

DRAFT

Sunnyvale Sustainability Commission Sub-Committee

Proposal for FY2026-27 & FY2027/28 Sustainability Speaker Series



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Sunnyvale

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City of Sunnyvale and Sunnyvale Sustainability Commission

Goals of Speaker Series



- Educate, engage and motivate residents and businesses to take action on key sustainability issues in Sunnyvale
- Encourage diversity in attendees and speakers and involve youth in every event

Proposal City of Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series 2026-2028

Topic	Format: Target Audience
Sustainability and Climate Messaging Workshop	Workshop: Climate-interested folks and media-interested creators
Waste Reduction Fair	Fair: community-wide, general public
Resilience Hub Workshop	Workshop: Existing community (neighborhood, affinity) groups, individuals looking to connect
Cross-generational Climate Roundtable	Discussion Roundtable: Youth groups, concerned elders, and anyone in between
Food Fair	Fair: community-wide, general public
All About Plastic Fair	Fair: community-wide, general public



Proposal Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series – Sustainability and Climate Messaging

Title: Finding Your Climate Story

We all are on board with climate and sustainability, but it's still not something that most people see in their day to day. And while there are six *Hunger Games* films (so far) there's a dearth of stories in the world (in both nonfiction and fiction, humor and drama) about what it would look like to instead avoid the apocalypse.

This workshop would target both **people with sustainability stories to tell, and people who like to tell stories**. Whether you're starting a community group to speak to city council about an issue you care about, or are an (aspiring) podcaster or youtuber who wants to do some meaningful influencing, this event will help participants learn which messaging works, so we can all work towards a broader awareness of sustainability.

References: Alda Center for Science Communication https://www.aldacenter.org/professional-development/_climate
The Science & Entertainment Exchange <https://scienceandentertainmentexchange.org/>
Climate Town <https://www.climateproductions.com/>
What if we get this right? <https://ayanaelizabeth.substack.com/p/how-what-we-watch-changes-our-world> <https://ayanaelizabeth.substack.com/p/winning-the-narrative-battle-with>
8 hours and 25 mins network TV climate coverage in all of 2025 <https://www.mediamatters.org/broadcast-networks/how-broadcast-tv-networks-covered-climate-change-2025>



Proposal Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series – Waste Reduction Fair

Title: Waste is a subjective term

Waste is often defined as "matter out of place" or resources deemed useless by one person, company, or culture, while holding value for another. Through reuse, repurposing, or recycling, what is discarded as trash can become a valuable resource, raw material, or income source for someone else.

This fair would highlight different ways the community is adopting a circular mindset. We could have different booths focused on upcycling, crafting, clothing and materials swap, repair cafes, E-cycling, library of things, reusables instead of disposables, food cycle, composting, waste auditing, etc. We can also have booths focus on **why waste reduction is important**, showcasing the impacts of abundant waste. We can invite different Zero-waste store to attend, as there are many in the Bay Area, but few in the peninsula and south bay. This event will help educate residents on different ways to achieve Zero Waste and reduce expenditures.

Potential Booths: RebrandSkincare.com, TheSourceZero.com, Simple-SF.com, RightOnRefillery.com, EthosSantaCruz.com, MakerNexus.org, Scrap-SF.org, Habitat.org/Restores, rheaply.com

Supports plays: 4.A, 4.B, 4.C, 4.D, 4.E, 5.F



Proposal City of Sunnyvale Speaker Series – Resilience Hub Workshop

Title: Climate and Community Resilience Workshop

Our community faces many challenges these days, and how prepared we are for various challenges and emergencies will determine whether we falter or thrive. Resilience hubs are community centers and sites which are specifically prepared to help members of the community after an emergency or natural disaster, and are specifically called out in Sunnyvale's CAP Move 6.F.

In this workshop, community members would come prepared to work through how to use their existing resources and infrastructure to further promote climate and community resiliency in climate-induced hardships (heat waves, AQ events, floods) and its intersections with those working on other challenges (e.g. housing or financial insecurity groups, mutual aid networks). It would also be an opportunity to network with others in the community and with city staff to work through the most effective ways to implement resilience hubs and other resilience measures.

Potential Speaker: McKenzie Jones Resilience Hub Director, Urban Sustainability Directors Network

Links: https://www.usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn_2023_annual_report.pdf, <http://resilience-hub.org/>



Proposal Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series – Cross-generational climate roundtable

Title: Building cross-generation climate partnerships

Climate activists come from all walks of life, with varying backgrounds and ethnicities, and with varying age and experience. Cross-generational climate advocacy focuses on connecting people from different age groups, leveraging the strengths of both the youth and elders into effective climate advocacy.

This workshop would target people of all ages. The Bay Area is fortunate to have both organizations that mobilize elders and people over 60 for climate work (such as Elders Climate Action or Third Act) and organizations that mobilize the younger generations (e.g., Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action, FUHSD Climate Collective). While some of these groups are already collaborating, this workshop would bring in these groups, together with city staff and other community members. The sessions could include identifying shared advocacy topics, sharing successes and disappointments, and developing a plan to continue cross-generational collaboration and support.

References: <https://symposium.org/double-interview/>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9819550/>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667278222000621>



Proposal Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series – Get Dirty with Sustainable Food

Title: Get Dirty with Sustainable Food

Sunnyvale's FoodCycle program eliminates 2,500 metric tons of carbon dioxide each year, and it has reduced our landfill use by 18%. But what we eat still has a huge impact on the planet, and the impact is changing as our population continues to grow.

This workshop is for anyone interested in food in Sunnyvale and our surrounding communities, with special outreach to owners of restaurants and small grocery stores. We could have tables/stations for people to visit. Possible station topics are sustainable cooking options; resources on community and local gardening (including Sunnyvale School District garden programs); Sunnyvale composting workshops; the pilot program to provide reusable dishware to restaurants; and laws/best practices related to food waste, takeout practices, and more. There could be demos or a cooking competition featuring local chefs of various cuisines using induction cooking and vegetarian and/or sustainable recipes (e.g., sustainable seafood). Students in Sunnyvale Middle School's culinary elective could do a cooking demo. Some stations would be targeted towards kids (games or cooking activities).

References: TBD



Proposal Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series –

All About Plastics Fair

Title: The Last Straw: Rethinking Our Plastic Habits

Plastic profoundly impacts human life by offering convenience in packaging and manufacturing, yet it poses severe risks through environmental contamination and toxicity across its entire lifecycle. Plastic never goes away; it just breaks down into finer and finer particles. Humans ingest or inhale microplastics daily via food, water, and air, which are linked to cancer, reproductive, and developmental issues.

This fair will focus on all the different ways that we can reduce our reliance on plastics. The highlight of the fair would be a fashion show centered on clothing made with natural fibers, while highlighting the environmental impacts of synthetic fibers (PFAS) on the waterways, oceans, and landfills. We could have youth groups staff booths showcasing different alternatives to single use plastics. Our keynote speaker for the event would be focused on the current and future laws centered around the reduction of plastics in California.

Potential Speaker: Nick Lapis - Californians Against Waste, Dianna Cohen - Plastic Pollution Coalition, Bea Johnson – Zero Waste Home

Supports plays: 4.A, 4.B, 4.F, 5.D

Next Steps

- Proposal presented to Sustainability Commission for ranking and approval at March 2026 meeting
- Prepare Report to Council and provide to Council for approval
- Once approved, Environmental Services Department Staff arrange specifics (dates, venues, speaker engagements, payments, curation of videos and resources, introductory speakers) and publicize events (in coordination with subcommittee)
- Environmental Services Department hosts events
 - Zero-waste refreshments
 - Gather feedback to identify ideas for future events
 - Record events, broadcast on Community TV and post on city website

Questions and Discussion



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