

**CITY OF ALBANY
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: March 19, 2014
TO: Sustainability Committee
FROM: Claire Griffing, Sustainability & Transportation Coordinator
SUBJECT: Climate Action Plan Update

The following is intended to serve as an overview of completed and ongoing Climate Action Plan (CAP) projects. Please see the attached Implementation Plan (Attachment 1) for updates on individual CAP measures.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

CAP Funding Research

The Committee has been researching funding strategies and is planning to propose a Utility User's Tax increase to fund priority CAP measures.

School Energy Efficiency

The committee has been meeting with District staff and attending School Board meetings to encourage energy efficiency in the schools.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update

Staff worked closely with Stopwaste.Org to conduct an update to the greenhouse gas emissions inventory. The Sustainability Committee modified the inventory to make a better comparison to the previous inventory. The overall findings concluded that greenhouse gas emissions have decreased slightly in the City since 2005.

CAP OUTREACH

Arts & Green Festival

In partnership with the City, the Sustainability Committee continues to produce the annual Albany Arts & Green Festival. The next event will be on Sunday, May 4th. The Festival celebrates Albany's commitment to the arts and the environment with music, activities, demonstrations, and information booths displaying the activities of local environmental groups.

Community Outreach

The City expanded online media outreach to include Nextdoor.com and Facebook. For regular updates, 'Like' the City of Albany Transportation & Sustainability Division's page at www.facebook.com/albanytransportation. The website is updated regularly with environmental messages. The City also uses the advertising space on the Big Belly Solar Compactors to provide environmental messaging and promote events. Bill inserts are sent through Waste Management to outreach about recycling and waste reduction as well as promote energy efficiency programs and events.

Albany Green Coalition

The committee is working on additional ways to reach Albany residents, and is planning to propose a meeting of community groups to discuss possibilities for collaboration.

BUILDINGS AND ENERGY

Community Choice Aggregation

The Sustainability Committee has been researching community renewable energy options, including Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). CCA allows public agencies to procure electric power on behalf of electric power customers. The City Council's Strategic Vision, adopted in the spring of 2013, identifies investigating CCA as a strategic priority. In November 2013, Council authorized a letter to Marin Clean Energy to consideration as a member. Staff has received a grant from the World Wildlife Fund for \$15,000 to cover a portion of the cost of this membership analysis. City staff will work closely with MCE during the membership analysis process. Upon approval of the analysis by MCE Board staff, Council will decide whether to join MCE.

Green Building

The City established a Green Building Subcommittee comprised of members of the City's Planning & Zoning Commission and Sustainability Committee to provide input on the existing green building ordinance, identify updates, and customize the ordinance with energy conservation measures. The revisions include increasing the minimum point requirements, requesting additional submittal documentation, and collecting a fee for final inspection to insure compliance. Additional edits include changing the new commercial construction threshold to 10,000 sq. ft. for official LEED certification and allowing equivalency for renovation/construction more than 5,000 sq. ft. These revisions were approved by Council in April 2013.

Energy JPA

The City Council approved a resolution to join the Energy Council JPA in March. The JPA will procure and administer funding for energy efficiency projects in Alameda County.

Residential Energy Efficiency Incentive Program

The City continues to promote a residential energy efficiency incentive program through the existing Energy Upgrade California program. Homeowner workshops continue to be offered countywide. The City promoted a residential energy efficiency incentive program through the existing Energy Upgrade California program. The City actively promoted informational workshops through bill inserts, our cable TV station, web postings, email trees and some door-to-door flyers.

Commercial Rebate Incentive for Energy Efficiency

The City worked with the SmartLights Program (a nonprofit funded by PG&E) to provide energy efficiency assessments and rebates for lighting and refrigeration upgrades to commercial businesses. City staff participated in a "walking campaign" and sent a letter to all businesses to encourage participation in the program. Twenty-eight businesses completed retrofit work.

Develop and Distribute Community Outreach Materials

The City developed flyers for the residential and commercial energy efficiency programs as well as an outreach piece outlining the Climate Action Plan and its implementation measures.

Municipal Energy Action Plan

SEI conducted energy audits of City facilities in 2012 and assisted the City in preparation of an Energy Action Plan. The plan provides a summary of energy use history and trends for the City's facilities, identifies future energy efficiency projects, and sets energy reduction goals for energy use reduction in the next 3-5 years. It can be used to plan future capital improvement projects.

Municipal Energy Management Tools

Staff set up MyEnergy and Business Tools (PG&E energy use and tracking tools) accounts to monitor energy usage through the PG&E website. Energy management tools allow the City to identify anomalies in electricity usage, highlight billing mistakes and inventory electrical and gas meters.

Renewable Energy at City Facilities

In coordination with the Small Cities collaborative, the City received a proposal for installation of solar panels on city facilities in 2012. Staff determined funding was available for the proposed project to install solar panels on the roof of the Childcare Center. The Albany City Council authorized staff to implement this solar installation (26 kW-DC system) and to pursue funding for the remaining projects. Staff was unable to execute a contract with Real Goods Solar and is reevaluating the project to determine if a solar lease would be a possible alternative.

Childcare Center HVAC replacement

The City of Albany replaced the old HVAC system at the City's Childcare Center with a high efficiency system in April of 2012.

City Hall Lighting

Staff completed an automated lighting management system at City Hall to control and schedule all existing lighting panels, individual relays which control the operation of all light fixtures, and ceiling fans by areas/zones. The system is designed to turn all lights off in evenings after working hours and on weekends and holidays.

Ohlone Greenway Lighting Upgrade

City staff worked with the City of El Cerrito to procure and install HID lighting with LEDs along the Ohlone Greenway for energy savings and enhanced visibility.

TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

Active Transportation Plan

The Albany Active Transportation Plan was adopted in the Spring of 2012. The following projects are currently complete or underway:

- The City obtained a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grant (CMAQ) for the construction of the Marin-Buchanan Bikeway from San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan bridge overcrossing. The project broke ground in the fall of 2012, and when finished it will create a bike and pedestrian path that provides a link between the Marin Avenue bike lanes and the Bay Trail. The final phase of the project will underground utility lines along Marin Avenue and complete the bicycle facility

from San Pablo Avenue to Cornell Avenue. Designs for this phase are scheduled to go to Council in December 2014.

- The City obtained a Planning grant from Caltrans to develop a Complete Streets plan for Buchanan Street and San Pablo Avenue. "Complete Streets" are designed to make it easier and safer to walk, bike, ride the bus, and drive along San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street. A weeklong series of open studio sessions took place in December 2012 and final designs were approved by Council in December of 2013. The designs provide the basis for planning on San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street in order to increase safety for all users of the street. The plan includes bike lanes on portions of San Pablo Avenue (near city limits) and sharrows within the city core. The plan provides to improved crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections, pedestrian recall for all signalized intersections, and medians whenever possible to provide refuge for pedestrians.
- Designs for wayfinding signage have been approved by Council, the Traffic and Safety Commission and the Arts Committee. Signage will be installed along the Ohlone Greenway at City limit and at Pierce Street Plaza.
- Vehicle access was recently blocked to Buchanan Avenue at Pierce Street. A multi-use bicycle path was created on the west side of the 500 block of Pierce Street and will continue through the future Pierce Street Park and connect to Cleveland Avenue and the Buchanan-Marin Bikeway.
- The City worked with BART to ensure that the Ohlone Greenway was striped with a separate right-of-way for pedestrians and cyclists after retrofit work was completed.
- All of the striping and signage projects identified in the Active Transportation Plan are expected to be completed by summer 2015. This accounts for about 65% of projects identified in the plan.

Bike Racks

With funds from Measure B, the City has been able to partner Albany Strollers & Rollers, the Albany Unified School District, and local merchants to install additional bike racks at the swimming pool, Albany Middle School, the Senior Center, the waterfront, the YMCA, the Community Center, and along Solano and San Pablo Avenues.

Safe Routes to School Program

The City of Albany began its SR2S Program in 2007 to decrease traffic and pollution and increase the health of children and the community. The City has received three SR2S grants from the State for infrastructure improvements around schools, which include the traffic signal and pedestrian improvements at Buchanan/Jackson and Marin/Santa Fe. Pedestrian improvements will be made at the Marin/Curtis intersection in the summer of 2014. Each of these grants has allocated 10% of the funds for educational programming. In 2012, the City obtained a federal Safe Routes to School Grant for staff support, encouragement, and education activities at the three elementary schools and at Albany Middle School for three school years from 2012-2015. The City has established monthly walk and roll to school days, International Walk to School Day in October, Bike to School Day in May, the Golden Sneaker Contest in the spring, the Bike Program during P.E. and several educational presentations at each elementary school and the middle school. Cornell Elementary is the only school in the county administering weekly Walk to School events with the support of the City and a dedicated group of parent volunteers. The High School began their SR2S program in 2012 and is expanding it with the help of their student-led environmental club. The City also puts on a Bike Rodeo each spring to teach students bicycle safety in a fun environment. Staff worked with the Street Smarts program to create an outreach campaign

and materials, including posters, street banners, bumper stickers, and brochures about pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety as well as to encourage active modes of transportation in the city.

Car Sharing

City staff is working with City Car Share and the Traffic and Safety Commission to identify potential car share locations.

Electric Vehicles

City staff is working with electric vehicle charging companies to identify potential charging locations within the city.

Parking

City staff has secured funding for a comprehensive parking study and a bicycle facility study for Adams and Kains. The City has convened a working group of members from the Sustainability Committee, Traffic & Safety Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission to discuss Measure D parking requirements. The City completed a parking occupancy survey on San Pablo Avenue

General Plan

City staff is working on the General Plan update, which will include policies in line with CAP measures.

WASTE REDUCTION

Countywide Ordinances – Single Use Bags & Mandatory Recycling

The Alameda County Waste Management Authority (Stopwaste.Org) adopted the single use bag ordinance and mandatory recycling ordinance last year. The single use bag ordinance went into effect January 2013 in conjunction with a reusable bag campaign. The mandatory recycling ordinance went into effect July of 2012 and through a partnership with Waste Management of Alameda County (WMAC), the City was in full compliance by October 2012. Phase 2 of the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance will go into effect July 1, 2014 and will require all businesses and multi-family dwellings to recycle and compost. City staff has been working on a comprehensive outreach campaign, including designs for recycling signage.

School Recycling

The School District voted to become a priority partner with Stopwaste.Org. City staff met with Stopwaste to develop a long-term plan for waste reduction in the schools.

Waste Management Contract

The Franchise Agreement with Waste Management of Alameda County, adopted in November 2011, provides to following additional services:

- 15 solar compactors for trash and recycling were installed along Solano Avenue and in parks. They are currently being used to promote City programs and events, and can be purchased as ad space for local businesses.
- Curbside collection of household batteries, CFLs, and cell phones is now available for single family customers. The City has promoted this service through bill inserts, posters, social media,

and the website. City staff worked with Waste Management to create a video tutorial for residents in 2013.

- Waste Management provides bagged compost twice a year; at the City's Arts & Green Festival in May and at a separate event in July held in the parking lot at Golden Gate Fields.
- Outreach on diversion programs has been done through a series of bill inserts, website updates, Facebook posts, the City newsletter, Patch announcements, and flyers posted at City facilities. Site visits, waste assessments and presentations are provided free of charge to businesses and multi-family dwellings.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Rain Gardens

A rain garden was installed as part of the Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements at the intersection of Marin and Santa Fe Avenues during the summer of 2012. The San Francisco Estuary Project will install a rain garden on the eastern side of San Pablo Avenue between Marin and Dartmouth. This is part of a pilot project to develop green infrastructure to limit storm water runoff in seven cities along San Pablo Avenue. The project is fully funded and should be completed by fall of 2015. The Public Works Department is looking into additional rain garden projects.

Urban Forestry

The City's Urban Forestry program continues to proactively plant street trees throughout the City. The program has planted 1,580 trees since 2011, including 850 trees in 2013 alone.

WATER CONSERVATION

Buchanan Street Bikeway

As part of the Bikeway project, the City laid a purple pipe, which will eventually provide recycled water for landscaping.

Outreach

Staff provides outreach materials and social media announcements regarding water conservation. Staff is currently working with Albany Middle School students to create a water conservation campaign on campus.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Community Gardens

The Parks & Recreation Commission has been working on expanding opportunities for community gardens, especially for production. City staff has provided support for school district gardens and garden education.

Farmers Market

The Berkeley Ecology Center has operated the Albany Farmer's Market since 2011. City staff is working with the Berkeley Ecology Center to determine a better location the market.