

Sunnyvale Sustainability Commission Sub-Committee Proposal for FY2022 Sustainability Speaker Series



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November 2020



Sunnyvale

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City of Sunnyvale and Sunnyvale Sustainability Commission

Goals

- Educate, Engage and Motivate residents and businesses to take action on key sustainability issues in Sunnyvale. Tie into what is important to people, how the topics directly affect them, and what actions they can take.
- <NEW> Encourage diversity in attendees (and speakers) and involve youth in every event. Youth involvement could be in the form of outreach, hosting the Q&A, making an introductory speeches, etc.

2021-2022 Theme – Equity and Resilience

- Considering the events of 2020 and the ongoing work and challenges associated with them in the context of our approach to climate change, the proposed theme for the next series is **Equity and Resilience**. The individual topics relate to the theme and are relevant to residents and businesses in Sunnyvale.
- The following is a proposal for six events which can be ranked by Sustainability Commission.
- Events will be between July 2021 and June 2022 - every two to three months.

Report Introduction

This following proposal from the Sustainability Commission is for the 2021-2022 Sustainability Speaker Series (FY2022 Series). In line with the current Council Priority for ‘Accelerating Climate Action’, the series informs and inspires residents and businesses on sustainability topics. This proposal for the 5th year of the series will be coincident with planning for the 2022 update of the Climate Action Playbook Next Moves.

The proposed theme for the next series is “Equity and Resilience”. Events of 2020 brought these issues to the fore and made it clear that our actions to address climate change need to be equitable and build resilience. Equity and social justice issues were highlighted as the nation grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic and witnessed inequalities in society taking a disproportionate toll on low-income Americans, people of color, and others who were already marginalized before the crisis hit. The wildfires very close to home and across California tested our systems and infrastructure and showed us that our actions need to be flexible and adaptive to changing conditions. Six topics relating to this theme have been proposed of which four will be selected. Final speakers and dates will depend on speaker availability and city schedules.

Proposal City of Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series 2021 - 2022

Equity and Resilience (Page 1 of 2)

Topic	Event Title	Speaker	Title / Affiliation	Description
Consumption Emissions	The Emissions that You Purchase	Chris Jones	Director, CoolClimate Network /UC Berkeley	For Sunnyvale and many cities like it, the GHGs we emit locally are just the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of our climate impact! Learn about consumption-based emissions: those that mostly occur elsewhere as a result of our buying decisions here. Learn what drives our consumption-based emissions, how equity issues and consumption emissions are linked, and what your choices can do to make a positive impact.
Home Electrification	This Old Zero-Emission House: Climate Retrofits on a Limited Budget	Sean Armstrong (or other)	Partner, Project Manager and ZNE Design Manager at Redwood Energy	Sunnyvale's existing buildings account for about a third of the city's greenhouse gas emissions. What are the barriers that can keep property owners from retiring polluting appliances, and how can we overcome them? What are highest-impact actions you can take if you're eager to make progress, but you've got a limited budget, or are renting?
Water Resiliency	Let's Talk Water	Rick Callender	CEO, Valley Water	Where does Sunnyvale's water come from? How secure is our future supply considering the impacts of climate change? Are there threats to water quality? How is Valley Water partnering with Sunnyvale to protect against storm related flooding? What are the top priorities for the Office of Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Valley Water? What is 'Net Zero Water' and how can residents and businesses help achieve it? What roles do rainwater harvesting, graywater and onsite recycling play?

Proposal City of Sunnyvale Sustainability Speaker Series 2021- 2022 –

Equity and Resilience (Page 2 of 2)

Topic	Event Title	Speaker	Title / Affiliation	Description
Healthy Community	The Nature Fix	Florence Williams (or other)	Author of “The Nature Fix”	Research has shown that spending time in nature improves our mental and physical health. Likewise, lack of access to nature can result in sub-optimal health. In some cities historical biases have exacerbated inequities in access to nature and increased the heat island effect. What's the status of Sunnyvale's Urban Forest? How much will trees help the city reduce greenhouse gases? What successes have other cities had in implementing nature-based resilience solutions?
Sea Level Rise	Who Pays When the Water Comes?	Jeff Goodell or Jeremy Lowe or Will Travis	Author of “The Water Will Come”, San Francisco Estuary Institute, (former director, BCDC)	Some amount of sea level rise is expected, but how much is uncertain. Projections of ‘several feet in the coming century’ are only increasing as meaningful emissions reductions globally are delayed. How we navigate these 'uncharted waters' will matter. What are our options in terms of infrastructure, natural barriers, ecosystem services, financing, land use, and city services? How much will it cost and who pays? How can we build in equitable and resilient solutions?
Health and Adaptation	Well-adjusted: How to stay sane and healthy in a changing climate	Sona Mohnot (or other)	Greenlining Institute	Our climate is already changing and impacting our lives and our health. We have all experienced wildfire smoke creating unhealthy air quality, drought, and extreme heat events. We have seen flooding and wildfire destruction of forests and homes nearby. What are some equitable strategies we can take to adapt to these changes and protect our mental and physical health?



Proposal City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series – Consumption Emissions

Title: “The Emissions that you Purchase” // Or: “Are you Buying Climate Change?”

Speaker: Chris Jones*, Director, CoolClimate Network, a university-government-industry partnership at the University of California, Berkeley

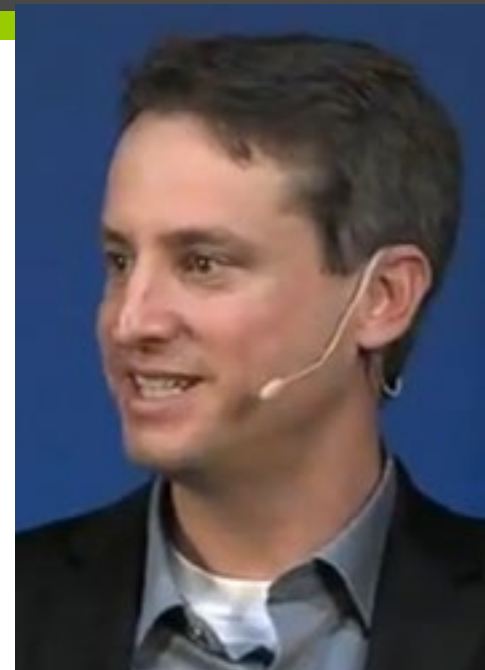
Content: For Sunnyvale and many cities like it, the GHGs we emit here locally are just the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of our climate impact! Come learn about consumption-based emissions: those that mostly occur elsewhere as a result of our buying decisions here. Learn what we know (and don't know) about what drives Sunnyvale's consumption-based emissions, how equity issues and consumption emissions are linked, and what your choices can do to make a positive impact.

Synergy with:

Next Moves 5.B

Resources:

**<https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/videos>,
<https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/calculator>**



* Speaker not yet contacted.



Proposal

City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series –
Decarbonizing on a budget

Title: **This Old Zero-Emission House**

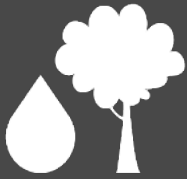
Speaker: **Sean Armstrong***, Partner, Project Manager and ZNE Design Manager at Redwood Energy (or other speaker TBD)

Content: **Low carbon building retrofit model for equity and affordability. Sunnyvale's existing buildings account for about a third of the city's greenhouse gas emissions. What are the barriers that can keep property owners from retiring polluting appliances in their houses and apartment buildings, and how can we overcome them? What are highest-impact actions you can take if you're eager to start making progress but you're operating with a limited budget, or renting?**

Synergy with: **Playbook Play 2.2 “Decarbonizing Existing Buildings”.** Incentives and rebates offered by SVCE, PG&E, BayRen



* Speaker not yet contacted.



Proposal

City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series –

Water Resiliency

Title: **Let's Talk Water**

Speaker: **Rick Callender* CEO of Valley Water**

Content: **Where does Sunnyvale's water come from? How secure is our future supply considering the impacts of climate change like drought and reduced snowpack? Are there threats to water quality? How is Valley Water partnering with Sunnyvale to protect against storm related flooding? What are the top priorities for the new Office of Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Valley Water? What technologies are coming for water recycling? What is 'Net Zero Water' and how can residents and businesses work towards achieving it? What roles do rainwater harvesting, graywater and onsite recycling play?**



Synergy with: **Playbook Next Moves 4.D (promote and seek incentives for making water conservation a way of life and set a water reduction target consistent with statewide standards) and 4.E (Partner with Valley Water to evaluate opportunities to expand water reuse).**

Resources: <https://www.valleywater.org/water101academy>

* Speaker not yet contacted.



Proposal

City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series –
Healthy Community

Potential Titles: "The Nature Fix" // "Nature and the City" // "Healthy in Nature!" // "Cure for our Ills" // "Tree Hugging - It's not just for environmentalists anymore" //

Speaker: Florence Williams, Author of "The Nature Fix" or other speaker recommended by SUFA or Canopy.

Content: Research has shown that spending time in nature improves our mental and physical health. Likewise, lack of access to nature can result in sub-optimal health.

In some cities historical biases have exacerbated inequities in access to nature and increased the heat island effect in lower income neighborhoods. What's the status of Sunnyvale's Urban Forest and how effective is it in keeping our city cooler? Is the tree canopy even across residential areas? How much will trees help the city reduce greenhouse gases? What actions can you take to improve your health and increase resilience and equity in Sunnyvale? What successes have other cities had in implementing nature-based resilience solutions to adapt to climate change?

Synergy with: Urban Forestry Plan, Active Transportation Plan, Community Gardens, Parks and Recreation, Complete Streets, Stevens Creek Trail Extension

Resources: <http://www.florencewilliams.com/the-nature-fix>





Proposal

City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series –

Sea Level Rise

Title: **Who Pays When the Water Comes?**

Speaker: **Jeff Goodell Author of “The Water Will Come”,
OR Jeremy Lowe (San Francisco Estuary Institute), OR Will
Travis (former Executive Director, BCDC)**

Content: **Some amount of sea level rise is expected; exactly how much is uncertain, but projections of ‘several feet in the coming century’ are only increasing as meaningful emissions reductions globally are delayed. How we navigate these ‘uncharted waters’ will matter. What are the options for adapting in terms of infrastructure, natural barriers, and ecosystem services, financing, insurance, land use, and city services? How much will it cost and who pays? How can we build in equitable and resilient solutions? What does ‘managed retreat’ mean, and how can cities best prepare? Who is leading the regional Bay Area approach?**

Synergy with: **Playbook Strategy “Adapting to a Changing Climate”
and associated Next Moves**





Proposal

City of Sunnyvale Speaker's Series –
Healthy Climate Adaptation

Title: Healthy Climate Adaptation

Speaker: Sona Mohnot, Environmental Equity Senior Program Manager & Policy Analyst at The Greenlining Institute*

Content: Our climate is already changing and impacting our lives and our health. We have all experienced wildfire smoke creating unhealthy air quality, drought, and extreme heat

events. We have seen flooding in neighboring San Jose, and wildfire destruction of forests and homes in the mountains surrounding our valley. What are some strategies we can take to adapt to these changes equitably and protect our mental and physical health? In order to build a resilient community, we must address issues related to gentrification, displacement, and racial justice. So how can we develop the green infrastructure we need for climate adaptation without displacing the residents we seek to protect?

Synergy with: Playbook Strategy “Adapting to a Changing Climate”

* Speaker not yet contacted.



Next Steps

1. Present proposal to Sustainability Commission for ranking and approval at November 2020 meeting.
2. Prepare Report to Council and provide to Council for approval.
3. 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)
4. Environmental Services Department hosts events.
 - Zero-waste refreshments (if in person)
 - 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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