



SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Overview

The City of Santa Clara is committed to creating a sustainable city for its residents and businesses. The City strives to conduct its operations in a way that is environmentally conscious and promotes sustainability. The City is dedicated to collaborating with regional stakeholders to improve the air quality, water quality, and overall environmental quality of life for the residents and businesses of the City.

Guiding Principles

The City of Santa Clara's guiding principles for legislative advocacy include and are not limited to:

- Support the League of California Cities and National League of Cities positions on priority bills that benefit Santa Clara.
- Protect local revenue sources and prevent unfunded mandates.
- Protect and/or increase funding for specific programs and services.
- Protect and/or increase local government discretion.
- Advance approved policies such as the City's Statement of Values, the General Plan, or the Climate Action Plan.

Legislative Advocacy Position

Sustainability and environmental issues at the state and federal levels will likely result in new legislation and regulatory changes that could significantly impact the City. The City's monitoring and advocacy efforts will be geared towards ensuring that emerging legislation and regulations align with the City's interests in providing sustainable services to its residents and businesses through the following:

- Support opportunities to further reform the California Environmental Quality Act process to match California's very ambitious and accelerated goals related to sustainability and environmental protection, including Greenhouse Gas emissions reductions while protecting local land use authority.
- Support energy goals and policies that remain technology agnostic and commercially available, and oppose policies that choose specific technologies or energy procurement mandates that can lead to increased customer costs while discouraging innovation.
- Support legislation that removes barriers to the electrification of buildings and transportation, as well as legislation that provides regulatory streamlining of reporting and other actions that preserve local decision-making authority.
- Support a comprehensive approach to climate policy that optimizes GHG reductions across multiple sectors (transportation, electricity, buildings, etc.).
- Support funding opportunities and other financial incentives that facilitate the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure at multi-family housing complexes, schools, and other publicly accessible spaces.

- Support funding opportunities that will assist with the transition of the City's vehicle fleet to low- or zero-emission vehicles.
- Support efforts to provide flexibility in the transition of the City's vehicle fleet to low- and zero-emission vehicles, as to take into account the limited availability of vehicles, availability of specialized features, costs associated with the transition, power availability to charge electric vehicles, and potential reliability impacts.
- Advocate for the flexibility to optimize the portfolio of GHG emissions reduction opportunities identified in the City's Climate Action Plan and includes, but not limited to, new renewable energy and storage procurement, water conservation and energy efficiency, smart grid solutions, increase waste diversion, sustainable land use, increase tree canopy, building decarbonization, transportation electrification among other actions in the portfolio.
- Support efforts to streamline permitting and construction of compost and other facilities that enable jurisdictions to comply with SB 1383 and efforts to broaden procurement requirements for local jurisdiction to comply with SB 1383.
- Support legislation and funding related to recycled water state, regional, and local efforts to reduce imported water supplies and supplant the use of potable water and preserve local groundwater supplies.
- Support legislation and regulatory efforts that aid the City's Pretreatment Program, Fats, Oils & Grease (FOG) Inspection Program, and Operations and Maintenance of the sanitary sewer collections system.
- Support urban runoff pollution regulations, water conservation and recycling, and pollution controls that benefit the City.
- Support legislation and regulatory efforts that enable the City to collect fees to support the storm drain collection system.
- Support legislation, regulations, and funding to strengthen forest management and fire prevention activities and improve emergency preparedness and response. These include, but are not limited to, the modernization of vegetation and forest management practices for wildfire prevention and carbon sequestration and biomass production for energy, forest thinning, and other activities to improve the health of forests damaged by infestation of bark beetles, plant pathogens, drought, or other hazards that exponentially increase wildfire dangers.
- Support legislation and funding for resiliency to develop home hardening, defensible space at the home and neighborhood level.
- Support California Energy Commission (CEC) and California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) efforts to accelerate building and transportation decarbonization through Title 24 Part 6 (CalGreen) code with consideration of cost effectiveness studies.
- Support telework policies that reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion.
- Support transitioning from diesel backup generators to battery-based or other environmentally sustainable backup generators technology as appropriate.
- Support legislation that provides residents and businesses with incentives for undertaking decarbonization activities, such as replacing aging heat pumps, hot water heaters, and appliances.
- Support efforts to expand energy generation, distribution infrastructure and transmission infrastructure to enhance power availability that will help the City meet the pace of energy/load growth combined with decarbonization goals.

- Oppose federal or state efforts to permit additional oil drilling off the California coast to maintain consistency with the City's Climate Action Plan and efforts to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.
- Oppose legislation and regulatory efforts that create new reporting requirements that may be duplicative and resource intensive for local jurisdictions.
- Monitor energy related legislation including but not limited to that which impacts renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation, resiliency, smart grid solutions, energy storage, demand response, distributed energy and building and transportation electrification.
- Monitor legislation and regulatory efforts that may have a regional and local impact on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and advocate for effective and equitable approaches to emissions reduction.
- Monitor legislation and water quality regulations related to contaminants of emerging concern and advocate for funding for treatment of these contaminants.
- Monitor Lead and Copper Rule Revision legislation and support funding to better protect communities from exposure to lead in drinking water.
- Monitor research and regulations on Per-and Poly-fluoroalkyl Substances (PFASs) and their impacts on the environment and drinking water, and advocate for funding for treatment of PFASs.
- Monitor legislation and regulatory efforts related to recycling and solid waste and advocate for legislation and regulations that enable mixed waste processing and composting to remain viable pathways for waste compliance.
- Monitor legislation and regulations related to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and support efforts that are attainable and reflect local conditions and circumstances and oppose those that do not.
- Monitor legislation and regulations related to the San Jose/Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility (RWF), and support efforts related to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The RWF is regulated by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit under the Clean Water Act administered by San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. New regulations are focused on Contaminants of Emerging Concern, Toxicity, and Nutrient Reduction.
- Track the progress of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project and its proximity and potential impacts to the Regional Wastewater Facility, which Santa Clara jointly owns with the City of San Jose, and support regional planning and funding efforts.
- Track the progress of the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project and the Santa Clara County Subregional Shoreline Adaptation Plan and support associated regional resiliency planning and infrastructure improvements that provide coastal flood protection from a rising sea level. Support funding efforts to ensure that Santa Clara's infrastructure and community assets are considered and protected as the Bay Area plans and constructs resiliency projects.