



Environment and Climate Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
April 15, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Environment and Climate Commission (ECC)
 Submitted by: Brianna McGuire, Chairperson, ECC
 Subject: Environment and Climate Commission 2025 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
Building Decarbonization	In Committee	Support OESD staff with feedback on building electrification programs, including Building Emissions Saving Ordinance (BESO), Berkeley Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy, Climate Equity Fund, Just Transition Fund, REACH Codes, and Building Performance Standards. Collaboration with Housing Advisory Committee as needed.
Community-informed Environmental Justice & Climate Metrics, and Principles of Just Transition, Vehicle Miles Traveled & Workforce	In Committee	Support and participate in 2025 efforts to develop an Environmental Justice Element for the General Plan and track the city’s climate goals using community-driven benchmarks (health-focused, emissions-based, qualitative measure, etc.). Perform research and give feedback on the Just Transition principles, Vehicle Miles Traveled reduction, and development of a Workforce Development Board to suggest as amendments to the City’s General Plan.

Community Outreach	In Committee	In collaboration with OESD, plan community outreach campaigns, create materials, and support events that raise awareness of City activities, public programs, and local climate action opportunities. Make suggestions about possible website improvements. Raise awareness of climate activities/resources to Councilmembers.
Climate Emergency Preparedness	In Committee	In coordination with the Office of Emergency Services and Public Health Community Preparedness and Prevention Team, support the City with engagement on climate emergency education and resources including at Community Resilience Centers.
OESD Input & Support	Ongoing	Support OESD staff with feedback on programs, standards, and other initiatives, including the Climate Equity Fund, Climate Action planning, etc. Forward viable grant opportunities when appropriate.

At its February 26, 2025 meeting the ECC approved the work plan to send to City Council as follows: Motion/second to approve the 2025 Workplan with minor revisions as discussed and recorded (McGuire, Binns). The motion carried 8-0-0-1; Ayes: Ranney, McGuire, Tahara, Guliasi, Kesselman, Binns, Athanasiou, Syed. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: LaBonte.

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.

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

This work plan is intended to provide a guide to the work the ECC plans to take on in 2025. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, the ECC will adjust this plan accordingly.

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

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