



SIERRA CLUB
LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER



**SILICON VALLEY
YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION**

**MOTHERS
OUT
FRONT** ■ ■

November 8, 2021

San José City Council
200 E. Santa Clara St
San José, CA 95113

Via email to: mayoremail@sanJoseca.gov

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RE: Support the Carbon Neutral San José by 2030 Resolution

Dear Mayor Liccardo and San Jose City Council,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley and Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action strongly support the November 8th Resolution establishing a carbon neutral by 2030 goal. This 2030 target is necessary to ensure that we rapidly reduce emissions to protect future generations from the ravages of climate change.

Since this resolution accelerates the Climate Smart San José Plan, which will be updated in FY 2022-2023, we would like to start the conversation now about what the future of climate action could look like in the City. Please consider our following suggestions:

Ensure Ecological Resilience

We hope that San José enhances ecological resilience within the Natural and Working Lands section of the Climate Smart plan. San José should protect and restore its natural ecosystems while also expanding the urban forest. This is necessary to remediate the dearth of tree canopy

in some regions of the city, which exacerbates the urban heat island effect. San José should also incorporate and strengthen its Bird-Safe and Dark Sky standards, as these will protect nature and reduce energy use from inefficient windows and lighting. In addition to the core values of social justice and equity, we hope that the updated Climate Smart Plan evaluates its climate measures with regards to their benefits or impacts on biodiversity. Environmental justice requires the protection of both humans and wildlife.

In addition to the Climate Smart Update process, we hope that San José protects its natural ecosystems for their own sake and for the co-benefits to San José residents that are mentioned in the resolution. We hope that San José protects Coyote Valley in its ongoing General Plan Update. The area of North Coyote Valley should have its land use designations changed to meet this goal. The Industrial Park Designation areas that have been purchased by the City, POST and OSA should be changed to Open Space, Parklands and Habitat with the remaining areas changed to Agriculture, as recommended in the October 22 Staff memo to the Envision San José 2040 4-Year Review Task Force (see attachment "10.22.2020 SJ Memo").

Accelerate Timeline to Address Gas Fuel Cells

We urge Council to accelerate the timeline of the City's analysis on the emissions impacts from distributed energy resources such as gas fuel cells, particularly since the City is now accelerating its own GHG targets. Bringing this analysis back to the Council no later than March 30th, 2022, which will give the City time to take action to address this high GHG-emitting infrastructure.

Clarify that there will be no Carbon Offsets

We appreciate that carbon offsets are not mentioned as a pathway to reaching carbon neutrality, and that San José is looking at real-world emissions reductions from fuel use from "1) buildings, transport and industry, 2) Use of grid-supplied energy, and 3) treatment of waste generated within the city boundary". We hope the city clarifies this stance by explicitly stating that purchasing carbon offsets will not be a part of the carbon neutrality by 2030 solution. This could be accomplished through Council direction to staff.

Strengthen EV Pre-wiring

We hope that San José will commit to strengthening its EV charging requirements for new construction of multi-family buildings. Specifically, we recommend that the City strengthen its reach code to require that every new apartment or condo unit with parking have access to EV-ready charging. This is essential to accelerating an equitable transition to electrified transportation for all of San José's residents, not just those in single-family homes.

Continue to Explore Emissions Reductions From Buildings

We fully support the City's efforts to explore policy solutions that would decarbonize San José's building sector. We are optimistic about the Building Electrification Plan currently underway, and

when the Plan returns to the Council, we hope San José takes the opportunity to become a leader on the equitable electrification of existing buildings.

Staffing Resources

We expect that the City of San José will allocate sufficient personnel resources towards ecosystem protection and climate action.

Proceed by Centering Equity and Community Outreach

We are glad to see that Equity is a central point in the resolution, and we support the City in this framework. We hope the City continues to ramp up its public outreach efforts to ensure that all of San José's communities are educated about and involved in shaping the Climate Smart update.

We hope the City Council swiftly adopts the carbon neutrality by 2030 resolution and proceeds with an aggressive, equitable and ecologically beneficial framework for its 2022-2023 Climate Smart update.

Sincerely,



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