



# STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 10a

MEETING DATE: November 20, 2017

**To: Honorable Mayor and City Council**

**Date: November 20, 2017**

**From: Sigalle Michael, Sustainability Coordinator – (650) 558-7261**

**Subject: Annual Report of Sustainability Activities**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council receive a report summarizing the City's sustainability activities over the past year.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Sustainability Coordinator is tasked with supporting the City Council's priority to "exceed carbon reduction targets and develop strategies to address changing environmental realities." The Sustainability Coordinator works closely with City staff, Burlingame residents and businesses, and other local jurisdictions to implement the above-stated priority through the various efforts and initiatives summarized below.

## **DISCUSSION**

Over the last year, staff implemented the following programs and policies to improve sustainability in the City's operations and on a community-wide scale.

**Peninsula Clean Energy:** Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) is San Mateo County's new electricity provider that rolled out to all residents and businesses over this past year. Burlingame enrolled its municipal accounts into PCE last October; Burlingame residents and businesses were auto-enrolled in two phases, in October 2016 and April 2017. Electricity accounts were auto-enrolled at PCE's default rate, called ECOplus. ECOplus provides electricity comprised of 50% renewable energy content and costs about 5% less than PG&E's rates. Customers also have the option to opt-up to ECO100, a 100% renewable energy rate that costs about 5% more than PG&E rates. Burlingame opted-up all of its municipal accounts to ECO100 this past summer and has been encouraging Burlingame residents and businesses to follow suit. Opting up to ECO100 is the single easiest step with the greatest impact a person can take to support energy innovation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since its start last October, PCE has achieved the following results in Burlingame:

- 14,747 accounts enrolled in PCE (98%; 255 accounts opted out of PCE)
- 263 accounts buying 100% renewable energy in ECO100 rate (~2%)

- \$1 million in savings to customers
- 39 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions avoided, which is equivalent to removing 3,788 cars from the road for a year

Staff conducted various outreach to promote ECO100 participation and will continue to do so over the next year. Actions include: writing articles for the e-news; posting on Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor; presenting to interest groups; and coordinating with the Citizens Environmental Council of Burlingame (CEC) and PCE staff on marketing strategies.

**Bay Area SunShares:** This is the third year in a row that Burlingame has participated in the SunShares program. SunShares is a bulk renewable energy purchasing program that offers vetted contractors, free solar audits, and discounted solar costs to residents. Staff participated in the Request for Proposals committee to select the solar contractors and co-hosted a workshop with the City of San Mateo. Over 50 organizations region-wide are participating in the program; over 1,300 people registered online; and 84 solar contracts were signed. In Burlingame, 22 people signed up online, and one solar contract was signed.

**PACE Programs:** Five Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs operate in Burlingame. PACE programs allow property owners to spread the cost of an energy efficient project, or other upgrades, over many years as part of their annual property tax payments. Property owners are slowly taking advantage of this innovative benefit. To date, the HERO program has approved 14 solar and energy efficiency applications; CaliforniaFirst has approved 18 solar project applications; and Ygrene has approved three projects for solar, energy, and water conservation projects.

**Home Energy and Water Saving Toolkit:** The County of San Mateo provided Burlingame's two libraries with a Home Energy and Water Saving Toolkit as a lending resource. The toolkit is filled with devices and information to save money, energy, and water. Users check out the toolkit (just like a library book) and get to keep the devices for use in their home, such as an LED lightbulb, weather stripping, and low-flow showerhead. The toolbox is then returned, and Library staff restocks the kit for the next user. Staff assisted the Library in outreach for the Toolkit.

**BAWSCA Programs:** The Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) offers rebates and programs to cities to help conserve water. The City is in its third year of participating in BAWSCA's free sprinkler nozzle program. The program provides water customers up to 25 free water-efficient sprinkler nozzles to use on lawns. To date, 63 rebates have been redeemed, and 1,374 free sprinkler nozzles have been distributed. The sprinkler nozzles use 30% less water than traditional nozzles and provide a water efficient alternative for properties with lawns. Burlingame offers its residents other BAWSCA rebates as well including \$50-100 for purchasing high efficient toilets and \$50 for rain barrels.

Burlingame also took advantage of BAWSCA's landscaping classes this year and hosted a rainwater harvesting class in April. The instructor discussed the benefits of rainwater harvesting and taught attendees how to harvest, store, and use rainwater.

**Green Practices:** Staff continued efforts to increase green practices in the workplace, coordinating with Human Resources staff to introduce new employees to the City's green practices as part of their orientation process. Staff also prepared a Green Practices summary that was added to new employee orientation packets and posted on the City's intranet.

The City hosted a Go Green Brown Bag to share opportunities available to staff, including PCE and the benefits of opting up to ECO100, Bay Area SunShares, Commute.org's commute challenge, and the City's Green Practices summary.

The Sustainability Coordinator is a member of the City's internal Quality of Work Life Committee, which organizes the employee holiday parties and other social events. Staff strived to make the events zero waste by introducing composting and purchasing and using reusable, compostable, and recyclable supplies.

The City held its second Bicycle to Work Day breakfast to encourage staff to ride to work. Participating staff enjoyed a catered breakfast and bike-to-work freebies provided by Commute.org.

**Electric Vehicles:** This year has seen a lot of activity with electric vehicles (EV), specifically EV charging stations. Staff engaged in several potential opportunities to fund and install EV charging stations in Burlingame, specifically engaging with EVgo, Electrify America, PG&E, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

EVgo is proposing to install and operate a high-speed charging plaza in Lot Y in downtown Broadway. The plaza will contain three high-speed charging stations that provide complete charges in 30 minutes and the wiring to potentially install three more in the future. The charging stations are intended to service the area's many multifamily buildings. Charging access in existing multifamily buildings is often limited and complicated due to space, electricity capacity, and agreements between tenants and landlords. EVgo targeted the Broadway community for the area's high number of multifamily buildings, nearby commercial district, and easy access to Highway 101. The Broadway Merchant's Association and the Citizens Environmental Council of Burlingame have voiced their support for the project. Staff will be requesting the City Council's approval for the project in December.

Staff applied for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's *Charge!* grant program and was awarded \$10,000 to install four level 2 EV charging stations at City facilities – one at City Hall, one for the Police Station, one at the Corp Yard, and one for the Library. Staff is coordinating with the City's Facilities Manager to determine whether the grant is a cost-effective opportunity for the City.

**Bicycle Sharing:** The LimeBike bicycle-sharing company proposes to operate a six-month pilot program in Burlingame using their dockless bicycle fleet, which is considered the new wave of bicycle-sharing technology. The dockless system avoids costly dock stations and allows for greater flexibility, availability, and affordable pricing. The pilot program is being offered at no cost to the City.

Under the proposed agreement, LimeBike would be responsible for operating and supporting the bike sharing program including: launching operations, bicycle deployment, marketing, fleet management, maintenance and repairs, outreach, safety education, and customer support.

A local bicycle-sharing program would support the City's long-term sustainability and general plan policies to enhance bicycle accessibility and reduce emissions and congestion. It could serve as an exciting local amenity for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Staff presented the LimeBike proposal to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) in November. Two members of the Traffic, Safety and Parking Commission (TSPC) attended the meeting. BPAC members, including one of the TSPC attendees, provided preliminary feedback about the bike sharing proposal. Specifically, they were concerned about potential clutter from the bicycles, improperly parked bicycles, and lack of existing bicycle parking in Burlingame. Staff will have more information to share from the BPAC chairperson at the council meeting. Staff seeks the Council's feedback on the LimeBike proposal and plans to bring the item to Council in the future.

**General Plan and Climate Action Plan:** Burlingame's General Plan Update is underway, and staff is working closely with the Envision Burlingame consultants. The Sustainability Coordinator reviewed the draft general plan and provided the consultants with the City's municipal greenhouse gas inventory for the general plan's environmental review process. Sustainability related policies and goals are integrated throughout the draft general plan.

The environmental review process for the draft plan was initiated this fall. The environmental review will include an analysis of the City's greenhouse gas emissions, targets, and necessary reductions to achieve the targets. The analysis results combined with general plan sustainability strategies will form the City's updated Climate Action Plan.

**Sea Level Rise:** Multiple sea level rise efforts kicked off this past year. San Mateo County completed its Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for the County. The assessment analyzes the region's sensitivity, exposure, adaptive capacity, and consequences to sea level rise. Staff reviewed the Burlingame portion of the assessment and will apply the results in the General Plan Update and future planning decisions along the Bayfront.

Staff engaged with the Bay Area: Resilient by Design Challenge (RBD), which is tasked with designing sea level rise mitigation solutions in the region. The RBD is modeled after a similar challenge in New York that created implementable solutions for climate emergencies. The RBD team will be selecting ten sites in the Bay Area, with at least one in each county. Staff submitted an application for Burlingame's Bayfront for site consideration and coordinated a site visit with San Mateo County for the RBD teams to tour Burlingame's Bayfront. The RBD tour met at the Bayfront by the Marriott Hotel, and Councilmember Beach, Planning Manager Kevin Gardner, and the Marriott's Facilities Manager spoke about sea level risks facing the Bayfront. The RBD teams plan to choose the final design sites this winter.

Burlingame was invited to participate in a Stanford course called, "Disasters, Decisions, Development, in Sustainable Urban Systems," that is studying San Mateo County's vulnerability

to flooding. A graduate student team will be conducting a vulnerability assessment of Burlingame using new data methods. The City's Planning Manager will visit the Stanford class to view the results and provide input.

**Green Business Award:** In partnership with the Burlingame Chamber of Commerce, the City awarded its first annual Green Business Awards to Kent Putnam Automotive and Que SeRaw SeRaw. The awards were presented by Mayor Ortiz at the Chamber of Commerce's Annual Lunch on January 13, 2016. The awardees were also honored on Arbor Day when trees were planted in their honor in Washington Park. Staff introduced the Green Business Award program to recognize the environmental achievements of local businesses.

Staff coordinated with the Burlingame Downtown Business Improvement District to highlight green business practices by downtown Burlingame businesses in their monthly e-newsletter. This effort creates an opportunity for staff to engage with downtown Burlingame businesses and share best practices with the business community.

**Outreach:** Staff continues to participate in several community and regional groups including: the Citizens Environmental Council (CEC) of Burlingame, RICAPs (a monthly meeting of sustainability coordinators in San Mateo County), and Sustainable San Mateo.

The City's Sustainability web page is continually being updated and improved to inform and engage Burlingame residents and businesses. Staff also frequently posts content to the City's e-newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact.

Exhibit:

- Presentation