



**CITY OF PALO ALTO  
CITY COUNCIL  
Special Meeting  
Monday, March 10, 2025  
Council Chambers & Hybrid  
5:30 PM**

<b>Agenda Item</b>
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9. Quarterly Information Report on Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP)  
Implementation; CEQA Status - Not a Project



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

## City Council Staff Report

**From: City Manager**

**Report Type: INFORMATION REPORTS**

**Lead Department: Public Works**

**Meeting Date: March 10, 2025**

Report #:2412-3930

### **TITLE**

Quarterly Information Report on Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP)  
Implementation; CEQA Status - Not a Project

### **RECOMMENDATION**

No Council action is required. This is an update on Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) Implementation Progress through the fourth quarter of calendar year 2024. It is provided to give the City Council and public an overview of S/CAP workplan items status since adopted by Council in June of 2023.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City is implementing the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) to help the City meet its sustainability goals, including its goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2030 (the “80 x 30” goal) and achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Since the S/CAP was adopted in June 2023, staff has provided implementation updates covering progress in Q3 2023, Q4 2023, Q1 2024, Q2 2024 and Q3 2024. This update covers progress through the fourth quarter of 2024. Highlights of Q4 2024 progress include:

#### Climate Action

- As of December 19, 2024, 498 residents had either completed installations or signed contracts to get a new heat pump water heater (HPWH) through the full-service HPWH program or rebate program, with 84 projects applying for on-bill financing.
- As of December 31, 2024, 17 multi-family properties representing 814 housing units (about 7.4% of all multifamily units in Palo Alto) installed a total of 263 EV charging ports facilitated through the City's EV programs, with another 14 multi-family projects in progress representing an additional 779 residential units (7.1% of multifamily units) and 211 charging ports. Notable in Q4 2024 was the installation of 6 Level 2 chargers at Alta Housing’s 65-unit Arastradero Park Apartments, which is the first dedicated affordable housing property in Palo Alto to install chargers through the EV Rebate Program.
- Ten customers participated in the City’s Residential Energy Assistance Program (REAP) to receive energy and water efficiency improvements at no cost.

- As of December 31, 2024, the Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Program (CIEEP) completed 15 major energy efficiency projects with projected energy savings of 2,454,865 kWh. Twelve projects are currently being installed, with a projected savings of 2,706,636 kWh.
- The final draft of the Palo Alto Safety Action Plan, a comprehensive roadway safety plan focused on improving safety for vulnerable road users which will reduce vehicle miles traveled and encourage walking and cycling, is complete and will be presented to Council for review in early 2025.
- On December 16, 2024, the City Council approved the grant agreement with the Federal Highway Administration for the South Palo Alto Bikeways Demonstration Project to improve bikeways and crossings on East Meadow Drive and Fabian Way.
- The City received delivery of two electric vehicles - a Tesla Model 3 and a Rivian R1S - for the Palo Alto Police Department. There are now 35 EVs in the City fleet, or about 15% of the passenger vehicles and light duty trucks and vans.
- There are currently 111 City-owned EV chargers, with a total of 146 charging ports, an increase of 6 EV chargers and 15 charging ports from last quarter. Twenty-five of those chargers are dedicated to City vehicles, while the rest are primarily for public use.
- The Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee held four Working Group meetings to discuss the Whole Home Electrification Program Proposal, Funding Study Policy, EV Charger Needs Assessment Study, and S/CAP Funding Study preliminary Results.
- The inaugural Youth Climate Advisory Board (YCAB), comprised of 11 high school students attending schools in Palo Alto, met monthly and appointed three leadership positions.

#### Sustainability

- As of December 19, 2024, the percentage of customers who accessed the WaterSmart portal, an online water management tool, increased to 29%. Last quarter 24% of customers accessed the portal.
- On October 18, 2024, the City provided feedback on the Bay Conservation Development Commission's Draft Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan. The Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan (RSAP) guidance for Bay Area was approved at the December 5, 2024 Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission. The City will coordinate the development of its Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan to align with this and other regional planning efforts.
- On October 7, 2024, City Council adopted a resolution approving the Palo Alto Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), including Volume I of the 2023 County of Santa Clara Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and Volume II of the Palo Alto Jurisdictional Annex.
- The City developed a new innovative outreach tool for businesses offering waste reduction resources. This initiative is the first of its kind and provides tips and best practices for waste prevention in daily operations and procurements.
- As part of the new Zero Waste Living outreach campaign, the City published fourteen Zero Waste Minute weekly e-newsletters in Q4 2024, providing the community with

reduce, reuse, and repair tips, and essential tools to tackle the complex waste challenges our community is dedicated to solving.

## **BACKGROUND**

In April 2016, the City Council adopted the goal of reducing GHG emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2030 (the “80 x 30” goal),<sup>1</sup> and in October 2022 the City Council adopted the ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.<sup>2</sup> Staff, with community and City Council input, referred to the 2016 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) Framework and 2018-2020 Sustainability Implementation Plan to create a comprehensive S/CAP and Three- Year S/CAP Workplan.

In June 2023, Council adopted the 2022 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan,<sup>3</sup> certified the Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Report Addendum: Update to the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan,<sup>4</sup> and accepted the 2023-2025 S/CAP Workplan.<sup>5</sup> The S/CAP is an ambitious plan to reduce the City and community’s GHG emissions, while also guiding how Palo Alto uses land and natural resources in ways that ensure quality of life for future generations. The S/CAP aligns with several goals of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan.

All previous S/CAP Implementation updates can be found in the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) Program Reports section of the Sustainability Actions and Accomplishments page of the City website<sup>6</sup>.

The 2022 S/CAP and 2023-2025 S/CAP Work Plan align with one of the four Council Priorities for CY 2024: “Climate Change & Natural Environment: Protection and Adaptation”. In addition, there are several overlapping Council Priority Objectives, the status of which can be found in the 2024 Council Priority Objectives Q4 Report.<sup>7</sup> This report references the Council Priority Objectives in parentheses where applicable.

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<sup>1</sup> City Council, April 18, 2016; Agenda Item #10; SR #6754, <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/reports/city-manager-reports-cmr/yr-archive/2016/id-6754.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> City Council, October 3, 2022; Agenda Item #9; SR #14720, <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/city-council-agendas-minutes/2022/20221003/20221003accsm-amended-presentations.pdf#page=131>

<sup>3</sup> 2022 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan; [https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/sustainability/reports/2022-scap-report\\_final.pdf](https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/sustainability/reports/2022-scap-report_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Report Addendum: Update to the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, 2023; <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/city-council-agendas-minutes/2023/2023comprehensive-plan-environmental-impact-report-addendum-update-to-the-scap.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> 2023-2025 S/CAP Workplan, 2023; [https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/sustainability/reports/2023-2025-scap-work-plan\\_final.pdf](https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/sustainability/reports/2023-2025-scap-work-plan_final.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) Progress Reports, <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/City-Hall/Sustainability/Goals-and-Progress/Sustainability-Actions-and-Accomplishments>

<sup>7</sup> City Council, January 21, 2025; Agenda Item #13; SR #2501-3968, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=1d9f9f98-3d09-44e0-84d3-3ffb71def84c>

## ANALYSIS

The City is committed to a sustainable future. The City owns, operates, and maintains a full-service utilities portfolio that provides electric, natural gas, fiber, water, refuse, and wastewater services to residents and businesses in Palo Alto. Palo Alto's continued leadership in advancing sustainability commitments has succeeded mainly because of the continued collaboration of community stakeholders, City departments, and the leadership of the City Council.

The S/CAP Goals and Key Actions are divided into eight areas, four of which are climate-focused and include actions to achieve the City's 80 x 30 and carbon neutrality by 2030 goals (Climate Action, Energy, Electric Vehicles, and Mobility) and four of which are focused on actions that create a sustainable natural environment and adapting to a warming climate (Water, Climate Adaptation and Sea Level Rise, Natural Environment, and Zero Waste). The Work Plan is similarly divided between climate-focused and sustainability-focused priorities.

There are 23 Council Priority Objectives in the 2024 Council Priority Area Climate Change and The Natural Environment: Protection & Adaptation (CC&NE). This report addresses 18 of those Council Priority Objectives, as well as 2 in Council Priority Area Community Health, Safety, Wellness, and Belonging (CHSW&B), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: 2024 Council Priority Objectives Addressed in the S/CAP Quarterly Report	
Number	Council Priority Objective
<i>Climate Change and the Natural Environment: Protection &amp; Adaptation (CC&amp;NE)</i>	
Climate Change Protection	
CC&NE 14	Conduct community engagement and data collection and analysis to develop a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan for Council approval in 2024
CC&NE 15	Continue community engagement efforts to inform the update and receive Council feedback on the 2025 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) characteristics in preparation for next steps including environmental review and adoption in 2025
CC&NE 16	Complete initial pilot area of electric grid modernization
CC&NE 18	Continue to improve the Advanced Heat Pump Water Heater Pilot Program in preparation for a full-scale program
CC&NE 19	Adopt a residential whole home electrification pilot program
CC&NE 20	Refine existing HVAC pilot program to encourage participation as a next step toward a 2025 Council approved commercial rooftop HVAC electrification advanced pilot program
CC&NE 21	Develop and approve an Electric Vehicle Strategic Plan
CC&NE 22	Develop an EV Replacement Program for the City Fleet
CC&NE 23	Develop and initiate implementation of a Reliability and Resiliency Strategic Plan

CC&NE 24	Develop draft S/CAP funding study with Council input
CC&NE 25	Evaluate and report out Palo Alto Link pilot performance and consider continuation and/or expansion of future services
CC&NE 26	Begin community engagement to consider parking policy updates that enhance customer satisfaction, improve program sustainability, and aligns with S/CAP mobility goals
CC&NE 27	Amend local building regulations to establish a "One Margin" energy efficiency standard, to allow installation of natural gas plumbing while imposing more stringent energy efficiency and all-electric readiness requirements to all new buildings
CC&NE 28	Initiate the 2026 California Building Standards Code update, including the California Green Building Standards Code
CC&NE 29	Complete community engagement for the Airport's Long-Range Facilities & Sustainability Plan in accordance with Federal requirements and hold a study session with Council on the draft plan
Climate Change Adaptation: Flood Protection	
CC&NE 31	Advocate for the San Francisquito Creek Flood Protection capital project (Reach 2) through Council's JPA representation and any Council approvals involved
CC&NE 32	Complete design and right-of-way acquisition, obtain regulatory permits, finalize project funding needs including potential Council advocacy with State legislators, and approve construction contract for the Newell Road Bridge Replacement project
CC&NE 33	Coordinate with Federal and regional partners on a path forward exploring the development of a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan
<i>Community Health, Safety, Wellness, and Belonging (CHSW&amp;B)</i>	
Invest in Reliable Safety Infrastructure and Systems	
CHSW&B 70	Approve updated Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan
CHSW&B 71	Update Foothills Fire Management Plan

### Climate Action

Covering the S/CAP Areas of Climate Action, Energy, Electric Vehicles, and Mobility, this section reports on progress based on the Work Plan Climate Action Priority areas. This includes five priorities with various work items under each priority. This report notes where these work items have been designated as Council priority objectives.

#### P1. Grid Modernization

#### P2. Launch Programs

P2.1 Residential Emissions Reduction

P2.2 Non-Residential Emissions Reduction

P2.3 Citywide Mobility

P2.4 Municipal Electrification

- P2.5 EV Strategic Plan
- P3. Build Awareness and Confidence
- P4. Additional Emissions Reductions
- P5. Funding Needs and Sources

Separately from the work plan updates, there are two 2024 S/CAP-related Council priority objectives that did not appear in the Work Plan. The first (CC&NE 27) was to adopt local amendments to the State's Energy Code to replace all-electric new construction requirements which had been placed under an enforcement moratorium in February 2024.<sup>8</sup> Council adopted replacement local amendments that became effective October 4, 2024. The second (CC&NE 28) is to begin planning for the next building code cycle, 2026-2028. The City has already started the planning process, forming a staff team and completing an RFP for professional services to assist with the process.

#### *P1. Grid Modernization*

Electric grid reliability and resilience will be important to inspiring confidence in electrified homes and vehicles. The focus of Priority 1 is to preserve and enhance reliability, modernize the electric grid and replace aging infrastructure, increase electric grid capacity to accommodate electrification, and explore ways to enhance resiliency.

*Grid Modernization (Work Plan Item 1A, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 16):* As of November 2024, the engineering design work was completed, and project construction began. The City continues to work with vendors and distributors of poles, transformers, and secondary wire to ensure a continuous supply of materials, and to ensure the Pilot Project is completed in a timely manner and on budget. To date, 55 out of 75 poles (73%) have been replaced, 36 new transformers have been hung, and a significant portion of the planned tree trimming work has been completed. Additionally, 428 (47%) out of 908 residences in the Pilot Area now have sufficient electrical capacity for electrification. The Pilot Area remains on track for completion by the end of March 2025.

*Reliability and Resiliency Strategic Plan (Work Plan Items 1B, 1C, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 23):* In April 2024, the City Council accepted the Reliability and Resiliency Strategic Plan (RRSP).<sup>9</sup> A status report on implementation was included in a report to the Utilities Advisory Commission on September 4, 2024.<sup>10</sup> This status update summarized various City efforts to improve reliability and resiliency, including utility workforce planning, tree trimming, undergrounding in the Foothills, and grid modernization. In addition, three studies are currently in progress to help understand the costs and benefits of flexible energy technologies, efficient electrification, and microgrids on City electric supply and distribution costs and on community

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<sup>8</sup> City Council, February 26, 2024; Agenda Item #14; SR #2402-2644, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=8ac11983-10ba-4a79-a823-3693203c22d7>

<sup>9</sup> City Council, April 15, 2024; Agenda Item #4; SR #2401-2496, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=ada33d0c-c1a6-490c-8978-4107b43e6ab5>

<sup>10</sup> Utilities Advisory Commission, September 4, 2024, Agenda Item 4, Attachment B, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplatId=13500>

member resiliency (RRSP Strategy 4). Potential reliability and resiliency programs are being developed for staff, UAC, and Council consideration.

Utility Rates and Fees (Work Plan Item 1D): The City is on track to complete the advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) project by March of 2025, with time of use rates planned to follow with a limited pilot program. The City is pursuing a study to modify its transformer upgrade fees to avoid situations where the resident who triggers a transformer upgrade pays the entire cost of that upgrade. The study is partially completed but has been delayed due to staff turnover.

## *P2. Launch Programs*

The focus of Priority 2 is to launch effective programs for emissions reductions with the highest impact and lowest cost such as single-family electrification, strategic promotion of EVs, commercial rooftop HVAC, and expanded transportation alternatives.

### *P2.1. Residential Emissions Reduction*

The goals for residential emissions reduction embodied in the Work Plan include encouraging EV adoption for all residents, helping multi-family residents access EV charging, and facilitating building electrification of single-family homes and multi-family affordable housing.

Advanced Heat Pump Water Heater Pilot (Work Plan Items 2.1D, 2.1E, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 18): The City launched the Advanced Heat Pump Water Heater (HPWH) Pilot Program in March 2023. The pilot's goal is 1,000 heat pump water heater installations. It includes both a full-service option (where residents can use the City's prescreened contractor to complete the install at a discount) and a rebate option (where residents can hire their own contractor and receive a rebate), with a new emergency replacement option launched in September 2024. As of December 19, 2024, 498 residents had either completed installations or signed contracts to get a heat pump water heater installed through the City's programs, with 84 of these projects applying for on-bill financing. With the current pace of new HPWH program signups, the City is on a pace to complete around 250 water heater conversions per year through the Advanced HPWH Pilot Program, equivalent to about 20 percent of the water heaters estimated to be replaced each year. In addition, the City and State Energy Reach Codes encourage new construction and major renovations to be built all-electric, which adds to this total.

The City is working on various efforts to increase signups for the Advanced HPWH Pilot Program. In 2024 the City worked to improve the program and increase signups through:

- Innovative outreach: targeted online and social media advertisements, community canvassing, in-person events, and mailers in addition to traditional outreach. Mailers were the most effective.
- Customer outreach: a customer feedback outreach effort to improve customer satisfaction was completed in early 2024, and several program improvements were



implemented based on the feedback received. On average, customer satisfaction surveys consistently show 8.1/10 rating on "likeliness to recommend the program"

- Keeping pricing low: used Council-approved budget (April 2024) after State incentive expired
- Expanded outreach: increased outreach to income-qualified residents
- Additional programs: launched emergency replacement program (September 2024)
- More technical expertise: established an electrification expert program to help with complex installations.

The installation rate has stayed at about five installations per week (about 250 per year), about 150-200 per year through the full-service program and 50-100 through the rebate program. This is about 20% of the estimated annual turnover of HPWH in Palo Alto and 5-10 times the rate of installation at other top HPWH programs in the State, adjusted for population. If the emergency replacement program were to add another 100 installations per year, that could increase the percentage of estimated annual turnover to about 30%. Counting new construction and major remodels, which represent 100-200 new heat pump water heaters per year, the City may be reaching as much as 35% or more of the estimated annual water heater turnover.

*Whole Home Electrification (Work Plan Items 2.1G, 2.1H, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 19):* The City is launching its whole home electrification program in two phases. In the first phase, launching in January 2025, the City is establishing a program to help people hire their own contractor to do home electrification projects. The first phase includes new rebates, an online home electrification assessment tool, a free phone consultation with an electrification expert, a contractor directory, and financing.

In a second phase, scheduled for summer of 2025, the City will look to add a full service, turnkey program to help people with home electrification upgrades using a City-prescreened contractor. Rebates will continue to be available for customers who choose to work with their own contractor. An initial Whole Home Pilot for 100 homes could have various incentives for electrifying at least one major appliance. Spending authority for Phase 1 is included in the Adopted FY 2025 Budget, but additional Council approvals will be needed for Phase 2.

*Electric Vehicles and Charging (Work Plan Items 2.1A, 2.1C, 2.1J):* The City's promotion of electric vehicle (EV) adoption and expansion of multi-family EV infrastructure continued. In Q4 2024, the City offered four in-person EV showcases, four EV webinars, and three EV discount campaigns (one for new EVs, one for used EVs, and one for e-bikes). Three of the four EV showcase events in Q4 took place at multifamily properties with recent EV charging installations at 101 Alma (market rate condos), Arastradero Park Apartments (income-qualified apartments), and University Terrace (Stanford staff and faculty housing). An additional "Frunk-or-Treat" EV showcase took place at Mitchell Park during Halloween with approximately 250 attendees and included e-bike test rides. In 2025, the City plans to support at least five EV and e-bike discount campaigns and workshops, three large community-facing EV showcases, and up to 18 resident-focused mini EV showcases at or near multifamily

properties.

As of December 31, 2024, 17 multi-family properties representing 814 housing units (about 7.4% of all multifamily units in Palo Alto) installed a total of 263 EV charging ports (including make-ready spaces) facilitated through the City's EV programs, with another 14 multi-family projects in progress representing an additional 779 residential units (7.1% of multifamily units) and 211 charging ports. Notable in Q4 2024 was the installation of 6 Level 2 chargers at Alta Housing's 65-unit Arastradero Park Apartments, which is the first dedicated affordable housing property in Palo Alto to install chargers through the EV Rebate Program.

The City is evaluating designs for an expanded version of the City's multi-family EV program, and is also considering adding incentives for the purchase of e-bikes and new or used EVs specifically for income-qualified households.

*Affordable Housing Electrification (Work Plan Item 2.1I):* The City continues to engage with multi-family affordable housing providers in Palo Alto on building electrification and vehicle charging. To-date, the City has collaborated with multiple affordable housing providers on potential EV charging projects and is engaging in conversations and site assessments regarding facility energy upgrade needs and electrification opportunities. In addition to Alta Housing's Arastradero Park Apartments that completed an EV charging installation in Q4 2024, there are two additional affordable housing projects that have been permitted and five more that are in either the scoping or bidding phase that are expected to install projects in 2025, which will result in 74 new EV chargers and 24 EV ready parking spaces serving 522 affordable multifamily residential units.

The City's Residential Energy Assistance Program (REAP) for income-qualified customers continues to reach the City's most vulnerable population, offering energy and water efficiency improvements at no cost to the customer. In Q4 2024, 10 customers participated in the REAP program. Four received a HPWH at no cost, and two additional REAP customers received a site assessment for a heat pump water heater and is awaiting installation. Three received energy and water efficiency upgrades. Some customers received both efficiency upgrades and a HPWH.

#### *P2.2. Non-Residential Emissions Reduction*

The goals for non-residential emissions reduction embodied in the Work Plan include encouraging electrification of rooftop packaged HVAC units in commercial buildings, developing custom partnerships with major employers, and developing strategies to promote lower emissions commuting.

*Rooftop Packaged HVAC (Work Plan Items 2.2A, 2.2B, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 20):* In September 2024 the City launched an update to the rooftop packaged HVAC pilot with the goal of collecting additional data to inform the design of an advanced pilot program. To achieve this, the City is offering enhanced incentives to a limited group of 10 customers. In return, these customers are required to gather and provide detailed cost and project information to the City.

Businesses that prefer not to collect this data can still participate in the program at the original incentive level.

Outreach efforts are ongoing through various channels to encourage participation. So far, seven building owners have applied to join the program, with two permits issued and one project successfully completed.<sup>11</sup>

Major Employer Partnerships (Work Plan Item 2.2C): This work plan item involves developing customer partnerships for emissions reduction with major employers, including assistance for City facility projects and the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). Staffing changes slowed progress on this item. The City has been in talks with multiple major employers and completed a project to install EV charging in partnership with Stanford Health Care. The City coordinated with PAUSD on its HVAC improvements to various schools and the City is exploring potential City facility electrification projects.

As of December 31, 2024, the Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Program (CIEEP) achieved 2,454,865 kWh in actualized savings from fifteen completed projects. An additional twelve projects currently being installed are expected to generate 2,706,636 kWh in savings, bringing the total projected and actualized savings to 5,161,501 kWh. Thirteen projects are currently undergoing onsite assessments which will result in an “Initial Investigation” report. This report will identify and quantify potential energy-efficiency measures with the goal of converting them into actual installations.

Commuter / Visitor Emissions Reduction (Work Plan Items 2.2D, 2.2E): These work plan items have been lower priority pending completion of the Electric Vehicle Strategic Plan (renamed “E-Mobility Strategic Plan” - see Priority 2.5, below).

### P2.3. Citywide Mobility

The goals for citywide mobility embodied in the Work Plan include both transportation-focused and land-use focused actions.

Transportation and Land Use Policies and Programs (Work Plan Item 2.3A): The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program continues to grow, with the anticipated addition of a youth-focused coordinator for programs at the middle and high schools. This year is the 30th anniversary of the SRTS program, and a celebration is being planned for Bike Month in May 2025.

The Downtown Housing Plan began in March 2024 with the goal of increasing housing production while ensuring that the downtown area continues to be an attractive local and regional destination. The Plan will help implement programs of the Housing Element by establishing policies and development standards, and plan for the public infrastructure necessary to support increased housing. The project is in the needs assessment phase

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<sup>11</sup> Program rebate amounts and guidelines; <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/commercialhvac>

which includes stakeholder engagement. A Community Advisory Group was formed in December 2024.

The San Antonio Road Area Plan envisions creating cohesive mixed-use neighborhoods with improved mobility and interconnectivity through an integrated transportation network that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the use of single-occupancy motor vehicles. The Plan will implement a program in the Housing Element to redevelop a portion of the Bayshore Alma San Antonio Priority Development Area (BASA PDA). An RFP was issued in June 2024 for a consultant to develop the Plan and staff is working on finalizing the contract for the Council to review in early 2025.

*Housing Element Adoption and Implementation (Work Plan Items 2.3B, 2.3C):* In a joint session on April 15, 2024, the Planning & Transportation Commission and the City Council readopted the sixth cycle 2023-2031 Housing Element. On August 20, 2024, the City accomplished the milestone of receiving Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) certification of the Housing Element.<sup>12</sup> Following adoption and HCD certification, the City has made considerable progress in implementing the 110 program objectives in the 2023-2031 Housing Element.

*Last Mile Solutions (Work Plan Items 2.3D, 2.3E and Council Priority Objective CC&NE 25):* During the budget adoption process, the City Council reduced its General Fund allocation to the Palo Alto Link on-demand transit service pilot program and directed staff to make fare and coverage changes to the service. These changes went to Council for adoption in October 2024.

On October 30, 2024, the Office of Transportation presented issues for consideration regarding micromobility to the Planning and Transportation Commission.<sup>13</sup> The Commission provided feedback and suggested the development of a feasibility study to understand local demand for micromobility and to identify if a micromobility program would be financially sustainable for the City. The City began conducting research and will work with an on-call transportation planning firm to do data analysis. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed in the late spring of 2025.

*Bicycling Improvements (Work Plan Items 2.3F, 2.3G and Council Priority Objectives CC&NE 14 and CC&NE 15):*

The City worked with transportation planning firm Fehr & Peers to develop a final draft of the Palo Alto Safety Action Plan. This comprehensive roadway safety plan is critical to reaching S/CAP goals because improving safety for vulnerable road users will reduce vehicle miles traveled and encourage walking and cycling. The final draft was reviewed by an internal staff

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<sup>12</sup> City of Palo Alto, 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle 2023-2030 Housing Element, Adopted April 15, 2024, Certified August 20, 2024, <https://paloaltohousingelement.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Palo-Alto-Housing-Element.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Planning and Transportation Commission, October 30, 2024; Agenda Item #3; SR #2410-3586, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/portal/viewer?id=5662&type=0>

working group and revised accordingly. The City issued a Public Review Draft in December which is available to the Palo Alto community for comment. City staff are presenting the draft plan for review at standing committees and Council in early 2025, with final plan adoption by City Council in Spring 2025.

For the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan Update, the project team developed a strategy for public engagement to present and get feedback on system development and network priorities. This includes the project's draft recommendations for the updated bicycle network and draft list of projects, as well as the draft project prioritization framework and performance measures. Public engagement activities will occur in winter 2025 and extend into spring 2025 and include meetings with the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, Planning and Transportation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Rail Committee, the City Council, focus groups, a community meeting, and online engagement. The feedback received will help shape the draft and final plan. The draft plan is anticipated to be released in fall 2025.

On December 16, 2024, the City Council approved the grant agreement with the Federal Highway Administration for the South Palo Alto Bikeways Demonstration Project.<sup>14</sup> The \$888,000 federal funds and \$222,000 matching City funds will use quick-build infrastructure to improve bikeways and crossings on East Meadow Drive and Fabian Way. The City will begin procurement for a transportation planning firm to finalize the street design in January 2025 and is aiming for construction at the end of summer 2025.

Transportation Demand Management (Work Plan Item 2.3H): The Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) is conducting essential outreach to businesses on El Camino Real regarding available transit, bike, and parking programs in advance of the parking changes to the corridor as part of the Caltrans repaving project, as funded by a \$25,000 VTA Transit Oriented Communities Grant. Work on the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance is on hold until staff capacity is available. The PATMA administered a commute survey for 2024 and received 885 completed responses. The PATMA distributed 46 free transit passes to workers at businesses along El Camino Real in Q4, encouraging sustainable commutes.

Parking (Work Plan Items 2.3I, 2.3J, Council Priority Objective CC&NE 26): The City initiated a survey that closed in August to gauge customer satisfaction and support for future updates to parking policies. The City is planning to continue community engagement efforts for proposed enhancements to our parking policies and programs. The City will select a parking permit vendor by January 2025 and work with the selected vendor to present improvement options. Public Works contractors began work on installing Automated Parking Guidance Systems in four Downtown garages. The systems, similar to the one installed at the 350 Sherman Avenue garage in the California Avenue district, will display parking availability by level, enabling better

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<sup>14</sup> City Council, December 16, 2024; Agenda Item #9; SR #2411-3763, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/portal/viewer?id=5890&type=0>

efficiency of parking resources. Improvements will seek to limit the time that drivers spend circulating to find parking and will offer opportunities to better align parking policies with TDM efforts and more efficient usage of parking resources.

On October 15, 2024<sup>15</sup>, Office of Transportation staff presented the Finance Committee with several potential parking management strategies, such as eliminating the Color Zone system and charging an hourly rate where parking demand is high, such as on-street parking. These strategies would alleviate traffic congestion at high-demand locations and would encourage travel modes alternative to driving.

*Traffic Signals (Work Plan Item 2.3K):*

The City continually monitors, maintains, and optimizes traffic signal operations, and addresses concerns from the community daily. As funding and staffing allow, the City also works on a variety of capital improvement program projects to update and upgrade the current traffic signal network and keep up with changing standards, modernization, and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies. These improvements are a key component to optimizing operations to reduce delays and GHG emissions.

In Q4 of 2024, the City completed upgrades to three intersections along Charleston Road. The City also kicked-off a new capital project to upgrade systems at four intersections along Quarry Road. The City is continuing to make progress on several projects including at the intersection of Alma Road/Churchill Avenue. The City also began a significant update for its centralized traffic signal management systems.

Included with the traffic signal program, the City programmed and plans to add or upgrade several pedestrian-activated beacon crossings and will be installing the newest crossing at University Avenue and East Crescent Drive in early 2025. These pedestrian crossing improvements are essential in encouraging walking and alternative modes of transportation.

**P2.4. Municipal Electrification (CC&NE 22)**

The City's municipal electrification efforts include both facility and fleet electrification and are intended to show the community that the City will participate in the same electrification efforts it is encouraging the community to undertake.

*Facility Electrification (Work Plan Items 2.4A, 2.4B, 2.4C):* In 2023, the City worked on a Facility Electrification Assessment Plan. The City is evaluating the feasibility of electrifying equipment at City Facilities each time aging equipment requires replacement. Completion of an Electrification Plan for City Facilities has been delayed while a vacant staff position dedicated to this effort is filled.

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<sup>15</sup> Finance Committee, October 15, 2024; Agenda Item #AA1; SR #2409-3537, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/portal/viewer?id=5580&type=0>

*Fleet Electrification (Work Plan Items 2.4D, 2.4E and Council Priority Objective CC&NE 22):* In Q4 2024, the City received delivery of two electric vehicles - a Tesla Model 3 and a Rivian R1S, both for the Palo Alto Police Department - which replaced internal combustion engine fleet vehicles. There are 35 EVs in the City fleet, or about 15% of the passenger vehicles and light duty trucks and vans. Six new EV chargers dedicated to the City fleet vehicles were placed in service at City Hall in Q4 2024, for a total of 25.

As part of the Capital Budget, the City Council approved an all-electric FY 2025 vehicle replacement program, except for Police pursuit vehicles. The City ordered the above-mentioned Rivian R1S as a pilot EV Police pursuit vehicle.

*Publicly Owned Charger Planning (Work Plan Item 2.4F):* There are currently 111 City-owned EV chargers, with a total of 146 charging ports, an increase of 6 EV chargers and 15 charging ports from last quarter. Twenty-five of those chargers are dedicated to City vehicles, while the rest are primarily for public use. Development of a plan for additional publicly owned charging is awaiting completion of the E-Mobility Strategic Plan (P2.5, below)

#### P2.5. E-Mobility Strategic Plan (Council Priority Objective CC&NE 21)

In September 2024, staff presented a preliminary outline for the *EV Strategic Plan*—now titled the *E-Mobility Strategic Plan*—to the Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee. In early November, staff also shared preliminary results of the EV Charger Needs Assessment, a key component for finalizing the Strategic Plan. A review of electric grid impacts, EV charging benefits, mitigation strategies, and opportunities has been incorporated into a consultant contract approved by Council in September to support implementation of the *Reliability and Resiliency Strategic Plan* (approved in April). Using insights from these studies and feedback from the Ad Hoc Committee, staff aims to finalize the *E-Mobility Strategic Plan* for policymaker and stakeholder review, with Council approval targeted for the first half of 2025.

#### *P3. Build Awareness and Confidence*

The focus of Priority 3 is to build community awareness and confidence in electrification through engagement, addressing concerns, and program results.

*Building Awareness of the Need for and Benefits of Climate Action (Work Plan Item 3.1A):* The City continues to publish a monthly Climate Action Blog and a Quarterly Sustainability Newsletter. In Q4 2024, the City published an October<sup>16</sup> and November<sup>17</sup> Climate Blog. The City did not publish a Sustainability Newsletter in Q4. Historically, the Sustainability Newsletters have an average 52% open rate, which is the percentage of readers that open the e-mail you send them. The average open rate for electronic newsletters is 21.5%.

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<sup>16</sup> Climate Blog, October 2024: <https://medium.com/paloaltoconnect/the-ultimate-palo-alto-halloween-community-guide-37d958e9ac09>

<sup>17</sup> Climate Blog, November 2024: <https://medium.com/paloaltoconnect/sustainability-for-a-greener-holiday-season-c2409d03cf60>

In Q4 2024, the City held one Bike Palo Alto event, three electric vehicle webinars, one E-bike webinar, one EV & E-bike Show: Frunk or Treat!, two gardening webinars, one SunShares Webinar, one Pollinator Plants Walk and Talk, one rain garden workshop, one composting workshop, and one Heating Solutions for Commercial Buildings webinar.

The City participated in the California Avenue Third Thursday “Sustainability Fun Fair” on October 17, 2024.

The City co-sponsored Acterra’s 2024 Electric Home Tour<sup>18</sup> on October 19, 2024, which engaged Bay Area residents in a unique opportunity to explore sustainable home electrification. There was a total of 403 participants, with 118 participants visiting homes in Palo Alto.

In Q4 2024, the Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee<sup>19</sup> held four Working Group meetings to discuss the Whole Home Electrification Program Proposal, Funding Study Policy, EV Charger Needs Assessment Study, and S/CAP Funding Study preliminary Results.

In Q4, 2024, the inaugural Youth Climate Advisory Board (YCAB), comprised of 11 high school students attending schools in Palo Alto, met monthly and appointed three leadership positions: Chair, Elsa Lagerblad, Junior, Palo Alto High School; Vice Chair, Caitlin Hopkins, Junior, Castilleja School; and Vice Chair, Aiden Miao, Sophomore, Palo Alto High School. YCAB formed issue-specific subcommittees and met with City staff to learn more about City initiatives, programs, and policies, and discuss how YCAB can work with the City on various policy issues.

*Drive Community Actions to Achieve S/CAP Goals (Work Plan Item 3.1B):* The City continued to implement the Electrification Marketing Plan and the Heat Pump Water Heater Marketing Plan. The City provided information on sustainability and climate action programs and initiatives for residents and businesses at the Third Thursday Sustainability Fun Fair and at the Electric Home Tour. The City published a November Blog<sup>20</sup> on Heat Pump HVAC Systems.

*S/CAP Reporting and Surveys (Work Plan Items 3.1C, 3.1D):* The City continues to calculate an annual GHG emissions inventory. In October, the City reported on the 2022 Citywide GHG inventory to the CDP,<sup>21</sup> an international non-profit that helps companies, cities, states, regions, and public authorities disclose their environmental impact.

*Build Confidence in City’s Electric Infrastructure (Work Plan Item 3.1E):* The City continues to provide updates and engagement around its electric infrastructure.

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<sup>18</sup> Acterra Electric Home Tour, October 2024; <https://acterra.org/electrification/greenhome/electric-home-tour/>

<sup>19</sup> Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee; <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/City-Clerk/City-Council-Committees/Climate-Protection-Ad-Hoc-Committee>

<sup>20</sup> November Blog, <https://medium.com/paloaltoconnect/save-big-for-a-limited-time-save-the-planet-install-a-heat-pump-hvac-system-733aa93bfcd7>

<sup>21</sup> CDP, <https://data.cdp.net/>



#### *P4. Additional Emissions Reductions*

The focus of Priority 4 is to identify an additional nine percent in emissions reduction opportunities to achieve 80 x 30, primarily through a focus on studying multi-family and commercial building equipment. The City is proceeding with studies of the multi-family and commercial sectors in conjunction with the S/CAP Funding Study. These studies include review of publicly available data sources and on-site surveys of building equipment at multi-family and commercial buildings. The City's consultant completed its review of publicly available data and a number of on-site surveys of commercial and multi-family buildings and is working to complete a summary report.

#### *P5. Funding Needs and Sources (Council Priority Objective CC&NE 24)*

The focus of Priority 5 is to identify, by 2024, funding needed and potential funding sources for full scale implementation of the highest impact emissions reductions. Council approved a contract with E3/Willdan in January 2024 to complete a study of funding needs and sources. This S/CAP Funding Study continues. Completion of the Funding Study depends in part on completion of other complementary studies, including an EV Charger Needs Assessment, Building Sector Study, and the Funding Source Survey. All studies are being completed by the same group of consultants and all are in progress in parallel. Preliminary results from all studies were generated in Q4 2024. Staff discussed scenarios to model in the Funding Study with the Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee in October 2024. The consultant generated preliminary results based on those scenarios and staff reviewed key insights and outputs with the Ad Hoc Committee and Working Group in December.

#### Sustainability

The Sustainability section of the work plan includes the following S/CAP Areas: Water, Climate Adaptation and Sea Level Rise, Natural Environment, and Zero Waste.

*Maximize Water Conservation and Efficiency (Work Plan Item 8.A):* The near-term focus for water is reducing water consumption while exploring ways to capture and store water and increase the availability and use of recycled water. The WaterSmart customer portal, an online water management tool, launched in November 2022. Through this program, home water reports are sent to around 11,000 single-family customers on a monthly basis. A control group of around 4,000 single-family customers currently do not get the reports. The average open rate of home water report emails is 74%. As of December 19, 2024, 29% of all single-family customers have accessed the portal – an increase from 24% last quarter - which provides information about their water consumption and personalized water conservation recommendations. Results from the efficiency study show that sending home water reports results in water savings of 3.4%.

The City, in partnership with the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), offers landscape education classes throughout the year to introduce residents to the concepts of water-efficient and sustainable landscaping. In Q4 2024, the City held two online and two in-person workshops.

*Design and build a salt removal facility for the Regional Water Quality Control Plant (Work Plan Item 8.B):* The City continues work on the Advanced Water Purification System, which will reduce the salinity of treated water used for irrigation. In May, the City Council reviewed Site and Design application for a proposed local advanced water purification system.<sup>22</sup> The design is complete, funding is secured, and staff anticipates Council approving a construction contract in Spring 2025.

*Develop a “One Water” Portfolio for Palo Alto (Work Plan Item 8.C):* The final One Water Plan is a 20-year trigger-based plan for implementing future water supply and conservation portfolio alternatives. Staff presented this plan to the Utilities Advisory Commission in January 2025 and will transmit the report to Council in 2025.

*Develop a tool for dynamic water planning in the future (Work Plan Item 8.D):* An excel-based tool for water planning is part of the “One Water” Plan effort and final report tools the City now has to assist in modeling and planning efforts.

*Complete the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (Work Plan Item 8.E):* The City completed a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment in the Fall of 2022. The Vulnerability Assessment identified risks and hazards to the Palo Alto Baylands, City infrastructure, and residential and business property. The Assessment considers high tide, 100-year coastal storm event scenarios, and rising shallow groundwater impacts.

*Develop a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan (Work Plan Item 8.F and Council Priority Objective CC&NE 33):* The City will coordinate the development of its Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan to align with SB272 (Laird): *Sea Level Rise Planning and Adaptation* requirements and other regional planning efforts. On October 18, 2024, the City provided feedback on the Bay Conservation Development Commission’s Draft Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan. The Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan (RSAP) guidance for Bay Area was approved at the December 5, 2024 Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission. The RSAP requires subregional (e.g., County-wide, or City-wide) sea level rise plans. The Santa Clara County Office of Sustainability is considering leading subregional plan development and will provide a proposal to interested partners, including the City of Palo Alto, to collaborate on elements of the RSAP guidance. Staff anticipates a proposal for this effort in Q1 2025.

Part of any long-term sea level rise adaptation plan will include Palo Alto shoreline levee improvements which had been pursued most recently through the Shoreline II Project led by Valley Water as the lead for a partnership with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). In late 2023, a USACE cost/benefit analysis determined that there is no federal interest in funding Palo Alto shoreline improvements at this time, and that improvements would not be needed until approximately 2060. A Congressional letter encouraging another

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<sup>22</sup> City Council, May 13; Agenda Item #11; SR #2403-2760, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=5f812cd5-ab33-4e51-851a-1b01fde39467>

review of this determination was sent to no avail. Valley Water and Shoreline II partners (CalTrans and the cities of Palo Alto and Mountain View) developed an agency factsheet, and other reference materials for public information and as a staff technical reference.

Despite longer-term regional planning horizons for sea level rise, the City is working on several near-term goals. These efforts include publishing web-based GIS maps which depict future sea level rise and shallow groundwater changes for use in City project planning (implementation for use is estimated by July 1, 2025), and inclusion of sea level rise in long range facility plans for the Regional Water Quality Control Plant and Palo Alto Airport—both of these are active tasks.

*Begin design process for levee projects (Work Plan Item 8.G):* The City continues to advance the Palo Alto Horizontal Levee Pilot Project (PAHLPP). The PAHLPP will be the first horizontal levee to be built in the Bay Area to be both irrigated with treated wastewater and hydrologically connected to San Francisco Bay. The project will provide much-needed data to inform the design of future horizontal levees around the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Horizontal levees are nature-based sea level rise adaptations with multiple benefits over traditional flood- control levees such as habitat enhancement, sea level rise adaptation, and additional wastewater treatment. The City's project partner, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, is releasing a solicitation for construction in January 2025 with the goal to begin construction during the first half of 2025. This was enabled by an additional \$2 million Coastal Conservancy grant that was approved in December 2024 to address escalating construction costs. Staff is also working on interpretive signage with the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, and lining up required monitoring services and permit requirements.

*Identify Protection Strategies from Significant Flood Events (Work Plan Items 8.H, 8.I, 8.J, and Council Priority Objectives CC&NE 31 and 32):* The City continues to work with the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA) member agencies to coordinate the San Francisquito Creek Flood Protection capital project (Reach 2) with the Newell Road Bridge replacement project.

*Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Council Priority Objective CHSW&B 70):* The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires all cities, counties, and special districts to adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) to receive disaster mitigation funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The State of California and FEMA approved the Santa Clara County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), Volume I and the associated Jurisdictional Annexes, Volume II. On October 7, 2024, City Council adopted a resolution<sup>23</sup> approving the Palo Alto LHMP, including Volume I of the 2023 County of Santa Clara Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and Volume II of the Palo Alto Jurisdictional Annex.

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<sup>23</sup> City Council, October 7, 2024; Agenda Item #14; SR #2407-3313, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=b90a63a1-e1cc-4b5f-934b-bee4486b2909>

*Foothills Fire Management Plan and Collaboration on Reducing Wildfire Hazards (Work Plan Items 8.K, 8.L, 8.M, 8.N, Council Priority Objective CHSW&B 71):* The effort to combine the Palo Alto Foothills Fire Management Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) into one document to integrate the wildfire mitigation efforts among the Palo Alto community is underway. The updated plan is currently under environmental review and will be open for public comment when the review is complete. The final plan is scheduled to be completed in Q2 2025.

*Increase Palo Alto's Tree Canopy and Ensure No Net Tree Canopy Loss (Work Plan Items 8.O, 8.P):* The City will use the iTree inventory to calculate a baseline and citywide public tree inventory update. The current baseline, which needs to be updated, is 5,236,420 lbs CO<sub>2</sub> sequestered for 35,570 calculated public trees. The inventory data points used to calculate the current baseline (e.g. tree species) may be outdated (e.g. trees are larger than the data shows, trees were replaced or removed without updating the data). An effort to establish a baseline for carbon storage of Palo Alto's urban tree canopy is on-track to be completed in 2024.

*Reduce Pesticide Use in Parks and Open Space Preserves (Work Plan Item 8.Q):* The City continues to review the use of pesticides in all parks and open space preserves to identify opportunities to further reduce both the amount and the toxicity of pesticides that are used.

*Coordinate Implementation of City Natural Environment-Related Plans (Work Plan Item 8.R):* The City is working on an update of the Tree and Landscape Technical Manual. In addition, the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance process is currently under review and should be completed soon.

*Support the Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Plan and incorporate GSI in Municipal Projects (Work Plan Item 8.S):* This is an on-going effort to achieve a 10% increase in land area that uses green stormwater infrastructure to treat urban water runoff.

*Encourage Commercial Food Waste Prevention and Provide Technical Assistance (Work Plan Items 8.T, 8.W):* It is an on-going effort to encourage food waste prevention and require edible food recovery for human consumption from commercial food generators, and to provide technical assistance. The City developed a new innovative outreach tool for businesses offering waste reduction resources. This initiative is the first of its kind and provides tips and best practices for waste prevention in daily operations and procurements. New outreach was created which included a new webpage, handouts and educational content on social media.

*Promote Residential Food Waste Reduction (Work Plan Item 8.U):* The City developed a new Zero Waste outreach community campaign to promote food waste reduction and connect it to reducing GHGs and climate change with a call to action: Strategize, Organize, Prioritize. New educational content was developed include a webpage,

handouts, advertisements in the local newspapers, outreach signs for the collection vehicles, and content for social media.

*Champion Waste Prevention, Reduction, Reusables, and the Sharing Economy (Work Plan Item 8.V):* As part of the new Zero Waste Living outreach campaign, the City published fourteen Zero Waste Minute weekly e-newsletters in Q4 2024 providing the community with reduce, reuse, repair tips, and essential tools to tackle the complex waste challenges our community is dedicated to solving. The weekly e-news average an open rate of 52 to 54%.

In Q4 2024, the City held one compost workshop for residents to learn how easy it is to make their own compost. Palo Alto residents receive a free compost bin or worm bin (one per household) by attending a compost workshop. The City also continued the permanent Compost Giveaway Station at Eleanor Pardee Park where residents can pick up compost for their homes and landscape at no charge. Free mulch from tree removal operations is also available at centralized stations throughout the City.

*Prioritize Domestic Processing of Recyclable Materials (Work Plan Item 8.X):* Domestic processing for mixed paper and mixed rigid plastics began in April 2022. The City continues to review processing efforts.

*Eliminate Single-Use Disposable Containers (Work Plan Item 8.Y):* The strategy and timeline for expanding the Disposable Foodware Ordinance is on hold until further clarification is received through SB 54 final regulations and changes on what will be considered recyclable and compostable, which is expected by Q2 2025.

*Expand the Deconstruction and Construction Materials Management Ordinance (Work Plan Item 8.Z):* The Deconstruction and Construction Material Management Ordinance requires all residential and commercial projects undergoing a whole structure demolition to obtain a deconstruction permit.<sup>24</sup> Deconstruction is the careful disassembly of building components to maximize reuse and recycling. Staff continued monitoring the Deconstruction Ordinance with proactive collaboration and education to project managers, contractors and reuse organizations. The ordinance was effective July 2020 and in the past 4 years, over 160 buildings went through the deconstruction process, which resulted in approximately 20,800 tons or 93% of building materials salvaged for reuse or recycle, and only 1,670 tons or 7% of materials landfilled.

*Implement the Reach Code Standard for Low Carbon Construction Materials (Work Plan Item 8.aa):* The City Council approved a reach code standard for low carbon construction materials in October 2022. Since adoption (effective 1/1/2023), all new construction and substantial

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<sup>24</sup> City Council, May 6, 2024; Agenda Item #18; SR #2312-2377, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=da6cfa4a-5637-44bd-a7bc-92763615dbc1>

remodels are required to meet the low-carbon concrete requirements. Fire Station 4 (3600 Middlefield) is currently under building permit review, and the concrete mix will meet the low-carbon requirements.

### **FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT**

Current and future initiatives will be managed and funded across various departments and funds. The Fiscal Year 2025 work items in the 2023-2025 S/CAP Work Plan can proceed with the actions approved in the Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget. Staff expects to submit additional resource requests as part of the annual budget process in subsequent years as the work plan proceeds.

Some items in other work plans are also relevant to the S/CAP Work Plan. The Utilities Strategic Plan, for example, includes workforce development and advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) work items that are directly relevant to the S/CAP. Some of these may involve future budget requests as well.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Stakeholder engagement on S/CAP implementation is wide-reaching and coordinated with multiple departments. Efforts include direct engagement, webinars, social media and other digital marketing/outreach, website updates, public signage, Ad Hoc Committee meeting participation, leveraging the city's communication platforms, and more. Stakeholder engagement efforts were described in the Analysis section Stakeholder engagement efforts were described in the Analysis section, under P3. Build Awareness and Confidence as well as other Work Plan areas.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Council's review of this report is not a project subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### **APPROVED BY:**

Brad Eggleston, Director Public Works/City Engineer