



Item No:
Meeting Date: 1/6/15

To: Planning Commission

Date: 12/26/14

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Subject: Draft Climate Action Plan and General Plan Amendment (PA14-114)

RECOMMENDATION

Review and comment on the draft Climate Action Plan and the related draft General Plan Amendment and Addendum to the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

BACKGROUND

The draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a comprehensive strategy to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in San Mateo. The CAP identifies reduction measures and implementation strategies the City will use to achieve the State-recommended GHG emissions reduction target of 15% below 2005 emissions levels by 2020 and to establish a clear path for future and continued emissions reductions beyond 2020.

The CAP consolidates the City's existing greenhouse gas reduction plans, including the 2007 Sustainable Initiative Plan, the 2009 Climate Action Plan for Operations & Facilities, and the 2010 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Program, consistent with the General Plan policy direction to update the greenhouse gas reduction program every five years. Where the City has successfully implemented reduction measures, the CAP analyzes the GHG emission reductions achieved to date. In addition, the CAP quantifies expected reductions for planned reduction measures that have not yet been implemented, such as the Citywide conversion to LED Streetlights. For some existing measures, the CAP presents modifications to build on new

opportunities, programs, or resources. The CAP also contains new strategies to help address areas not covered by these previous plans to aid the City in achieving its reduction targets.

The City developed this CAP in a collaborative manner, working closely with City staff, agency partners, and the public. An interdepartmental team of City staff was involved in the development and review of the proposed GHG reduction measures. In addition, the newly formed Sustainability Commission has been working on the CAP since their formation and selected the GHG reduction measures to include in the CAP and identified the proposed level of implementation (require, incentivize, or encourage) for each measure that they believed to be appropriate for San Mateo.

Public Input

Residents of San Mateo were invited to contribute ideas and concerns throughout the CAP development process. The three primary avenues for the public to get involved in the process were through outreach events at the Central Park summer concert series, the online San Mateo Town Hall platform, and a community forum at the San Mateo Public Library. Draft CAP measures were reviewed at the community forum and input was solicited on the level of implementation that was most appropriate for each measure. Additionally, seven public meetings with the Sustainability Commission served as a platform for citizens to continue to voice their thoughts and share their ideas for the CAP.

The community input process identified a strong interest in increasing the percentage of energy from renewable sources, making alternatives to driving more appealing, and increasing the use of recycled water. At the CAP community forum, the community members present preferred the approach of mandating GHG emission strategies for new development projects and incentivizing reductions for existing properties.

Progress to Date

The CAP analyzed GHG inventories for 2005 and 2010 to evaluate progress to date in achieving the goal of a 15% reduction below 2005 levels by 2020. The results of the 2010 inventory, which was completed for the City by the County of San Mateo in February 2014, showed that GHG emissions in 2010 were 9% below 2005 levels. The three largest sources of emissions, on-road transportation and the residential and commercial built environment all declined during this timeframe. Although detailed inventory data is not yet available beyond 2010, a review of specific community data sources shows that per capita residential and nonresidential energy use and solid waste production have continued to decline. Only a portion of this decline can be attributed to specific State, regional, and local programs that were implemented during this timeframe. The remainder of the decline is likely attributed to behavioral changes, potentially related to greater awareness of the impacts of climate change.

A large portion of the emission reductions achieved toward the 15% reduction target are from State-level actions. Local actions, although important, play a much smaller role in meeting the target. By the year 2020, State-level actions, such as requirements for cleaner cars and for utilities to source 33% of their energy from renewable sources, will be responsible for achieving 68% of the total required GHG reduction, which translates to a 10% emission reduction over the 2005 baseline. The City's prior and already planned actions, plus the behavioral changes to date, achieve a 3% decrease over the 2005 baseline. The new CAP measures address the remaining 2% reduction needed to meet the target goal.

Measure Selection

The Sustainability Commission went through several iterations of GHG reduction measure identification and refinement. The Commission was concerned about making sure the CAP requirements were not overly onerous and therefore tried to limit the number of measures that were mandates to high priority items. Key measures recommended by the Sustainability Commission include:

- Pursuing a Community Choice Aggregation Program
- Requiring new multi-family residential developments of over 20 units to obtain at least 50% of their energy from on-site renewable energy systems
- Incentivizing energy efficiency upgrades for both residential and non-residential buildings
- Expanding Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure by installing public EV chargers, requiring all new developments to be pre-wired for EV chargers, and requiring the provision of EV chargers in new multi-family and commercial developments of over 10,000 square feet that have off-street parking
- Expanding car sharing programs throughout the City
- Requiring composting service (or off-site sorting) for all multi-family buildings and commercial properties of over 10,000 square feet by 2020

The single largest source of emission reductions in the CAP is the formation of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program. CCAs are programs that allow local communities to procure their own electricity, with the goal of increasing the percentage from renewable sources. Under a CCA program, the existing utility company still provides transmission and billing services. CCAs are currently in operation in Marin and Sonoma Counties. Formation of a CCA would achieve a GHG reduction of 23,720 MTCO₂e which represents over 70% of the remaining emission reductions required to meet the City's reduction target. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors supported the exploration of a Countywide CCA at their December 9, 2014 meeting. The initiation of feasibility analysis will likely begin in early 2015.

Collectively, the measures included in the CAP, coupled with State actions and prior local accomplishments, will reduce GHG emissions 18% below the 2005 baseline by 2020. If a Community Choice Aggregation program is not implemented, an emissions reduction of 15.5% can still be achieved with the remaining measures.

Some of the GHG emission reduction measures that the Sustainability Commission considered but did not recommend include:

- Requiring energy audits and/or required energy efficiency upgrades at time of sale for residential and non-residential properties
- Requiring renewable energy systems for new non-residential developments
- Requiring solar pre-wiring for non-residential retrofits
- Requiring energy efficiency retrofits for additions or retrofits to non-residential buildings over 10,000 square feet
- Restrictions on idling of construction equipment

The Commission had several reasons for not recommending these actions. Since the City had already exceeded our emissions reduction target with the recommended measures, implementing these actions were not required and were deemed lower priority than the selected measures. The required energy audits at the time of sale is a very controversial item that realtors strongly opposed in other communities that have considered it for inclusion in their CAPs. In addition, the restriction on idling of construction equipment was considered by the Commission to be overly onerous and difficult to enforce.

CAP Implementation

For each proposed GHG reduction measure included in the CAP, the Sustainability Commission's recommendation for the level of implementation is included (require, incentivize, or encourage) as well as a list of sample actions that can be taken to achieve the reduction. It is important to note that the list of actions is intended to serve as a guideline for future implementation and not as a prescriptive course of action. As staff moves forward with implementation over the course of the next few years, some of the bullet pointed actions within a reduction measure may no longer make sense and may be substituted with alternative strategies to achieve the same end goal. Chapter 4 of the CAP includes the implementation strategy. Responsible City departments are identified for each measure and a rough timeline for implementation is assigned between 2015 and 2020.

Public Review Schedule

A series of public meetings have been scheduled to solicit input on the draft plan:

- December 11, 2014 – Review of Draft CAP by the Sustainability Commission

- January 6, 2014 – Joint Planning Commission and Sustainability Commission meeting on Draft CAP and draft General Plan Amendment
- January 20, 2014 – City Council review of Draft CAP
- February 12, 2014 – Sustainability Commission review of Final CAP
- February/March 2014 – Planning Commission review of Final CAP and General Plan Amendment
- March 2014 – City Council adoption of Final CAP and General Plan Amendment

Sustainability Commission Comments on the Draft CAP

The Sustainability Commission reviewed the Draft CAP at their December 11, 2014 meeting. A key comment made at the meeting was that the CAP should include more discussion of the relative role of State versus local actions in achieving the target and how this relates to the effectiveness of Community Choice Aggregation. Other comments included making the CAP Implementation Work Plan (Table 11 in Chapter 4) more comprehensible if used as a stand-alone document and providing more specific detail on the metrics that will be used to track the implementation of each measure.

General Plan Amendment

The General Plan incorporates the City's previous greenhouse gas reduction plans, including the 2007 Sustainable Initiative Plan, the 2009 Climate Action Plan for Operations & Facilities, and the 2010 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Program. The CAP consolidates and these existing plans and provides updated data but does not change the City's adopted greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. The CAP carries forward existing greenhouse gas measures with some revisions and provides new strategies to help address areas not covered by these previous plans to aid the City in achieving its reduction targets. The proposed General Plan amendment will update text references in the Land Use, Urban Design, Housing and Circulation Elements to refer to the CAP instead of the prior sustainability plans. The text of the proposed General Plan Amendment is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The San Mateo General Plan Update EIR includes an analysis of the City's previous greenhouse gas reduction plans. The CAP carries forward existing greenhouse gas (GHG) measures with some revisions and provides new strategies to help address areas not covered by these previous plans to aid the City in achieving its reduction targets. These proposed changes trigger the need for additional environmental analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The draft Addendum to the General Plan EIR addresses the potential for changes to the anticipated environmental impacts analyzed in the adopted Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). The draft Addendum is included as Attachment 3 to this report.

Based on the information provided in the draft Addendum to the General Plan EIR, implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in any new impacts or increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts analyzed in the certified FEIR.

NOTICE PROVIDED

Meeting notice requirements were met. Specifically, the meeting was published in the Examiner newspaper, placards were posted at three City facilities (main library and two branch libraries) at least 10-days prior to the meeting. Additionally, information was posted on the City's website at <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/index.aspx?NID=2769>.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Climate Action Plan
2. Draft General Plan Amendment
 - a. Table of Contents
 - b. Land Use Element
 - c. Circulation Element
 - d. Housing Element
 - e. Urban Design Element
3. Draft Addendum to the General Plan EIR
4. Draft Minutes from the December 11, 2014 Sustainability Commission Meeting
5. Public Comments

CC (AR and attachments via Email)

Sustainability Commission