

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Approve the Fiscal Year 2020/21 Sustainability Speaker Series

BACKGROUND

In June 2016, City Council approved Budget Supplement No. 7 (Attachment 1) to create and conduct a Sustainability Speaker Series. The Supplement provided \$25,000 annually for five years for a total amount of \$130,855 (adjusted for inflation each year after the first approved budget) to hold two to four events each year.

The Series is led by a Subcommittee of the Sustainability Commission consisting of Vice Chair Wickham, and Commissioners Zornetzer and Kunz, which proposes the topics and identifies speakers. City Council approves the Series topics. Staff provides logistical support for implementing the events.

The FY 2019/20 Sustainability Speaker Series was approved by the City Council on April 9, 2019 (RTC No. 19-0386) and included four events:

1. Climate, Energy & Food: A Recipe for Action (Eugene Cordero, San Jose State University, and youth speakers from Sunnyvale), May 2019
2. Electric Cars Demystified (EVucation LLC), November 2019
3. California's Rise to Water Resilience: What Will It Take? (Felicia Marcus, former State Water Resources Control Board), January 2020
4. Less Traffic, Better Places: How Do We Get There? (Patrick Siegman, founder of Siegman & Associates), March 2020

Some have included hands-on educational opportunities, such as an electric vehicle expo and ride event, which preceded the lecture for topic 2. Events have been broadcasted live on K-SUN TV, streamed live online, and audio or video recordings have been made publicly accessible on the City's website.

The two FY 2019/20 events completed to date were attended by 97 and 120 participants, respectively. The feedback received in follow-up surveys from attendees, Councilmembers and Sustainability Commissioners in attendance has been overwhelmingly positive.

EXISTING POLICY

Implementing the Sustainability Speaker Series is included as Move 5.D of the 46 "Next Moves" (specific actions) in the City's Climate Action Playbook (CAP), adopted in August 2019.

This Series is also aligned with the Sustainability Commission's duties, which include advising the Council on ways to drive community awareness, education and participation in best practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

DISCUSSION

At the November 18, 2019, Sustainability Commission meeting, the Subcommittee presented a proposal for the FY 2020/21 Sustainability Speaker Series. The Commission prioritized the six proposed topics with the understanding that up to four events will be implemented.

The Commission prioritized the topics in the following order (Attachment 2):

- Sustainability goes to School - Youth focused
- Recycling - Beyond the Triangle
- What Moves You - Active, Shared and Electric Transportation
- California’s Carbon Neutral Future
- A Sense of Place - Retrofitting Neighborhoods
- Playbook Next Moves - Progress and Plans

The Commission voted unanimously to forward the FY 2020/21 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal to Council for review and approval (Attachment 3).

FISCAL IMPACT

The Sustainability Speaker Series budget covers speaker fees and travel costs, refreshments, video recording, advertising, and staff time for event planning and promotion.

The adopted Projects Budget for FY 2020/21, Project 832360, allocates \$27,315 for this program to cover up to four events. Staff will continue to monitor the budget and will work with the Sustainability Commission to ensure that the proposed Series is conducted within the approved budget.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the FY 2020/21 Sustainability Speaker Series topics as proposed by the Sustainability Commission, with the provisions that:

1. Implementation of up to four events will be contingent on speaker availability, staffing resources, and available budget; and
2. The Subcommittee will provide enhanced support to coordinate logistics for speaker panels when proposed.

Staff has collaborated with the Subcommittee during the development of the proposed Series and generally supports the topics selected.

Prepared by: Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager

Reviewed by: Melody Tovar, Regulatory Programs Division Manager

Reviewed by: Ramana Chinnakotla, Director, Environmental Services Department

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Budget Supplement No. 7
2. FY 2020/21 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal Report from the Sustainability Commission
3. Excerpt from final November 18, 2019 Sustainability Commission Meeting minutes