

Environmental Quality Commission



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: 6/24/2020

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Special Meeting Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 983-4564-7162

A. Chair Price called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Gaillard, Kabat, London, Martin, Payne (Vice Chair), Price (Chair), Turley

Absent: None

Staff: Rebecca Lucky, Sustainability Manager

C. Regular Business

C1. Approve December 10, 2019 and February 19, 2020 minutes

Chair Price introduced item.

ACTION: Motion and second (Gaillard/London) to approve December 10, 2019 and February 19, 2020 minutes, passed unanimously.

C2. Recommend subcommittee's draft Climate Action Plan to City Council

Commissioner Gaillard from Climate Action Plan Subcommittee made a presentation (Attachment).

- Jen Wolosin spoke in support of the draft climate action plan, read an email from Adina Levin in support of the draft climate action plan, and requested increasing the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction goal (Attachment).
- Scott Marshall from Canopy spoke in support of the draft climate action plan, and requested inclusion of developing an urban forest master plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Pam Jones spoke in support of the draft climate action plan.
- Staff read an email from Menlo Spark that supported the draft climate action plan (Attachment).
- Staff read an email from Mitch Slomiak that supported the draft climate action plan (Attachment).

ACTION: Motion and second (Gaillard/Payne) to recommend the draft climate action plan to City Council with the following changes: (1) Include a goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2030 (2) Revisit the plan in one year to incorporate further actions to achieve net zero goal by 2030, and (3) Modify proposed climate action plan strategies No. 2, No. 4, and No. 6 based on the commission's consensus to include a gasoline reduction goal, increase VMT reductions to 25%, and remove the moratorium on development, and instead include developing a climate adaptation and implementation plan that protects the Belle Haven Community from sea level rise, passed unanimously.

D. Adjournment

Chair Price adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Rebecca Lucky, Sustainability Manager

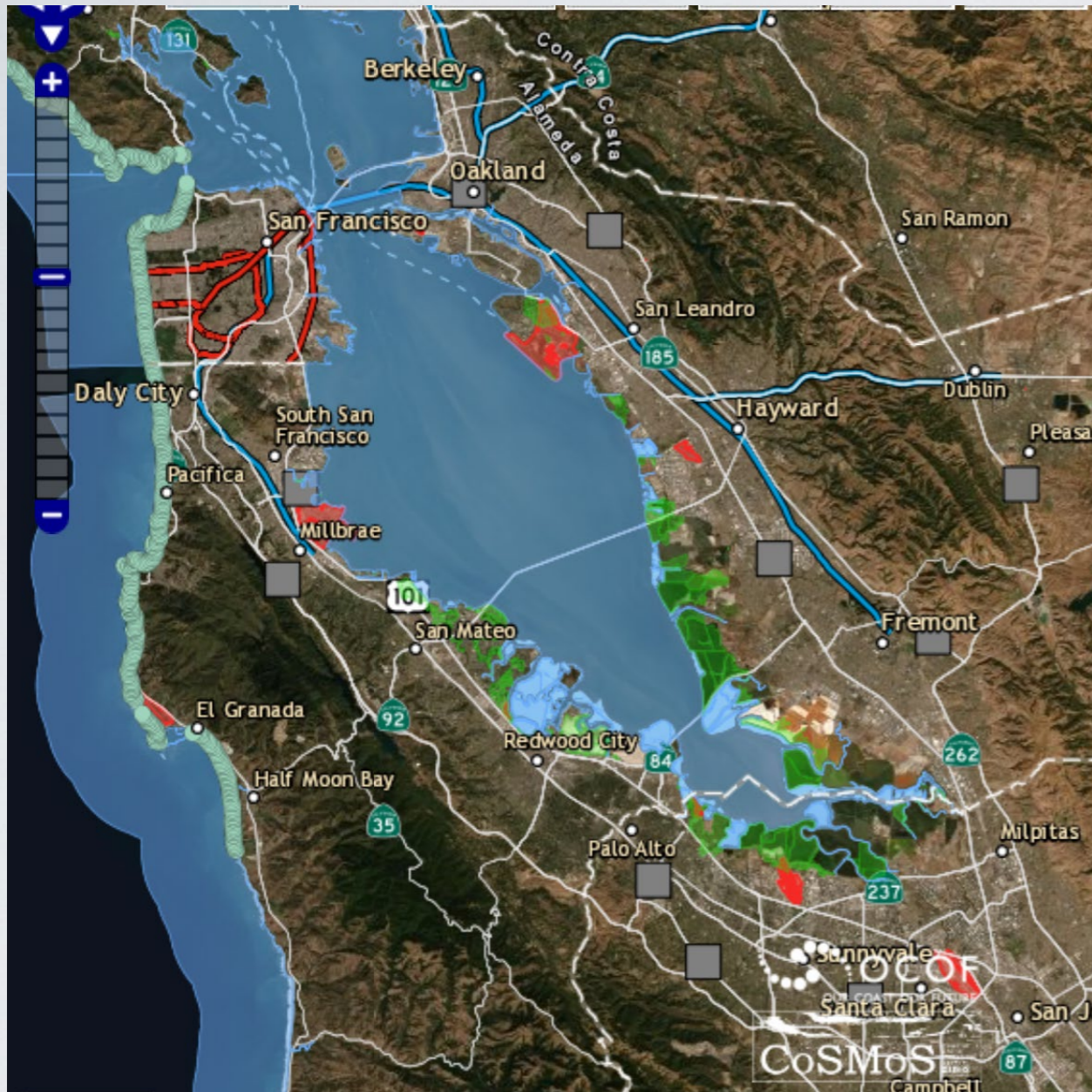


DRAFT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

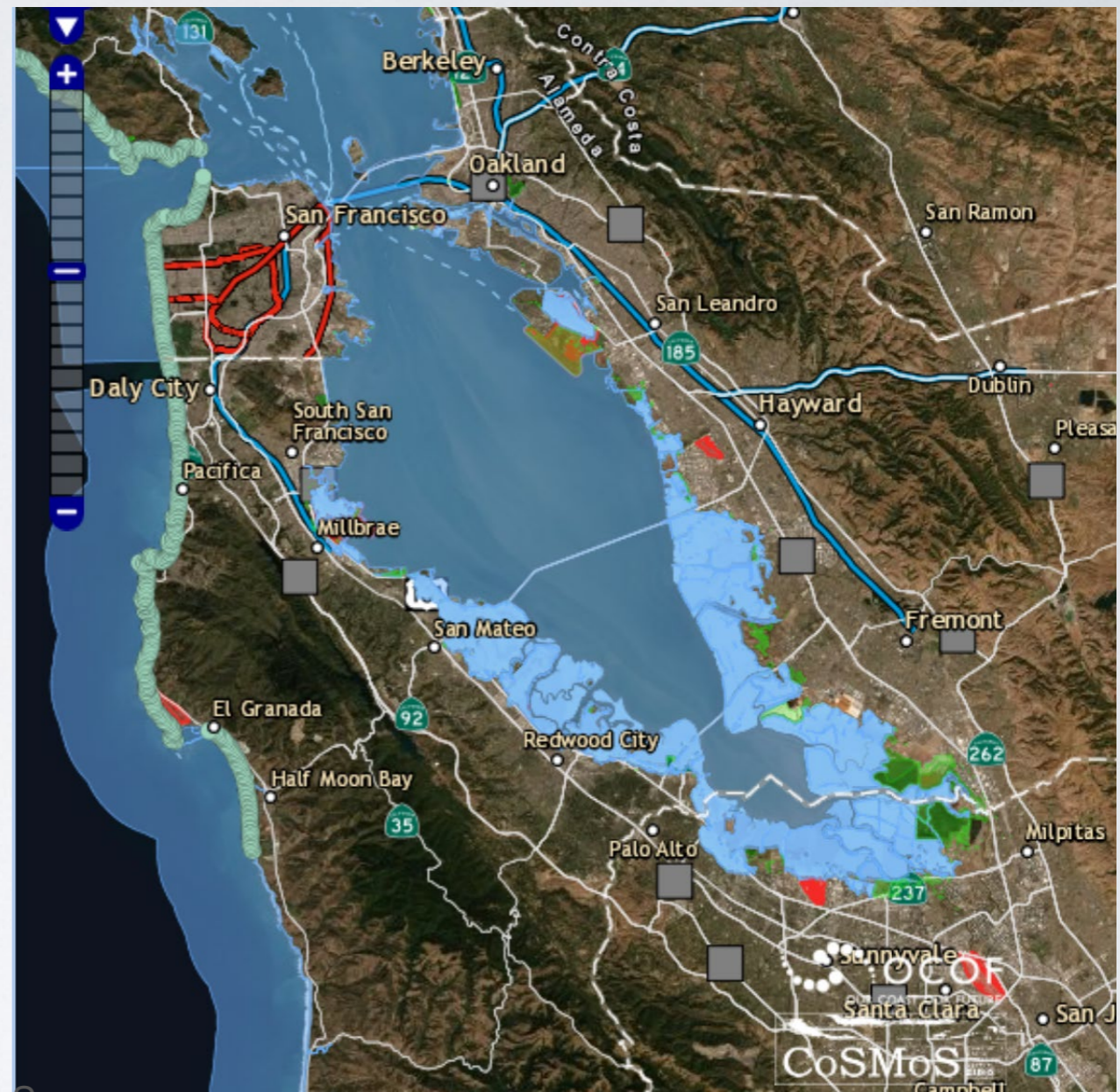
Presentation to the Environmental Quality Commission

June 24, 2020

THE BAY IS RISING



TODAY



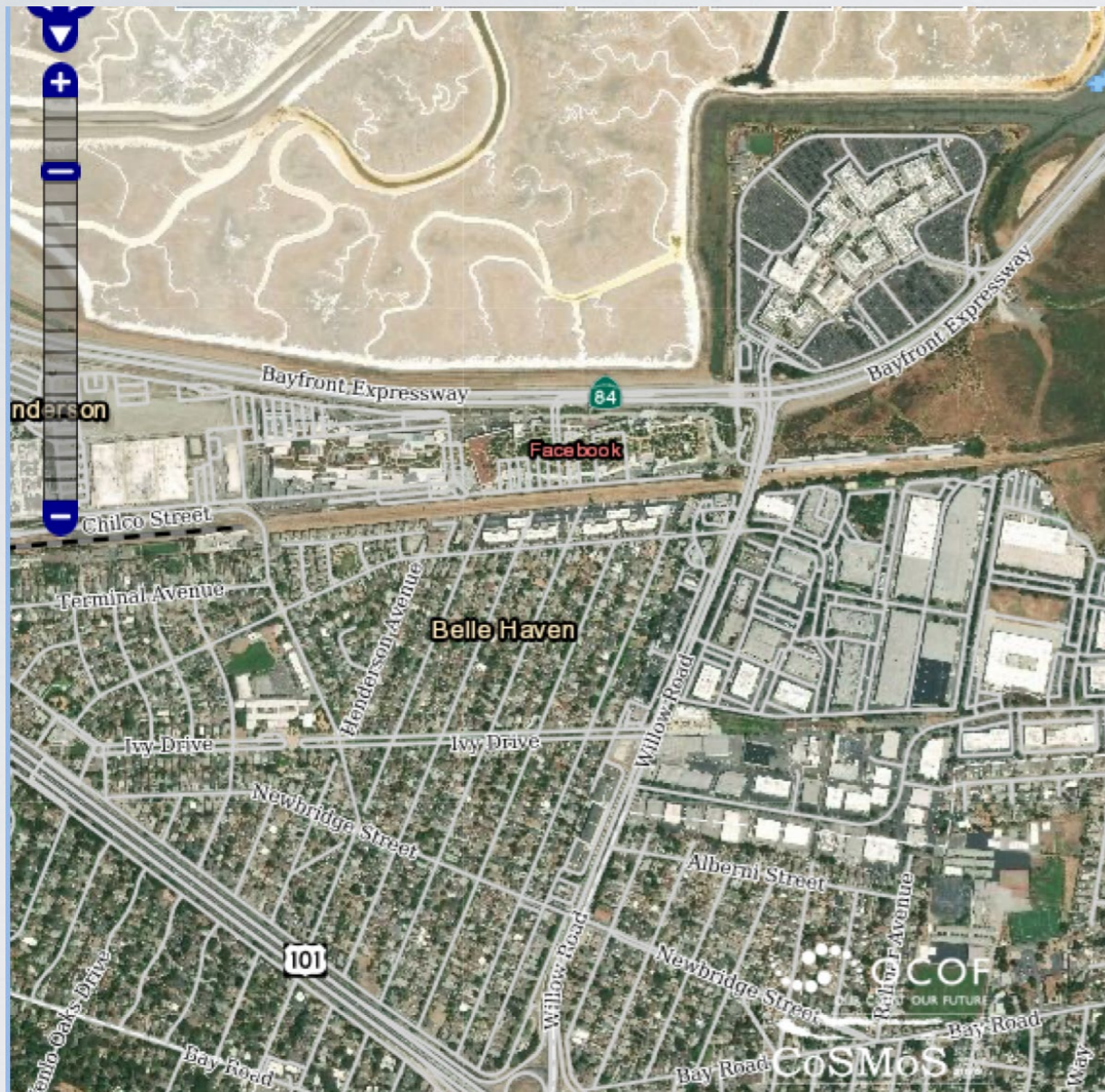
Source:

<http://data.pointblue.org/apps/ocof/cms/index.php?page=flood-map>

YEAR: 2060-2100

the Bay is projected to rise 3.3 feet

SEA LEVEL RISE IMPACT



TODAY

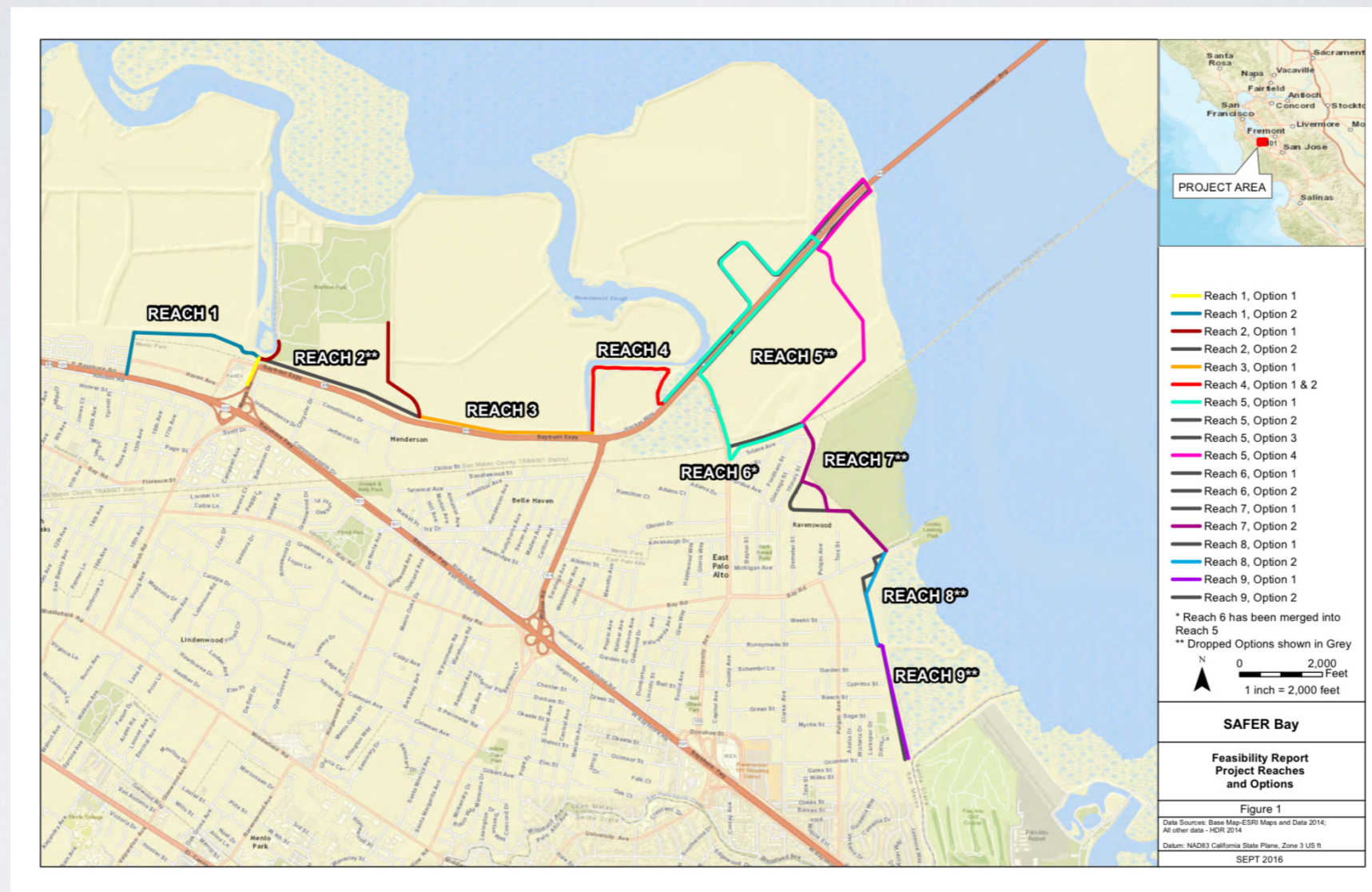


Source: <http://data.pointblue.org/apps/ocof/cms/index.php?page=flood-map>

YEAR: 2060-2100

the Bay is projected to rise 3.3 feet

PLAN FOR SEA WALLS AND LEVEES



\$100 million* to build sea walls and levees for **Menlo Park** and **East Palo Alto** alone to address **3 feet** of sea level rise

***Source:** SFCJPA Feasibility Study October 2016

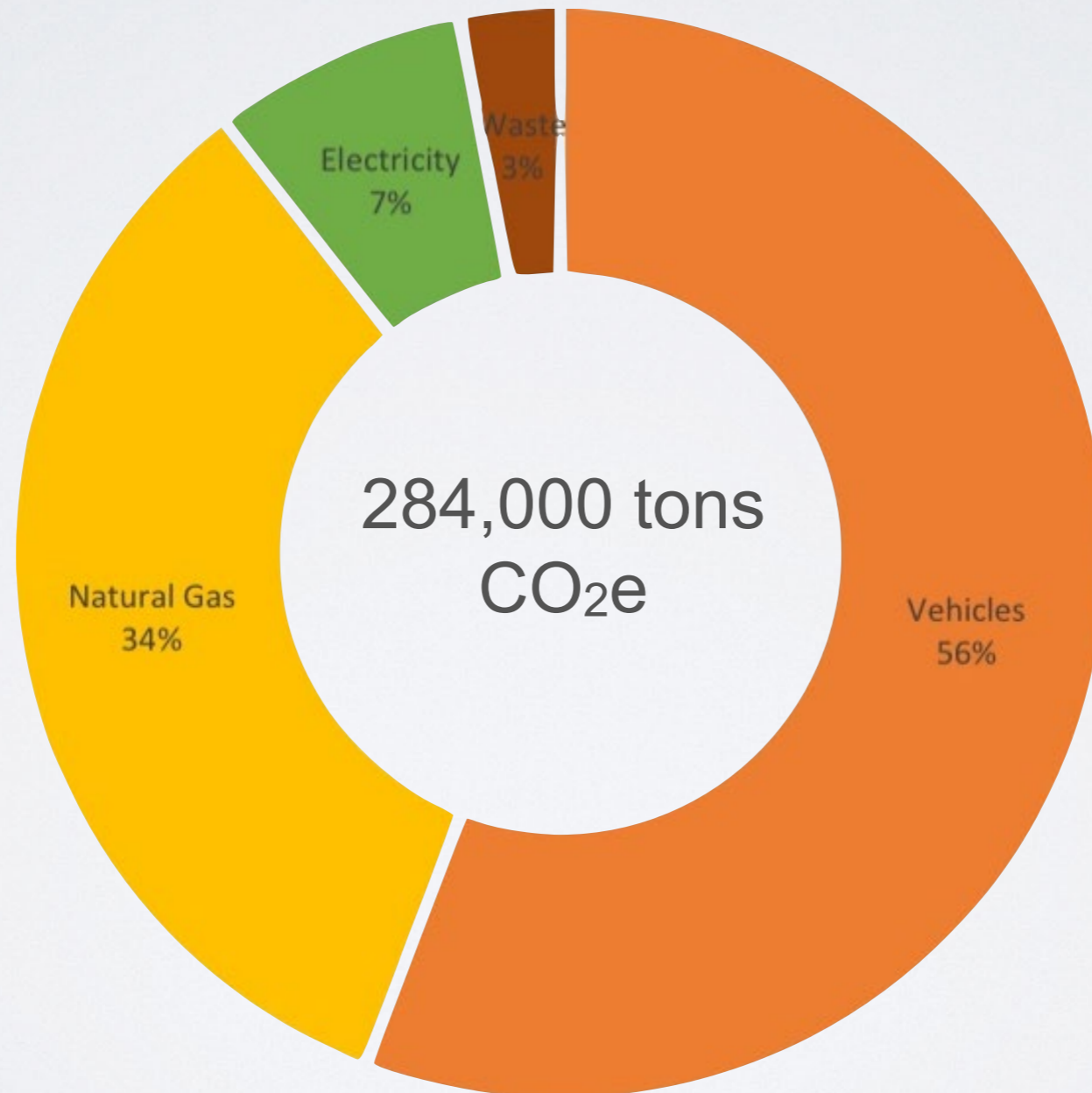
http://www.sfcjpa.org/documents/SAFER_Bay_Public_Draft_Feasibility_Report_Summary_Oct._2016_.pdf

IF LEVEES FAIL

- **Human impacts** in Belle Haven will be **devastating**
 - 2,800 residents* from Belle Haven at risk, may require relocation
 - 574 residential parcels* inundated
 - 139 commercial parcels* inundated
 - Highest impact on by historically disadvantaged members of our community
- **Economic** impacts will also be **significant**
 - Loss of \$1.29 billion in real estate (assessed value)*
 - 20 miles of roads,* inc. Dumbarton Bridge approach, will have to be re-routed

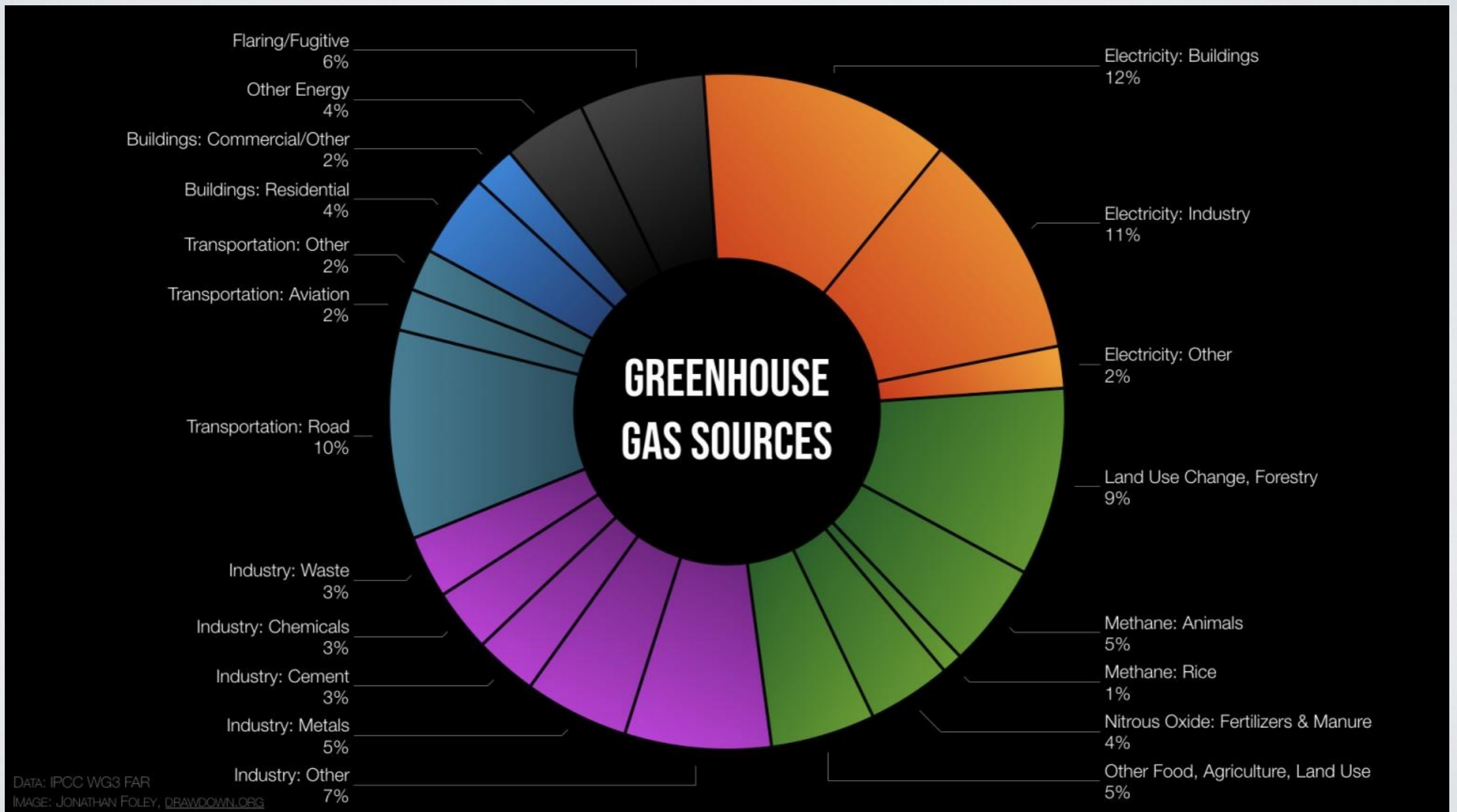
* **Source:** County of San Mateo Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment, March 2018, p. 139-141.
https://seachangesmc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2018-03-12_SLR_VA_Report_2.2018_WEB_FINAL.pdf

MENLO PARK GHG EMISSIONS 2017



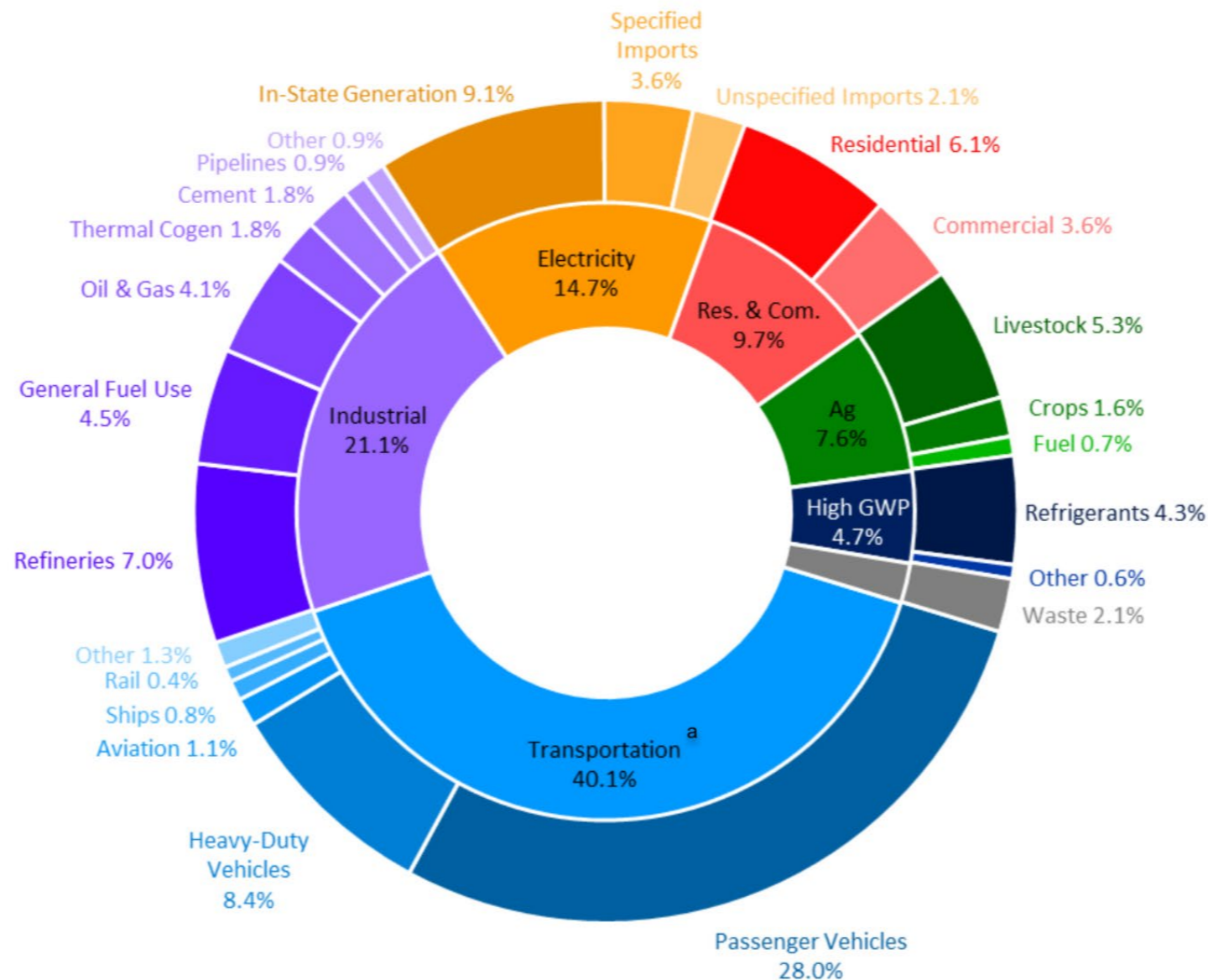
Source: December 2019 Staff CAP report

GLOBAL GHG EMISSIONS



Source: IPCC WG3, www.drawdown.org

CALIFORNIA GHG EMISSIONS 2017



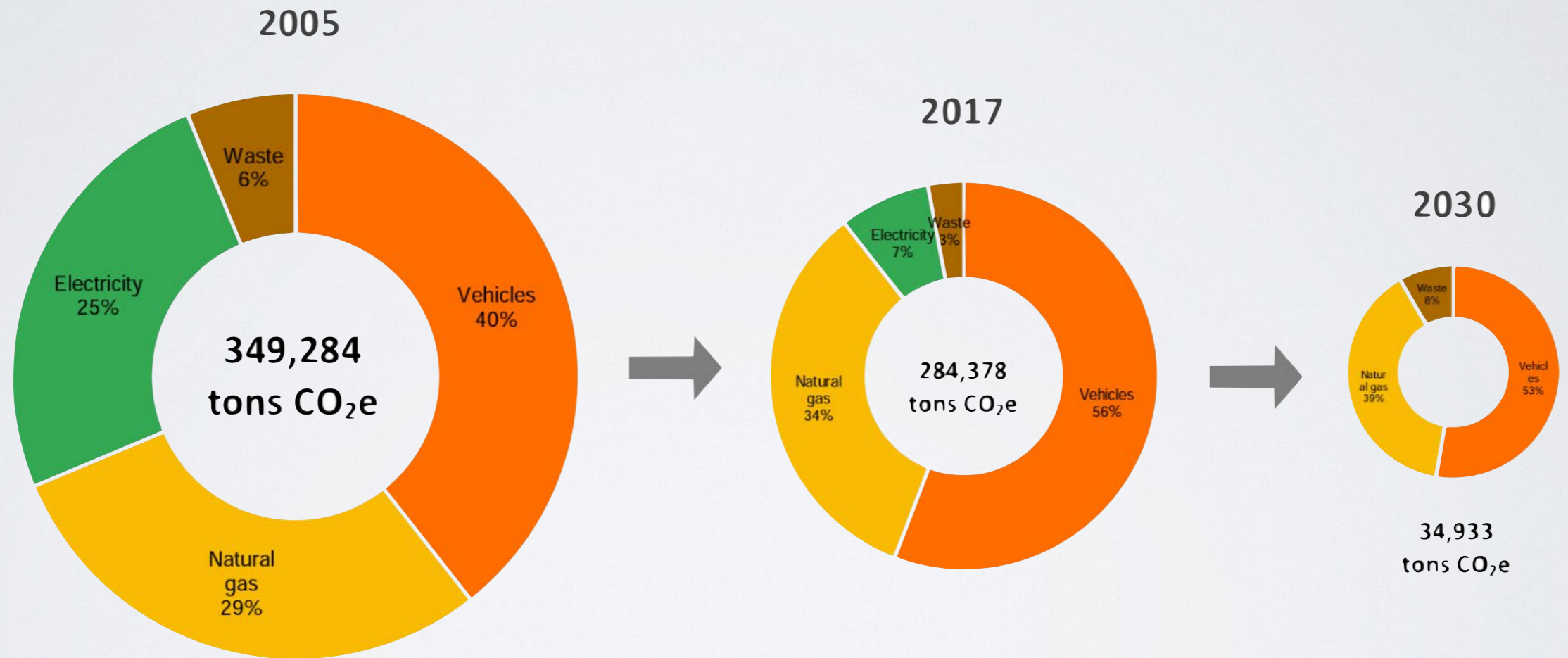
Source: CA Air Resources Board, California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017,
https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/pubs/reports/2000_2017/ghg_inventory_trends_00-17.pdf

MENLO PARK'S CAP GOAL

On December 10th, Menlo Park's City Council expressed support for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030:

- **90%** reduction in GHG emissions by **2030**
- **10%** of GHG sequestered through direct carbon removal

THE CHALLENGE



WE HAVE A PLAN

- EQC's Climate Action Plan Subcommittee (inc. a Stanford scientist, a 37-yr veteran of the utility industry and a business person) has spent over 1,000 hours researching and drafting a Climate Action Plan for Menlo Park
- Plan reduces risk from Sea Level Rise through bold leadership...our only hope
- As with COVID, early action is CRITICAL to saving our local community and economy
- EQC to review - June 24 and make recommendation to Council
- Council to review - July 14

PRE-COVID PLAN

- Included actions suggested by EQC & staff
- Read dozens of CAPs from other cities
- Evaluated actions for:
 - Potential GHG reductions both in MP and statewide
 - Staff resources required
 - City's cost to implement
 - Out-of-pocket expenses for community members
 - Political feasibility
 - Potential for replication by other cities

PRE-COVID PLAN: 3 OPTIONS

Bold Plan	Moderate Plan	Go Slow Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few bold actions -22 • One-year implementation • Achieves goal of Zero by 2030 • Less \$ now (staff resources) • Less \$ later (lower sea walls) • Subject to opposition • Less human suffering • Regional leadership role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many moderate actions -77 • Three-year implementation • Makes progress toward goal of Zero by 2030 • More \$ now (staff resources) • Some \$ later (sea walls) • Subject to some opposition • Some human suffering • Regional leadership role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No proactive actions • No specific implementation time • Falls well short of Zero by 2030 goal • Less \$ now (staff resources) • More \$ later (high sea walls) • Subject to some opposition • More human suffering • No regional leadership role
<p>6 FTEs for 1 year</p>	<p>6 FTEs for 3 years</p>	<p>Unknown # of FTEs</p>

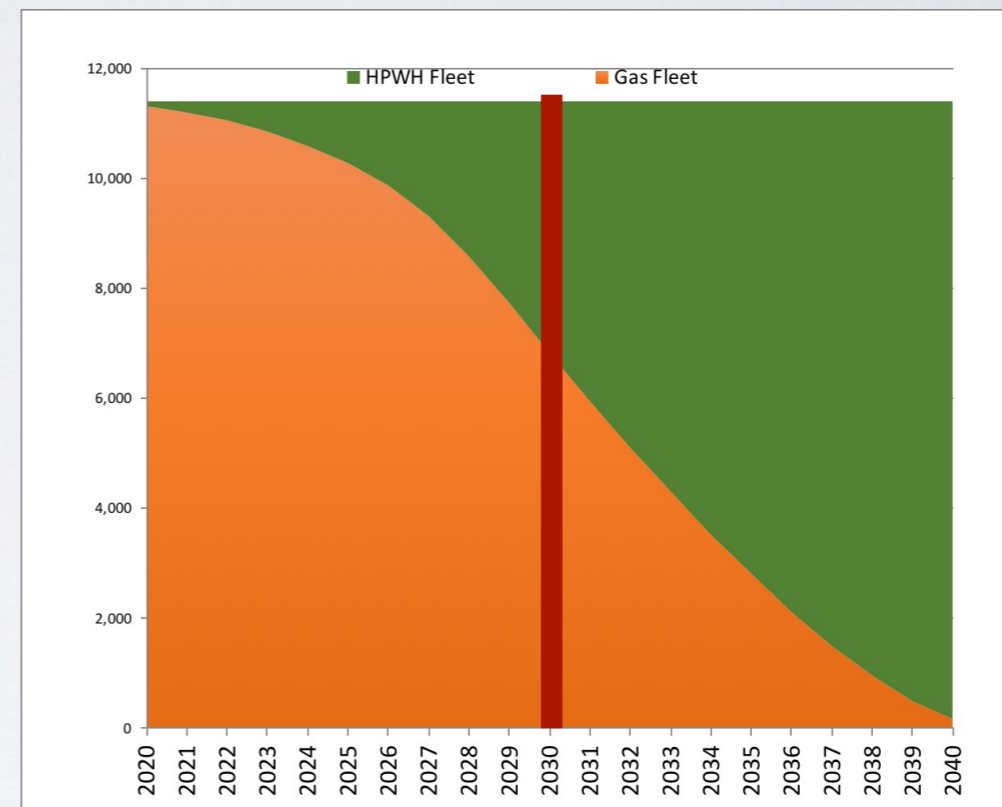
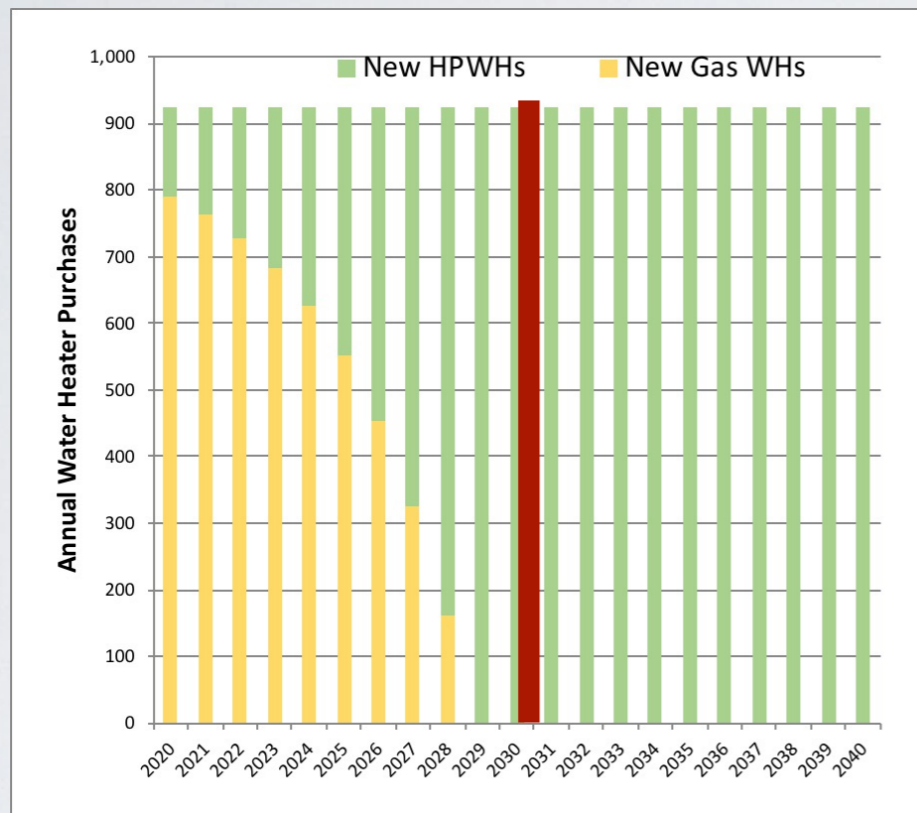
POST-COVID PLAN

- New context:
 - Economic recession
 - \$12.7 million City budget shortfall
 - More concern about lung health
 - Greater awareness of racial inequity
- New Plan:
 - Streamlined from 77 actions to 6 most critical actions
 - Less costly
 - Projected to achieve 47% GHG reductions vs. 90% by 2030
 - More analysis of the cost of inaction
 - Assumes additional actions will be funded, perhaps as soon as next year

THE PLAN

Action	#	Description	2030 GHG Reduction (tons/yr)	Estimated Staff Time Req'd (hrs)	Est. Cost to City
Convert 100% of existing buildings to all-electric by 2030	1	Two basic options: 1) Announce the “end of flow” of natural gas in the City by 2030 OR 2) Enact a “burn-out ordinance” requiring that when gas appliances expire, they must be replaced by electric (preferably high efficiency heat pump) alternatives; phase in large commercial, small commercial, residential; may require follow-on compliance ordinance as current permit compliance for residential gas appliances is low; will require follow-up “cash-for-clunkers” program to achieve 2030 goal; relies on PCE subsidies to reduce or eliminate cost differential; may require use of UUT funds to cover additional cost differential for low-income residents. Extend burnout ordinance to expiring air conditioners, to be replaced with heat pumps, eliminating need for separate gas heating.	1) 86,465 OR 2) 51,636	1,000 OR 1,500 (TBD)	TBD
Set a citywide EV goal	2	Announce and promote a citywide goal of making all new vehicles be electric by 2025 and track progress publicly on a monthly basis	7,120	150 (TBD)	TBD
Expand access to EV charging	3	Install or assist building owners in installing EV chargers throughout the City, siting them preferably where they will be used during daylight hours (when solar electricity is abundant on our grid) and where residents of multi-family housing can access them	7,370	2,000 (TBD)	TBD
Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 20%	4	Reduce VMT through a two-pronged approach: 1) Change zoning to encourage higher density (esp. for housing) near transit 2) Make the City easier to navigate without a car by accelerating implementation of the Transportation Master Plan with an emphasis on developing a clear network of protected pedestrian/bike paths throughout town	31,743	6,000 (TBD)	TBD
Eliminate the use of fossil fuels from municipal operations	5	Replace 100% of the following municipal assets with efficient electric substitutes for: 1) Gas pool heating equipment 2) Gas and diesel municipal fleet vehicles 3) Gas furnaces 4) Gas hot water heaters 5) Gas-powered gardening equipment	879	1,000 (TBD)	TBD
Enact a moratorium on building in flood zone until global emissions stabilize at net zero	6	Until global emissions stabilize at net zero, enact a moratorium on building in areas of the City that are predicted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and California State agencies to be under water by 2100. Consider requiring developers to pay into an escrow account to fund deconstruction of their buildings.	0	2,000 (TBD)	TBD
		TOTAL (assumes option 2 is chosen in action #1)	88,748	12,650	TBD

WATER HEATER FLEET CONVERSION W/ SUBSIDY ONLY

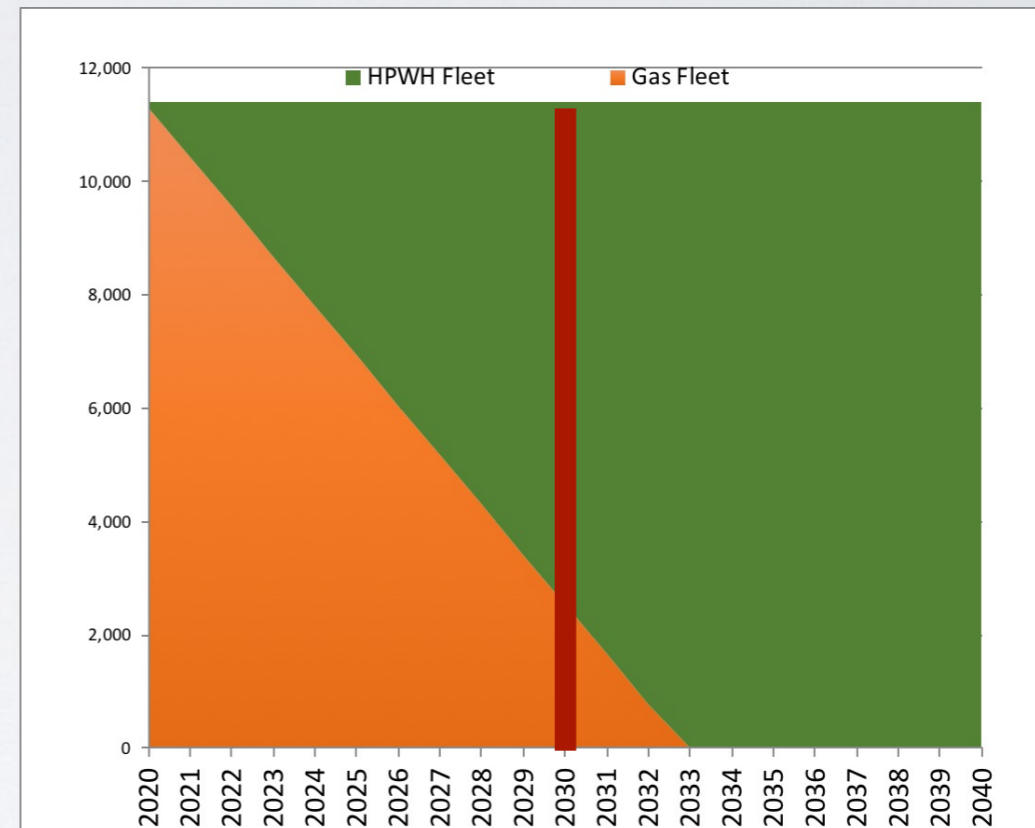
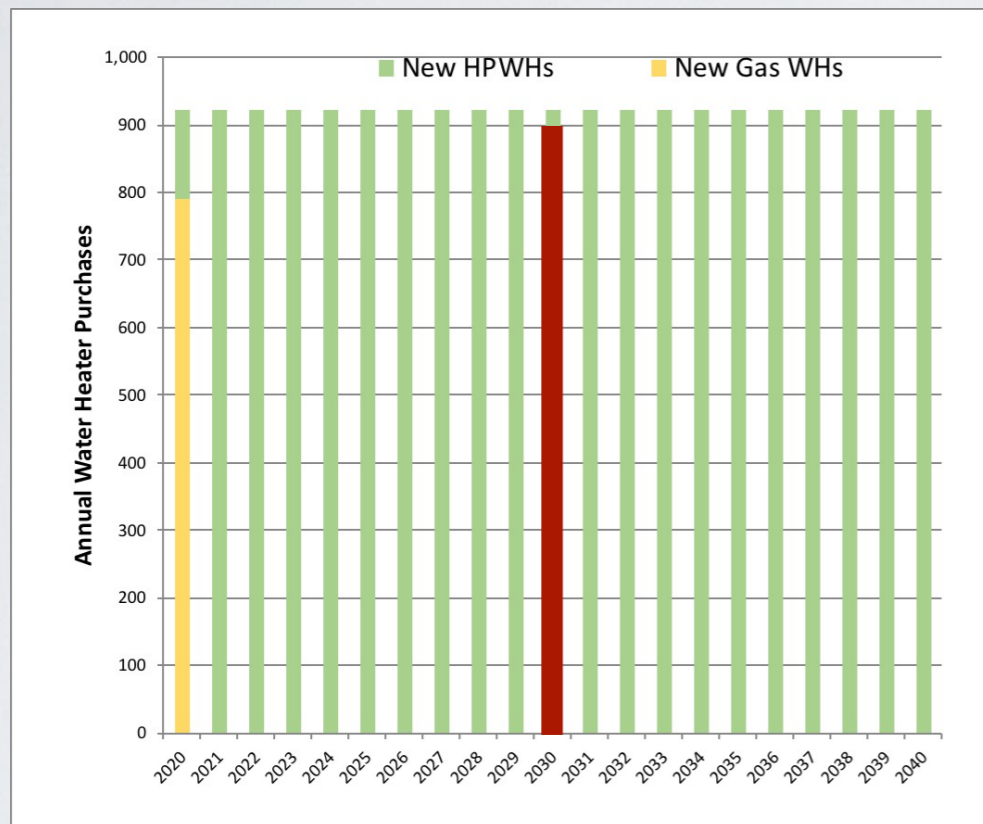


Assumes:

- Expected life of water heater = 13 yrs
- 10% conversion in 1st yr
- 30% increase in conversions each year thereafter until 100% of water heaters are replaced by heat pump water heaters

- Menlo Park does not reach its goal of 90% reduction by 2030

WATER HEATER FLEET CONVERSION W/ SUBSIDY + MANDATE

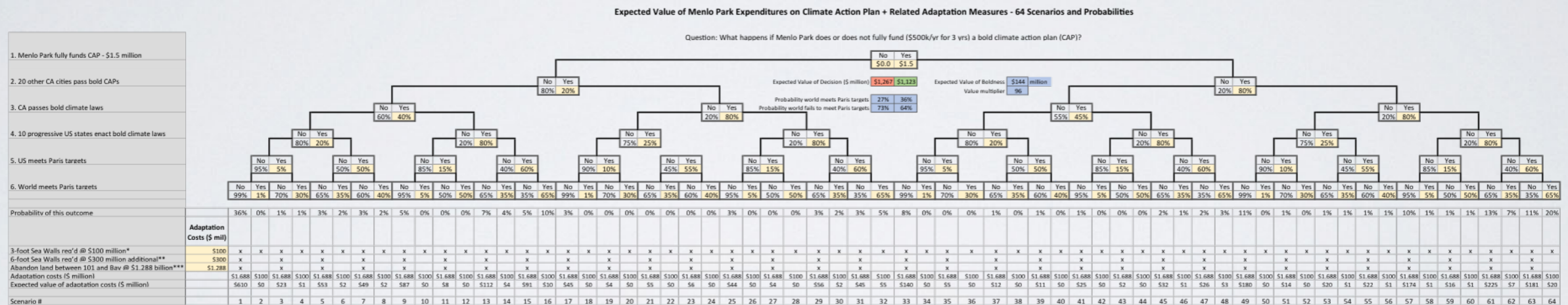


Assumes:

- Expected life of water heater = 13 yrs
- Mandate requiring electrification upon burnout starts in year 2021

Menlo Park gets close to achieving its goal of 90% reduction by 2030

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF BOLD LEADERSHIP



* Source: "Public Draft Feasibility Report, SAFER Bay Project Strategy to Advance Flood Protection, Ecosystems and Recreation along San Francisco Bay East Palo Alto and Menlo Park (Task Order 1) October 2016," p. 37/49, http://www.sfcjpa.org/documents/SAFER_Bay_Public_Draft_Feasibility_Report_Summary_Oct_2016.pdf
 ** Source: "Choosing a Future Shoreline for San Francisco Bay: Strategic Coastal Adaptation Insights from Cost Estimation," The Journal of Marine Science and Engineering, p. 12 shows that increasing levee height by 2x results in 4x increase in cost, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Daniella_Hirschfeld/publication/32011123_Choosing_a_Future_Shoreline_for_the_San_Francisco_Bay_Strategic_Coastal_Adaptation_Insights_from_Cost_Estimation/links/5a94759Daca2721405674b35/Choosing-a-Future-Shoreline-for-the-San-Francisco-Bay-Strategic-Coastal-Adaptation-Insights-from-Cost-Estimation.pdf
 *** Source: "County of San Mateo Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment, March 2018," p. 139, <https://seachangesmc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2018-03->

Expected value analysis shows that every \$ spent now on bold climate action results in a **100-fold savings** in adaptation costs later

EXPECTED VALUE ANALYSIS

- Asked initial question: “What happens if Menlo Park pay \$1.5 million to fund a bold climate action plan?”
- Assessed probability of 5 contingent and cascading outcomes:
 - 20 other CA cities pass bold CAPs, causing...
 - CA passes bold climate laws, causing...
 - 10 progressive US states enact bold climate laws, causing....
 - US meets Paris targets, causing....
 - World meets Paris targets
- Resulted in 64 potential outcomes (different routes down the probability tree)
- Calculated cost to Menlo Park of those 64 outcomes
- Compared expected value of funding the CAP (-\$1.27 billion) versus not (-\$1.12 billion)
- Funding the CAP with \$1.5 million results in \$144 million in expected savings to Menlo Park

SOURCES OF FUNDS

Staffing:

- Current sustainability staff can take on actions #1, #2 & #3, with support from City Attorney, Building Department, Public Engagement and a contractor
- For #4.1, request that Community Development assign resources
- For #4.2, request that Council unfreeze 2 Transportation Department positions for Transportation Master Plan and protected network of bike/ped paths
- For #5, request that Public Works assign resources to develop plan in collaboration with Sustainability staff (or outsource to consultant) and then implement
- For #6, request resources from Community Development, City Attorney and Public Engagement
- The above should be covered by current resources, General Fund or funds earmarked in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the CAP, currently \$400k

SOURCES OF FUNDS

Capital investment required:

- EV infrastructure
- Street upgrades for the TMP and network of protected ped/bike paths
- Electric replacements for municipal gas and diesel assets
- The above should be covered by current capital budgets or Council should amend the CIP to cover these items
- We recommend that City Council not use any of the \$400k currently earmarked in the CIP to cover capital expenditures related to the CAP

SOURCES OF FUNDS

Debt:

- If General Fund monies can not be identified to fund the CAP, we strongly advise the Council to issue debt or borrow money for this work
- Saving our community for future generations is a prudent use of borrowed funds

COVID LESSONS

- Heed warnings from scientists and experts
- Humans struggle to understand problems with **exponential** growth
- Acting **earlier** than seems warranted leads to outsized benefits
- Early **proactive** steps will be labeled by some as “extreme” or “alarmist”
- Those same early proactive steps will later be viewed as “**prudent**”
- The public can make **drastic** changes to behavior, if leaders make the case
- Our best leaders look over the horizon at coming risks and act decisively to **prevent** them

COVID LESSONS

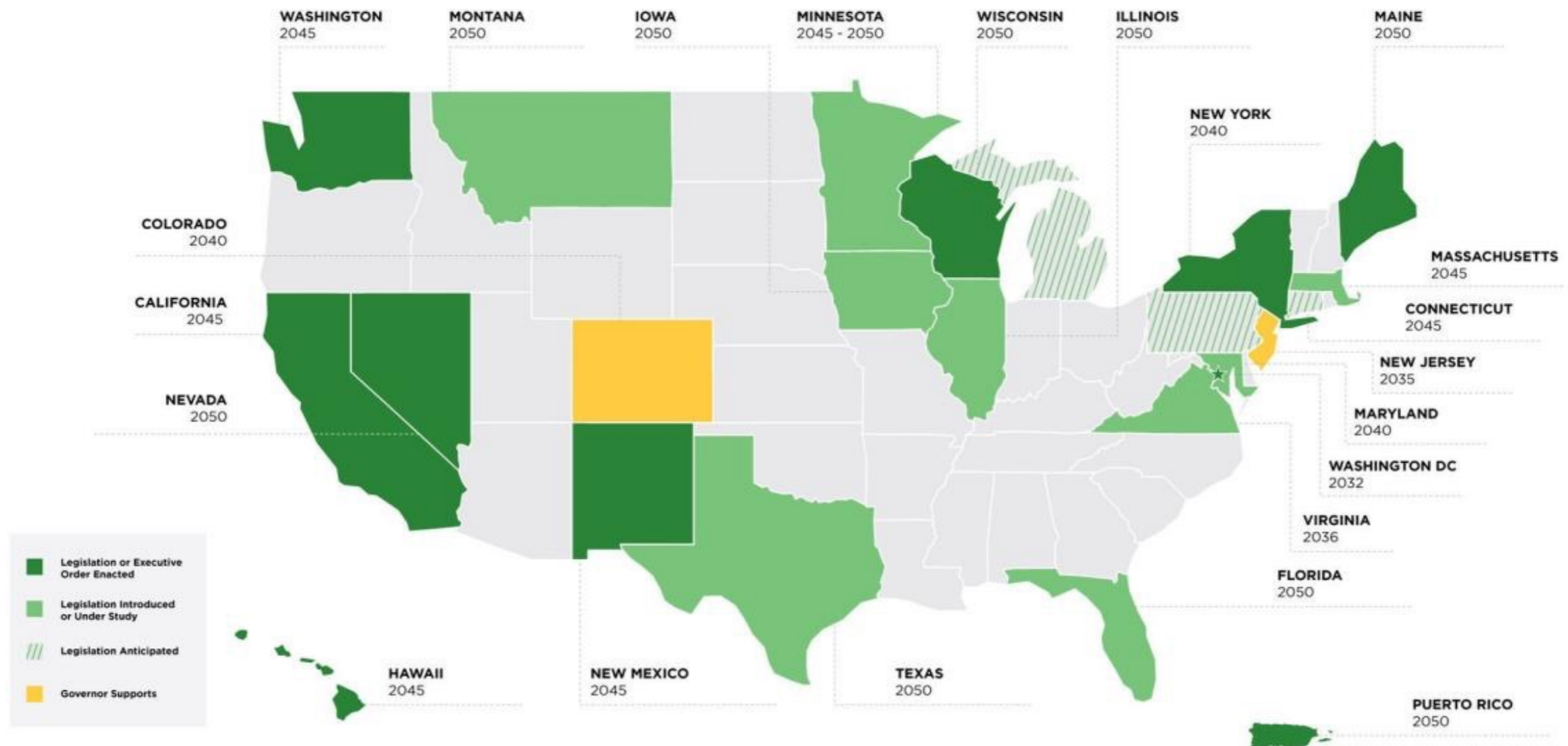
- We can not rely on federal or state government to save us
- Thinking we must choose between addressing the crisis or protecting the economy is **flawed thinking**
- If we don't act swiftly to address the crisis at hand, the **economic** consequences of delay will dwarf any perceived savings from delaying
- Mitigation measures (i.e. shut-downs) seem costly but ultimately save \$ over delaying or adaptation measures alone
- Every day of inaction is **costly** both in terms of economics and lives lost

ANOTHER COVID LESSON

Leadership matters. Those who lead prove that it can be done and provide a valuable template that others will follow:

- South Korea showed us that testing and contact tracing works
- California showed other US states that sheltering in place can work, if the contact tracing window is missed

STATES WITH 100% CLEAN ENERGY STANDARDS



Source: EQ Research Policy Vista™ Legislative Tracking Database as of March 15, 2019, California Energy States Alliance.

Leadership Matters:
California's policies copied by other states

REMEMBER COVID'S LESSON

If we don't act swiftly to address the crisis at hand, the **economic** consequences of delay will dwarf any perceived savings from delaying

REVISIONS TO DRAFT CAP

NEW CAP SUBCOMMITTEES

- Buildings
- Transportation: EVs and VMT reduction
- Building moratorium
- Marketing and public engagement

From: [Diane Bailey](#)
To: [London, Janelle](#); [Deborah Martin](#); [Tom Kabat](#); [Ryann Price](#); [James Payne](#); [Rebecca Turley](#); [Josie Gaillard](#); [Lucky, Rebecca L](#); [Chen, Joanna P](#)
Cc: [Mitchel Slomiak](#); [Chris DeCardy](#); [Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti](#); [Nash, Betsy](#)
Subject: Strong Support for Draft CAP
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 3:44:19 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

Dear Rebecca, Joanna, and EQC Commissioners,

I'm writing with enthusiastic support for the [Draft Climate Action Plan](#). Several past commissioners are copied here - I know they'll be proud to see this draft plan.

The Climate Action Plan Subcommittee has done phenomenal work creating a plan that matches the quality of what a large consulting team would produce, and remarkably, produced it in a much shorter timeframe. Although it may be disappointing to see the initial proposals for a stronger and more comprehensive set of measures pared back to meet this difficult moment, the draft plan wisely suggests revisiting those measures in future years as our economy and public health recover.

The remaining core measures in the draft CAP are the strongest and most appropriate areas of focus – reducing fossil fuels, which will also improve air quality and health. I also appreciate the additional information in the draft plan about how racial justice relates to climate and how the plan advances equity with the planned reductions in carbon pollution. It's worth noting that Menlo Park can achieve additional carbon reductions and improvements in resilience through collaboration with local agencies, such as Peninsula Clean Energy, and San Mateo County.

I hope the Draft CAP will move forward to City Council for discussion and potential approval on July 14th, as currently planned. Thank you for your expert work compiling a Climate Action Plan that addresses the urgency of climate impacts and unique vulnerability of Menlo Park.

Warm best,

Diane

Diane Bailey | Executive Director

MENLO SPARK

diane@menlospark.org | 650-281-7073

Visit us: www.MenloSpark.org & www.FossilFreeBuildings.org

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Climate Neutral for a Healthy, Prosperous Menlo Park

EV, PV & Fossil Free: Guides for Electric Cars, solar & Fossil Free Homes at: <http://menlospark.org/what-we-do/>

From: [Adina Levin](#)
To: [Lucky, Rebecca L](#)
Subject: Re: Menlo Park Draft Climate Action Plan Meeting Wednesday 4pm
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 2:07:13 PM
Attachments: [CMP_Email_Logo_100dpi_05d92d5b-e8e3-498f-93a6-d0da509bd60211111111.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

Hi, Rebecca,

Following are several comments and questions with regard to the Climate Action Plan draft being discussed at EQC today. Please forward this to the Commission.

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

First of all, thank you to the EQC for moving this forward at a difficult time during the pandemic recession, because the climate crisis is not waiting.

Second, thank you for including of VMT reduction as an important strategy, since transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. This is where I will focus comments and questions:

a) The target of 20% VMT reduction. What is the source of this number? This is lower than the target identified by a report required by SB150 to assess California's progress on SB350 Sustainable Communities Strategies. That report concludes that even if the state achieves its EV goal and the share of EVs increases by 10x by 2030, we still need to reduce driving miles by 25% to achieve our environmental goals.

https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-11/Final2018Report_SB150_112618_02_Report.pdf

b) The cost of achieving these goals. This is divided into two components, land use and transportation

Question: For land use, the city is already obligated to complete a housing element in the coming year that will zone for more housing. Siting that housing near transit, jobs and services will help us reach the goal. Are there staff resources needed above and beyond what is available for the housing element and other planning, that would be needed to be approved in a revised budget?

Comment. For active transportation, there are staff positions to implement the transportation master plan that are frozen in the current budget, that would need to be unfrozen in order to advance this measure. At last night's budget meeting, City Council members expressed a willingness to use up to a million dollars in reserves to advance goals that are expected to be coming forward, and they specifically referenced the Climate Action Plan. Council Members did not vote for a motion that set aside the \$million as a separate fund, but they all expressed the intent that they would be willing to spend reserve funds for upcoming priorities such as the CAP. So I would strongly recommend the EQC continue to include this element of the plan with a request to unfreeze the needed positions in line with the Council's willingness to use

reserves to advance the CAP.

Thank you for your consideration,
- Adina
Adina Levin
650-646-4344

On Mon, Jun 22, 2020 at 5:11 PM Lucky, Rebecca L <RLLucky@menlopark.org> wrote:

Good Evening,

I hope you are doing well. I wanted to reach out to you to let you know that the City's Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) will be making a recommendation on a new Climate Action Plan developed by their subcommittee in partnership with two City Council members and staff. The EQC meeting will be held on Wednesday at 4pm. You are welcome to join or provide public comment in advance of the meeting. Please follow the instructions on this link to join the meeting and to also view the draft Climate Action Plan:
<https://www.menlopark.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/3461?html=true>

The EQC's recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for decision that is tentatively scheduled for July 14.

Please Note: Each Climate Action Plan strategy would need to be developed, analyzed, and evaluated further before formal adoption by the City Council and would include community engagement. The community engagement strategy for each Climate Action Plan strategy would be determined by the City Council in July and August. The Climate Action Plan is intended to provide a framework for addressing climate change in Menlo Park. Approval of the plan would result in dedicating city resources, time and funding to bring each strategy to realization over the next couple of years.

Please feel free to forward to other community members that would be interested.

Kindest Regards,

Rebecca

Rebecca L. Lucky
Sustainability Manager

From: [Mitch Slomiak](#)
To: [London, Janelle](#); [Deborah Martin](#); [Tom Kabat](#); [Ryann Price](#); [James Payne](#); [Rebecca Turley](#); [Josie Gaillard](#); [Lucky, Rebecca L](#); [Chen, Joanna P](#); [Chris DeCardy](#); [Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti](#); [Nash, Betsy](#)
Cc: [Diane Bailey](#)
Subject: Re: Strong Support for Draft CAP
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 10:27:13 PM
Attachments: [FFD72D53-DF9C-4392-B6B3-71E5E73ED950f501.jpg](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

Dear Rebecca, Joanna, and EQC Commissioners,

Diane Bailey shared her excellent email of support with me and I simply want to add my personal support, as I endorse everything she says in her note. I read the original CAP that you all had hoped to move forward pre-COVID and the updated plan. While unfortunate that available City resources have diminished, you all have done a commendable job determining the most significant measures that the City will be able to prioritize, fund and staff. In addition, you have wisely included the full set of needed initiatives so that there will be a “playbook” available should federal and/or state funding for climate action initiatives become available in the coming years.

I assure you that Menlo Spark will continue serving as a strong partner to the City doing this time and will supplement City resources as we have done since our inception.

Many thanks for all of your efforts,
Mitch

On Jun 23, 2020, at 3:44 PM, Diane Bailey <diane@menlospark.org> wrote:

Dear Rebecca, Joanna, and EQC Commissioners,

I’m writing with enthusiastic support for the [Draft Climate Action Plan](#). Several past commissioners are copied here - I know they’ll be proud to see this draft plan.

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such as Peninsula Clean Energy, and San Mateo County.

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Warm best,
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Diane Bailey | Executive Director

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Follow us on [Twitter](#)

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Climate Neutral for a Healthy, Prosperous Menlo Park

EV, PV & Fossil Free: *Guides for Electric Cars, solar & Fossil Free Homes at: <http://menlospark.org/what-we-do/>*

Mitchel J. Slomiak

Vice Chair, Advisory Board
Menlo Spark

msslomiak@comcast.net

650-322-6349



Achieving Climate Neutrality as a Community

From: [Scott Marshall](#)
To: [Lucky, Rebecca L](#)
Subject: Letter to EQC for Draft CAP review
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 2:08:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

Dear Members of the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) subcommittee,

The depth of the CAP subcommittee's research and the wealth of ideas for this draft are tremendous. There are many carefully considered ideas and options for giving the City of Menlo Park various routes and timetables to obtain zero carbon output. I appreciate that the Moderate and Bold Plans both include carbon removal in their lists of actions, but they should go much further in recognizing the climate-change and other benefits of protecting trees, planting trees, and increasing the city's tree canopy.

As a former member of the EQC and now a member of the Canopy Advocacy Committee, I have observed the role of trees in urban environments and their immeasurable silent contributions. A living tree sequesters carbon just by growing and being a part of our landscape. Except for the initial cost of the tree and the labor to put it in the ground, a carefully selected tree gives us benefits with no hidden costs besides water until it is established. In addition to sequestering carbon, trees provide many other benefits. A healthy urban forest helps retain moisture in the soil, provides shade which reduces the urban heat island effect, stabilizes temperature extremes which can reduce the demand for energy-consumptive air conditioning, provides habitat for wildlife, helps recharge aquifers through water infiltration, and increases property values.

Beyond these tangible qualities that a healthy canopy promotes, trees play a crucial role in public health, both physical and socio-psychological. For instance, trees provide a feeling of connection to our natural world, which is especially important during these stressful times.

One of the recommendations from the Heritage Tree Task Force was to develop an Urban Forest Master Plan. This plan could set goals of increasing the urban canopy in all neighborhoods of Menlo Park. With a plan in place, the city arborist, businesses, developers and residents could see the projected targets for canopy growth and diversity. An approved master plan leads to coordinated planting of trees, which store increasing amounts of carbon over time. The city could partner with tree planting organizations, such as Canopy, to add more trees to the urban forest and educate the public about the importance of these trees. A plan could also ensure that trees are protected as required by the city's updated tree ordinance and that installation of rooftop solar panels does not result

in loss of existing trees. Integrating the city's Climate Action Plan and Urban Forest Master Plan increases efficiencies and strengthens both plans.

While Menlo Park is in the process of developing a guideline for reducing carbon in its near future, the city can study and assess surrounding communities' plans for carbon reduction. Currently, Palo Alto is updating its Sustainability and Climate Action Plan and adding specific Natural Environment goals. Mountain View has a Climate Action Roadmap and recently voted to increase its efforts and achieve community-wide carbon neutrality by 2045. A review of our civic neighbors' goals and ideas might lead to parallel planning and possibly joint cooperation for a regional plan of combating climate change.

On behalf of Canopy and myself, I recommend that Menlo Park incorporate an Urban Forest Master Plan into its Climate Action Plan to help reach its Carbon Neutral goals.

Thank you,

Scott Marshall