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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Update on Sustainability Program and Provide Feedback on 2022 Program Focus Areas

COUNCIL PILLAR

Promote Sustainability and Environmental Protection

BACKGROUND

The need for sustainability and climate action was identified several decades ago. However, more recently the consequences of climate change have become increasingly severe with an observable impact on all sectors of our society. Additionally, local, regional, national and international momentum demonstrates a more widely accepted recognition that making bold commitments to sustainability and taking action that creates climate solutions is not only needed to support a livable planet but is also critical for the success of our society and our economy.

Regulations and policy targets around climate action, sustainability, and energy innovation include:

- 2006 Assembly Bill (AB) 32 - California Global Warming Solutions Act aimed at reducing Statewide GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.
- California Executive Order (EO) B-30-15 targeted reductions in GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.
- 2016 SB 32 expanded on AB 32 by requiring further reduction of GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050.
- 2016 Senate Bill (SB) 1383 - Short Lived Climate Pollutants Strategy targeted organic Waste methane emission reductions establishing targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025.
- 2018 California EO B-55-18 called for carbon neutrality by 2045.
- 2018 SB 100 - accelerated the State's current Renewables Portfolio Standard program to 50%

by 2025, 60% by 2030, and 100% by 2045.

2018 AB 1668 and SB 606 established guidelines for efficient water use and a framework for the implementation and oversight of the new standards.

More recently, the push to reduce carbon through more aggressive measures and support environmental equity has been proposed at the State and Federal levels with policy such as:

- 2020 State EO N-79-20 requiring that *all new cars and passenger trucks sold in California be zero-emission vehicles by 2035.*
- 2021 President Biden Sets 2030 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Target Aimed at Creating Good-Paying Union Jobs and Securing U.S. Leadership on Clean Energy Technologies.

While there is a steep climb ahead to meet sustainability and climate related regulations and targets, this challenge presents an opportunity to creatively integrate sustainability into City planning and operations and to implement measures today that protect our community's long-term health and social and economic vitality.

In February of 2019, the City of Santa Clara adopted sustainability as one of the City Council's seven strategic pillars. In 2020 the City established a new sustainability program to create more coordinated and impactful strategies and actions for addressing sustainability and climate issues. The City's sustainability program takes an integrative and multi-solving approach to achieve the ambitious goals set forth by State regulations and is committed to developing and implementing sustainability initiatives and incorporating equitable community involvement along the way.

Sustainability is of particular importance as the City addresses the overlapping challenges related to climate change, energy, transportation, waste management, water conservation, sustainable development, and overall sustainability in operations. The growing climate and sustainability regulatory mandates offer the City an opportunity to build upon past and current sustainability efforts while looking towards new and innovative approaches to create a Sustainable Santa Clara that actively contributes towards a resilient future.

DISCUSSION

Over the past year and a half, the sustainability program focused on initiatives across three sustainability areas established by the City Council in summer of 2020 - integration, innovation and collaboration and connection. Efforts included foundational work such as assessing existing sustainability efforts, building internal and community collaboration networks, and implementing targeted sustainability related programs and projects. Some of the sustainability program accomplishments over the past year include the following:

- Conducted an update to the City Climate Action Plan (CAP) with associated public engagement and outreach
- Adopted all-electric building electrification and EV (Electric Vehicle) charging reach codes with associated public engagement and outreach
- Expanded implementation of the Community Electric Vehicle Blueprint with 96 public EV charge connectors
- Initiated implementation of the City Fleet Electrification plan with over 20 EV's on fleet and installation of EV charging

- Initiated microgrid and battery storage projects
- Ranked second in the Nation for Green Power Excellence through SVP's Green Power Program
- Launched an organics waste collection program
- Delivered Water & Sewer projects with recycled water offsetting 19% of potable water
- Implemented sustainable parks projects including Smart irrigation, water conservation, tree plantings, EV charging and solar installations
- Completed facility greening projects such as the Northside Library 62 MWh solar project and the LEED Silver Certification of the Mission Branch Library
- Installed 2.5 miles of bicycle lane improvement projects with 5.9 miles on the way
- Conducted Complete Streets public outreach efforts
- Provided energy efficiency rebate savings to SVP customers equivalent to over 2,000 homes' annual usage. Rebates included e-bicycles, heat pump water heaters, EV's, EV chargers and more.
- Provided utility customer outreach on energy efficiency, rebates, EV's and more to residents and businesses including workshops and various direct customer support programs
- Conducted outreach on water conservation and drought messaging
- Promoted water conserving measures and customer rebates such as the lawn replacement and rain barrel programs
- Established an internal Sustainability Green Team
- Launched Sustainable Santa Clara engagement efforts using new and existing community outreach platforms to expand our connection with the community
- Engaged with the Santa Clara youth voice on sustainability related topics
- Reached over 2,000 residents through virtual Earth Month activities
- Established local and regional partnerships focused on climate and sustainability topics such as urban forests, transportation and building electrification, climate action planning, pollution prevention and environmental equity and green jobs

In the year ahead, the City will continue to expand and implement new and existing sustainability related initiatives, plans and policies while continuing to grow a collaborative, community-wide network to advance sustainability and climate action efforts. The proposed areas of focus and expansion for the sustainability program for the year to come include efforts to:

- Align implementation of sustainability related plans through cross-departmental collaboration
- Explore and expand sustainable energy solutions
- Explore and expand sustainable transportation, transportation electrification and clean mobility options and initiatives
- Identify and implement water conservation, nature-based climate solutions, and other natural resource conservation strategies
- Incorporate sustainability into City parks, facilities, and fleet maintenance, management and development
- Update green purchasing policy and practices as opportunities and regulations arise
- Expand sustainability related community education & outreach programs and provide community engagement opportunities
- Utilize new and existing partnerships to increase reach/impact across targeted sustainability areas

- Update Sustainability related Legislative Advocacy Positions

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to approving this sustainability report.

COORDINATION

In addition to following council direction on the proposed priorities, the Sustainability Program continues to be developed and implemented in collaboration with several City departments including, but not limited to, City Manager’s Office, Community Development, Silicon Valley Power, Water and Sewer, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Library, and Finance.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov [<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) [<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Note and file the Update on Sustainability Program and Provide Feedback on 2022 Program Focus Areas.

Reviewed by: Michelle Templeton, Assistant to the City Manager

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