



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

Agenda Number: 2

Section Name: PUBLIC HEARING

File ID: 20-2363

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Kathy Kleinbaum
PREPARED BY: City Manager's Department
MEETING DATE: February 11, 2020

SUBJECT:
Draft 2020 Climate Action Plan General Plan Amendments and Addendum No. 2 to the General Plan EIR

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution recommending City Council adoption of the General Plan Amendments and EIR Addendum as adequate in satisfying the requirements pursuant to CEQA regulations, for the Draft 2020 Climate Action Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The City of San Mateo adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in April 2015 which provides a comprehensive strategy to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in San Mateo. The 2015 CAP identified GHG reduction measures and implementation strategies for the City to achieve the State-recommended GHG emissions reduction target of 15% below 2005 levels (or a return to 1990 levels) by 2020 as established in Assembly Bill 32.

Since the adoption of the 2015 CAP, a number of recommended strategies in the plan have been implemented, including the highest impact strategy, joining Peninsula Clean Energy, a Community Choice Energy program. Additionally, the State adopted Senate Bill 32, which established a revised statewide GHG emission reduction target 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. Staff began work to update the 2015 CAP in order to quantify the City's progress towards GHG reduction targets, update the GHG targets to stay consistent with State regulations, and integrate with the General Plan update.

In August 2018, the City advertised a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an update to the Climate Action Plan and selected PlaceWorks. PlaceWorks was already under contract with the City to complete the General Plan update, which helps staff coordinate seamlessly with the General Plan update. The project kicked off in October 2018. The Sustainability and Infrastructure Commission (SIC) has served as the key advisory body throughout the CAP update process. With continuous feedback from the SIC, the project team prepared the updated Draft 2020 CAP (Attachment 1), which identifies new GHG reduction targets, revised GHG reduction strategies, and demonstrates the City's continuing leadership in sustainability.

The SIC is responsible for the review and approval of the 2020 Climate Action Plan document, while the Planning Commission is responsible for review and approval of the General Plan Amendments and the EIR Addendum. The Draft 2020 CAP was presented to the SIC at the December 11, 2019 meeting, and the Commission recommended that the Draft 2020 CAP be brought forward to the City Council for review. At the January 6, 2020 City Council Study Session, the City Council reviewed the Draft 2020 CAP and provided direction for the overall document and approach. City Council then directed staff to bring the related General Plan Amendments and Addendum to the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to the Planning Commission for review. Following Planning Commission's recommendation, the 2020 CAP would be brought forward for adoption by the City Council in March 2020.

Draft 2020 CAP – Key Updates

The project team updated the 2020 CAP with the most recent climate change science and developed a 2017 GHG inventory to measure the City's progress in meeting the 2015 CAP goals. The GHG inventory showed that the City has already reduced GHG emissions 18% below the 2005 baseline and is therefore on track to reach and exceed the 2020 goal of 15% below the 2005 baseline. The community's emissions are roughly 5.2 MTCO₂e per-capita.

The 2020 CAP updates the GHG reduction targets in accordance with the State recommendations in the Climate Change Scoping Plan and establishes emission reduction targets as follows:

- 2030: Reduce emissions to 4.3 MTCO₂e per-capita
- 2050: Reduce emissions to 1.2 MTCO₂e per-capita

Much of the focus of the 2020 CAP Update was on updating and quantifying the GHG reduction strategies. The GHG strategies follow the general categories and framework established in the 2015 CAP with some reorganization and revised category names. The project team also reviewed emerging issues and best practices to capture a comprehensive and innovative suite of GHG reduction measures. Some of the new measures included in the CAP are strategies addressing building electrification, battery storage, and waste source reduction. Building electrification refers to replacing some or all of a building's natural gas-powered appliances or machinery to models that run on electricity. Since electricity releases much fewer GHGs, there is a significant GHG reduction benefit. Battery storage technology has advanced since the development of the 2015 CAP. There are more cases of battery storage use at the residential scale and potential resilience benefits when deploying battery storage paired with solar. Waste source reduction opportunities, such as the reduction of single-use plastics, have recently gained more attention. While it is important to sort waste properly and use recyclable or compostable material whenever possible, it is also helpful for community members to minimize the amount of materials they throw away at all.

The GHG reduction targets and updated GHG reduction strategies were vetted by the SIC, the general public, City staff, and by the City Council at the January 6, 2020 study session. Both the SIC and the City Council were unanimous in their support for the GHG targets and strategies included in the updated 2020 CAP.

Draft General Plan Amendments

The General Plan incorporates the City's 2015 CAP and specific elements were amended during the 2015 CAP adoption, including the Circulation, Housing, Land Use and Urban Design Elements. The proposed General Plan Amendments will update the text references in the Land Use Element (Attachment 2, Exhibit (A)(i)), Circulation Element (Attachment 2, Exhibit (A)(ii)), and Housing Element (Attachment 2, Exhibit (A)(iii)) to refer to the 2020 CAP and reflect up to date information. The Urban Design Element did not need to be updated.

Draft Addendum No. 2 to the General Plan Final EIR

In 2015, the San Mateo General Plan EIR was amended to include the 2015 CAP. Similar to the 2015 CAP, the 2020 CAP carries forward existing GHG reduction measures with some revisions, and provides new strategies to help address new best practices and advances in technology. These proposed changes trigger the need for additional environmental analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The draft Addendum No. 2 to the General Plan EIR (Attachment (2), Exhibit B) addresses the potential for changes to the anticipated environmental impacts analyzed in the adopted Final EIR.

Like the 2015 CAP, the Draft 2020 CAP will reduce GHG emissions for the City of San Mateo through a mix of mandatory and voluntary measures. These measures require, encourage, or incentivize actions that would result in the reduction of GHG emissions in the city, but they do not require or result in actions that would result in physical effects that were not previously considered in the Certified EIR.

Next Steps

Following the Planning Commission's review and approval of the General Plan Amendment and Addendum No. 2 to the General Plan EIR, the project team will return to City Council for the adoption of the 2020 CAP and related General Plan Amendment and Addendum to the General Plan EIR in March 2020.

BUDGET IMPACT:

Sufficient funding for the update of the CAP was budgeted in the Construction Services Fund as part of the 2018-2020 Business Plan. Implementation of specific measures under the CAP will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis and may require additional funding to implement.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The Addendum No. 2 to the General Plan EIR was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 to determine whether implementation of the 2020 CAP would result in any new impacts or increase the severity of significant environmental impacts than previously analyzed in the Certified EIR. Based on the information provided in the Addendum, implementation of the proposed 2020 CAP would not result in any new impacts or increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts analyzed in the Certified EIR. The proposed modifications to the Approved Project would not result in a substantial change to the project, so additional environmental review is not necessary.

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

Att 1 – Draft 2020 Climate Action Plan

Att 2 – Proposed Resolution

Exhibit A – Amendments to the City of San Mateo General Plan

- i. Land Use Element
- ii. Circulation Element
- iii. Housing Element

Exhibit B – General Plan Environmental Impact Report Addendum No. 2

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