 with a specific strategy for acceleration of work in *Climate Smart San José* needed to put the City firmly on a path to achieve our carbon-neutral goal by 2030.
 - a. Work in collaboration with the Mayor's Office to secure philanthropic funding to update the *Climate Smart San José* Plan to address near-term actions to reduce emissions.
 - b. Focus should be placed on transportation, which accounts for the majority of our emissions profile. Estimates of cost or quantity of needed infrastructure—such as for electric vehicle-charging—should be included in the analysis.

- c. Any plan update should ensure inclusion of those very high-impact adaptation and resilience efforts—such as tree-planting in barren, “heat island” neighborhoods—that traditionally take a lower priority in emissions-focused plans. Staff should focus on the substantial planning funding for climate adaptation and resilience available through the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) today.
 - d. Clarify that implementation of a carbon-neutrality goal will act neither as a policy nor legal barrier to any one development or project—when viewed in isolation-- that might potentially add emissions. Failing to do so could effectively prohibit any future housing construction within the City, for example, and result in a host of other unintended consequences.
- 2. Aggressively pursue regional, state, federal, and philanthropic funding to advance climate action in San José – especially given the budgetary priorities and historic levels of investment aligned with our work.
 - a. Ensure the City will formally apply in the current cycle to the MTC for existing funding for electric car-sharing pilots, for which a first cycle of funding has already been distributed without any application from the City of San José.
- 3. As Council directed in November of 2020, prior to the pandemic:
 - a. return to Council in the budget process with a three-year staffing plan and budget recommendations to ensure this critically important work persists beyond the American Cities Climate Challenge funding horizon, and which embeds sustainability, resilience, and adaptation across all of the work that we do.
 - b. 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.

BACKGROUND

The recent International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report reveals the enormous challenges ahead. The climate has already warmed by 1.1 degrees Celsius (about 2 degrees Fahrenheit), which is the hottest Earth has been in 100,000 years; and we are set to pass 1.5°C warming by 2040. We don’t need to look far to see the impacts of climate change, as we live annually under the threat of drought, wildfires, urban heat island and extreme heat, flooding, PSPS events, and more.

With the adoption of *Climate Smart San José* in 2018, we charted a path to lead the nation in prioritizing climate action. Accelerating our carbon neutrality goals to 2030, many years sooner than our original goal, will require that we push beyond what we are currently doing. We have a unique opportunity for bolder action now, with historic state and federal investments for climate work.

On behalf of our future generations of San Joséans, we offer our gratitude to our outstanding but thinly staffed City team - in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) –that has advanced this work since we adopted *Climate Smart San José*. We’ve accomplished extraordinary things together in a short period of time:

- Launching San Jose Clean Energy, which now provides residents and businesses with electricity that is 92% GHG-free.
- Protecting more than 900 acres of Coyote Valley against development, and preserving our foothills and open spaces through Measure C.
- Becoming the largest US city to require all-electric construction of new buildings.
- Becoming the major U.S. metro with the greatest adoption of electric vehicles.
- Surpassing the implementation of 400 miles of bike lanes and trails, and constructing bold roadway designs for dozens of miles of segregated and separated lanes.
- Using tools like single-day permitting for solar and battery storage, which has made San José the third-highest adopter of solar of any major city in the U.S.
- Working with our partners at VTA to expand transit infrastructure –bus rapid transit, BART, and light rail.

Together, we have much more work to do.