

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: January 19, 2010

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Summary of Climate Action Plan Study Session and Review of  
draft Climate Action Plan

REPORT BY: Jeff Bond, Building & Planning Manger  
Nicole Almaguer, Environmental Specialist

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

1. Receive a staff summary of the January 4 City Council Study Session of the Climate Action Plan.
2. Direct the Sustainability Committee to complete the review of the Draft Climate Action Plan and work with the consultant to finalize the plan.
3. Direct the Sustainability Committee and Planning and Zoning Commission to review the final Climate Action Plan and recommend adoption by the City Council in March 2010.

**BACKGROUND**

The City initiated a community planning process to develop a climate action plan in the summer of 2008, and retained the services of EDAW, Inc. to complete the plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 25% below 2004 levels by the year 2020. As a result of this planning process, the current draft of the Climate Action Plan was released in November for review by the City's Sustainability Committee, Planning & Zoning Commission and the community at large. Additionally, a survey was mailed citywide to obtain additional input on the draft CAP. Approximately 500 responses have been received to date, with the majority indicating strong support for reduction of greenhouse gasses and the City taking leadership regarding this issue. Detailed survey results are included as an attachment to this staff report.

On January 4, 2010, the City Council held a study session to review the draft Climate Action Plan and obtain further community input regarding the plan. The study session included roundtable discussions with members of the Sustainability Committee, Planning & Zoning Commission and public. At this meeting staff provided an overview of the climate action planning process along with a detailed staff report on the subject (attached). The study session provided the opportunity to openly discuss the intent of the Climate Action Plan (CAP), and gain a variety of perspectives on the draft plan and its policies.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study session included the formation of roundtable groups to discuss questions relating to identification of climate action priorities, the City and community's role in implementing the CAP, and noting areas of the CAP that require more attention or clarification. Each roundtable group discussed the greenhouse gas reduction measures they felt should be of priority. Priority measures were grouped into three categories (priority 1, 2, and 3). As detailed on the attached matrix, the first three priorities that emerged from the roundtable discussions include:

- Building energy efficiency;
- Solar power; and
- Building code upgrades for energy efficiency.

Following these first three priorities, “complete streets”, waste reduction, and land use policies were identified as the next priority set.

The majority of report outs from the roundtable discussions agreed that the City should be a leader in implementing greenhouse gas reduction policies, with the notion that if it can't be done in Albany, it may not be able to be done at all. There was also some general discussion regarding how CAP measures will be funded, acknowledging that they carry a significant cost. Additionally, report outs from the roundtable discussions identified:

- Initiatives should be both cost effective and ensure measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions;
- Developing a parking permit system for the residential sector as a potentially more effective action in comparison to parking meters in the commercial sector; and
- Interest in community networking to share ideas relating to building energy efficiency/solar installations, such as tours of homes with energy efficiency or solar equipment installed.

In terms of items in the CAP that may require additional attention, the following were identified:

- Verification that the cost estimates and other relative data are as accurate as possible;
- Clarification that action items are well defined and practicable, for example, the measure regarding paperless city offices may need to be revised to accommodate for particular needs;
- Include some discussion and guidance regarding the upstream environmental consequences associated with development of new technologies such as solar panels to avoid adverse impacts; and
- Whether the building energy efficiency ordinances should be a mandatory requirement .

- Building code upgrades for energy efficiency should not be more stringent than the State code

## **ANALYSIS**

In an effort to complete the climate action planning process and adopt a finalized CAP, the items identified during the study session should be examined further to ensure accuracy of the final CAP. The Sustainability Committee has taken a leadership role to assist the consultant from project initiation through development of the draft CAP. As such, it is recommended that City Council direct the Sustainability Committee to again work with the consultant to finalize the CAP, including:

- Complete the Plan with acknowledgement that a significant community challenge remains to meet the City Council 25% reduction goal;
- Clarifying any discrepancies in cost estimates or other numerical data;
- Reviewing public comments received and forwarding those comments to the consultant as the Committee sees applicable; and

Additionally, it is recommended that the Planning & Zoning Commission conduct a review of the final CAP following the work conducted by the Sustainability Committee and in advance of City Council.

The proposed schedule for completion of the final CAP is as follows:

- January 20, 2010: Sustainability Committee Meeting – finalize review of the Draft CAP and submit to consultant to prepare final CAP;
- February 17, 2010: Sustainability Committee Meeting – review final CAP and make a recommendation to the City Council on final action;
- February 23, 2010: Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting – review final CAP and make a recommendation to the City Council on final action;
- March 1, 2010: City Council Meeting – review final CAP for approval.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

Adoption of the final CAP is intended to facilitate implementation of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and demonstrate the City's leadership regarding climate action. It is also envisioned that a number of the proposed measures within the CAP will have co-benefits, including improving local quality of life, creating a healthier environment to live and work, and improving the ecological health of the community and San Francisco Bay.

It should also be noted that the measures identified within the CAP reflect a master list of projects and programs, all of which requiring their own particular process for implementation. As such, the community, public Commissions/Committees and Council will have the opportunity to further customize measures to ensure they are appropriate to

city needs and generate as much greenhouse gas emissions reductions as possible while also being cost effective.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Completion of the final CAP is funded by a grant award from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The consultant's contract scope includes attendance at the upcoming public hearings, and for completion of the CAP. Any major changes to the plan may not be included in the current scope, and as such would require additional funding.

Implementation of the CAP will require identification of several funding sources. The City will pursue grants and partnership opportunities with other jurisdictions and agencies in an effort to streamline costs as much as possible. However, some costs will not be eligible for outside funding and consequently other revenue will be needed for those expenses. It is also envisioned that implementation of the CAP may require additional staff assistance to work with the community, business district, and other agencies towards achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions and to monitor effectiveness of the plan.

### **Attachments**

1. Citywide CAP survey results
2. January 4, 2010 Climate Action Plan Staff Report
3. Study Session results matrix