

**CITY OF MERCED**  
**Development Services**

TO: Climate Action Plan Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee  
FROM: Bill King, AICP. Principal Planner  
DATE: March 3, 2011  
SUBJECT: City Council Selection of GHG Reduction Target and Parameters

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ACTION REQUIRED: Discussion

DISCUSSION

On February 22, 2011, the Merced City Council adopted a motion to:

(1) select a greenhouse gas reduction target that (a) affects government-based facilities and community-based emission sources; (b) addresses the long-term, but includes a phasing plan that recognizes short-term and near term approaches to meet the long-term goal; and (c) includes a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 20% below 1990 levels by 2020 for government-based facilities and the community; and

(2) accept Staff's approach to drafting the Climate Action Plan, which is an approach, based on the facts and considerations listed below:

- Time constraints on City Staff necessitate a focused approach;
- Current City policies will form the foundation upon which specific strategies will be crafted (Attachment 1);
- The Climate Action Plan will include a set of recommended strategies and implementation plan;
- Among other topics, the recommended strategies will address state-mandated programs, such as water conservation (SB x7-7 2009), commercial recycling (AB32), building efficiency (CalGreen Code); and other "co-benefit" categories and items;
- Strategies will be financially feasible;
- The plan's focus will be qualitative, in the sense of identifying and crafting feasible strategies that can be implemented in Merced;
- The Plan will seek to create linkages between it and established City plans such as the City's general, specific, and master plans so that they can work together to achieve the reduction target;
- The strategies will complement and be consistent with MCAG's charge to craft a Sustainable Communities Strategy as part of the County's Regional Transportation Plan, which has implications for future transportation funding and review of development projects; and,

- Strategies will be implemented in an incremental manner, based on the needs and ability of the Community.

The Committee's charge is now complete. Within the framework described above, beginning in April, the committee will focus its work on selecting greenhouse gas reduction actions.

Attachments:

1. Existing Greenhouse Gas Reduction Related City Policies

The “Merced Vision 2030 General Plan” lists numerous policies that are designed to ensure that global climate change impacts are minimized as development occurs. These policies are cited in two places; (1) Section 3.17 of the General Plan EIR, titled, “Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Global Climate Change),” on pages 3.17-10 to 3.17-12, under the sub-title “General Plan Consistency; and (2) Chapter 8 of the Merced Vision 2030 General Plan titled, “Sustainable Development,” on pages 8-34 to 8-35, under Policy SD-1.8.

### ***Urban Expansion***

- UE-1.1** Designate areas for new urban development that recognize the physical characteristics and environmental constraints of the planning area.
- UE-1.2** Foster compact and efficient development patterns to maintain a compact urban form.
- UE-1.3** Control the annexation, timing, density, and location of new land uses within the City’s urban expansion boundaries.

### ***Land Use***

- L-1.1** Promote balanced development which provides jobs, services and housing.
- L-1.2** Encourage a diversity of building types, ownership, prices, designs, and site plans for residential areas throughout the City.
- L-1.7** Encourage the location of multi-family developments on sites with good access to transportation, shopping, employment centers, and services.
- L-1.8 \*** Create livable and identifiable residential neighborhoods.
- L-1.9 \*** Ensure connectivity between existing and planned urban areas.
- L-2.1** Encourage further development of appropriate commercial and industrial uses throughout the City.
- L-2.4** Provide a range of services adjacent to and within industrial areas to reduce auto trips.
- L-2.6** Provide neighborhood commercial centers in proportion to residential development in the City.
- L-2.7** Locate and design new commercial development to provide good access from adjacent neighborhoods and reduce congestion on major streets.
- L-2.8** Encourage a mixture of uses and activities and reinvestment that will maintain the vitality of the downtown area.
- L-2.9** Identify locations and develop standards for campus-type research and development parks.
- L-3.1** Create land use patterns that will encourage people to walk, bicycle, or use public transit for an increased number of their daily trips.

- L-3.2** Encourage infill development and a compact urban form.
- L-3.3** Promote site designs that encourage walking, cycling, and transit use.
- L-3.5 \*** Develop a Transit-Oriented Development Overlay Zone Adjacent to the Planned High Speed Rail Station in Downtown Merced
- L-3.7 \*** Implement policies and principles to conform to the intent of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint.

### ***Transportation and Circulation***

- T-1.1 \*** Design streets consistent with circulation function, affected land uses, and all modes of transportation.
- T-1.2** Coordinate circulation and transportation planning with pertinent regional, State and Federal agencies.
- T-1.3** Design major roads to maximize efficiency and accessibility.
- T-1.5** Minimize unnecessary travel demand on major streets and promote energy conservation.
- T-1.6** Minimize adverse impacts on the environment from existing and proposed road systems
- T-2.1** Provide for and maintain a major transit-way along "M" Street and possibly along the Bellevue Road/Merced-Atwater Expressway and Campus Parkway corridors.
- T-2.2** Support and enhance the use of public transit.
- T-2.3** Support a safe and effective public transit system.
- T-2.4** Encourage the use of bicycles.
- T-2.5** Provide convenient bicycle support facilities to encourage bicycle use.
- T-2.6** Maintain and expand the community's existing bicycle circulation system.
- T-2.7** Maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- T-2.8** Improve planning for pedestrians.
- T-2.9** Ensure that new development provides the facilities and programs that improve the effectiveness of Transportation Control Measures and Congestion Management Programs.
- T-3.5** Support enhanced railroad passenger service and high speed rail service for Merced
- T-3.6** Retain and expand as needed rail facilities serving industrial development

### ***Public Services***

- P-1.1** Provide adequate public infrastructure and municipal services to meet the needs of future development.

- P-1.2** Utilize existing infrastructure and public service capacities to the maximum extent possible and provide for the logical, timely and economically efficient extension of municipal infrastructure and services where necessary.
- P-1.3** Require new development to provide or pay for its fair share of public facility and infrastructure improvements.
- P-3.1** Ensure that adequate water supply can be provided within the City's service area, concurrent with service expansion and population growth.
- P-3.2** In cooperation with the County and the Merced Irrigation District, work to stabilize the region's aquifer.
- P-4.2** Consider the use of reclaimed water to reduce non-potable water demands whenever practical
- P-5.2** Integrate drainage facilities with bike paths, sidewalks, recreation facilities, agricultural activities, groundwater recharge, and landscaping.
- P-6.1** Establish programs to recover recyclable materials and energy from solid wastes generated within the City.
- P-6.2** Minimize the potential impacts of waste collection, transportation and disposal facilities upon the residents of Merced.

### ***Urban Design***

- UD-1.1** Apply Transit-Ready Development or Urban Village design principles to new development in the City's new growth areas.
- UD-1.2** Distribute and design Urban Villages to promote convenient vehicular, pedestrian, and transit access.
- UD-1.3 \*** Promote and facilitate Core Commercial design principles in Village commercial areas.
- UD-1.4** Promote and facilitate Urban Village residential area design principles.
- UD-1.5** Design and develop public and quasi-public buildings and uses utilizing Transit-Ready Development or Urban Village principles.
- UD-2.1** Use Urban Village design concepts in neighborhood revitalization programs.

### ***Safety***

- S-7.1** Prevent injuries and environmental contamination due to the uncontrolled release of hazardous materials.
- S-7.2** Ensure that hazardous materials are cleaned up before a property is developed or redeveloped.

### ***Open Space***

- OS-1.4** Improve and expand the City's urban forest.
- OS-3.2** Maintain and expand the City's Bikeway and Trail System
- OS-5.1** Promote water conservation throughout the planning area.

### ***Sustainable Development***

- SD-1.1** Accurately determine and fairly mitigate the local and regional air quality impacts of projects proposed in the City of Merced.
- SD-1.2** Coordinate local air quality programs with regional programs and those of neighboring jurisdictions.
- SD-1.3** Integrate land use planning transportation planning, and air quality planning for the most efficient use of public resources and for a healthier environment.
- SD-1.4** Educate the public on the impact of individual transportation, lifestyle, and land use decisions on air quality.
- SD-1.5** Provide public facilities and operations which can serve as a model for the private sector in implementation of air quality programs.
- SD-1.7** Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan for the City.
- SD-1.8** Implement Policies in Other General Plan Chapters to Address Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Goals
- SD-3.1** Promote the use of Solar Energy technology and other Alternative Energy Resources
- SD-3.2** Encourage the use of energy conservation features, low-emission equipment, and alternative energy sources for all new residential and commercial development.
- SD-4.1** Create a healthy built environment.
- SD-4.2** Encourage increased physical activity of residents and healthier food choices.

### ***Housing***

- H-1.1** Support increased densities in residential areas.
- H-2.2** Promote preventative maintenance and energy conservation in older housing units.