



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STATEMENT



April 20, 2021

File ID: 21-0031

TITLE

CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTING THE CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPDATING THE CHULA VISTA 2017 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA ACCEPTING THE CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION REDUCTION STRATEGIES AND DIRECTING STAFF TO UPDATE THE 2017 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ACCORDINGLY FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Council adopt the resolution.

SUMMARY

Since 2000, Chula Vista has been a nationally recognized leader in implementing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to address the local threat of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering Chula Vista's vulnerability to expected climate change impacts. To update the CAP with new carbon reduction strategies, City staff worked with the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG). The group - comprised of residents, business, non-profit and utility representatives - held 8 public meetings over the last two years to learn about the current 2017 CAP implementation and evaluate over 100 different potential additional strategies. They ultimately recommended 7 action areas to expand the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction efforts. Staff has listed initial actions that can be used to implement the CCWG recommendations, attachment 1, but they will need to be further refined by City staff to outline specific implementation steps, costs and timelines to be incorporated into an updated Climate Action Plan for future City Council review and consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed activity has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and it has been determined that the activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the state CEQA Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Although environmental review is not required at this time, once the scope of potential project(s) has been defined, environmental review will be required for each project and the appropriate environmental determination will be made. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it has also been determined that the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Thus, no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Climate Change Working Group presented their recommendations to the Sustainability Commission (SSC) on February 8th, 2021 for review and feedback. The SSC supported the recommendations and advised City Council to direct staff to update the 2017 Climate Action Plan accordingly for future consideration.

DISCUSSION

For almost 15 years, Chula Vista has been a nationally recognized leader in implementing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to address the threat of climate change to the local community. The 2017 CAP included 11 new carbon reduction mitigation objectives to reduce community wide GHG emissions. These are in addition to the 7 previous climate mitigation measures and 11 climate "adaptation" measures adopted in previous CAPs. In addition to addressing climate change, these climate action measures create numerous community co-benefits such as utility cost savings, better air quality, reduced traffic congestion, local economic development and improved quality of life.

A key component of the CAP update process was working with the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) to help evaluate and recommend new greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies. Through the update process, the City would (1) update GHG forecasts, (2) recalibrate its GHG reduction target in relation to the new forecasts, (3) quantify and select new greenhouse gas reduction strategies and (4) create an updated Climate Action Plan document which would include a climate equity and health focus. The equity focus is designed to build off past equity efforts at the City such as housing support programs, the adoption of the Digital Equity and Inclusion Plan and past Climate Action Plan measures. To take advantage of grant funds before they expired staff worked with stakeholders to develop the Chula Vista Climate Equity Index (CEI) that will be presented to City Council later in May. Pending Council approval, the CEI will be incorporated into the upcoming CAP update and other City planning efforts.

The CCWG, which was chaired by a member of the Sustainability Commission met 8 times over the last two years to develop recommendations. In addition to their publicly noticed meetings, the CCWG held two special public forums in September 2019 to solicit additional community feedback. Through this process, the CCWG evaluated over 100 different options for new policies and programs that the City could adopt to help reach its GHG emission reduction goal. As a result, the CCWG has made 7 recommendations in different action areas covering topics such as renewable and efficient energy, zero waste and clean transportation.

If supported by City Council, staff will further develop the recommended actions over the next 6 months. Specifically, staff will work to outline potential implementation steps, costs and timelines for each action as well as refine their associated greenhouse gas emission reduction estimates. This additional information will be incorporated into an updated Climate Action Plan for future City Council review and consideration.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the 500-foot rule found in California Code of Regulations Title 2, Section 18702.2(a)(11), is not applicable to this decision for purposes of determining a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

Staff costs and resources required to further develop the Climate Change Working Group's recommended actions and update the Climate Action Plan would be supported by existing departmental budgets.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

City staff will prepare and present an updated Climate Action Plan for City Council consideration in fall/winter of 2021. Any ongoing fiscal impact associated with implementing the plan will be provided in the report for City Council consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Climate Change Working Group's Recommendations

Staff: Cory Downs, Conservation Specialist