



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION &
ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE

FROM: Lori Mitchell

SUBJECT: See Below

DATE: January 19, 2026

Approved

Date:

1/23/2026

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

SUBJECT: Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) Recommend the City Council consider and take action to:
 - 1. Adopt the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.
 - 2. Approve the incorporation of the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan into annual Climate Smart updates.
- (b) Cross-reference this item to the March 3, 2026, City Council meeting for consideration and approval.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

This memorandum presents a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP), which helps the City understand local climate risks, prioritize adaptation strategies, and strengthen San José's long-term resilience to climate hazards. The CARP is intended to complement the existing Climate Smart San José plan and its climate mitigation efforts by focusing on how climate change impacts people, infrastructure, and essential services, with particular emphasis on communities most vulnerable to climate impacts.

Staff recommends acceptance of the CARP. Approval of this memorandum will position the CARP as the City's guidance document for coordinating adaptation efforts across departments, informing future programs, grant pursuits, and capital planning. City implementation efforts will occur over time as the City acquires funding through the pursuit of external funding opportunities and the City's budgeting process.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, with an update in 2025, City Council approved the City of San José's climate action plan, Climate Smart San José (Climate Smart), which establishes strategies to mitigate (i.e. reduce) communitywide greenhouse gas emissions. Climate Smart recognized that, even with aggressive mitigation efforts, San José would continue to experience increasing climate impacts and identified the need for future climate adaptation and resilience planning.

In June 2023, the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (now the Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation) awarded approximately \$650,000 to the City of San José to develop the City's first CARP. The City's grant application included coordination with the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), to provide technical and advisory input, and with San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), to support community engagement. The grant work supports the identification of climate vulnerabilities and the development of adaptation strategies with an emphasis on critical infrastructure and the needs of vulnerable communities. The City must expend grant funds by January 31, 2026.

ANALYSIS

The proposed CARP (Attachment A) complements the City's Climate Smart mitigation efforts by addressing climate adaptation and resilience while aligning with existing City plans, policies, and programs. The City, supported by its technical consultant Raimi + Associates, developed the CARP through a multi-phased process including: review of existing relevant plans and policies; development of a framework to guide the development of adaptation measures and strategies; completion of a City of San José Climate Vulnerability Assessment (Vulnerability Assessment; Attachment B) to local hazards, impacted communities and City assets; conducting internal and external stakeholder engagement; and, development of final adaptation and resiliency measures for inclusion in the CARP.

Climate Vulnerability Assessment

The City worked with its technical consultant to prepare the Vulnerability Assessment, with consideration for the California Adaptation Planning Guide. The Vulnerability Assessment is a high-level analysis that evaluates how projected climate hazards may affect the City's populations, buildings, critical facilities, utility infrastructure, and transportation systems. It does not evaluate the physical condition or site-specific characteristics of individual facilities. Instead, it is intended to inform prioritization and the development of adaptation strategies and measures in the CARP.

The Vulnerability Assessment evaluates five major climate hazards that are already occurring or projected to intensify in San José: extreme heat, flooding (including

extreme precipitation), sea level rise and storm surge, drought, and wildfire. Climate projections are based on a high-emissions scenario to support a conservative, worst-case planning approach recommended by the State for long-term adaptation planning.

Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data sources, including the Silicon Valley 2.0 Climate Change Preparedness Tool, Federal Emergency Management Agency maps, Adapting to Rising Tides sea level rise data, and local and regional planning documents (including the Santa Clara County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and the City of San José Annex), the Vulnerability Assessment identified relative vulnerability ratings for assets and populations. Key findings for San José indicate flooding is the most impactful hazard to infrastructure (critical facilities, buildings, transportation assets, and utility infrastructure) and populations in the city, followed by extreme heat and sea level rise. Extreme heat will impact the entire city but does not greatly affect infrastructure; its greatest impact is health and safety of residents, particularly older adults, children, and other socially vulnerable populations. Sea level rise and storm surge pose increasing long-term risks but is geographically limited to northern portions of the city. Wildfire risk is present within City limits but geographically limited; wildfire smoke from regional fire activity is a more impactful hazard for San José residents as it presents significant public health and service continuity concerns.

Interdepartmental and External Engagement

Throughout the CARP development process, City staff conducted bimonthly Climate Ready Working Group (Working Group) meetings which included staff from multiple City departments, the project's community-based organization (CBO) lead partners, SPUR and Valley Water. The Working Group included representatives from the following City departments: City Manager's Office; Energy; Environmental Services; Finance; Housing; Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs; Office of Emergency Management; Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Public Works; and Transportation.

As detailed in the Public Outreach section, the City completed additional community-focused stakeholder engagement through two community workshops, tabling at seven events, a public survey, and use of an online engagement platform to obtain public comments on the draft CARP. CBOs and residents also played a role through these engagement activities, helping ground CARP measures in lived experience and community priorities. Based on input received through these efforts, the City refined the CARP measures into their four categories (noted in Table 1).

Measure Development

The CARP Framework is the organizational structure of the measures and is designed to keep the plan focused on "foundational measures" that address the most impactful ways to adapt to climate change and increase resilience. Based on this framework, City staff selected measures and strategies to address identified climate vulnerabilities while focusing on the following criteria:

- Within the City's direct control to implement
- Integrate with related City plans and policies
- Address inequities and reduce climate-related impacts to vulnerable communities
- Address infrastructural, community, and ecosystem impacts from climate-related hazards

The CARP measures build on the Vulnerability Assessment, a review of existing City plans and policies, stakeholder input, and best practices to address climate hazards that are already occurring or projected to intensify in San José, including extreme heat, flooding, drought, wildfire smoke, and sea level rise. These hazards pose increasing risks to residents, public health, infrastructure, and essential services, particularly for communities that have been historically marginalized. The CARP organizes measures into four categories as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: CARP Measure Categories

Knowledge	Governance and Policy
Improves data and analysis to better understand climate hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks.	Strengthens coordination and integrates climate resilience into City policies and processes.
Structural	Communications
Reduces physical vulnerabilities through resilient infrastructure and natural systems.	Enhances information sharing and engagement to support climate preparedness and resilience.

The CARP measure categories include 19 measures, each supported by one or more implementation strategies, with a total of 62 strategies as shown in Attachment C. The CARP measures emphasize improving data and planning, strengthening governance and interagency coordination, investing in resilient infrastructure and physical interventions, and enhancing communication with residents, partners, and stakeholders. Each measure also identifies impacted climate hazard(s), co-benefits (e.g., emergency preparedness, equity, public health, and greenhouse gas mitigation), potential key collaborators, and rough order of magnitude cost range estimates to support future prioritization, coordination, and integration with existing City programs and planning efforts. The strategies within each measure are designed to provide guidance on how high-level measures can become actionable approaches to address identified climate hazards.

Implementation and Next Steps

The CARP is designed to complement Climate Smart San José by addressing climate adaptation and resilience while Climate Smart focuses on greenhouse gas mitigation. Together, these efforts provide a comprehensive approach to addressing climate change by reducing future emissions while preparing for and responding to climate

impacts, such as flooding, drought, wildfires, sea level rise, and extreme heat, that are already occurring or projected to worsen.

In alignment with existing City commitments and with currently available resources, City staff anticipate proceeding with several CARP measure/strategy implementation activities as noted in Attachment C.

In addition, Energy Department staff are hosting the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel workshop from March 18-19, 2026. This grant-funded project will help inform and advise the City on equity-centered best practices pertaining to CARP implementation, specifically focused on the following CARP strategies: site-specific vulnerability assessments for City facilities and mobile home parks, climate resilience and adaptation funding strategies, and upgrades to community-serving facilities and resilience hubs.

As a planning document, the CARP provides guidance on policies, procedures, and priority actions rather than committing the City to specific projects or funding decisions. The City will identify City department leads and seek to implement CARP measures as funding is acquired through the pursuit of external funding opportunities and the City's budgeting process.

Racial Equity Impact Analysis

Communities that have been historically marginalized are often disproportionately impacted by climate hazards while facing greater barriers to recovery and adaptation. The CARP incorporates an equity-centered approach by prioritizing actions that reduce climate risks for vulnerable populations and promote inclusive planning and decision-making. City staff reached out to community groups that support communities with historic or existing challenges to present information regarding the CARP and hold listening sessions. These included the Alviso Neighborhood Group, Climate Resilient Communities – United Alviso for Change, and East Side Climate Change Community Team.

Climate Smart San José Analysis

The recommendation in this memo aligns with the following Climate Smart San José goals:

- It facilitates the reduction of energy or water use consumption or increases the demand for renewable energy.
- It increases the density of new development.
- It reduces vehicle miles traveled.
- It facilitates the energy and water efficiency of homes or commercial buildings.
- It facilitates the choice of mobility choices other than single-occupancy, gas-powered vehicles.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Staff will provide progress updates to the Transportation and Environment Committee and City Council on Climate Smart activities, including CARP progress, on an annual basis

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

In June 2023, the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation awarded the City funding in the amount of \$650,000 to develop the first CARP. Grant funding was allocated in the General Fund to support the identification of climate vulnerabilities and development of adaptation strategies as part of the CARP. City Council approved acceptance of the grant in August 2023 and the grant term expires January 31, 2026.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the: City Attorney's Office; City Manager's Budget Office, Environmental Services, Finance, Housing, Library, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Public Works, and Transportation; and Offices of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs and Emergency Management.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the Council Agenda website for the February 9, 2026, Transportation and Environment Committee meeting and March 3, 2026, City Council meeting.

City staff conducted public outreach for the CARP through a multi-pronged engagement process in partnership with the City's community engagement partner, SPUR, and the consultant team. City staff designed outreach to inform plan development, gather input at key milestones, and engage communities and stakeholders most affected by climate change impacts (see Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of Key Public Outreach

Outreach Type	Participants / Organizations	Date	Details
Agency Interviews	Valley Transportation Authority; Pacific Gas & Electric	Aug.–Sept. 2024	Coordination on regional infrastructure, resilience efforts, and policy alignment
Advisory & Community Presentations	Youth Commission; Alviso Neighborhood Group	Jan.– Feb. 2025	Lived experience related to extreme heat, flooding, and sea level rise
Climate Resilient Communities (CRC) Engagement	CRC groups in Alviso and East San José; Climate Smart San José	Apr. 2025 – Ongoing	Updates, coordination, and solicitation of participation
Climate Advisory Commission Presentation	Climate Advisory Commission	May 15, 2025	Project updates and introduction to measures
Community Survey	General public	Apr.–Jun. 2025	88 responses; available in multiple languages
Table Events	Community members	Spring-Fall 2025	Five pop-ups at existing community events
Virtual Workshop	Community members	Apr. 18, 2025	27 participants; overview of climate vulnerabilities and feedback on draft measures
Draft Public Comment Period	General public and non-governmental organizations	Sept. 25–Oct 26, 2025	216 comments via Konveio (online engagement platform); letters from Open Space Authority and San Francisco Estuary Institute/Save the Bay
Virtual Open House	Community members	Oct.14, 2025	39 participants; overview of plan and commenting process
Small Group Meetings (CBOs)	Acterra, Mothers Out Front, Silicon Valley Leadership Group	Oct. 2025	Feedback on CARP strategies from environmental, family/youth, and business perspectives
Climate Advisory Commission Presentation	Climate Advisory Commission	Jan. 15, 2026	Report on final CARP and Committee/ Council recommendation

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

At its January 15, 2026, meeting, the Climate Advisory Commission approved the following recommendation:

"The Climate Advisory Commission accepts staff's presentation on the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan and recommends approval of the plan by City Council."

CEQA

Not a Project, Public Project File No. PP17-001, Statutory Exemption Planning Feasibility

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/
Lori Mitchell
Director
Energy Department

For questions, please contact Julie Benabente, Deputy Director, Energy Department, at Julie.Benabente@sanjoseca.gov.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - The City of San José Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan
Attachment B - City of San José Climate Vulnerability Assessment
Attachment C - CARP Implementation Activities