



Environment and Climate Commission

## INFORMATION CALENDAR

September 13, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Environment and Climate Commission (ECC)  
Submitted by: Ben Gould, Chairperson, ECC  
Subject: Environment and Climate Commission 2022 Work Plan

### INTRODUCTION

The Environment and Climate Commission (ECC) is responsible for advising the City Council on matters related to environmental sustainability and climate change. The commission's scope includes work to advance the goals of: advancing green buildings and resource efficiency; decarbonizing buildings and transportation; engaging and educating the community; addressing the impacts and welfare of all species, including animals, insects, and plants; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; reducing toxics and preventing pollution; and supporting environmental justice. The commission works closely with the Planning & Development Department's Office of Energy & Sustainable Development (OESD).

First established in 2022, ECC was formed by merging the Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) and the Energy Commission (EC). ECC commissioners bring a wide range of expertise, with backgrounds in government, academia, nonprofit, and private sector environmental work. These backgrounds inform ECC's work and help it to consider diverse and equitable approaches to addressing the City's environmental challenges.

This work plan is intended to provide a guide to the work ECC plans to take on in 2022. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, ECC will adjust this plan accordingly.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Environment and Climate Commission has a very broad scope and a duty to continue and build upon past work done by both CEAC and EC. However, as a new commission, ECC also has numerous vacancies and limited institutional knowledge.

At its July 27, 2022 meeting the Environment and Climate Commission approved the work plan to send to the City Council as follows: Motion/second to approve the workplan with amendments to add current project for 2022 to explore banning gas delivery vehicles and amend climate literacy description (Gould, Ranney). The motion carried 3-

0-1-2; Ayes: Ranney, McGuire, Gould. Noes: None. Abstain: Guliasi. Absent: Tahara, Lunaparra.

### BACKGROUND

Both CEAC and EC prepared memos for ECC to review past projects and suggest future items. The table below indicates those workplan items to follow up on and suggestions for new projects from the previous commissions:

### **Environment and Climate Commission 2022 Work Plan**

| <b>Project</b>                       | <b>Status</b>                  | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Source</b> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Bird Safety                          | Existing item, needs follow-up | Proposal to require new development to meet bird safety standards for glass. Track progress of item through Planning Commission and back to Council  | CEAC          |
| Gas Station CO <sub>2</sub> Labeling | Existing item, needs follow-up | Requirement for gas stations to display warning labels notifying buyers that burning gasoline causes climate change. Pending finalization at City Attorney's office  | CEAC          |
| Ban sale of used gas cars            | Existing item, needs follow-up | Proposal to ban the sale of existing (used) gas cars within city limits by 2040 (except to be sold as scrap). Pending finalization at City Attorney's office   | CEAC          |
| Hazardous Waste                      | Potential new item             | CEAC received multiple emails in 2021-22 about hazardous waste, but there are no drop-off sites within City limits due to BMC 11.50  | CEAC          |
| VMT targets                          | Potential new item             | Set specific, measurable VMT reduction targets and identify and implement strategies to achieve them   | CEAC          |
| Sidewalk Condition Index             | Potential new item             | Adopting a "sidewalk condition index" metric, similar to pavement condition index, to quantify the quality of Berkeley's sidewalks and measure improvements in pedestrian infrastructure   | CEAC          |
| Public Space Re-allocation           | Potential new item             | Re-allocate public street space away from auto-centric uses towards pedestrians, bicyclists, and buses, even more than currently envisioned in the bicycle and pedestrian master plans   | CEAC          |
| Building Decarbonization             | Potential new item             | Berkeley's building decarbonization plan is only a start; more work is needed to identify and effectively implement strategies to decarbonize: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single-family ownership residences</li> <li>- Single-family rental residences</li> </ul> | CEAC          |

|                                       |                    |  |      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--|------|
|                                       |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rent-controlled multifamily residences</li> <li>- Non-rent-controlled multifamily residences</li> <li>- Commercial spaces</li> </ul>  |      |
| De-zoning gas stations                | Potential new item | Berkeley should remove gas stations as a permitted use from all City zoning codes.   | CEAC |
| Banning gas-powered delivery vehicles | Potential new item | The ECC should explore opportunities to require last-mile delivery vehicles to use zero- emission alternatives.  | CEAC |
| OESD input: Transportation            | Potential new item | <p>Ensure the City is adequately staffed to implement transportation-related activities that reduce carbon emissions. Ensure staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conducts a mobility needs assessment</li> <li>- Convenes an electric mobility roadmap implementation working group</li> <li>- Pursues discounts and digital access strategies for electric shared mobility options</li> </ul> <p>Track progress and provide input on implementation of the Electric Mobility Roadmap, the Bicycle Master Plan, the Pedestrian Plan, Vision Zero, and other City plans to encourage non-car mobility.</p>  | EC   |
| Alternative Transportation            | Potential new item | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study and support expanding transportation measures to reduce GHG emissions associated with car travel.</li> <li>- Promote safe and convenient cycling through a protected and connected bike lane network, docked and dockless bike share systems, public e-bike charging, and secure bike parking.</li> <li>- Promote safe routes to schools, beginning with opportunities for the Energy Commission to contribute to the 2x2 committee (Council and BUSD board).</li> <li>- Research the feasibility of a zero-emissions zone, or a car-free zone for Berkeley.</li> <li>- Investigate opportunities to cut emissions through mass transit, such as more frequent service, new routes, zero-carbon fuels, and lower fare prices.</li> <li>- Investigate new approaches to public, curbside, or neighborhood charging for residents without access to on-site charging, focusing on commercial or public ownership</li> </ul> | EC   |

|   |                    |   |    |
|---|--------------------|---|----|
|   |                    | of chargers, dedicated street parking spots for EV charging, and/or low-cost connections to the grid. Collaborate with Transportation and Public Works commissions.   |    |
| Integrate Climate + Transportation policymaking | Potential new item | Ensure integration of the climate aspects of transportation with other transportation issues in Transportation and Public Works work.   | EC |
| Bond measure for transportation                 | Potential new item | Engage with Council to include language in City bond measures to finance and build low-carbon, equitable, safe, and convenient transportation infrastructure.   | EC |
| OESD input: Buildings                           | Potential new item | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Track progress and provide input on implementation of the Berkeley Existing Building Electrification Strategy (BEBES), including funding for the equity pilot program, staffing needs, and renovation reach codes.</li> <li>- Support municipal building electrification and energy efficiency upgrades and development of municipal green building programs, including the City’s work with EBCE to install solar + storage systems on critical facilities to provide resilience during outages.</li> </ul> | EC |
| Electrification cost reduction                  | Potential new item | Develop recommendations to reduce the cost of electrification and for partial electrification measures, such as codes that require two-way heat pumps instead of central air conditioners, deployment of portable heat pumps and low voltage water heaters, and “Watt diet” measures to avoid electrical panel upgrades.  | EC |
| Building sale requirements                      | Potential new item | Investigate and advance time of sale opportunities for electrification and energy efficiency, including a transfer tax rebate program for energy improvements and the allocation of transfer tax revenues towards expanding building electrification in LMI and renter communities.   | EC |
| Electrification mandates                        | Potential new item | Investigate and advance electrification mandates, such as through the Building Energy Savings Ordinance (BESO)  | EC |
| Defund natural gas                              | Potential new item | Explore ways to redirect funds used to maintain PG&E’s fossil gas distribution network to support building electrification.   | EC |
| OESD Input: Climate Action                      | Potential new item | Track and provide input on implementation of the Pilot Climate Equity Action Fund and seek funding sources to provide ongoing support. Identify options to support the Fund from existing   | EC |

|                           |                    |  |    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|----|
|                           |                    | <p>or expanded City revenues. Solicit input from experts and conduct public meetings to study funding mechanisms, such as a gross-receipts tax, parcel tax, utility users tax, or building emissions tax. Explore options to split the collection of the Utility Users Tax to make it possible to charge separate rates for natural gas and electricity.</p> <p>Review and provide input on staff's annual report to Council on Climate Action Plan progress and recommend further actions. Explore the feasibility of expanding the Plan to cover "scope 3" or consumption-based emissions that occur outside of city limits, and research policies to reduce them. Work with staff to better measure and track progress and create a public dashboard to report key metrics.</p> |    |
| Renewable energy advocacy | Potential new item | Promote the use of renewable energy by advising Council on EBCE activities including electricity mix, default offerings, local programs, and opportunities to advance City priorities.   | EC |

ECC commissioners, as well as OESD staff, have also proposed other ideas not listed above for items for the commission to work on.

ECC is planning to take on the following projects in 2022:

| Project   | Goal   | Outputs                    | Target Date | Lead   |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Climate Literacy Advocacy                         | Request for state of CA to fund large \$\$ to do climate education work statewide, and look for opportunities to engage with BUSD colleagues in work of commission | Sign-on letter for Council | Dec 2022    | Ranney |
| Land Use Change for Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) | Provide recommendation to Council and Planning Commission on zoning / land use planning changes to support switching to ZEVs                                       | Rec. for Council           | Dec 2022    | Gould  |

|   |   |                  |          |         |
|---|---|------------------|----------|---------|
| Building Decarbonization                          | Explore strategies for building decarbonization: point of sale, building code, prescriptive requirements, tax, etc. | Rec. for Council | Dec 2022 | Tahara  |
| Sustainable transport infrastructure              | Allocate public street spaces towards more sustainable uses and away from auto-centrism                             | Rec. for Council | Dec 2022 | Gould   |
| OESD support – Climate Action Plan (CAP) tracking | Work with OESD staff to develop approach to track CAP implementation, based on recommendation under review at FITES | Rec. for Council | Dec 2022 | Gould   |
| Ban gas-powered delivery vehicles                 | Explore opportunities to require last-mile delivery vehicles to use zero-emission alternatives.                     | Rec. for Council | Dec 2022 | McGuire |

*Climate Literacy Advocacy:* A letter in collaboration with other local & statewide advocacy efforts around climate education in K-12 schools.

*Land Use Change for ZEVs:* Provide strategies for changing land use policies to discourage the use of fossil fuels and encourage sustainable transportation alternatives. Possible approaches: removing gas stations from permissible land use, expanding commercial EV charging, density bonus + fee to incentivize conversion of gas, while the help fund just transitions for workers no longer employed in fossil fuels and related industries.

*Building Decarbonization Efforts:* Review & recommend strategies for building decarbonization. Explore point-of-sale requirements, building code update(s), prescriptive requirements, local tax on direct CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, etc.

*Sustainable Transport Infrastructure:* Review & recommend strategies for realigning public right of way / infrastructure to support sustainable transportation. Consider suggestion to reopen the Transportation Element to close streets to cars, add bike lanes to more side streets & bus lanes to more major streets, narrow streets / add parks & parklets & bioswales, etc.

*OESD support - CAP tracking:* Support OESD staff in identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) for tracking CAP implementation & progress.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The projects which ECC is working on will improve environmental sustainability through a wide variety of methods.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future action items that ECC may send to City Council could require staff time to develop, finalize, and/or implement. ECC strives to ensure proposals provide significant net triple bottom line benefits to the City when evaluating total costs and benefits across environmental, social, and economic impacts.

CONTACT PERSON

Billi Romain, Secretary, Environment and Climate Commission,  
[BRomain@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:BRomain@cityofberkeley.info).

