



Joint Statement to Redwood City Council commenting on Climate Action Plan Update 2030

Released September 1, 2020

The Redwood City Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update for 2030 represents a critical opportunity for the City to set a course for climate adaptation locally and establish a standard in the region for resilient cities.

We applaud Redwood City's work to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including efforts to ensure that active and mass transportation are expanded and investing in bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure, and safety programs. Redwood City should continue to lead by establishing ambitious goals that surpass California state standards for GHG emissions.

In addressing adaptation to climate change, however, Redwood City has sadly fallen far short of where the City should be by this point. Climate change impacts are already occurring in Redwood City and surrounding communities. Redwood City should lead the Bay Area in adaptation as well as in emissions reduction by addressing the risks that Redwood City residents face from sea level rise, shoreline and inland flooding, extreme heat, wildfires, and other climate impacts.

Redwood City must also address climate equity in its 2030 CAP Update. Climate adaptation planning can either exacerbate existing disparities or help make our region more equitable through community-centered planning and protections against displacement. The ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) states that climate equity “ensures that all people have the opportunity to benefit equally from climate solutions, while not taking on an unequal burden of climate impacts.”

Redwood City’s first CAP, completed in 2013, committed to develop “recommendations for the City’s climate adaptation planning process,” including engaging with stakeholders to “establish planning priorities, determine decision criteria, and build community support for taking action.” The undersigned organizations believe such an approach would have resulted in a comprehensive plan for adapting to climate change over the next decade.

In the CAP 2030 Update, Redwood City should include specific and measurable climate adaptation actions to protect communities, homes, businesses, infrastructure, and the health of the San Francisco Bay. The 2030 CAP should include:

Shoreline Adaptation – Develop a shoreline vulnerability and opportunity assessment which includes the following measures:

- Adapt to flooding and sea level rise by restoring wetlands and prioritizing nature-based solutions, while creating recreational opportunities for the City and surrounding communities.
- Develop a shoreline management plan with associated adaptation strategies using available resources including the [San Francisco Bay Shoreline Adaptation Atlas](#).
- Prohibit new development on undeveloped baylands at risk of flooding based on sea level rise projections, including the Redwood City Salt Ponds.
- Protect public safety and critical infrastructure by requiring that new development in developed areas, and infrastructure supporting new development, are designed to be resilient based on mid-century sea-level rise projections and flooding projections due to major storm events.
- Develop guidelines and standards for infrastructure and buildings to be flood-proofed or capable of accommodating temporary flooding.
- Integrate climate change impacts into City planning, operations and capital improvement program project design and evaluation.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) – Integrate GSI into upland and upstream areas to alleviate localized flooding and urban heat island effect. Strategies should include increasing tree canopy and installing rain gardens, bioretention swales, regional stormwater facilities, and

similar strategies in the public right-of-way and on private development of all sizes. In addition to improving climate resilience, these strategies reduce polluted stormwater discharge into the creeks and Bay.

Mitigate Wildfire Risk – Reduce wildfire risk in the urban-wildland interface by strengthening wildfire scenario planning, building codes, fuel management, and fire protection plans for development in fire-risk areas. Develop new land use policies and programs to prevent and reduce development in the Wildland Urban Interface and to harden existing homes to survive wildfires.

The public deserves a CAP that prepares Redwood City and San Mateo County for climate change over the next decade. In order to protect our communities and taxpayers from disastrous effects of hesitancy and inaction, please include these comprehensive adaptation measures in the 2030 CAP Update now, to equitably protect our communities from flooding and other climate change-associated threats.

Organizations

Acterra	Green Foothills
Center for Biological Diversity	Greenbelt Alliance
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Citizens Environmental Council of Burlingame	Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action
Citizens' Climate Lobby	Redwood City Neighbors United
Clean Water Action	San Francisco Baykeeper
Defenders of Wildlife	Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Environmental Volunteers	Save The Bay
Fossil Free Mid-Peninsula	Sequoia Audubon Society
Fresh Approach	Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
Friends of Bedwell Bayfront Park	Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action
Golden Gate Audubon Society	Youth United for Community Action