
City of Merced

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 23, 2014
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Bill King, Principal Planner
SUBJECT: Appointment of Planning Commissioner to the Programmatic Climate Action Plan Focus Group

Requested Action

City Planning Staff seeks one Planning Commissioner to be a member of a Focus Group to advise Staff and the City's consultant in their preparation to update the City's Climate Action Plan.

Background

In 2012, the City of Merced adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The 2012 CAP identified over 150 ways to achieve community values outlined below. In pursuing these values, the community will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their influence on global climate change

Community Values	Goals
Healthy Communities	Enhance Mobility of all Transportation Modes Sustainable Community Design
Quality Natural Resources	Water Conservation and Technology Protect Air Resources Waste Reduction
Clean Energy Resources	Increase the Use of Renewable Energy Resources Building Energy Conservation
Leaders and Partners	Public Outreach and Involvement

The City of Merced has secured a professional consultant to help City Staff and the community to create a tool to implement the City's Climate Action Plan; this tool is referred to as the Programmatic Climate Action Plan (PCAP). The PCAP will identify government and community based projects and programs to implement between now and 2020. The PCAP tool will be developed with significant public involvement.

Tools and Features of the PCAP are envisioned to include:

- Selection of feasible and effective projects and programs to achieve the City's adopted greenhouse gas reduction target. A cost-benefit analysis will be performed to help with the process of selecting these projects and programs;
- Monitoring protocols and worksheets;
- New development-related codes grounded in adopted City policies, actions, and mitigation measures, together with a user-friendly design manual to clarify these, and resulting in a more predictable development review process; and,
- The PCAP will be crafted in such a manner to qualify it as a CEQA-streamlining tool, as provided for and encouraged by the State of California.

Roles and Duties

The Focus Group will advise and make recommendations to City Staff concerning various elements of the draft Programmatic Climate Action Plan (PCAP). Elements include:

- Review and selection of existing development-related City policies that lend themselves to becoming development-related codes.
- Review and selection of a set of CAP actions (listed in the City's adopted CAP, Chapter 4), along with review and feedback of a cost-benefit analysis of implementing such actions.
- Review and comment on creating a monitoring program to track implementation of the set of selected CAP actions.
- Review and comment on the draft code language and urban design manual, which graphically communicates the City's CAP-related development codes and standards in a user-friendly manner.

City Staff will develop the products described above and provide a recommendation to the City of Merced Planning Commission, who will then make a recommendation to the City Council.

Target Composition of the Focus Group

The Programmatic Climate Action Plan and related implementing ordinances will become tools in the day-to-day state-mandated project review activities of the Planning Division. Thus, a key objective of the project is to achieve community understanding of these documents. Toward this end, in addition to representation from the City Council and Planning Commission, Staff is seeking interested and affected individuals and representatives from various groups and industries to be part of the Focus Group, including builders, engineers and surveyors, local chambers of commerce, real-estate brokers and/or agents, energy utility representatives, transportation, air quality and health advocates, conservation groups, and the local "green-jobs" industry. Mayor Stan Thurston will be a member of the Focus Group.

AGENDA ITEM #4.3

Appointment of PC Commissioner to PCAP Focus Group

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In an effort to maximize productivity while assuring balanced representation, the number of available seats on the Focus Group is set at no more than twelve (12).

Logistics

Six Focus Group meetings are scheduled to occur between Spring 2014 and Spring 2015 (dates to be determined at a later date). Meetings will generally occur in the daytime and could last 2-4 hours, and will occur downtown at the City of Merced Civic Center. Focus Group Members will be expected to attend all meetings and read draft materials before and during each meeting. Two community workshops, in addition to the regular Focus Group meetings, are also planned.

Additional information about the Project

Refer to the project website (below) to learn more about the project and the City's Climate Action Plan.

http://www.cityofmerced.org/depts/cd/planning/programmatic_climate_action_plan.asp