



# MINUTES

## Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 02, 2020**

City Council Chambers – Teleconference and Electronic Means  
1 Civic Center Drive, San Marcos, CA 92069

### **CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:31 p.m. Planning Commission Chair Flodine called the meeting to order.

### **Chair Flodine made the following statement:**

Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020, and Executive Order N 33-20 dated March 19, 2020, issued with respect to COVID-19 pandemic, this Planning Commission meeting will be conducted utilizing teleconferencing and electronic mean. In the interest of reducing the spread of COVID-19, members of the public may only call in to hear the meeting and may not be present in the Council Chamber.

To submit a public comment at this Planning Commission meeting, please email [Ghenderson@san-marcos.net](mailto:Ghenderson@san-marcos.net) and write "Public Comment" in the subject line. In the body of the email, include the item number and/or title of the item as well as your comments. Email comments on matters not on the agenda must be submitted prior to the time the Chair calls the Oral Communications item. Email comments on any agenda item must be submitted prior to the time the Chair closes public comments on the agenda item. Please be advised that all emailed comments are subject to the same rules as would otherwise apply to speaker comments at any Planning Commission meeting, and that electronic comments on agenda items for this meeting may only be submitted by email. Comments via text message and/or social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) will not be accepted.

The Planning Secretary will read all email comments, provided that the reading will not exceed three (3) minutes, or such other time as the Commissioners may provide, consistent with its ability to set time parameters for public comment at a Planning Commission meeting. If persons submitting their comments do not want their comment read out loud at the meeting (not to exceed three minutes), they should not "Do Not Read Out Loud at Meeting" at the top of the email. All emailed comments that were received by 4:00 p.m. today were provided to the Planning Commission members and included as "Supplemental Information" on the City's website prior to the meeting. Those comments received after 4:00 p.m. and prior to close of public comment on the applicable agenda item will be added to the record and will be shared with the Planning Commission members at the meeting.

Any presentations or materials provided by planning staff or applicants to be shared during this Planning Commission Meeting are available on the City's website.

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[www.san-marcos.net](http://www.san-marcos.net)



### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Norris led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### **ROLL CALL**

The Secretary called the roll:

PRESENT BY TELECONFERENCE: COMMISSIONERS: NUTTALL, MATTHEWS, NORRIS, FLODINE, OLEKSY, MUSGROVE, CARROLL

ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS IN AUDIENCE BY TELECONFERENCE: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Also present were: Planning Manager Joe Farace; Principal Planner Saima Qureshy; Deputy City Attorney Punam Prahalad; Principal Civil Engineer Stephanie Kellar; Senior Office Specialist Gina Jackson

### **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None were received by email or telephone prior to 4:00 p.m.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

#### **1. Approval of Minutes, 09/21/2020**

#### **Action:**

COMMISSIONER MUSGROVE MOVED TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM #1 AS PRESENTED; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NORRIS. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE.

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS: NUTTALL, NORRIS, OLEKSY, MUSGROVE, CARROLL
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS: MATTHEWS, FLODINE

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## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **2. Project No.:** PA18-0003/ND20-004 Climate Action Plan update

**Applicant:** City of San Marcos

**Request:** The City of San Marcos intends to adopt an update to its Climate Action Plan (CAP) to be consistent with the State's requirement to meet the Greenhouse Gas reduction targets as stipulated in AB 32, SB 32 and Executive Order S-3-05.

**Environmental Determination:** The City prepared a Negative Declaration (ND20-004) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Location of Property:** Various/Applies to all area within the City limits.


**Saima Qureshy, Principal Planner:** Presented staff report and PowerPoint presentation. A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a long range policy document or a roadmap that a City can adopt to show how it is going to reduce GHG emissions in the future. The CAPs are based on what the GHG emissions are for a baseline year, the emissions are then forecasted for a future year, a target reduction for emissions is identified and a list of strategies are included to achieve the target reductions. The requirement to adopt and update the CAPs is rooted in State's adopted GHG emissions reduction targets. AB 32 established the target to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 level by year 2020; subsequently SB 32 established targets for year 2030 which are 40% below the 1990 level and Executive Order S-3-05 which calls for reducing emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The City adopted its current CAP in 2013 which is also a mitigation measure of the General Plan's EIR. The 2013 CAP's baseline GHG inventory is based on year 2005. It includes GHG target reductions for years 2020 consistent with AB 32 and 2030 targets which are 28% below the 2020 levels. Since the City's 2013 CAP is not consistent with the State's 2030 reduction goals, the City initiated an update to its 2013 CAP. Partial funding for this project is received from SANDAG's Energy Roadmap Program. Climate planning includes three main steps. Step 1 is develop and maintain a CAP which includes preparing baseline GHG emissions estimate and projections and developing GHG reduction targets and strategies. Step 2 is implementing the CAP and Step 3 is monitoring the implementation of the CAP and reporting the progress made on implementation. As I mentioned earlier, the City is updating its 2013 CAP to be consistent with the new State requirements that set stricter GHG reduction targets for 2030 and to establish a longer vision for 2050 GHG reduction targets. The updated CAP includes an updated GHG inventory of baseline year 2012. It established target reductions for 2030 and includes a set of Strategies and Measures to achieve those targets. The CAP also includes an Implementation and Monitoring strategy. Preparing GHG inventory is the first step in developing a CAP. It provides details on sources and amounts of GHG emissions generated from activities within the City. The baseline 2012 inventory identified that the City generated a total of roughly 600,000 MT of CO2 that year. As you can see from the pie chart, Transportation sector contributed 54% of the emissions with Energy sector responsible for roughly 39%. Other sectors that were counted for GHG emissions were Water, Waste Water and Solid Waste. This graph here shows the BAU emissions, Legislatively adjusted emissions and the target reductions to be consistent with State's requirements. Light grey line shows the GHG inventory identified the emissions to be 600,000 MT in 2012, projected to go down in 2020 but then increase in 2030. These future projections are called BAU projections which just means

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what could happen if citywide activities continued without any intervention from the City, State and federal level. The green light shows emissions reductions for future years when state and federal regulations are applied or legislatively adjusted emissions. The orange line shows what the target reductions are based on State's requirements. 2020 target is here on this chart, roughly 4% below the 2012 level and the 2030 target which is roughly 40% below the 2012 levels or 82,000 MT. As you can see from the graphic-after taking into account the federal and state requirements, there still remains a gap to achieve the target reduction. This gap is identified as "local gap". This slide provides additional information on state and federal programs that result in GHG reductions namely renewable portfolio standards, solar policies, energy efficiency programs and federal and state vehicle standards. The CAP identified GHG reduction strategies based on City's jurisdictional influence, public input, best practices in the region and cost implications to the City. The GHG reduction measures are identified the categories of Transportation, Energy, Water and Waste Water, and Carbon Sequestration efforts. Emissions from Transportation sector came from burning of fuel from vehicles traveling within the City. The strategies and measures that target reducing GHGs from Transportation section include: increased use of EVs or alternative fuels; reduction in Fossil Fuel use and reduction in Vehicle Miles traveled. The measures in the CAP include: transitioning the Municipal Fleet to be fuel efficient, increase EV chargers in the City to promote transportation sector's transition to clean fuel, synchronize traffic signals and install roundabouts to facilitate efficient driving, develop Bike networks to encourage other modes of transportation and adoption of a Citywide TDM Ordinance and strategies that will result in increased use of public transit among others. Emissions from energy sector are generated from electricity and natural gas use in buildings in both residential and non-residential structures. GHG reduction measures included in the CAP related to energy sector include increasing the amount of renewable electricity citywide by 95% as supplied through the grid, require PV or solar panels in new non-residential development and requiring water heaters in new residential projects to be non-natural gas water heaters. Emissions from water category are generated because of the fuel that is used to extract, treat and distribute water, and emissions from waste are generated due to disposal of solid waste in landfills. Reductions in emission will be achieved through reducing the amount of water used outdoors and by increasing Solid Waste diversion through recycling and other similar measures. The CAP also includes measures that will result in sequestering carbon through planting of trees citywide. The specific measures include planting of trees on City properties and continuing to require that trees be planted with new development. In addition to identifying measures, the CAP also includes details on how each strategy and measure is to be implemented and monitored over the years. Each measure has a list of action items with responsible City Departments that will implement those. The CAP implementation time horizon is ten years. Prioritization of efforts is based on available staffing, funding and status of on-going programs. A detailed Cost Analysis is conducted for each measure and is included as an Appendix to the CAP. It should be noted that the estimated cost to implement the CAP in first five years is roughly \$4.4 million. The City hosted three public workshops when considering the measures for inclusion in the CAP. All three were open to the public. Information on CAP's development was provided and comments were requested through administration of surveys at the workshops and through the website as well. The comments received informed the staff of community's interest in the overall CAP development and measures to be included in the update. In compliance with CEQA, the City conducted environmental review for the adoption of the CAP. The Initial Study/Neg Deg and the draft of CAP was published for 30 days public comment from August 7 to September 7. We received 17 comments during the comment period – all were related to the CAP itself and not the CEQA document. All received correspondence and Staff's responses are included in the Staff Report. Most commenters asked for

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additional measures to be included in the CAP. In response, consistent with CEQA Guidelines, the CAP measures have been quantified and are sufficient to achieve the 2030 target reductions as established by the State's requirements. Future updates to the CAP may incorporate new or suggested measures to achieve reduction targets for horizon years beyond 2030. One comment letter had comments on implementation of the CAP through the checklist which will be required to be completed by all the development projects. Staff's responses to those comments are included in your packet as RTCs. Staff's recommendation to Planning Commission is to Recommend to the City Council approval and adoption of the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and update of the Climate Action Plan, Resolution PC 20-4894. This concludes staff's formal presentation and we are available for questions you may have. I also want to introduce our technical consultants who provided support in updating this Climate Action Plan. We have Ascent Environmental Inc. and Energy Policy Initiative Center (EPIC) available for any questions you may have.

**Planning Commissioner questions/discussions included:** Please confirm that these recommendations will bring us into conformance with the State ordered plan; the work that Vallecitos Water District is doing, installing PV within the City or their operations, wouldn't that help us with the numbers that we are trying to achieve and could we as a City join them and install more PV at that location; this is a good blueprint we can build on, it's not the maximum this is the minimum and putting a group together to oversee the Climate Action Plan is a great idea; the Climate Action Plan talks about funding for 2 full-time employees to kick this off, then it goes down from there over the years; was the reduction of time for the full-time employees for the five years; suggested the City get a grant writer to apply for grants to help pay for the infrastructures instead of the City paying for these costs; my hats off to everyone who has done all this work on the Climate Action Plan; this is a good start but it's not the maximum of what we need to achieve, this is the baseline; concerns with the 4.5 million cost; is the 4.5 million dollars coming out of the City's General Fund and spend less on something else in order to do this; we are in a constrained environment for the unforeseeable future; sounds like the City is going to have to spend less on other things like parks or other projects, or dip into our reserves in order to meet this mandate; are there financial penalties from the State if we don't comply; how do we report what has been done, is a search going to be done on how many registered electric vehicles are in San Marcos; has there been any cost or benefit analysis for private businesses, private homeowners, renters, or is all of this the city cost and not the cost for these private measures.

**Saima Qureshy:** Yes, we are being consistent with SB 32. The list of measures we have will take us to the target reduction that is established by the State of California. It could be possible to join Vallecitos during the implementation phase for the City to look at opportunity sites that will be able to produce electricity within the city limits. I do want to point out that we do have a reduction measure, which calls out that we should have 95% renewable electricity by the year 2030, which means that we may establish a CCE or come up with other ideas on how to generate electricity within our city limits as well. It is possible in the future for the City to reach out to other agencies and look at our own sites as well. We have not done the implementation period yet so we have not looked at what other potential sites are available to produce electricity in the future. When we looked at our numbers as a City as a whole, we looked at SDGE numbers and we looked at behind the meter or what PVs generated within the City. As more PVs come online in our city limits, they will produce more cleaner energy as PVs are considered 100% clean electricity, so it's good

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for us and it will help our numbers overall. We will not know the exact answer to that until we actually crunch the numbers based on data we collect in the future.

If I may, provide some additional background on the cost analysis and staffing implications. When we did the calculations of what the staffing impacts would be, we looked at each measure but we were being realistic. We know that we are not going to start implementing each and every measure from day one. We looked at the ongoing programs and the staffing needs for those and the easiest to implement because it is already in process. We will be kick starting some of the programs in year one and it will continue to year five. We only did the cost analysis for five years. We didn't look at years six to ten. The time horizon for CAPs is ten years so some of the measures are not going to get fully implemented. In the beginning, there is a need for more staffing time and as time goes on less staff is needed. There will be a combination of staffing expertise from different departments working on the CAPs implementation.

Yes, there is a 4.5 million cost for the first five years. The cost estimate is based on what measures we will be implementing in the first five years. It's based on staffing costs that includes salaries and benefits, consultant costs and capital costs. What it doesn't include is if there are funding opportunities the City may be able to take advantage of.

There are no financial penalties for not complying with the CAP, but it is a state requirement that we meet the state's reduction targets for greenhouse gases in the future. A lot of our future development projects are going to rely on the adopted CAP and will be able to tear off their CEQA analysis from the CAP. It also keeps the City competitive if we are going after some state and/or federal grants to have a qualified CAP on our books. We have a chapter on implantation and reporting. The plan is once we have the CAP adopted the City will have a citizens' implementation group to guide the implementation of the CAP in the future. There will be bi-annual reporting to the City Council and Planning Commission. Staff will come back every two years and present in a public meeting what the City has been doing to implement the CAP.

We will be reporting on the actual measures we are adopting As long as we show consistent implementation of the CAP to achieve GHG reductions we can show compliance with the CAP moving forward. The City will be performing outreach on the importance of electric vehicles.

The cost analysis that was conducted is called implementation cost analysis and we only studied how much it will cost the City to implement the CAP. Our measures that are included in the CAP are sensitive to not impacting current homeowners and business owners. There will be some costs to new development projects and those are not much different from our neighboring cities and what is happening in the region; for example, installation of PVs with non-residential projects. If a commercial project comes forward in the City in the future after the CAP is adopted, they will be required to install EV chargers. The cost is additional to how they are designing their projects today. The analysis didn't take in account the benefits to the City, because that is a different type of analysis called Benefit Cost Analysis. For example, the initial cost of installing PVs is going to be substantial for a City, business, or resident, but you reap benefits over time and those PV panels will pay off the initial cost over 10 or 20 years. Same for EV chargers. They are costly to install but over time they can generate revenue for a commercial property if it is open to the public, depending on the kind of rate structure they develop.

**Nilmini with EPIC:** We worked with the City to determine the initial cost as well as the staff requirements, and it is only for the initial 5 years. That is the kind of process and thinking staff came up with EPIC and that it would decrease over time. That was the conclusion that was reached and it may not be the same in every city. The cost analysis does not include the cost of the CCA and that is a big one.

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If you get Federal and State incentives then that would not count as far as the reductions accrued to the City itself. It would have to be in addition to what you get.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Note that all comments received are posted on the City's website for the public to view.**

**Planning Secretary Gina Jackson read the following comments received by email:**


**Comment from Matthew Vasilakis:** Dear Commissioners, on behalf of the Climate Action Campaign we urge the Planning Commission to strengthen the draft San Marcos Climate Action Plan. As we outlined in our September 7 letter to the City, we strongly believe San Marcos residents deserve a gold standard CAP. We recommend the following updates to the draft CAP: \*Amend the planning horizon to 2045 to align with state targets for carbon neutrality; \*Commit to a 100% clean energy target and Community Choice Energy; \*Set mode share targets for increasing biking, walking, and transit to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT); \*Commit to a 90-100% zero waste target; \*Include an equity section and develop a Climate Equity Index to identify communities most vulnerable to the climate crisis in need of immediate support. We thank the city staff for their hard work on this critical document, and the community for working on developing the strongest CAP for San Marcos. We look forward to further partnering with you on this effort. Sincerely, Matthew Vasilakis.

**Other comments received earlier in the day were responded to by staff and posted on the City's website and sent to the Planning Commissioners.**

## **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

**Planning Commissioner discussions included:** The plan has a lot of merit but have concerns about the ways we are going to reduce some of the pollutants, specifically prohibiting natural gas in new homes; we can't sit back and think the option of electricity is cleaner; most of the electricity we get arrives from fossil fuels, so there are ways to make natural gas much cleaner; I don't think putting electricity in all homes and SDGE going off as a primary provider, is a good tactic; this is a classic case where we have one hand making conditions for Climate Action Plan and the other hand throws out RHNA numbers; I would like to see more coordination from the State and be more realistic with our cities including San Marcos; staff has done an exemplarity job with pulling together a lot of very detailed information and presenting it in a digestible form; I think we are setting the right targets and we need to stay focused on meeting the requirements; it would be nice to be a gold standard but I don't see that as being the target; we need to have the flexibility to adjust our individual tactics; I like the recommendation as it stands; staff has done an outstanding job; it's a good plan and we need to roll up our sleeves and get some of this work done; this illustrates the problem of

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Sacramento making planning and other decisions on behalf of local municipalities; we don't know what our financial situation is going to be like or how much longer this is going to last; I would love to see more vehicle charging stations around, but I fundamentally object to Sacramento making decisions for us that we don't have a whole lot of control over and spend money we don't have a choice over; I'm intrigued with looking into recovery costs; I'm excited about being progressive as the City of San Marcos and hopeful this will bring more employment opportunities to San Marcos; we have growing hubs in the city and I'm excited that now the Intra City Shuttle System that was talked about before in the General Plan is starting to make sense; it's very important this CAP be a living document; good job to staff, the commissioners and the public for reaching out and sending in their comments.

**Action:**

COMMISSIONER NORRIS MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO CITY COUNCIL PC20-4894 AND ADOPTION OF THE INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND UPDATE OF THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE.

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	NUTTALL, MATTHEWS, NORRIS, FLODINE, OLEKSY, MUSGROVE, CARROLL
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	NONE
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS:	NONE

**PLANNING MANAGER COMMENTS**

A few items went to City Council on October 13<sup>th</sup> that went before Planning Commission previously; one was the Kaiser Permanente project that was appealed to City Council by Friends of San Marcos. That appeal was heard by Council and Council denied the appeal, approving the site plan and supplemental environmental impact report that was prepared for the project. The other item that went before Council on October 13<sup>th</sup> was the amendment to the Accessory Dwelling Units ordinance, which City Council approved. We are in the process of implementing that the ordinance. We are developing Frequently Asked Questions sheets and a table for our customers to help them better understand the ordinance update. In terms of upcoming Planning Commission meetings, this is the last meeting of 2020. I wish all the Commissioners Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays and to a better 2021. This concludes my comments.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Looking forward to face to face meetings in 2021; Joe and the rest of the Planning staff do an excellent job at putting these meetings together and my hats off to you; good luck to Commissioner Musgrove tomorrow; it's an honor working on this Commission in the City of San Marcos; I appreciate your professionalism; Happy Holidays to everyone; I would like to thank staff and the Commission for their time and looking

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forward to face to face meetings next year; appreciate everyone in this difficult time the effort you put forth for these meetings; appreciate the opportunity to serve as your Chair this year; our Planning Commission has a great balance of professionalism and humor; looking forward to seeing everyone around.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:45 p.m. Chairman Flodine adjourned the meeting.

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ERIC FLODINE, CHAIRMAN  
CITY OF SAN MARCOS PLANNING COMMISSION

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
GINA JACKSON, SENIOR OFFICE SPECIALIST  
CITY OF SAN MARCOS PLANNING COMMISSION

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