



Community Environmental Advisory Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR

February 23, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC)
 Submitted by: Ben Gould, Chairperson, CEAC
 Subject: Community Environmental Advisory Commission 2021 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) is responsible for developing a plan, prioritizing strategies, and making recommendations for environmental protection, hazardous materials and reduction, with outreach to and education of the public, small businesses and industry.

The members of CEAC also consider climate adaptation and environmental justice to fall under the scope of the commission. A recommendation pending before City Council would officially incorporate this scope into the mission of CEAC.

CEAC has historically worked on a wide range of topics. Past projects include recommending a phase out of natural gas in new construction, a proposed ordinance requiring CO₂ warning labels on gas station pumps, a cigarette butt recycling receptacle pilot program in Downtown Berkeley, recommendations on mitigating stormwater and lead paint hazards, policies to address greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, and more.

CEAC commissioners bring a wide range of expertise in federal, state, and local government, as well as academia, nonprofit, and private sector environmental work. These backgrounds inform CEAC's work and help it to consider diverse and equitable approaches to addressing the City's environmental challenges.

On December 10, 2020 the Commission voted to adopt this as the CEAC workplan for 2021 by a unanimous vote (6-0-0-0; AYES Simmons, Varnhagen, Ticconi, Hetzel, De Leon, Gould; NOES none, ABSTAIN none, ABSENT none).

This work plan is intended to provide a guide to the work CEAC plans to take on in 2021. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, CEAC will adjust this plan accordingly.

BACKGROUND & 2019 WORK PLAN RESULTS

Currently, there are numerous City commissions dealing with a range of environmental issues. Because of the specialized expertise available on those commissions, and the

broad scope of its mission of “environmental protection”, CEAC frequently serves as a catch-all for environmental issues.

CEAC identified the following projects as goals for 2019. The results are indicated below:

Project	Goal	Outputs	Target Date	Result / Status
Cigarette Butt Receptacles	Evaluate pilot program and provide recommendations	Commission report and recommendation to Council	July 2019	Developing recommendations
Gas Station CO ₂ Labeling	Request Council elevate priority of item	Letter to Council	July 2019	Held pending Supreme Court decision, which was resolved in December 2019
Green Stormwater Infrastructure	Work with Council and Staff to improve recommendations on GSI	Recommendation to Council	September 2019	Resolved through Council action
Community Reporting of Pollutants	Develop a booklet on community reporting of pollutants	Booklet for distribution	June 2019	Explored; did not advance
Vegetation & Fire Safety	Develop a booklet on fire-safe vegetation and plant management approaches	Booklet for distribution	September 2019	Did not advance
Environmental Legislation Literacy	Develop strategies and guidance for enhancing community understanding of environmental legislation	TBD	December 2019	Did not advance
Electric Vehicles	Request hotels and Airbnb to provide information on EV charging availability at time of booking	Draft letter for Council to send to hotels and Airbnb	June 2019	Did not advance; developed alternative recommendations
Green Open Space	Provide recommendations to Council on strategies to	Recommendation to Council	December 2019	Did not advance

	increase and enhance green open space in Berkeley			
Lead Paint	Support Council and Staff in developing a robust lead paint education and enforcement program	Staff produce an interim report	December 2019	Did not advance
Bee City	Provide recommendations to Council on strategies for supporting bee habitats in Berkeley	Recommendation to Council	July 2019	Maintained communication with key stakeholders
Bird Safety	Provide draft ordinance for Council to adopt to require bird safety practices for new construction	Recommendation to Council	May 2019	Recommendation sent to Council
Sustainable Built Environment	Provide recommendations to Council on strategies to enhance sustainability and reduce carbon footprints in the built environment	Recommendation to Council	December 2019	Explored; continuing forward
Departmental Coordination for Environmental Protection	Analyze City interdepartmental environmental coordination efforts, e.g. managing firefighting foam runoff, and provide an analysis and recommendations	Report for Council, the City Auditor, and the City Manager	December 2019	Recommendation sent to Council

Cigarette Butt Receptacles: CEAC is evaluating the Downtown Berkeley pilot project and providing recommendations on expanding, including to other parts of Berkeley.

Gas Station CO₂ Labeling: In 2015 a referral was passed to require gas stations to label pumps with a CO₂ warning.

Green Open Space: Working to identify and recommend strategies to increase and enhance green open space in Berkeley, ensure it is healthy and safe to use, and provide habitat and nourishment for desirable flora and fauna.

Bee City: CEAC is supporting and coordinating with UC Berkeley students through CalPIRG, and working with the Parks & Waterfront Commission. Parks Department staff are implementing the vision of Bee City.

Sustainable Built Environment: Researching and recommending strategies to ensure a sustainable built environment.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The global COVID-19 pandemic has led to an emergency declaration that has suspended all non-essential commission meetings indefinitely. Recently, at the October 12, 2020 Agenda & Rules Committee meeting, the City Manager presented a proposal, approved by the Committee, to allow all commissions to meet under limited circumstances.

The guidelines provided by the City Manager emphasize that commissions may be authorized to meet to work on statutorily, budgetary, or COVID-19 required items, as well as council-adopted or voter-adopted mission critical projects and programs. Anticipated staff demands above and beyond baseline are also to be taken into consideration, as many staff are tasked with additional responsibilities with the City Emergency Operations Center or other pandemic-related duties.

In line with this guidance, CEAC has prepared a limited work plan that focuses on addressing climate action goals in line with Council-adopted, voter-adopted, and strategic plan targets including becoming a fossil free city, achieving carbon neutrality, and reaching 100% sustainable trips by 2040.

2021 WORK PLAN

To the extent permitted, CEAC anticipates working on the following projects in 2021:

Project	Goal	Commission Outputs	Target Date	Lead
Cigarette Butt Receptacles	On hold until end of pandemic			Varnhagen
Gas Station CO ₂ Labeling	Request City Attorney complete review and send to Council		June 2021	TBD
Sustainable Transportation	Provide recommendations to Council on strategies to encourage zero-emission transportation and eliminate fossil fuels	Recommendation(s) to Council	December 2020	Gould

Bee City	No Commission work needed before end of pandemic			Ticconi
Community Engagement & Outreach	Improve community awareness and garner greater engagement in environmental issues.	Webinars & community forums on environmental issues	December 2021	Simmons
Sustainable Built Environment	Track BESO update process and provide input to staff	N/A (provide comments as individuals)		N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

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

CONTACT PERSON

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