

Chapter IV

Implementation



Climate change is one of the most critical challenges facing society today. Overcoming climate change will require substantial efforts from government, organizations, and individuals. To meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target, the City needs to prioritize actions; mobilize residents, business owners and staff; and work with neighboring jurisdictions and regional agencies to create workable solutions. This chapter describes the City’s approach to implementing the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and provides actions to accompany each measure presented in Chapter V.

Approach

The City recognizes climate change as a threat to the community’s health, safety, and welfare. Reducing emissions and adapting to a changing climate are not simply good ideas, they are global imperatives. Given the urgency of the challenge at hand, the City places great emphasis on implementation of CAP measures.

Translating the measures into on-the-ground results requires tangible action steps, reliable funding, and the flexibility to change course as economic, political, and environmental conditions demand.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- *Implementation Matrices:* An implementation matrix is provided for each CAP measure that describes recommended actions, timeframes, performance metrics, and responsible departments and agencies.
- *Funding Strategies:* This section describes funding strategies available to implement CAP measures and actions. Potential future financing tools are also identified.
- *Plan Adaptation and Evolution:* This section discusses the need for the CAP to be updated and amended over time to ensure that it remains relevant as the science of climate change continues to emerge and climate action policy evolves over time.

Implementation Matrices

In Chapter III, matrices are provided for each quantified CAP measure that will help City staff and other responsible agencies implement CAP actions. The matrices will also enable the City Council and the public to track key actions and deadlines and monitor progress. Each matrix provides the following information:

- *Action Steps:* The specific actions that the City will take to implement the measure, the timeframe, and the responsible department(s).
- *Progress Indicators:* The benchmarks that will be used evaluate the performance and level of implementation of each measure. Both interim and final indicators are provided.

Even well-intended policies can be difficult to turn into reality. Because reducing the community's emissions is vitally important, the City has identified individual actions that support each measure. Providing specific action steps for each measure improves the odds of successful implementation by forming clear lines of responsibility and establishing schedule priorities.

Evaluating the performance of each measure is crucial for Albany to achieve its GHG reduction target. While the City employed rigorous methods to estimate the emission reduction capacity of each measure, such estimations are inherently imprecise due to the wide range of assumptions employed in such calculations. As time progresses and climate change science advances, the City should evaluate the actual performance of each measure on an annual basis. Such evaluation may be accomplished by comparing actual performance to the performance standards established within this section. Ideally, the identified actions should cause measures to meet or exceed these standards. If they do not, the City should examine ways to increase measure performance or create new measures capable of making up for missed emission reductions.

The City's Environmental Resources Division will track and report progress toward achieving the City's GHG emission reduction target of 25% below 2004 levels by 2020. The Division will provide annual reports to the City Council on the progress made toward achieving the reduction target as a whole, and for each quantified measure. The report will describe the following:

- Estimated GHG reductions for current year and to-date
- Implementation costs
- Cost savings and payback for given strategies
- Co-benefits realized
- Remaining barriers to implementation

Funding Strategies

This section describes potential funding sources and strategies that Albany could pursue to cover costs related to the CAP. Though the City will not be the sole entity paying for CAP measures, only the relative likely public costs of each measure have been identified, not those borne by individuals or businesses. The estimated costs to the City for each measure are presented in Appendix B, with an indication of whether local residents or businesses would also be required to pay a direct cost for each measure.

The CAP will require strategic public funding by the City, by regional government agencies, and by the state and federal governments to provide capital projects, incentives, outreach/education, and new regulations necessary to achieve the plan's objectives. To decrease costs and to improve the plan's efficiency, actions should be pursued concurrently whenever possible. For example, the City should pursue actions related to land use and transportation together during its upcoming General Plan update.

Funding sources have not been identified for all actions. However, numerous state and regional grants are available to assist with funding some of the more expensive strategies, such as capital improvement projects related to transportation. In addition, Albany can and should partner with Alameda County and other nearby jurisdictions to administer joint programs as feasible. As many businesses in the Bay Area are leaders in renewable energy and green infrastructure, potential opportunities to partner with the private sector to decrease the costs of implementation abound. Finally, many of the measures and actions have the potential to be self-financing if properly designed and implemented.

State and Regional Grants

Of all of the strategies in the CAP, the Transportation and Land Use Strategy is the most expensive, as it requires the creation of new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Fortunately, numerous regional and state grants are available to assist with transportation improvements.

Transportation Fund for Clean Air

The Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) is a Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) grant program funded by a surcharge on motor vehicles registered in the Bay Area. The purpose of the TFCA program is to provide grants to support Bay Area projects that will decrease motor vehicle emissions and thereby improve air quality. It funds a wide range of project types, including the purchase or lease of clean air vehicles; shuttle and feeder bus service to train stations; ridesharing programs to encourage carpool and transit use; bicycle facility improvements such as bike lanes, bicycle racks, and lockers; arterial management improvements to speed traffic flow on major arterials; smart growth projects; and projects that enhance the availability of transit information.

Safe Routes to Transit

Regional Measure 2, the \$1.00 bridge toll increase, funds projects that enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stations. TransForm is administering the program. Funding cycles are approximately every two years.



Livable Communities & Housing Incentive Program

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program provides technical assistance and capital grants to help cities, neighborhoods, transit agencies, and nonprofits develop transportation-related projects that improve walking and bicycle access to public transit stations, major activity centers, and neighborhood commercial districts.

Safe Routes to Schools

Safe Routes to School is an international movement focused on increasing the number of children who walk or bicycle to school by funding projects that remove barriers that currently prevent them from doing so. Those barriers include lack of infrastructure, unsafe infrastructure, lack of programs that promote walking and bicycling through education/encouragement programs aimed at children, parents, and the community. In California, two separate Safe Routes to School programs are available. One is the State program referred to as SR2S. The other is the federal program referred to as SRTS. Both fund qualifying infrastructure projects.

Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority Measure B

Measure B (2000) funds millions of dollars worth of local transportation improvements in every Alameda County jurisdiction. These are the most flexible Measure B funds and can be used for local transportation priorities. Viable uses of Measure B funds include street and road improvements; transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements beyond those funded with Measure B Bicycle and Pedestrian Funds; and encouraging transit use instead of cars.

Caltrans Planning Grants

Community Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) grants fund transportation and land use planning that promotes public engagement, livable communities, and a sustainable transportation system that includes mobility, access, and safety. The maximum award is \$300,000, and a local match of 20 percent of the grant request is required.

Partnerships with Private Companies

The Bay Area is home to numerous private companies who provide renewable energy or green infrastructure. The success of the CAP depends in part on collaboration between these businesses and the City and/or public. Both Better Place (located in Palo Alto) and Coulomb Technologies (located in Campbell) are developing electric plug-in auto charging station infrastructure throughout the Bay Area. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) also administer numerous energy efficiency and water conservation programs that the City can leverage and help advertise to residents. Solar companies will also be an important asset to the CAP, as the advent of the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) enables businesses, residents, and the City to install solar panels and access solar power at no cost. Partnering with these businesses, as well as new businesses as they arise, will enable the City to both save money and provide the community with the most up-to-date green infrastructure.

Power Purchasing Agreements

Solar power has become increasingly more accessible and cost-effective due to Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). In a PPA, a private company or third party installs the solar panels at no cost to the consumer and maintains ownership of the installed panels, selling customers the power the panels produce on a per-kilowatt-hour basis at a locked-in rate. The locked-in rate is often lower than what customers pay their utility today, and the rate increases at a fixed percentage (usually 3.5% or 3.9%) annually. In addition to installing the panels, the third party monitors and maintains the systems to ensure that they keep working. The contract period for a PPA is typically 15 years, at which point the third party will cancel or sign a new agreement with the building owner.

Partnerships with Other Jurisdictions

As Albany is a relatively small city, partnering with neighboring jurisdictions is another key implementation strategy supporting the CAP. The City of Berkeley is the primary potential partner the City will pursue given both Berkeley's proximity to Albany, and its own dedication and leadership addressing GHG emissions and climate change. Berkeley has been identified in the CAP as a potential partner in creating a food industry grease-to-biodiesel recycling program, and obtaining AC Transit EasyPasses for City employees, as the City of Albany alone is too small to qualify. Albany will also seek to partner with AC Transit to improve the public transit system, and with Alameda County to improve the energy efficiency of the City street lights.

New Financing Products and Programs

There are numerous financing products and programs the City could establish to encourage homeowners and business owners to invest in energy efficiency. The potential products include on-bill financing, low interest loans, and energy efficient mortgages. There is great variability in the potential structure of the programs and products. However, all three establish a lender/borrower relationship in which the City, utility or private lender loans the building owner money to pay for upgrades and the amount loaned is paid back over time. The cost (or payback) to the City is wholly dependent on how much the City intends to subsidize interest rates.

Energy savings could also be financed through a (potentially tax-exempt) municipal bond issue or through a Local Improvement District (LID). In the case of the bond, the City would administer a revolving loan fund with the bond proceeds. The goal is to provide capital for energy efficiency upgrades at the lowest cost of capital possible. With a LID, the City will pay the upfront costs and property owners will repay those costs over time through a special assessment on their property tax bills.

Self-Financing Strategies

CAP measures include incentives, as well as regulations or fees to change the community's behavior. It is important that the fees established in the CAP be self-financing. For example, the amount of the tiered residential parking fee that increases with vehicle size should be large enough to pay for both program creation and on-going implementation.



Utility Taxes

Electricity Tax

The City could implement a Climate Action Plan Tax levied on electricity usage (per kilowatt hour) for City of Albany residents and businesses. The charge would be included on customers' PG&E bills and collected during the normal billing process, with different rates for residential, commercial, and industrial users. Customers enrolled in PG&E's ClimateSmart program may be eligible for exemption or partial exemption from the tax.

Trash Tax

The City could establish a tax on the amount of waste generated by residents and businesses. The Trash Tax would be levied on trash haulers in Albany, based on the amount of trash they collect within City limits. The trash haulers could pass the tax onto their customers as a line-item expense in their bills. Trash Tax revenue could be used to fund waste reduction programs.

Plan Adaptation and Evolution

The 2009 CAP represents the City's best attempt to create an organized, community-wide response to the threat of climate change at the time of preparation. The field of climate action planning is rapidly evolving. Over the next decade, new information about climate change science and risk is likely to emerge, new GHG reduction technologies and innovative municipal strategies will be developed, and State and federal legislation are likely to advance. In order to remain relevant and to be as effective as possible the CAP must evolve over time.

In combination with the annual monitoring and reporting requirements for individual measures and actions outlined in the matrices above, the CAP as a whole will be reviewed and modified every three years to identify potential plan update needs. These reviews will evaluate improvements to climate science, explore new opportunities for GHG reduction and climate adaptation, and respond to changes in climate policy. As many of Albany's CAP measures will be implemented through the City's upcoming General Plan update, the first CAP review should occur following adoption of the General Plan. Furthermore, the CAP should be identified as an implementation program supporting achievement of land use, circulation, and conservation policies within the General Plan.

Relationship to the California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the City to identify the significant environmental impacts of its discretionary actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible. Senate Bill 97 (2007) acknowledges that climate change is a prominent environmental issue that requires analysis under CEQA. When the City undertakes a discretionary action, such as approval of a proposed development project, plan, policy, or code change, the City will evaluate whether that action would result in a significant climate change impact. Adoption of the CAP itself by the City is considered a project under CEQA. The overall purpose of the CAP is to reduce the impact that the community will have on global climate change and, therefore, reduce an impact on

the environment. However, as with any proposal involving construction, implementation of the CAP could potentially result in adverse impacts on the physical environment, such as degrading visual resources, biological resources, or cultural resources. An Initial Study is being prepared by the City pursuant to CEQA to evaluate the potential impacts of implementing the CAP. Because the CAP will have undergone environmental review under CEQA, and is intended to reduce the City's impact on climate change, determining the consistency of a proposed project with the CAP is one way to evaluate whether a project would have a significant climate change impact.

When determining whether a proposed project is consistent with the CAP, staff should consider the following:

- The extent to which the project supports or includes applicable strategies and measures, or advances the actions identified in the CAP;
- The consistency of the project with Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) population growth projections, which are the basis of the GHG emissions inventory's projections;
- The extent to which the project would interfere with implementation of CAP strategies, measures, or actions.

If the City determines in its environmental review that the proposed project would conflict with the CAP, the City would be required to incorporate mitigation measures, where feasible, within the proposed project to minimize its greenhouse gas emissions and/or climate change impact. If mitigation measures are determined infeasible, the City has the option to adopt a statement of overriding considerations as described in Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines.



This page intentionally left blank.