

Environmental Services Department

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San José Kicks Off New Climate Change Initiative

The City will gain new resources and support to help achieve carbon reduction goals of Climate Smart San José

SAN JOSE, Calif. — The City of San José has launched a new initiative that promises to dramatically improve energy efficiency and decrease carbon emissions in San José, boosting the City's commitment to meet the greenhouse gas emission (GHG) reduction targets of the international [Paris Agreement](#).

On Tuesday, February 26, the City Council authorized City staff to move ahead with participation in Bloomberg Philanthropies' American Cities Climate Challenge, which provides the City with the equivalent of \$2.5 million in resources and technical support over two years from a network of world-class partners, including the nonprofit Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The Climate Challenge aims to enhance and accelerate the work already being done by mayors across the United States, including the implementation of [Climate Smart San José](#), the City's roadmap for reducing GHG emissions and improving quality of life.

San José is one of 25 cities selected to participate in the Climate Challenge, a national initiative to reduce carbon emissions in large cities and create healthier and more prosperous urban communities.

"As increasing natural disasters continue to threaten cities across the country, we must accelerate our efforts to combat climate change," said San José Mayor Sam Liccardo. "We're grateful to Bloomberg Philanthropies and the NRDC for their investment in the success of our pioneering Climate Smart San José plan. Their support will enable our continued efforts to dramatically reduce our city's GHG emissions and our pursuit of innovative sustainability policies focused on buildings and transportation."

Working with a network of partners, San José will develop a City Strategy Plan to guide the development of eight campaigns that support Climate Smart and advance the City's GHG reduction goals:

- Energy reduction programs and policies for commercial buildings
- Roadmap for residential building decarbonization
- Energy reach code for electric vehicles, solar readiness, and Zero Net Energy in new residential and commercial construction

- Improvements to the walking and bicycling network
- New and improved mobility options
- Shared electric vehicle strategy
- Electric vehicle education and incentives
- Parking management and pricing

Experts from the NRDC will be available to advise San José on best practices and support the development and advancement of public engagement strategies that further transportation and buildings policies, and programs to reduce emissions. Other partners expected to provide support include the Energy Foundation, New Buildings Institute (NBI), Forth Mobility, and NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials). San José has already partnered with Prospect Silicon Valley and Microsoft to develop a Climate Smart dashboard for tracking key performance indicators.

"We are thrilled to work with the NRDC and other partners to achieve our Climate Smart goals, and we're grateful for the generous support from Bloomberg Philanthropies," said Kerrie Romanow, Director of the San José Environmental Services Department, which oversees Climate Smart. "This is an exciting challenge and important opportunity. We must act now to ensure the health and prosperity of San José for generations to come."

"San José has always helped propel the Bay Area's national leadership on sustainability issues — and we are proud to help the City propel its leadership ever further," said Christina Angelides, American Cities Climate Challenge director with the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Reducing fossil-fuel consumption in residential and commercial buildings is an essential component of Climate Smart and the Climate Challenge. San José took a major step toward reducing energy use in large commercial and multifamily buildings in December when the City Council passed an [Energy and Water Building Performance Ordinance](#), which will provide benchmarking data for energy and water use in roughly 2,500 buildings that are 20,000 square feet in size or larger as well as create performance standards and incentives. San José also plans to work with partners to launch a private sector building performance challenge.

Panama Bartholomy, Director of the Building Decarbonization Coalition, of which San José is a member, said the City's participation in the Climate Challenge cements its status as a global leader in the realm of sustainability.

"There is no question that, if we want to continue building equitable and prosperous communities in California, we must stop burning fossil fuels in our homes and workplaces," said Bartholomy. "We are excited that San José will craft a fossil-fuel free vision for all its buildings that will control utility bills, improve access, spur job growth, and reduce climate pollution."

To reduce carbon emissions from residential buildings, San José will pursue various programs including a Zero Net Carbon demonstration project; electrification incentives; and outreach, education, training, and workforce development.

San José also plans to pursue a Reach Code Task Force to create an energy reach code that will drive progress on electric vehicles, solar readiness, and Zero Net Energy in new residential and commercial construction. The reach code will enable San José to go beyond the minimum requirements of California's latest Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which take effect on January 1, 2020.

About the City of San José

Known as the Capital of Silicon Valley, San José is the nation's tenth largest city and the largest city in Northern California, with an ethnically diverse population of more than one million. San José was founded in 1777, once served as the state capital of California, and now encompasses 180 square miles. Facts about San José can be found here:

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/780>. The City's website is www.sanjoseca.gov.

About the San José Environmental Services Department (ESD)

San José, Capital of Silicon Valley, is the largest city in Northern California and the 10th largest city in the nation. The San José [Environmental Services Department](#) leads Climate Smart San José and manages garbage and recycling services; watershed protection and pollution prevention; municipal drinking water and recycled water; sustainability initiatives; and the operation and infrastructure improvements of the San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. ESD's mission is to deliver world-class utility services and programs to improve our health, environment and economy.

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Bloomberg Philanthropies works in 480 cities in more than 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$702 million. For more information, please visit www.bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge

Recognizing that cities account for more than 70% of global carbon emissions, the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge was formed with an investment of \$70 million to enhance the work already being done by mayors across the U.S. and to support cities in the fight against climate change. The Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge aims to go beyond the theoretical and scale up high-impact urban climate solutions that are already proven to succeed – specifically, from the buildings and transportation sectors. World-class partners for the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge will be led by the Natural Resources Defense Council and Delivery Associates. The Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge is part of Mike Bloomberg's American Cities Initiative, a suite of more than \$200 million in investments to strengthen city halls and advance critical policies.

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