



Environment and Climate Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
May 7, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Environment and Climate Commission (ECC)
 Submitted by: Cecilia Lunaparra, Chair, ECC
 Subject: Environment and Climate Commission 2024 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. ECC’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 ECC works closely with the City of Berkeley’s Office of Energy & Sustainable Development (OESD).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The ECC has a broad scope and a responsibility to support and work closely with OESD staff. The ECC created subcommittees to work on the following projects:

Project	Status	Description
Transportation Public Space Re-allocation & Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Targets	In Committee	Re-allocate public street space away from autocentric uses towards pedestrians, bicyclists, and buses, even more than currently envisioned in Berkeley’s Climate Action Plans, bike and pedestrian master plans, etc. Begin by evaluating the city of Berkeley’s existing transportation plans to determine to what degree they achieve the VMT necessary to meet climate goals.
Native Plants	In Committee	Identify opportunities and strategies to support native plants.
Electrification Equity and Access	In Committee	Identify opportunities for access to e-mobility and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, electric home appliances, distributed energy resources, and microgrids by renters, others in multifamily housing, and those Berkeley residents who have historically been left behind in the clean energy transition. Explore funding

		opportunities for those populations.
Water Conservation, Recycling, and Reuse; Stormwater Management	In Committee	Explore how existing policies and initiatives around water conservation, recycling and reuse, and stormwater management, including the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan, are evolving to address sustainability goals, adaptation and resilience for a future of larger storms, longer droughts, and seawater rise. Coordinate with work of other commissions.
OESD Input & Support	Ongoing	Support OESD staff with feedback on programs, standards, and other initiatives, including the Building Emissions Saving Ordinance (BESO), the Berkeley Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy (BEBES), the Climate Equity Fund, Just Transition, Climate Action planning, etc.

At the February 28, 2024 meeting the ECC approved the work plan to send to the City Council as follows: Motion/second to approve the 2024 Workplan with the addition of Electrification Equity and Access content (Lunaparra, Tregub). The motion carried 10-0-0; Ayes: Tregub, Ranney, LaBonte, McGuire, Tahara, Allen, Guliasi, Lunaparra, Athanasiou, Syed. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

BACKGROUND

First established in 2022, the ECC was formed by merging the Community Environmental Advisory Commission and the Energy Commission. ECC commissioners bring a wide range of expertise, with backgrounds in government, academia, nonprofit, and private sector environmental work, and include youth perspectives. These backgrounds inform the 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 the ECC plans to take on in 2024. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, the ECC will adjust this plan accordingly.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The ECC's initiatives will improve environmental sustainability, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support a just transition.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

ECC is considering the following potential additional efforts:

Project	Status	Description
Green New Deal policies	Conceptual	Develop and support Green New Deal policies for Berkeley.
Electrification Information Campaign	Conceptual	Make it easier for homeowners and renters who are interested in electrification (building + vehicle) to get information and get excited. Give people positive feelings about induction and electrification. Create checklist / resources / what you might do / should think about for people who are not doing major remodel or buying home, etc.
Expanded OESD Support – events; Resiliency Hubs	Conceptual	Provide additional support at public events where OESD is staffing tables or otherwise engaging with the public. Support OESD with resiliency centers.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future action items that the ECC may send to City Council could require staff time to develop, finalize, and/or implement. The 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

Sarah Moore, Secretary, Environment and Climate Commission, smoore@berkeleyca.gov

