



**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Agenda Item # 4**

**AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY**

**Meeting Date:** January 12, 2021

**Subject:** Resolution No. 2021-02: Cut the Commute Pledge

**Prepared by:** Jon Maginot, Acting City Manager

**Attachment(s):**

1. Resolution No. 2021-02
2. Cut the Commute Pledge

**Initiated by:**

Mayor Fligor and staff

**Previous Council Consideration:**

None

**Fiscal Impact:**

None

**Environmental Review:**

Exempt per CEQA Guidelines 15262 (Feasibility Study) and 15308 (Action to protect the environment)

**Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:**

- Does the Council wish to adopt the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Cut the Commute Pledge?

**Summary:**

- The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has asked employers to pledge to allow employees to telecommute one or two days per week following the easing of restrictions stemming from COVID-19 stay-at-home orders
- The past nine months have demonstrated that the City has the ability and means to have employees effectively work remotely

**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt Resolution No. 2021-xx, adopting the Cut the Commute Pledge

---

**Reviewed By:**

City Manager

JM

City Attorney

JH

Finance Director

SE

---



**Subject:** Resolution No. 2021-02: Cut the Commute Pledge

---

### **Purpose**

To adopt a Resolution adopting the Cut the Commute Pledge

### **Background**

In July 2020, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) began asking employers within the Bay Area to sign the Cut the Commute Pledge. This pledge encourages employers to continue allowing employees the option to telecommute once regional stay-at-home orders are lifted.

### **Discussion/Analysis**

As part of the City Council's 2020 Strategic Priorities, Council set as a priority to "adopt policies and practices that advance the City's sustainability and GHG emission reductions."

Prior to the County Shelter-in-Place order issued in March 2020, the City of Los Altos developed a telework policy to allow employees who could work from home the option to do so one or two days per week. This policy was not widely used prior to March as it had been recently adopted and not fully implemented. Concurrent with the development of the City's telework policy, City IT staff established the infrastructure necessary to allow staff to work remotely.

Beginning in March 2020, the City of Los Altos, like other government agencies and private employers required those employees who could, to work from home. Since that time, the majority of employees at City Hall and in the Recreation and Community Services Department, as well as the management staffs of the Police Department and Maintenance Services Department have primarily worked remotely. Because of the excellent work of the City's IT staff in establishing the necessary infrastructure and tools, this remote working has been successful.

The goal of the BAAQMD Cut the Commute Pledge is to encourage employers, like the City, to continue to allow employees to work remotely once restrictions caused by COVID-19 are lifted. There are a number of advantages to allowing employees to work remotely, but the primary goal of BAAQMD is to continue to reduce greenhouse gases caused by commutes. This aligns with the City Council's 2020 goal.

Staff anticipates that following the lifting of restrictions put in place because of COVID-19, there will still be opportunities for staff to work effectively from home.

Staff recommends adopting the Cut the Commute pledge to demonstrate the City's commitment to reducing greenhouse gases.

### **Options**

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. 2021-02 adopting the Cut the Commute Pledge



**Subject:** Resolution No. 2021-02: Cut the Commute Pledge

---

**Advantages:** Demonstrates the City's commitment to reducing greenhouse gases and protecting the environment

**Disadvantages:** None identified

2) Do not adopt Resolution No. 2021-02

**Advantages:** None identified

**Disadvantages:** The City will not pledge to help reduce commute trips by City employees

**Recommendation**

The staff recommends Option 1.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2021-02**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS  
SUPPORTING THE GOAL OF REDUCING VEHICULAR COMMUTE AND  
INCREASING REMOTE WORK IN THE BAY AREA**

**WHEREAS**, climate change and air pollution, caused by the emission of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) and fine particulates from automobiles with combustion engines, represents a profound threat to the Bay Area's air quality, public health, environment, and economy; and

**WHEREAS**, NO<sub>x</sub> is a noxious gas that has been linked to respiratory problems and other health conditions and also reacts with other chemicals in the atmosphere to form fine particulate pollution, and fine particulate matter; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates the average gasoline passenger vehicle emits .89 of a pound of CO<sub>2</sub> per mile; and

**WHEREAS**, about 1 in 12 workers in the Bay Area are super commuters and drive more than 90 minutes each way to and from work; and

**WHEREAS**, the average Bay Area household spends \$13,350 a year on transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Highway Patrol reported 197,146 fatal and injury traffic crashes statewide in 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders issued to protect the public from the spread of COVID-19 necessitated a shift in how Bay Area employers operate, and many employees quickly made the adjustment to remote work; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District estimated that the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders resulted in a decrease of an estimated 70% of Bay Area vehicle miles traveled in the first three months, which resulted in estimated reductions in total emissions of 15% for fine particulates, 30% for NO<sub>x</sub> and 20% for CO<sub>2</sub>; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commuter Benefits Program is mandatory for all employers in the Bay Area with 50 or more full-time employees, per Senate Bill 1128, and remote work qualifies to meet the program requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, the option to work from home or another off-site location is critical to reducing single occupancy vehicle trips; and

**WHEREAS**, there will be employees post COVID-19 who will not be able to work remotely, but could use public transportation if applicable options are available; and

**WHEREAS**, the increase of the use of public transportation reduces the number of single occupant vehicle trips; and

**WHEREAS**, people are more inclined to use public transportation if it is faster than driving in a single occupancy vehicle and cities and counties can increase the speed of public transportation through land use decisions; and

**WHEREAS**, the increase in bike lanes and other land use decisions, such as the inclusion of complete streets, increases safety and the perception of safety thereby increasing the number of people who will use bicycles to meet their transportation needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the increase in bicycle and pedestrian travel has been shown to provide population-level health benefits and reduced health care costs.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Los Altos hereby strongly supports the goal of reducing single occupancy vehicle trips in the Bay Area, and supports the implementation of policies that will increase options, incentives and abilities for employees to use public transit and other alternative modes of transit.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Los Altos hereby gives direction to staff to determine whether the City has policies in place that encourage more employees, who are able to do so, to work remotely.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Los Altos hereby encourages staff to identify opportunities where the City can encourage and incentivize the reduction of single occupancy vehicles when making decisions about transportation demand management measures.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Los Altos hereby encourages staff to identify opportunities to support increasing the use of public transit and reducing the need for single-occupancy vehicles.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Los Altos hereby strongly supports advocating for measures that increase public funding for faster, accessible, and convenient public transit to ensure that public transportation is available for those who cannot afford private transportation and those who prefer public transportation.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Los Altos at a meeting thereof on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

---

Neysa Fligor, MAYOR

Attest:

---

Andrea Chelemengos, MMC, CITY CLERK

# SPARE THE AIR CUT THE COMMUTE PLEDGE

The shelter-in-place orders issued to protect the public from the spread of COVID-19 necessitated a major shift in how Bay Area employers operate, and many employees quickly made the adjustment to remote work.

As shelter-in-place orders are eased or lifted, let's rethink how we conduct business and consider the substantial benefits remote work can bring to us all:

- Cleaner air and reduced climate impacts
- Reduces traffic congestion
- Saves money and time spent in traffic
- Improves employee recruitment, retention and productivity
- Saves money on commercial real estate and parking facilities
- Enhanced employee work-life balance
- Resiliency— Provides a blueprint to continue business during a crisis

The benefits of remote work are numerous. All that is needed now is leadership, vision and commitment.

Are you ready to step forward and adopt an innovative remote work policy after the shelter-in-place? By signing this pledge, your company or organization commits to extending remote work options by at least 25% (or 1-2 days a week) for employees whose work requirements allow for that flexibility, though you can pledge more! For those employees that don't have that flexibility, your company or organization will encourage alternatives to driving alone.

Help improve air quality and quality of life for all Bay Area residents!

Name (first/last)

Title

Company

City

Signature

Date



BAY AREA  
AIR QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT

