



Environment and Climate Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
April 11, 2023

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 2023 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Environment and Climate Commission 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 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 following projects are the current efforts underway by the ECC:

Project	Status	Description
Transportation Public Space Re-allocation & Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Targets	In Committee	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. Consider setting specific, measurable VMT reduction targets and identify and implement strategies to achieve them.
Encourage cargo bike deliveries	In Committee	Encourage e-bike deliveries to & by businesses.
Native Plants and Pest Reduction	In Committee	Identify opportunities & strategies to support native plants & avoid pesticides.

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, Climate Action planning, etc.
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At its February 22, 2023 meeting the Environment and Climate Commission approved the work plan to send to the City Council as follows: Motion/second to approve the 2023 Workplan as revised during the meeting (Tregub, Hedlund). The motion carried 9-0-0-0; Ayes: Tregub, Ranney, Hedlund, McGuire, Tahara, Allen, Guliasi, Lunaparra, Gould. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

BACKGROUND

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.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

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	Making it easier for homeowners and renters who are interested in electrification (building + vehicle) to get information & be 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.

		Support renters with feasible, affordable technologies.
Electric Mobility	Conceptual	Work to reduce technological, policy, access, and cost barriers to transportation electrification.
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.
Water conservation, recycling, and reuse; stormwater management	Conceptual	Explore opportunities for policies and initiatives around water conservation, recycling, and reuse; stormwater management.

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.