



Public Works Department
Environmental Programs Unit
February 2, 2010

To: Environmental Quality Commissioners
From: Rebecca Fotu, Environmental Programs Manager
Subject: Consideration of the Climate Action Plan Assessment Report

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Environmental Quality Commission provide feedback on the Climate Action Plan Assessment Report.

Background

This report provides the background and purpose of the CAP Assessment Report and outlines the next steps for climate protection program implementation. The CAP Assessment Report has been linked to the Environmental Quality Commission's (EQC) online agenda, and is posted on the City's website.

To provide a comprehensive picture of Menlo Park's climate protection program implementation, this report also includes the status of the 2009 Climate Action Plan GHG reduction strategies since several programs have been implemented, or are included in the draft 2012-2016 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for funding.

Menlo Park's 2009 Climate Action Plan (CAP) development was funded by a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality District and completed by ICLEI in coordination with staff. The 2009 CAP provided strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to assist Menlo Park to meet or exceed the emissions reduction targets of AB 32 (California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006).

The 2009 CAP was approved by the City Council in May 2009 and the council stated that the Climate Action Plan was intended to be a 'living document' to be updated periodically as current strategies are implemented, and as new emission reduction strategies emerge that effectively reduce emissions. Some City Council members voiced concern regarding aspects of the CAP such as a clear metric to prioritize GHG reduction strategies and requested that additional work be completed. The City Council directed staff to complete 'Climate Action Plan Supplemental Research' in coordination

with a consultant. Staff directed CSG Consultants to complete a high level assessment of the 2009 Climate Action Plan with these major tasks:

1. Complete a GHG Emissions Forecast for 2020
2. Complete a high level review of the existing community and municipal GHG reduction strategies
3. Identify potential new GHG reduction strategies for consideration
4. Develop a cost-benefit analysis to provide a consistent metric to evaluate GHG reduction strategies

CSG evaluated the Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee (GRCC) reports that included 130 recommendations and included select strategies into the CAP Assessment Report. The GRCC's work was highly valuable due to the GRCC's comprehensive knowledge of the community, subcommittee reports and the well researched recommendations.

CAP Assessment Report Summary

Menlo Park's emission forecast through 2020 is included on page 6 of the report and quantifies the projected GHG emissions. This is important information that enables the city to determine how much GHG emission reductions are necessary within the context of increased growth. Note that these estimations for "business-as-usual" are from the Association of Bay Area Governments (completed ABAG in August, 2009) and these estimates may be high in comparison the current economic slowdown.

The assessment report also includes a *potential* GHG reduction target for Menlo Park that is consistent with AB 32 and with the new California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. However, another re-inventory of community and municipal GHG emissions is necessary in order to adopt a realistic GHG target. Staff is currently working on an inventory for 2009.

The CAP Assessment Report provides updated community and municipal GHG reduction strategies with a relative priority ranking for implementation that is similar to how the City's Capital Improvement Plan is developed. Several recommendations are "best climate protection practices" that have successfully been implemented in neighboring communities and are higher priority strategies that are recommended for implementation in the near term to achieve the needed GHG emission reductions.

Each strategy has a recommended evaluation timeline before implementation. The basis for this is two-fold:

1. GHG reduction policy is a quickly evolving realm of new tools, information, and larger regional efforts. Many strategies can quickly become outdated or need to

be retooled for implementation, in which case, staff would have to undertake a cost benefit analysis for that particular strategy.

2. The evaluation timeline provides a plan of action to evaluate high priority strategies for community impacts and maximize GHG reductions.

The report also includes a cost-benefit metric that would assist in evaluating each GHG strategy. The cost-benefit metric would be applied according to the proposed evaluation timeline for each strategy. The purpose of the assessment report is to update strategies and provide a high level analysis on next steps for program evaluation and implementation.

The final pages of the report provide specific next steps for consideration to further GHG reduction strategy planning and implementation.

December 2010 EQC Subcommittee Meeting

The EQC Subcommittee met with staff and CSG on December 15, 2010 and had several comments that included:

1. The need for discussion and establishment of GHG emission reduction targets.
2. Staff's plan for GHG strategy emission reduction quantification and prioritization and GHG strategy implementation. After quantification is complete, establish whether the collective strategies would achieve established GHG reduction targets in a five and ten year timeframe. Modify the tables to reflect work to begin in 2011 instead of 2010¹.
3. Modify the Civic Green Building Policy to monitor energy consumption in facilities in operation and report energy intensiveness metric on an annual basis.

Attached to this report is Commissioner Mitch Slomiak's comments regarding the Assessment Report.

¹ Note that some 2009 Climate Action Plan GHG strategies have been implemented and this emission reduction could be reflected in upcoming Menlo Park GHG inventories. GHG inventory levels are dependent on several factors that include GHG reduction strategy implementation, vehicle miles travelled, energy use and other factor that reflect a community's economic activity.

GHG Reduction Strategy Implementation/Climate Action Plan Process

The following describes the next steps in GHG reduction strategy implementation and climate action planning.

- Forward Assessment Report to Council for Approval to begin implementation of strategies
- Inventory 2009 GHG Community and Municipal GHG emissions
- Evaluate a realistic GHG reduction target

Supplemental Information: Status of Menlo Park's 2009 Climate Action Plan's Community and Municipal GHG Reduction Strategies

The following tables summarize the community and municipal GHG reduction strategies from Menlo Park's 2009 Climate Action Plan completed by ICLEI and approved by City Council in May 2009.

Community GHG Reduction Strategies -2009 Climate Action Plan

Community GHG Reduction Strategies	Status
Residential Energy Audit Program (Green@Home)	Underway; recommend alternative new program for 2011-2012
Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy Financing Program	Not Implemented Modified for FY2011-2012 to the California Energy Upgrade Program
Electric Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle Recharging Station	Not Implemented Proposed for FY2012-2013
Expand Community Shuttle Service	Underway 2 Residential 2 Business Additional study underway to enhance service and ridership Many new developments already pay shuttle fee
Implement Bike Improvements	Underway Bicycle Master Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See related work for alternative transportation that includes completion of the "Safe Routes to Schools" for Laurel Elementary and Encinal (plan completed) and Hillview; City has a grant and construction planned for 2012 • CIP Projects to fund Safe Routes to Schools for Oak Knoll School
Enhance Recycling Collection Service	Underway Recology Rollout 1/3/11
Incentives for Building Practices that reduce energy consumption beyond current code	Not completed Recommend sustainable development ordinance FY2011-2012
Early Implementation of CA Building Code	Not completed Recommend sustainable development ordinance FY2011-2012

Community GHG Reduction Strategies	Status
City Car Sharing Program	Not Implemented Recommended 2015-2016
Limit Commercial Vehicle Idling	Not Implemented Modified
Transportation Demand Strategies	Underway Implemented with city/CCAG
Transportation Demand Strategies for New Developments	Partially implemented CIP projects include Transportation Demand Management Study Ordinance Study for 2015-2016
Zero Waste Plan and Target	Not Implemented Recommend Policy adoption 2014-2015
Require Recycling for Commercial Facilities	Not Implemented Proposed 2011-2012
Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance Amendments	Not Implemented Proposed 2011-2012
Menlo Park Municipal Water District Conservation Programs	Underway
Landscape Ordinance Update	Underway

Municipal GHG Reduction Strategies-2009 Climate Action Plan

Municipal GHG Reduction Strategies	Status
Roofing for City Buildings-Reflective and Energy Star	Partially implemented Proposed
Solar PV Panels for Corporation Yard	Not implemented Focus on energy efficiency was more of a priority
Replace existing streetlights with LEDs	Underway with 22% LED relighting Planned expansion/funding for 2011 In CIP for 2011-2012
Sharon Heights Water Supply Pump Station	Planned
Solar Water heating for Belle Haven Pool	<i>In CIP 2011-2012</i>
Enhance Transit Pass/Carpooling Programs	Implemented
Marsh Road Landfill Methane Emissions Mitigation Bedwell Bayfront Park	Included in CIP for 2011-2012 Bedwell Bayfront Park Gas Collection
Enhance Recycling Collection Service at city facilities	Partially implemented
Install Water Efficient Fixtures in Municipal Facilities	In CIP for 2011-12
PGE Climate Smart	Deleted
Climate and Energy Coordinator	Not Implemented
Plant Trees	Implemented/Additional El Camino Tree Planting for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Street Reforestation Project
Environmental Preferable Purchasing Policy	Not Implemented Proposed 2011-2012
Green Fleet Policy	Not Implemented Proposed 2011-2012
Idling Policy	Not Implemented Proposed 2011-2013

Other Related Sustainability Projects Underway not in 2009 Climate Action Plan

- Energy Audits of City Administration in CIP for 2012-13
- Citywide Sidewalk Master Plan: Development of Citywide Sidewalk Master Plan adopted in 2009
- Safe Routes to Schools for Laurel Elementary and Encinal (plan completed) and Hillview, city has a grant received and construction planned for 2012
- Onetta Harris Community Center Solar Power Conversion (for \$400k) in 2011-2012

Commissioner Mitch Slomiak's Comments on Climate Action Plan Assessment Report

1) Establishment of GHG Reduction Goals

A) Only one option, that of complying with AB-32, is discussed. Since AB-32 is a requirement, I contend that merely complying with this positions Menlo Park as a "follower" in climate action. I recommend that two additional options be presented. The first would modestly exceed AB-32 requirements. The second would significantly exceed AB-32 requirements, thereby positioning Menlo Park as a "climate action leader."

B) In conjunction with Item A above, I am puzzled as to why the extensive research efforts by the CAP Subcommittee are not mentioned in the CAP Assessment. This was developed in close coordination with Staff (Lisa Ekers in particular) and is intended to help provide a context for GHG Reduction Goal recommendations to City Council. Should Menlo Park be a leader, middle of the pack, or a follower in regard to climate action? Without understanding what it looks like to be a leader, Council will be unable to understand whether the recommended goals attain this positioning or not.

2) Strategy/Prioritization of GHG Reduction Strategies.

A) Since the overall aim of a CAP is to reduce GHG, I believe it is critical to see at least a high level estimated GHG reduction impact for each strategy. Otherwise, it is unclear whether an initiative rises to the level of significance. While I understand that due to resource constraints all strategies are presented as high level, this document will be a great deal more usable by adding an estimated GHG impact, such as "estimated annual GHG reduction.)

B) The Report does not indicate whether the collective set of strategies presented are likely to be sufficient to achieve 5-year or 10-year GHG reduction goals. This, in part, is why I believe we need estimated GHG impact with each strategy. We need to know the extent to which goals can be achieved by strategies that have been identified and prioritized as significant.

C) I very much like Table 1 on page 8, as it addresses a confusion in the original CAP. One comment, though, is that the discussion of 15,131 tons per year assumes that GHG reduction impacts will begin in 2010 (2010-2020). This appears overly optimistic, as 2010 is already behind us and can no longer be impacted by the strategies presented, and it is unlikely that there can be much impact in 2011 since the new budget cycle does not begin until July. It would perhaps be more realistic to recalculate over an 8-year period, since the lag time in moving forward with the CAP Assessment since the initial Council discussion have effectively cost the City and community two full budget cycles.

D) It was not clear from the report whether the 132 GRCC recommended strategies were evaluated in developing these strategies. There are many in the community who will be curious about this, given the intensity of effort and depth of community participation in 2007.

E) The methane reduction opportunity in the City's landfill is presented inconsistently. The first full bullet point on page 3 indicates that "99% of the emissions are from community sources," which implies that this 8.5% is a community source. However, this is presented in Table 3 (municipal) rather than Table 2 (community) later in the report. Furthermore, this is the single greatest concentration of GHG emissions that is fully under City control and it happens that there is a dedicated funding source that can/will be used to explore means of significantly reducing this impact. I strongly recommend that this be given more prominent discussion in the initial pages and also moved from a Priority 3 to Priority 1 project (page 17)

F) On page 18 I recommend that this be changed from Priority 3 to Priority 1. Without annual evaluation there is no practical way to know whether the City is on track in attaining Goals. In my view this is an essential element of a meaningful CAP and thereby needs to be Priority 1.

G) On page 16, Civic Green Building Policy, please consider including a provision to annually publish metrics related to the actual energy intensiveness of each building **in operation**. This will remedy a glaring weakness of the LEED standard, in which buildings are related when first built, then never evaluated in operation to see if the assumed energy efficiency design has actually been attained.

3) **Evaluation Metrics for GHG Reduction Strategies.** I am largely satisfied by the discussion and approach presented. Here are specific comments:

A) On page 19 the only example provided is, in my opinion, a very weak approach to evaluating cost-effectiveness. I recommend that an example be given that represents a sound or even leading approach, such as that in use by the City of Palo Alto (which happens to be the approach that is then recommended in this Report). My concern is that a casual reader may not think deeply enough about the presented San Carlos approach to realize that it is very flawed.