



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Date: January 17, 2024
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Michael Chandler, City Manager
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Subject: Climate Action Plan and Sustainability Programs Annual Report for Calendar Year 2023

Recommendation

Receive report and hold discussion regarding the City's Climate Action Plan and Sustainability Programs implementation during calendar year 2023.

Background

The California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) passed in 2006 and established a statewide goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In response to AB 32, the City adopted a [Climate Action Plan](#) ("CAP") in June 2009. The adopted CAP presents goals, principles, and strategies for reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions, conserving energy and natural resources, and preparing for a changing climate. Major focus areas of the CAP include transportation, energy, solid waste, water, and climate adaptation. The City's efforts during 2023 are largely focused on solid waste due to recent significant statewide legislation and available funding to support these efforts.

The City continues to make progress in support of the CAP through its sustainability programs, infrastructure improvements, and dedicated community member efforts. In the future, the City's sustainability efforts may be further improved upon with a comprehensive update to the CAP to address legislative changes and emerging trends.

Discussion

Following are key sustainability accomplishments and notable metrics from calendar year 2023 in support of the CAP, which are broken down by topic areas, including General Sustainability; Transportation; Energy; Solid Waste and Recycling; Water; and Adaptation and Carbon Sequestration:

General Sustainability:

1. Green Business Recertification of City Hall and the Police Department. Conducted an audit of City Hall and the Police Department with a Contra Costa Green Business Program representative. The City Hall and the Police Department successfully achieved recertification, which will be effective for four years from November 29, 2023 through November 29, 2027. The Green Business Program estimates approximately 3,145,198 pounds of CO₂, 201,211 kilowatt hours (“KWh”), and 127,224 gallons of water are saved per year based on measures completed.
2. Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge Participation. Participation in the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge grew from 250 in 2022 to 332 Martinez households in 2023. The Challenge is hosted on a third-party website platform and helps residents take action to reduce their environmental impact. Martinez participants have reported savings of 26 tons of CO₂e, 5,945 KWh, 719 therms, 768 gallons of gas, and 44,872 gallons of water in 2023. The Challenge is promoted on the City website and through social media.

Transportation:

3. Electric Vehicle Charging Station Upgrade at City Hall. The City installed a new dual-port electric vehicle (“EV”) charging station to replace an outdated single-port station. This upgrade increases the total number of charging ports available at City Hall to from three to four for both public and employee use. The City received a \$7,000 rebate from MCE Clean Energy and \$4,000 from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to support this project.

Energy:

4. Rankin Aquatic Center Pool Heater Replacement. The City has replaced the old pool heaters with new, energy-efficient heaters with a 96-percent efficiency rating and a lifecycle of 20 to 24 years.
5. HVAC Upgrade at City Hall. The City replaced three Air Handling Units and pneumatic building controls which were originally installed in 1994. The project was funded from \$766,812 in General Fund Infrastructure Reserves. City staff estimates 19 to 25 percent of total electrical savings will be realized from this project. The upgrade is expected to save the City between \$920 to \$1,210 per month in utility costs.
6. Solar and EV Charging Station Installations. The City issued building 425 permits for solar and electric vehicle charging stations, including 397 residential solar permits, one commercial solar permit, and 27 residential EV charging station permits. Further, the Community and Economic Development Department obtained a California Automated Permit Processing Program (“CalAPP”) grant for \$40,000 to assist with establishing online, automated solar permit processing, which is anticipated to launch in early 2024.

7. Promoted Energy Efficiency and Rebate Programs. The City continued to promote energy efficiency resources for single-family homes, multi-family properties, and businesses on the City's website and e-newsletter.

Solid Waste and Recycling:

8. Martinez Unified School District Recycling Project. The City completed the eighth year of the Martinez Unified School District ("MUSD") Recycling Project, in collaboration with New Leaf Collaborative ("NLC"), MUSD, and Republic Services. Various activities occurred through this partnership, including:
 - a. NLC provided eco-literacy lessons to over 2,500 students at MUSD elementary schools.
 - b. NLC also provided presentations for Martinez Junior High School and Alhambra High School virtually and in person. Following the presentations, students, parents, and staff participated in a waste sorting game.
 - c. Waste audits were conducted with Republic Services to evaluate program status and educational needs.
 - d. Green Team volunteers helped with sorting solid waste during lunch and recesses at John Muir Elementary School (100 student volunteers), John Swett Elementary School (18 student volunteers), Morello Park Elementary School (64 student volunteers), and Alhambra High School (18 student volunteers). Las Juntas Elementary School and Martinez Junior High School plan to start Green Team lunchtime waste station monitoring in 2024. NLC hosted or supported Green Team outreach booths at orientations, appreciation events, and provided staff and classroom presentations upon request.
9. Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting Education and Outreach. The City, in partnership with Republic Services, conducted direct outreach to community members, including:
 - a. The City's Sustainability Assistant completed site visits at 85 restaurants to inform them of Senate Bill ("SB") 1383 and Assembly Bill ("AB") 1276 requirements and provided outreach materials, including signage. The City collaborated with Republic Services for business compost and recycling trainings and additional outreach requests.
 - b. In collaboration with Republic Services, the City sent direct mailers to residents and businesses, providing an overview of SB 1383 requirements, sorting information, and additional program details.
 - c. The City continued to promote SB 1383 regulations and resources through social media and the City e-newsletter to provide tips for solid waste reduction and composting. Information is also maintained on the City website.

10. John Muir Earth Day/Birthday Event. The City hosted a booth at the John Muir Earth Day/Birthday event on April 22, 2023 and shared information with community members about sustainability programs and educational opportunities, including an upcoming home composting workshop. The booth included an interactive recycling sorting game and sustainability giveaways. City partners NLC and Republic Services also hosted educational booths. NLC provided environmental education and Republic Services offered kitchen food scrap pails to Martinez residents in attendance.
11. Composting Workshop at City Hall. In collaboration with Waste Sleuth and Associates, the City held a free composting workshop at City Hall on May 20, 2023. The workshop provided an overview of backyard composting, curbside organics collection, and requirements of SB 1383. The workshop was promoted at the City's John Muir Earth Day/Birthday Event booth, social media, email, and flyers at local shops. The City raffled a free backyard composting bin at the end of the presentation and provided free kitchen compost pails to attendees.
12. Compost Giveaway to Residents. Republic Services hosted two compost giveaways in 2023 for Martinez residents. Approximately 110 cubic yards of compost were given to 198 Martinez residents and 80 cubic yards were given to more than 200 residents, on March 25, 2023 and August 26, 2023, respectively.
13. Reuse Roundup Event for Gently Used Goods. Republic Services hosted the annual "Reuse Roundup" event, on October 28, 2023, at Light of Grace Korean Presbyterian Church. Approximately 800 pounds of blankets, clothing, housewares, toys, shoes, and bicycles were collected and repurposed for holiday gifting. This event helps keep usable items out of the landfill and into homes.
14. Extra Recycling Collection to Residents. Republic Services hosted the fifth annual post-holiday recycling collection event for extra cardboard and Styrofoam, on January 28, 2023, at the Republic Services office in Pacheco. More than 120 Martinez residents attended the event, recycling over 1,140 pounds of Styrofoam and over 1,000 pounds of cardboard. A second recycling collection event was held during the Reuse Roundup on October 28, 2023, with 75-100 residents recycling 1,100 pounds of Styrofoam and 840 pounds of cardboard.
15. Cold In-Place Recycling for Howe Road Paving Project. The City used Cold in-Place recycling for the paving project on Howe Road, which resulted in approximately 5,200 tons of asphalt being saved through reuse and recycling. In addition to recycling and reusing materials, City staff estimates that the Cold in-Place recycling method also prevented approximately 260 truck trips (18-wheel trucks) to the asphalt plant.

Water:

16. Eco-Kids Educational Workshops. NLC hosted 54 students and 14 youth mentors at climate-related workshops at Susana Street Park and the Kiwanis Club of Martinez. The

hands-on workshops included building bug habitats and garbage picker uppers, water cycle scavenger hunt, water conservation games, upcycled nature art activities, and compost in a jar with overarching themes of recycling, composting, reusing, and up-cycling.

Adaptation and Carbon Sequestration:

17. Contra Costa County Sea Level Rise Resilience and Adaptation Plan. Staff worked with the Mayor to submit a letter to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, endorsing the Contra Costa County Sea Level Rise Resilience and Adaptation Plan. The Plan will build upon foundational studies of sea level rise vulnerability along different sections of the Contra Costa County shoreline and establish a range of adaptation strategies tailored to the unique needs and priorities of the various communities along the county's coastline.
18. Recognition as "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation. The City planted over 200 trees in Martinez in 2023 (largely related to the new Traditions Subdivision). Planting and maintaining healthy trees helps sequester carbon. The City was recognized as a "Tree City USA" for the 20th year.
19. Tree Protection Regulations. On December 20, 2023, the City Council introduced Municipal Code Amendments to establish and enforce policies that protect existing trees. The amendments include clarifications to existing tree definitions, recommended trees, replacement standards, and a list of discouraged trees. The new regulations are anticipated to be adopted at the City Council meeting on January 17, 2024. The new regulations are in line with arborist and Arbor Day Foundation feedback.

Environmental Review

The Climate Action Plan and Sustainability Programs Annual Report is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 (Information Collection) as it was limited to basic data collection strictly for information gathering purposes, which does not result in a serious major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Fiscal Impact

None.

Attachments

None.