



Energy transition san jos 233

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The City Council voted unanimously to approve the pledge on Nov. 9. To be carbon neutral, the city needs to either offset all carbon emissions to reach a net-zero, or eliminate carbon emissions entirely.

San Jose declared a climate emergency back in 2019 and is the largest city in the United States to set a carbon neutral goal for 2030. Other major cities like New York City plan to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

The City Council adopted the Climate Smart San Jose plan in 2018 to fulfill the Paris Agreement commitment. The goal of that plan was to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 80 percent below 1990s levels by 2050. The new, accelerated carbon neutral pledge will adapt the same strategies to meet the 2030 goal.

There already are local laws in place requiring all-electric energy in new construction, EV charging stations at residential buildings and hotels and solar readiness on non-residential buildings.

The city is expected to present detailed plans on going carbon neutral in June 2022. San Jose's Environmental Services Director Kerrie Romanow said the city needs outside nonprofit funding to put those plans in motion. Climate Smart San Jose previously received a Bloomberg grant, which may be renewable.

"We know that all this work can be expensive, but the cost of not doing it will be even higher. There are many potential partners out there to help cities fund this vital work, including the private sector," San Jose Councilmember David Cohen told San Jos? Spotlight. Cohen is confident the funding is out there because Ithaca, New York has been able to raise \$100 million for its decarbonization efforts.

"Transportation is 50 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in San Jose, and the city hasn't made a lot of progress in this area at all," said Erin Zimmerman, a climate reality leader with the Climate Reality Project Silicon Valley Chapter and San Jos? Spotlight environmental columnist.

Earlier this month, councilmembers highlighted the importance of increasing access to electric vehicle charging stations in the city. Romanow echoed that recommendation and is optimistic about the continued adoption of electric vehicles.

The Natural Resources Defense Council Action Fund is providing technical support to the city to tackle commercial vehicle emissions through a one-year accelerator program designed to help cities work toward 100 percent zero-emission commercial vehicles.

"The cost of a used electric vehicle is going down. With high gas prices, electric vehicles are becoming the more financially sensible option."



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"By reducing emissions from commercial vehicles, San Jose can make progress toward its ambitious climate goals and tackle air quality issues that are especially pervasive in communities near freeways and freight hubs," said Nadia Perl, Action Fund spokesperson for western regional issues.

"Some of the actions in the plan include building a network of complete streets that promote walking and biking, increasing transit frequency and reliability, and advancing projects like the BART extension to downtown San Jose," said a statement from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Environmental Programs Department.

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