



CUPERTINO

# CITY OF CUPERTINO CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

## APPENDIX A – Community Outreach Responses



The City of Cupertino provided several public engagement opportunities in their efforts to develop a communitywide Climate Action Plan (CAP). Two public workshops were held at De Anza College, along with supporting online surveys developed to mimic the workshop activities for residents who were unable to attend. The City additionally held two focus group meetings: the first with the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce, and the second with representatives of the local real estate industry. This memorandum summarizes public comments received from each of these outreach activities.

## Workshop #1

City of Cupertino staff and the CAP consultant team facilitated the first public workshop at De Anza College on May 14, 2014. The workshop began with a presentation that provided an introduction to climate action planning efforts in the state, the City's role in the Santa Clara County regional CAP project, and the common components of a CAP. The presentation also briefly introduced the reduction measure categories that would be explored and discussed in greater detail during the open house portion of the workshop. A brief question and answer session was held following the presentation, after which attendees were invited to informally explore three workshop stations: Energy, Transportation, and Natural Resources. Each station included two presentation boards with CAP-related information to help focus the open discussions. One board presented an overview of existing City actions, policies, and programs that result in emissions reductions within the specific topic areas (e.g., Energy). The second board presented high-level opportunities within the topic areas where the City could expand its existing offerings or develop new programs. City staff and consultant team members were on hand at each station to facilitate dialogue and record participants' comments and ideas. Broad questions were asked to initiate conversations, including:

- ▶ How can the City better implement its existing actions/programs on Board #1?
- ▶ What do you think of the proposed strategies on Board #2?
- ▶ What ideas do you have for additional strategies?

The following notes summarize public comments collected during Workshop #1 and are organized according to the presentation board topics.

### GENERAL THEMES

- ▶ Provide financial incentives to encourage participation
- ▶ Design/develop all-inclusive programs (regardless of income, social conditions)
  - Environmental justice is important consideration in measure selection/development
- ▶ Draft reduction target is not aggressive enough – should be straight line between baseline year and 2050

## TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE THEMES

- ▶ Bike/Pedestrian
  - Improve bike safety – infrastructure enhancements, enforcement
  - Slow down traffic throughout city – improve safety for pedestrians/cyclists
  - Plant native shade trees to increase walking comfort
- ▶ Transit
  - Bring light rail to I-85 instead of bus
  - Bring back VTA busses through neighborhoods
  - Develop transit spur to Caltrans/BART
    - Community shuttle bus
- ▶ Vehicle-Miles-Traveled (VMT) Reduction
  - Require Transportation Demand Management programs for employers and enforce them – link to reduced VMT (e.g., per employee VMT targets)
  - Build parking structures in dense commercial areas to prevent circling to find parking

## ENERGY THEMES

- ▶ Retrofits
  - Develop outreach/education campaign to demonstrate how existing homes can be retrofitted to be net-zero/highly-efficient
    - Provide local project examples; arrange tours
  - Do not develop Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) – not enough turnover in residential market to make a difference
  - Do not include point-of-sale requirements
- ▶ New Construction
  - Develop pre-wiring requirement for electric vehicle (EV) charging units in garages – Palo Alto has ordinance, as example
  - Choose lowest level of development for General Plan Amendment alternative = fewer emissions
- ▶ Renewable Energy Development
  - Provide outreach/education on cost-comparison of solar to grid electricity/natural gas

- Make photovoltaics (PVs) more affordable – property assessed clean energy (PACE), power purchase agreements (PPAs), better information on existing financing options
- Install more PVs on City buildings/land
- Require PVs on new carports

## **NATURAL RESOURCES THEMES**

### ▶ Water Conservation

- Increase water-use regulations / strict enforcement of xeriscaping requirements
- Clearly demonstrate existing City water-conserving activities (e.g., where can xeriscaping examples be seen?)
- Increase conversion/removal of turf lawns – to native vegetation, vegetable gardens, etc.

### ▶ Native Species

- Develop support services to help residents plant native species in their gardens
  - Seed-sharing workshops (native species)
- Increase native street tree planting
  - Promote community tree-planting drive
  - Incentivize tree-planting in residential parking strips
- Support services to help residents plant native species in their gardens

### ▶ Education / Outreach

- Increase public education on sustainability issues and what City is already doing

### ▶ Waste Reduction

- Develop plastic bottle ban

### ▶ Overarching Comments

- Implement large-scale demonstration project from conception to installation
- Provide additional community outreach on climate change/sustainability issues - community member offered to give presentation on climate change basics to fill information/knowledge gap of some residents
- Highlight City's past actions/success more visibly within community

## Workshop #2

City of Cupertino staff and the CAP consultant team facilitated the second public workshop at De Anza College on June 4, 2014. This workshop began with a brief introduction to the CAP project, a summary of comments provided at the previous workshop, and an introduction to the specific measures to be discussed during the breakout exercise portion of the workshop. Following the presentation, participants were separated into five facilitated discussion groups. Each group discussed the same topics, and included 6-8 participants with one facilitator and one note taker from the City staff or consultant team. The groups reviewed a poster that presented a list of the existing City actions to be continued and/or expanded, as well as potential new actions organized into High Impact and Low Impact categories. The facilitators presented the existing actions as a reminder from the first workshop, and then focused the discussion on the potential new actions to solicit community input on these items. The facilitator's each asked similar questions at their breakout tables to focus the dialogue:

- ▶ Do you support these measures, programs and policies? Why or why not? Pros/cons?
- ▶ What are the barriers and opportunities for local implementation?
- ▶ What kind of timeline is reasonable (short – medium – long)?
- ▶ Who should lead this effort?
- ▶ What can you do (in your role as business person, resident, etc.) to support it?

Following the breakout table exercise, workshop participants reconvened as a large group to share conclusions from their small group discussions. One community representative from each table presented their primary conclusions to the whole group. The following notes summarize public comments collected during Workshop #2 and are organized according to the presentation board topics.

### **BUILDING REGULATIONS STRATEGIES**

- ▶ If these are pursued, should be through regional effort so that Cupertino is not disadvantaging itself from an economic development perspective
- ▶ Need strong public outreach programs as related to building regulation strategies to link building and home owners with available rebate programs and financing options
- ▶ Mandatory energy audits slow down home sales process
- ▶ Point-of-sale regulations are ineffective in Cupertino because there is very low turnover rate in residential building stock
- ▶ Building energy rating disclosure does not compel action (e.g., energy efficiency retrofits)
- ▶ Need to incentive commercial retrofits; stream-lined permitting process could be good option

## **CLEAN ELECTRICITY OPTIONS**

- ▶ Explore partnership with Sunnyvale’s community choice aggregation (CCA) plan

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- ▶ Promote greater bicycle use through:
  - Regional bike maps, beyond Cupertino
  - Safer street design
  - Bike-share program
- ▶ Community shuttle option, with Maguerite example from Stanford/Palo Alto
- ▶ Bring amenities closer to residential areas

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION/OUTREACH**

- ▶ Additional outreach is necessary to encourage participation in many of programs considered
  - Use De Anza College as resource for information dissemination; involve local schools as well
  - Use community block leaders to spread information
- ▶ Need more/better access to information on PG&E rebates
- ▶ Connect residents/businesses with free energy audit/evaluation programs to start energy efficiency improvement process
- ▶ How do you convince people to pay more for energy they use? Re: CCA or Green Option programs

## **Workshop “Lessons Learned”**

Following the two workshops, the CAP consultant team prepared a brief summary of lessons learned as it relates to public engagement around the CAP. City staff and the consultant team also held conferences between the two workshops to incorporate relevant lessons from the first workshop into design of the second. The following notes summarize the lessons learned from both workshops.

## **PROMOTION**

- ▶ Overall turnout was good, particularly considering aggressive time frame for planning and promoting these events and comparable turnout for General Plan Update workshops
  - Success may be linked to overall community engagement through General Plan Amendment (GPA) process since many CAP participants also attended GPA workshops

- ▶ Participants specifically learned of workshops through Mercury News coverage / press release and postcard mailing
- ▶ Turnout from De Anza College students was not high considering that workshops occurred on their campus
  - One professor gave bonus points for students who attended; would be good to reach out to other professors and suggest similar approach – environmental classes, political science, sociology, etc.

## PRESENTATIONS

- ▶ Content and delivery were very good; helpful to have City representative and technical consultant share presentation and be available to answer specific questions
  - Presentation slides could have included less technical information for first workshop
  - Less policy and regulatory information would have been appropriate for general public audience

## LOGISTICS

- ▶ More lead time for preparation and materials production would have been desirable, though tight project schedule dictated timing of workshops
  - One full day to review draft posters/presentations, and another full day to incorporate revisions would be ideal for future workshops
- ▶ Additional City staff attendees were exceptionally organized, supportive, and engaging with attendees
  - Formal team coordination and preparation call (or in-person meeting immediately prior to workshop) with supporting City staff would have helped ensure everyone felt prepared and understood workshop's desired outcome
    - This type of preparation meeting was held immediately prior to second workshop, but was interrupted by early workshop participant arrivals; should be held not less than one-hour before advertised workshop start time
- ▶ More directional signs would have helped public attendees find meetings, particularly if workshop is held off-site of City Hall campus at locations that are less known to general public
- ▶ Schedule conflict with Chamber of Commerce was unfortunate for Workshop #1, but unavoidable due to tight project deadline
  - Special focus group meeting with Chamber to recap Workshop #1 was appreciated by Chamber members, and good use of project team time (though meeting time was limited and began late; more time would have been useful)

## Focus Group #1 – Chamber of Commerce

City of Cupertino staff and the CAP consultant team met with members of the City of Cupertino Chamber of Commerce on May 22nd, 2014 to present information to Chamber members who were unable to attend the first community workshop on May 14th due to a conflict.

Staff presented an overview of the CAP, including the regulatory framework, draft emissions reduction targets, and current city and regional efforts to address climate change. Chamber members had the chance to review proposed efforts in the energy, land use / transportation, and natural resources sectors, and provide feedback and suggestions to project staff. Eleven Chamber members, including several Board members, were present.

A brief summary of written and verbal comments received at this meeting follows. Chamber members were invited to the second community workshop scheduled for June 4th (see Workshop #2 notes above), and encouraged to review materials online and share these opportunities to comment with their colleagues.

### ENERGY

- ▶ What is trigger for building retrofits? Realtors are typically opposed to mandates associated with point of sale
- ▶ An alternative that real estate industry supports is to communicate with homebuyers about opportunities for efficiency improvements
  - City of Los Altos has alternative approach that Cupertino could review
- ▶ Education and outreach about home efficiency upgrades are broadly supported
- ▶ Cost and timing associated with commercial lighting retrofits are concern, particularly for small businesses
  - Typically need to pay extra fee/higher rates for work performed outside of contractors' normal business hours to avoid disruption of local business (e.g., restaurant serving hours, store hours)
- ▶ Providing lists of preferred vendors or other tools to business owners is beneficial
- ▶ There is often significant lag time between adoption of state building codes and local customization; it is not easy to modify local building code
- ▶ City of Los Altos Hills offers streamlined permitting for energy-efficient construction, which is supported by development community

### TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

- ▶ Consider requiring or providing incentives for 2-3 electric vehicle (EV) parking and charging spots in new multi-family residential buildings

- ▶ Improving safety and awareness of walking and bicycling around schools will help relieve these congestion areas
- ▶ Impact of corporate buses on Cupertino's emissions is mostly positive; there may be additional opportunities associated with alternative fuel or electric vehicles for these corporate shuttles
- ▶ Tesla is considering electric charging stations on Peninsula, but it is unknown what sites are being considered

## NATURAL RESOURCES

- ▶ There is concern that development allocations that may be allowed under General Plan Amendment may push sewage treatment plant over capacity and trigger development moratorium

## OTHER COMMENTS

- ▶ It would be advisable to build in study session with City Council prior to CAP adoption to allow adequate review and revision time
- ▶ Realtors are opposed to point-of-sale regulations, but amenable to working with City on proactive programs
- ▶ More specificity in CAP presentation would be appreciated, particularly with regard to impacts on residents and businesses

## Focus Group #2 – Real Estate Groups

A second focus group meeting was held on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in response to a request for additional discussion from a participant at the second workshop. City of Cupertino staff hosted representatives of the real estate industry at City offices, while the CAP consultant team attended via conference call. The discussion focused on the proposed CAP actions from the second workshop that included new mandatory regulations for the building industry. A summary of comments from that meeting follow.

- ▶ Point-of-sale (POS) regulations would slow down real estate transaction process in Cupertino, which can sometimes close in as few as two days
- ▶ Similar POS home energy rating requirements in Austin were deemed unsuccessful by area Realtors due to lack of enforcement, format that was not user friendly, and getting lost in paper shuffle
- ▶ Residential turnover in Cupertino is very low (3% of housing stock per year), which means uptake of mandatory regulations would be enacted slowly as well
  - Voluntary, outreach- or incentive-based alternatives could drive greater success in Cupertino than mandatory programs would achieve

- ▶ POS energy and water efficiency upgrades, either through RECO/CECO or other mechanisms, can be problematic if seller installs low-quality fixes and new buyer replaces those same items upon closing
  - Anecdotal data from the Berkeley RECO/CECO program indicates this may be happening there
- ▶ Buyers already do appliance, lighting, and landscaping upgrades within three months of home purchase, particularly on homes built prior to the 1990s
- ▶ Incentives are better than mandates

## Online Survey #1

Online surveys were developed to mirror the workshop activities as best as possible for residents who were unable to attend one or both in person. The first survey was posted May 14, 2014, and asked participants to read through existing and proposed community actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide their comments and feedback. PDFs of the boards presented at Workshop #1 were included as well.

Eleven participants completed this survey. Their comments are summarized below and organized by topic area.

### **NEW COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND USE MORE RENEWABLE ENERGY:**

- ▶ Respondents wanted actions that are supported by science, data, and analysis of financing and savings for renewable energy, lighting retrofits, and new construction energy efficiency installments; they also wanted easy-to-follow instructions/policies
- ▶ Several people expressed concern about how much proposed policies and programs would cost home owners, car owners, and business owners

### **OPPORTUNITIES IN ENERGY CONSERVATION AND CLEAN ENERGY USE:**

- ▶ Provide free and frequent mid-day shuttle service for seniors, students, and workers to transport people on route that goes to neighborhoods, transit stations, and health services
- ▶ Create tour of energy-efficient buildings that have been retrofitted in Cupertino
- ▶ Encourage all new construction to incorporate solar energy at earliest phase of design

### **NEW COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO REDUCE NATURAL RESOURCE CONSUMPTION AND ENHANCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:**

- ▶ Respondents showed some enthusiasm for organic waste diversion but want it to be easy, and are curious about its cost/benefit

- ▶ One responded suggested developing curriculum to teach students about composting, recycling, etc.
- ▶ People wanted examples of local buildings with water conservation technology , and they want discounts and assistance with gray water installation in homes
- ▶ Respondents' comments on urban forestry included:
  - Drought with trees too close to structures can create major problems in high fire danger situations
  - List local examples and service providers for forestry/tree services
  - Work with Master Gardeners and other experts on public education campaigns
- ▶ Respondents' comments on water conservation included:
  - Share water conservation tips with public
  - Provide incentives for facility staff to implement water conservation

### **NEW COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ENCOURAGE MORE WALKING, BICYCLING, PUBLIC TRANSIT, AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE USE:**

- ▶ Respondents generally resisted alternative fuel vehicle programs; there were various concerns, including coal-fired electricity used to power cars, vehicle cost, and notion that it is misplaced priority and that City should focus on reducing use of all cars; resistance and similar concerns carried through to survey questions about state regulations to encourage cleaner vehicle fuels
- ▶ Respondents had mixed responses to programs and partnerships to help employers reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips; one person suggested there should be rewards for employees
- ▶ Transit and Bike/Pedestrian strategies:
  - City should have separated/protected lanes (not on-street bike lanes)
  - Need to get families involved in walking and biking efforts
  - Bike lane on Stevens Creek Blvd.
  - Senior transportation options to reduce senior isolation; sponsor STAR Program

### **OTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, AND IDEAS:**

- ▶ Some respondents were skeptical of government action and preferred market-based actions
- ▶ Create interactive program that can be used to get information on individual buildings and model efficiencies as well as offer information on local sustainable building resources and companies that supply them
- ▶ Need to make smarter use of City-owned facilities so residents can minimize driving (Comment referenced the need for exercise classes at Monta Vista Recreation Center)

- ▶ Need for more healthy and affordable restaurants that are walkable/bikable
- ▶ Additional ideas related to residential energy efficiency programs:
  - Every time commercial unit gets new tenant, they should be given checklist of energy efficiency items to review (e.g., weather stripping)
  - Provide demonstration products for retrofits
  - New residential home requirement for turn-key solar panel installation
  - Community solar program could work with cutting-edge marketing

## Survey #2: Posted June 5, 2014

The second online survey was posted on June 5, 2014, following the second workshop. The survey provided information about the City's current efforts and potential new measures to reduce greenhouse gases. The survey asked for respondents' comments and feedback as related to information shown in the PDF of the second workshop's poster. One person completed this survey.

- ▶ Respondent was supportive of need for plans and policy actions to reduce greenhouse gases; they felt that City should lead effort and that actions should be voluntary and made as affordable as possible; they did not support point-of-sale energy rating requirements because it places burden on sellers

## Planning Commission Study Session

- ▶ Alternative 3 (Mandatory Building Regulations) is not supported, unless pursued through a regional implementation partnership
- ▶ Traffic congestion, pedestrian, and bicycling should all be considered since transportation emissions account for nearly half of the total inventory
- ▶ Voluntary, outreach-based programs are preferred, but City should consider their bang-for-buck in terms of staff resource time on measure implementation
- ▶ Some additional information regarding the CCA start-up costs, program development timeline, and likely efficacy would be needed before Planning Commission would be comfortable recommending this option for inclusion
- ▶ City should participate in PG&E Green Option program to purchase clean municipal electricity

## City Council Study Session

- ▶ A representative from the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce, Silicon Valley Association of Realtors, and the Commercial Real Estate Development Organization/Building Industry Association (BIA) expressed support for the first two alternatives, of three, presented by staff.

- ▶ A representative from the Silicon Valley Association of Realtors offered support to reach out to homeowners and homebuyers to help educate them in energy conservation.
- ▶ A community member noted that there should be a voluntary program that includes incentives for new homeowners to help upgrade more energy efficiently.
- ▶ Members of the Council asked for additional information on the Marin and Sonoma Community Choice Aggregation Programs and the Berkeley Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) and Commercial Energy Conservation Ordinance (CECO), if the mandatory alternative advanced.
- ▶ Council members recommended staff advance analysis and environmental review of the measures included in Alternative 1 (Community Choice Aggregation) and Alternative 2 (Enhanced Voluntary Outreach).

## Additional Public Comments Received

- ▶ Do not over-specify green requirements
  - White roofs/cool roofs are cheaper to install than green roofs and out-perform green roofs in reducing emissions because they are more efficient to produce, install, and maintain
  - CALGreen code already specifies green requirements, there is no need to expand upon this
- ▶ AB 32 will increase state's electricity costs; CAP does not need to encourage energy conservation because the state will already achieve that end through higher energy prices
- ▶ Grants that could be used to establish a CCE program are not free, they come from tax payers dollars
- ▶ Report does not mention that renewable energy is being subsidized by state and federal governments, making the actual cost to generate clean electricity much higher than reported
- ▶ Commenter is opposed to the following types of measures:
  - Building Retrofit and Public Realm Lighting Regulations – opposed to additional building regulations, there is already a building code, local LEED requirements, and state regulations addressing these issues
  - Community-wide Solar Photovoltaic Development Programs
  - Community Choice Energy Option – does not consider actual cost to generate clean electricity, need further financial analysis first
  - Parking Cash-Out Programs – attempt to penalize commuters, and can lead to long-term parking shortages
  - Transit Priority Strategies – intersection queue jumpers could lead to increased congestion and higher emissions levels
- ▶ Government regulations result in loss of American jobs, including health and safety standards

- ▶ State's solar power mandates increase price of electricity
- ▶ State's clean fuel mandates reduce vehicle efficiency and pollute water
- ▶ CAP can represent an un-necessary and unwarranted administrative cost burden unless thoroughly studied
- ▶ Do not make building retrofits mandatory at point-of-sale
  - Unless it is a major renovation over \$120,000
- ▶ Encourage major employers to shift starting work times or stagger work days to reduce freeway and street congestion
- ▶ Public transit needs to review their operating conditions
  - Promote use of mass transit, but do not operate buses with only 1-2 passengers
- ▶ Include discussion and promotion of nuclear fuel use
  - High potential for large-scale nuclear use in US if political barriers can be overcome
  - Safer than mining industries (e.g., coal, petroleum)
  - Standard power plant designs would reduce cost and environmental litigation fees
  - Hydrogen produced at nuclear plants could be used in vehicles to reduce dependence on oil and produce clean electricity; greatly reducing emissions and pollution
  - Nuclear is more economical than wind and solar, and power plants constantly generate electricity (even at night)

## Environmental Review Committee Meeting Comments

- ▶ How many EV charging stations will be installed and where?
  - Did you consider installing EV charging stations at Quinlan Center and the Senior Center?
- ▶ How will you implement building retrofit measure? A work program to direct implementation of that measure and other high-impact reduction measures should be prepared; the measures with lower reduction potential should not be prioritized at this time
  - Would like to see a concrete proposal for how the high-impact items will be implemented
  - CAP implementation priority should focus on the energy and transportation measures with highest reduction potential
- ▶ Concern about leakage that can occur during natural gas transmission, based on CAP's reference to CNG refueling station studies; commenter recommends not using CNG as a bridge technology at all

- Issue could be worth an inquiry to PG&E regarding the quality of Cupertino's gas lines.
  - There are no transmission pipelines going through Cupertino, but City could still request any reports PG&E has prepared regarding the area's CNG distribution infrastructure