**STUDY SESSION**

**Agenda Item # 1**

# AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

**Meeting Date**: November 2, 2021

**Subject**: Study Session – Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

**Prepared by**: Emiko Ancheta, Sustainability Coordinator
**Reviewed by**: Jon Biggs, Community Development Director
**Approved by**: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

**Attachment**:
None

**Initiated by**:
Environmental Commission Subcommittee and Staff

**Previous Council Consideration**:
Update to 2013 CAP Adoption

**Fiscal Impact**:
None, this is an informational Study Session

**Environmental Review**:
CEQA section 15306 -Information Collection for purposes of an action the City may approve.

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

- Does the City Council wish to provide feedback and direction so that the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan can be completed, and the final review process started?

**Summary**:

- The City of Los Altos' first Climate Action Plan was adopted in 2013 and set targets for GHG emission reductions by 2020
- Update to the 2013 CAP is a priority for City Council and the Environmental Commission
- In January 2021, Staff and the Environmental Commission Subcommittee began work to update the 2013 CAP, now the 2021 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) with the consultant
- The CAAP is scheduled to be presented to the City Council for adoption by end of year 2021 with an overall target of Carbon Neutrality by 2035

**Reviewed By:**

| City Manager | City Attorney | Finance Director |
|---|---|---|
| GE | JH | JF |

**Subject**: Study Session – Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

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**Purpose**
To have City Council review and consider the information included in the Study Session and provide feedback and direction so that the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan can be completed, and the final review process started.

**Background**
In 2013 the City of Los Altos adopted the Climate Action Plan in accordance with State Assembly Bill 32 that required public agencies in California to implement measures to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to year 1990 levels by 2020. Cities were required to adopt a plan to address carbon emissions and establish an implementation plan for programs and facilities. A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is the policy document that provides the framework to achieve those goals. After the adoption of the 2013 CAP, two annual report updates were completed in 2015 and 2016.

The 2013 CAP set a target of reducing the community's GHG by at least 15% by 2020. The GHG emission reduction measures were grouped into five focus areas:

| Focus Area | Potential Emissions Reductions by 2020 ($MTCO_2e$) | Focus Area Percentage of Total Reductions |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Transportation | -7,760 | 50% |
| 2. Energy | -5,740 | 37% |
| 3. Resource Conservation | -1,310 | 8% |
| 4. Green Community | -20 | <1% |
| 5. Municipal Operations | -810 | 5% |
| **Total** | **-15,640** | **100%** |

The City was successful in achieving and exceeding the target set by the 2013 CAP and reduced emissions by 35% between 2005 and 2018. A large percentage of emission reductions came from joining Silicon Valley Clean Energy, but many other actions were also taken that combined to create a 35% reduction in emissions. Approximately 2,500 metric tons of $CO_2$ were reduced through construction of new bike and pedestrian lanes, and approximately 2,400 metric tons were reduced through energy efficiencies. This shows the City is capable of reducing its emissions in a meaningful way.

The City Council continues to make the environment a priority and directed staff to prepare an update to the 2013 CAP.

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**Discussion/Analysis**
The City Council and Environmental Commission prioritized the Climate Crisis and agreed that this is a priority for both the Council and the Commission. The City set aside a budget of $75,000 to contract with a consultant to update the 2013 CAP.

**CAAP 2021**
The update to the 2013 CAP was identified as a priority for the City Council and the Environmental Commission. After release of the RFP in Fall of 2020, the City contracted with EcoShift Consulting in December 2020 and in January 2021 key stakeholders were identified to develop the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) and lead staff began working on the project.

**Lead Team**
The Environmental Commission CAAP sub-committee members include Bruno Delagneau, Raashina Humayun and Don Weiden. The City Staff Leads and Stakeholder groups are key to the development of the CAAP and will be instrumental to implement the future adopted plan.

CAAP City Staff Leads

- Kirk Ballard, Chief Building Official
- Jon Biggs, Community Development Director and Planning Commission Liaison
- Anthony Carnesecca, Economic Development Coordinator
- Gabriel Engeland, City Manager
- Scott Gerdes, HR Analyst
- Ann Hepenstal, Emergency Preparation Coordinator
- Manuel Hernandez, Municipal Services Director
- Marissa Lee, Transportation Services Manager
- Sonia Lee, Public Information Officer
- Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Svc. Director and Parks & Rec. Commission Liaison
- Jon Maginot, Deputy City Manager
- Trevor Marsden, Management Analyst Fellow
- Bridget Matheson, Senior Commission Liaison
- Scott McCrossin, Police Operations Captain
- Guido Persicone, Planning Services Manager and Planning Commission Liaison
- Jaime Rodriguez, Consultant - Traffic Patterns and Complete Streets Commission Liaison
- Jim Sandoval, Engineering Services Director
- Irene Silipin, HR Manager
- William Wells, Youth Commission Liaison

CAAP Stakeholder Groups

- Los Altos Property Owners Downtown
- Los Altos Village Association (LAVA)
- Los Altos Chamber of Commerce
- GreenTown Los Altos
- Los Altos Youth Climate Action Team (LAYCAT)
- Los Altos High School Green Team
- Los Altos History Museum
- LAUSD Outdoor Educator
- Orchard Commons Committee
- BATS Block Action Team
- Grass Roots Ecology
- Los Altos Rotary Club
- Parks & Recreation Commission
- Youth Commission
- Complete Streets Commission
- Senior Commission

**Consultant**

In December 2020, the City entered into contract with EcoShift Consulting to prepare a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) for the City of Los Altos. In January 2021, staff and the Environmental Commission Subcommittee began working with the consultant. The following summarizes the contract scope of services: Project Management, Data Inventory, GHG Forecast and Vulnerability Assessment, Review and Assessment of Relevant City Plans, Policies, Programs and Codes, Develop and Evaluate GHG Reduction and Climate Adaptation Measures, Prepare Draft and Finalize Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, and CEQA Compliance.

**Outreach & Engagement**

Given the modest budget available, we worked with the Consultant to identify areas to conduct outreach and engagement within the budget and without increasing costs to the City. We were able to develop an outreach and engagement plan that included:

- Public Community Workshop (Business & General)
    - June 28, 2021
    - 63 registered
    - Part A- Business, Part B- General Community
    - Attendees provided feedback through live discussion, chat, and by email
    - Session recorded for those unable to attend (CAAP webpage)
- Two Public Surveys (results of surveys: www.losaltosca.gov/caap)
    - Developed by Environmental Commission Subcommittee and staff

    - Farmer's Market tabling: Staff, Commission, Green Team/LAYCAT Volunteers
    - Business Flyers
    - Various Social Media, City Manager's Weekly Updates, Town Crier
- Three Stakeholder Focus Groups
- CAAP Webpage and dedicated email for updates and feedback
- Environmental Commission Monthly Updates

**Targets**
The proposed targets in this CAAP are to achieve an 85% reduction in GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 2030 and achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2035. These are bold but achievable objectives. The implementation of all proposed CAAP strategies and actions by each sector identified below will allow us to meet these objectives. Note that Transportation and Energy are the two largest sectors where the greatest reductions are needed and must be obtained.

**Sectors for Action**
The CAAP divides reduction strategies into the follow sectors:

- Transportation
- Energy
- Resource Conservation
- Green Community
- Municipal Operations

**Transportation**
Reducing GHG emissions from vehicle trips can be accomplished by providing safe and convenient alternatives to driving gas powered single-occupant vehicles and by ensuring that infrastructure is in place to support more efficient travel patterns. The strategies and actions identified in this focus area will reduce vehicle trips by increasing the number of bicycle, walking, ebike, escooter, or shared transit trips that residents and visitors make. Implementing the 2021 Complete Streets Master Plan, improving access and convenience of transit, and increasing the diversity of shared transportation options are key elements. While some vehicle trips will remain necessary because of distance, timing, sequence, or other factors, Los Altos should support efforts by residents and visitors to use efficient transportation by developing an infrastructure network that supports electric vehicles (EVs).

<u>Key Actions</u>

- Fully Implement the 2021 Complete Streets Master Plan by 2035 and make adjustments as needed to comply with VMT reduction objectives
- Support Transit-Oriented Development-10% of population living in high-density areas by 2035

- Increase public EV Charging stations throughout the City
- Increase the EV Charging and pre-wiring requirements in commercial and multi-family buildings when updating the Green Buildings Standards Code

**Energy**

Los Altos has many homes with higher-than-average energy use due to building size, age, and the prevalence of pools and hot tubs in the community. Although joining Silicon Valley Clean Energy in 2017 greatly reduced emissions from the energy sector, GHG emissions from non-SVCE customers and from the burning of methane gas in buildings remains a major problem. The strategies in this area address opportunities for residents and businesses to switch from non-renewable energy sources to renewable ones, accelerate electrification of buildings, conserve energy, and maximize energy efficiency.

Key Actions

- Adopt bold Reach Code ordinances expanded to include large additions and remodels
- Increase fuel switching in existing buildings – 470/year
- Implement a Carbon Emission Permit Fee on methane gas usage (proceeds could be used to finance green energy incentives for residents)

**Resource Conservation**

While waste disposal and water use, are all essential activities in the community, consuming and/or disposing of such resources generates community-wide GHG emissions. The effects of these activities can be reduced by diverting more waste from the landfill, using and conserving water efficiently, and promoting sustainable consumption patterns. Implementing SB 1383 requirements to divert organic waste from landfills will assist the City with increasing diversion rates.

Key Actions

- Increase current landfill diversion rates – 95% landfill diversion rate by 2035
- Adopt single-use plastic food service ware ordinance
- Increase C&D (construction and demolition debris) diversion rates

**Green Community**

Many projects in Los Altos contribute to an improved quality of life by providing economic, social, and environmental benefits for the community. These projects also indirectly reduce GHG emissions. While the measures and actions in this focus area identify only minor direct emissions reductions, they support the reduced energy or fuel consumption goals underlying numerous other CAAP strategies.

Key Actions

- Increase urban tree canopy
- Create water efficient buildings and landscapes
- Implement water recycling and natural water harvesting systems

**Municipal Operations**

While City activities represent a small part of overall emissions in the community, the Municipal Operations focus area is the City's opportunity to lead by example. Emissions reduction measures will also reduce the cost of City operations by decreasing energy, fuel, and other material consumption at City facilities.

Key Actions

- 30% energy reduction in municipal buildings by 2035
- Convert city fleet to 100% EV by 2030
- Build new City buildings to Net Zero standards

**Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation**

Senate Bill 379 requires local jurisdictions to address climate adaptation and resiliency strategies. The Vulnerability Assessment is the first step in Los Altos' effort in planning for and adapting to climate change, outlined in Los Altos' Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The climate vulnerability assessment identifies the risks that climate change poses and describes the changing frequency and intensity of climate hazards, and relies on resources provided by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) including Cal-Adapt and the California Adaptation Planning Guide. The Vulnerability Assessment is an appendix to the CAAP.

Santa Clara County Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Santa Clara County Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan is the county-wide hazard mitigation plan. The plan describes that the number and length of heat waves is expected to increase, how the timing and form of precipitation is expected to change stream flow and river flooding, and wildfire risk.

Los Altos Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex

The Los Altos Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex is an addition to the Santa Clara County Hazard Mitigation Plan, specific to Los Altos. The Los Altos Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex ranks natural hazards based on their probability and their impact. According to the Plan Annex, the hazards with the highest risk score (in order) is earthquake (48), severe weather (33), flood (18), drought (9), dam and levee failure (6), wildfire (3) and landslide (3).

Los Altos

The CAAP Task Force including Lead City staff and members of the Environmental Commission Subcommittee for the CAAP, guided the development. They understand the many aspects of Los Altos operations, planning, and environmental management.

The following climate-related events are identified as the primary hazards and frame the vulnerability assessment:

1. Temperature, Extreme Heat & Drought
2. Precipitation & Flooding
3. Wildfires & Air pollution

The Task group identified climate hazards of most concern in the future. Concerns were ranked (high, medium, low) for primary and secondary climate hazards. Primary climate hazards are phenomena that are climate variables. Temperature and precipitation define climate. Secondary climate hazards are hazards resulting from changes in primary climate hazards and how it relates to community sectors such as the natural environment, economy, and public.

The **primary** climate hazards identified in order of most concern was temperature increase, precipitation changes, and sea level rise. The **secondary** climate hazards identified in order of most concern was drought, extreme heat, wildfires, air pollution, flooding, and landslides.

Impacts on Los Altos' Assets/Community Sectors

The CAAP Task Force assisted with identifying the natural and built assets, facilities, and what sectors of the economy were most important to Los Altos' quality of life.

**Natural Environment**

The most important Los Altos' quality of life benefits (results receiving 40% or more) in order of importance are:

1. Managed landscapes (yards, parks, street trees)
2. Air and air quality
3. Natural habitat (soil, plants, wildlife)
4. Creeks, rivers, and other water bodies

**Built Environment**

The most important to Los Altos' quality of life benefit for the built environment (results receiving 40% or more) in order of importance:

1. Housing
2. Schools
3. Transportation (roads, sidewalks, buses, trains, parking spots & bike racks)
4. Utilities (power, drinking water, stormwater & sewer, natural gas, phone, internet)

Vulnerable Populations

As part of the Vulnerability Assessment, it is important to identify the vulnerable populations that are most at risks to climate hazards.

The vulnerable populations identified (in order of importance) include:

1. Elderly
2. People with chronic or pre-existing medical conditions
3. People with disabilities
4. Children
5. Indigenous and or people of color
6. People experiencing homelessness

Vulnerable populations often do not have access to the resources needed to mitigate health and safety impacts and may lack or have limited mobility. People with limited mobility and functionality during evacuation, flooding, and other events are at risk. People with chronic or pre-existing medical conditions, elderly and children are more at risk to develop health issues which could be exacerbated by poor air quality and extreme heat days. As experienced more recently with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is increasingly important to identify the vulnerable populations in the City and ensure that adaptation measures include resources to assist them during these events.

Staff is requesting that the City Council review and consider the information included with the agenda report and in the presentation and provide feedback and direction so that the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan can be completed, and the final review process started.