



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Eco-district Feasibility and Incentives (Study Issue ESD 13-05C)

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION ACTION

The Sustainability Commission considered this item on November 18, 2019.

The Sustainability Commission voted 6-0 (one Commissioner absent) to recommend that Council approve Alternative 1: Accept this staff report on eco-district feasibility and incentives; accept staff findings that a broad EcoDistrict program is not required; and, direct staff to evaluate the feasibility of identifying and potentially certifying the Moffett Park Specific Plan as an EcoDistrict. With this recommendation, the Commission added specific emphasis on developing targets and monitoring performance indicators for the Moffett Park area, regardless of whether the final decision is to certify it as an EcoDistrict.

Staff reiterated that having targets and performance indicators and tracking their progress are elements of the EcoDistricts protocol and would be part of what is evaluated within staff's recommended Alternative 1.

The Sustainability Commission also voted 6-0 (one Commissioner absent) to recommend that the City use the experience of the Moffett Park EcoDistrict approach to consider how it may strengthen or develop targets and indicators, as well as processes for monitoring performance, for future land use planning initiatives.

Staff concludes that it is premature to determine whether the performance monitoring outcomes of the Moffett Park EcoDistrict evaluation would be scalable to other areas of Sunnyvale and under what circumstances. More study would be needed. Staff has included Alternative 3 to reflect the Sustainability Commission recommendation.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Accept this staff report on eco-district feasibility and incentives; staff findings that a broad EcoDistrict program is not required; and, direct staff to evaluate the feasibility of identifying and potentially certifying the Moffett Park Specific Plan as an EcoDistrict.
2. Direct staff to return to Council with an estimate of resource needs to complete Phase 2 of the

Study Issue (described in Attachment 1).

3. Direct staff to return to Council after completion of the Moffett Park Specific Plan EcoDistrict evaluation with an estimate of the resources needed to evaluate how the City may strengthen or develop targets and indicators, as well as processes for monitoring performance, for future land use planning initiatives.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Accept this staff report on eco-district feasibility and incentives; staff findings that a broad EcoDistrict program is not required; and, direct staff to evaluate the feasibility of identifying and potentially certifying the Moffett Park Specific Plan as an EcoDistrict.

Staff does not recommend Alternative 2. Study Issue ESD 13-05C was ranked by the City Council during the 2017 session to proceed with a staff assessment (called Phase 1) and return with a recommendation on whether to proceed with Phase 2, which contemplated a consultant study to determine feasibility of eco-district implementation in Sunnyvale and incentives the City could offer to developers. Staff's findings concluded that a broad program is not warranted and that additional investment in a consultant study is not needed.

Staff does not recommend Alternative 3 at this time, as it is premature to conclude the outcomes of the Moffett Park EcoDistrict evaluation. The topic of performance targets and monitoring for land use initiatives presents a new idea that would best be considered as part the Study Issue process.

Prepared by: Melody Tovar, Regulatory Programs Division Manager
Reviewed by: Ramana Chinnakotla, Director, Environmental Services
Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Director, Community Development
Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Report to Sustainability Commission, 18-0796, November 18, 2019 (without attachments)
2. EcoDistricts Approach Comparison to Sunnyvale Planning Approach
3. Case Study Examples
4. Excerpt of Draft Minutes of the Sustainability Commission Meeting of November 18, 2019