



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

20-0127

Agenda Date: 2/27/2020

2020 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

CDD 19-08

TITLE Consider New Requirements or Policies to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from new Development Projects

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Community Development
Support Departments: Office of the City Manager
Office of the City Attorney
Environmental Services
Sponsor(s): Sustainability Commission
History: 1 year ago: Deferred by Council
2 years ago: N/A

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What precipitated this Study?

Accelerating Climate Action is a Council Policy Priority. Since 100 percent greenhouse gas-free electricity was made available through Silicon Valley Clean Energy in 2017, the use of natural gas in buildings has been the second largest contributor to Sunnyvale greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Given that Sunnyvale is attempting to decrease its GHG emissions, new buildings represent an opportunity to reduce the GHG emission levels in Sunnyvale and bring the City further in line with the goals of the recently adopted Climate Action Playbook.

What are the key elements of the Study?

The Study would focus on reducing GHG emissions on new construction by creating a program and regulations for the community to promote the construction of zero carbon buildings.

The Study may include:

- Identifying costs and savings to the City, developers, residents and businesses for constructing zero carbon buildings;
- Identify the benefits zero carbon buildings would have on the community and the environment;
- Identify standards or certification programs already being used by the City that may help further the goal of the study;
- Consult with Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE) staff, or other groups with expertise on the topic, to discuss potential standards, policies or regulations for new construction projects;
- Study the impacts the above measures may have on design, building, marketing and other costs of new construction projects, and identify measures (e.g., strengthened voluntary incentives) to mitigate their impacts;

- Consider voluntary incentives for existing buildings that make the choice to retrofit and become zero carbon; and
- Study the potential costs of implementing an outreach and education program to encourage adoption of zero emission building systems, including zero emission cooking technologies (e.g., induction).

Estimated years to complete Study: 2 years

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Moderate
Funding Required for Non-Budgeted Costs: \$100,000
Funding Source: Will seek budget supplement

Funding would be used to hire a specialized consultant; staff does not have the technical expertise needed to conduct this study internally. Funding may also be utilized to hire an outside source to aid in conducting effective outreach, and the necessary education.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs, including capital and operating, as well as revenue/savings.

EXPECTED CITY COUNCIL, BOARD OR COMMISSION PARTICIPATION

Council-Approved Work Plan: No

Council Study Session: Yes

Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Planning Commission, Sustainability Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Drop. This policy issue does not merit discussion at a future Study Issues Workshop.

- The City recently adopted its CAP 2.0 (Climate Action Playbook), which includes Decarbonizing Buildings as one of six major strategies needed to reduce GHG emissions by 80 percent by 2050. Within this strategy (Strategy 2) is Play 2.3 - Achieve all-electric new construction, which specifically addresses emissions from new buildings, with a goal of 100 percent all-electric new buildings by 2030. Further, the City plans to implement the following "Next Moves" (specific actions) from the Playbook in the next three years: Move 2.E - Evaluate code and permitting processes to streamline building electrification
- Move 2.G - Continue to incentivize energy efficient and high performance buildings through Green Building Program updates.

The City is examining the viability of streamlining for electric buildings (e.g., Reach Codes) as a part of Move 2.E. In line with Move 2.G, the City adopted revised Green Building Program standards in May 2019, which specifically incentivizes all-electric, zero-emission buildings. Given these developments, staff believes a study at this time is not needed.

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