



Environment and Climate Commission

[Meeting Date (MM dd, yyyy)]

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 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.

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

Project	Status	Description	Source
Bird Safety	Follow up w/ Planning Commission	Track progress of item through Planning Commission and back to Council	CEAC
Gas Station CO ₂ Labeling	Follow-up w/ City Attorney	City Attorney's office has had significant turnover and likely forgot to implement this item after relevant Supreme Court decision	CEAC
Ban sale of used gas cars	Follow-up w/ City Attorney	City Attorney's office has had significant turnover and likely forgot to implement this item after pandemic	CEAC
Hazardous Waste	Pot'l 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	Pot'l new item	Set specific, measurable VMT reduction targets and identify and implement strategies to achieve them	CEAC
Sidewalk Condition Index	Pot'l 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	Pot'l 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 Decarb	Pot'l new item	Berkeley's building decarbonization plan is only a start; more work is needed to identify and effectively implement strategies to decarbonize: - Single-family ownership residences - Single-family rental residences - Rent-controlled multifamily residences - Non-rent-controlled multifamily residences - Commercial spaces	CEAC

De-zoning gas stations	Pot'l new item	Berkeley should remove gas stations as a permitted use from all City zoning codes.	CEAC
Banning gas-powered delivery vehicles	Pot'l new item	The ECC should explore opportunities to require last-mile delivery vehicles to use zero- emission alternatives.	CEAC
OESD input: Transportation	Pot'l new item	Ensure the City is adequately staffed to implement transportation-related activities that reduce carbon emissions. Ensure staff: - Conducts a mobility needs assessment - Convenes an electric mobility roadmap implementation working group - Pursues discounts and digital access strategies for electric shared mobility options 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.	EC
Alternative Transportation	Pot'l new item	- Study and support expanding transportation measures to reduce GHG emissions associated with car travel. - 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. - Promote safe routes to schools, beginning with opportunities for the Energy Commission to contribute to the 2x2 committee (Council and BUSD board). - Research the feasibility of a zero-emissions zone, or a car-free zone for Berkeley. - Investigate opportunities to cut emissions through mass transit, such as more frequent service, new routes, zero-carbon fuels, and lower fare prices. - Investigate new approaches to public, curbside, or neighborhood charging for residents without access to on-site charging, focusing on commercial or public ownership of chargers, dedicated street parking spots for EV charging, and/or low-cost connections	EC

		to the grid. Collaborate with Transportation and Public Works commissions.	
Integrate Climate + Transportation policymaking	Pot'l 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	Pot'l 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	Pot'l new item	- 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. - 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.	EC
Electrification cost reduction	Pot'l 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	Pot'l 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	Pot'l new item	Investigate and advance electrification mandates, such as through the Building Energy Savings Ordinance (BESO)	EC
Defund natural gas	Pot'l 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	Pot'l 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 or expanded City revenues. Solicit input from experts and conduct public meetings to study	EC

		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. 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.	
Renewable energy advocacy	Pot'l 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.

Moving forward, ECC is exploring 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	Sign-on letter for Council	Sept 2022	Ranney
De-zoning gas stations	Provide recommendation to Council and PlannCom to remove gas stations from zoning, expand EV charging	Rec. for Council	Sept 2022	Gould
Fossil Free & Just Transition Overlay	Recommendation for a density bonus + just transition fund for fossil-centric businesses, eg gas stations	Rec. for Council	Oct 2022	Gould

Building Emissions Tax	Ballot initiative to tax large building owners based on building GHG emissions (natural gas use)	Rec. for Council	Nov 2022	Tahara
Street Space Reallocation	Re-allocate public street space away from auto-centric uses	Rec. for Council	Dec 2022	Gould
OESD support - 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

BACKGROUND

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

De-zoning Gas Stations: Removing gas stations from permissible land use and expanding commercial EV charging will make it harder to expand the use of fossil fuels and easier to support alternatives.

Fossil Free and Just Transition Overlay: A density bonus + fee will help incentivize conversion of gas stations to other, more climate-friendly uses, while the fee will help fund just transitions for workers no longer employed in fossil fuels and related industries.

Building Emissions Tax: A local tax on direct CO₂ emissions from building operations, with funding going towards equitable decarbonization efforts.

Street Space Reallocation: 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

Ben Gould, Chair, Environment and Climate Commission, 510-725-9176