



Agenda

Sustainability Task Force

A Committee of the Chico City Council

Meeting of Thursday, May 30, 2019 – 5:30 p.m.

Municipal Center - 421 Main Street, Conference Room No. 1 in the Council Chambers

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
2. **APPROVE APRIL 11, 2019 MEETING MINUTES** - *Draft 04/11/19 minutes attached.*
3. **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN “TRIAL” PUBLIC OUTREACH LISTENING SESSION (STF Chair Chastain)** - At its April 11, 2019 meeting, a STF sub-committee presented a draft format for public outreach/listening sessions to support development of an updated Climate Action Plan. The proposed format will allow community groups to receive a simple training, host listening sessions, and report back results for use by the consultant that will update the City’s CAP. The STF agreed to test the format and questions by holding a “trial” listening session. *Attached are draft Listening Session materials and Tips for Effective Facilitation of Group Discussions.*
4. **REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS** - These items are provided for the STF’s information. Although the STF may discuss the items, no action can be taken at the meeting. Should the STF determine that action is required, an item may be included on a subsequent agenda.
5. **BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR** - Members of the public may address the STF at this time on any matter not already listed on the agenda, with comments being limited to three minutes. The STF cannot take any action at this meeting on requests made under this section of the agenda.
6. **ADJOURNMENT** - Next meeting scheduled for July 11, 2019

ATTACHMENT(S): 04/11/19 STF Meeting Minutes (Draft)
Draft Listening Session Materials
Tips for Effective Facilitation of Group Discussions

Agenda available from the City’s website at www.ci.chico.ca.us under “**Minutes & Agendas**”

Prepared: 05/22/19
Posted: 05/22/19
Prior to: 5:30 pm

Community Development Department
421 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Chico, CA 95928
(530) 879-6800



Please contact the City Clerk at 896-7250 should you require an agenda in an alternative format or if you need to request a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting. This request should be received at least three working days prior to the meeting in order to accommodate your request.

Sustainability Task Force Members:

Cheri Chastain, Chair
Molly Marcussen

Danielle Baxter, Vice Chair
Mandi McKay

Dave Donnan
Mark Stemen

William Loker

**CITY OF CHICO SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
APRIL 11, 2019**

Municipal Center
421 Main Street
Council Chambers, Conference Rm. 1

STF Members Present: Cheri Chastain, Chair
 Daniel Baxter, Vice Chair
 Dave Donnan
 William Loker
 Mark Stemen

STF Members Absent: Molly Marcussen
 Mandi McKay

Staff Members Present: Brendan Vieg, Deputy Director, CDD
 Courtney Charter, CivicSpark Fellow

Guests Present: Matt Roberts, Ann Ponzjo, Mary Kay Benson, Pamm Larry

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Stemen called the meeting to order at 5:33pm. STF members, City staff, and guests were present as noted.

2. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

STF member Chastain was nominated and seconded to serve as STF Chair. *The STF voted 5-0-2 (McKay and Marcussen absent) approving Chastain as Chair.*

STF member Baxter was nominated and seconded to serve as STF Vice Chair. *The STF voted 5-0-2 (McKay and Marcussen absent) approving Baxter as Vice Chair.*

3. APPROVE FEBRUARY 28, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

The 02/28/19 STF Meeting Minutes were approved 5-0-2 (McKay and Marcussen absent).

4. SPRINGBOARD BIODIESEL PRESENTATION

Matt Roberts, owner of Springboard Biodiesel, provided a comprehensive overview of the benefits of municipal-driven used cooking oil collection programs, which promotes oils being converted into clean burning biodiesel fuel (*see attached presentation*).

The STF discussed a number of issues, including past coordination with the City, addressing BCAG concerns regarding mixing of fuels, use of the existing Springboard Biodiesel facilities for a collection facility, etc.

The STF urged Mr. Roberts to engage in the CAP Update process and to identify a clear quantitative GHG emission reduction linkage in order to be included in future actions.

5. REPORT BACK FROM SUB-COMMITTEE DEVELOPING FORMAT FOR FUTURE CAP OUTREACH SESSIONS

The STF received an update from Chair Chastain regarding the sub-committees efforts to develop a format and questions for public outreach/listening sessions to support the development of an updated Climate Action Plan (*see attached sub-committee notes for details*). The format allows other groups to receive a simple training, to host listening sessions throughout the community, and to report back results in a consistent format for use by the consultant that will update the City's CAP.

The STF provided feedback on the proposed format, and agreed to provide additional comments to Chair Chastain over the coming week.

A motion was made and seconded to hold a "trial" listening session at the STF's next meeting. The STF voted 5-0-2 (McKay and Marcussen absent) to hold a listening session at its next scheduled meeting.

STF member Loker agreed to prepare a list of priorities for listening session facilitators to ensure quality engagement and feedback.

STF member Donnan emphasized the need to coordinate a listening session with CARD.

Chair Chastain agreed to share the final listening session format with the STF in early May for final comment before the next STF meeting.

6. OPTIONS FOR THE MAKE-UP OF A STANDING CLIMATE COMMISSION

In anticipation of the STF potentially becoming a "standing commission", CivicSpark Fellow Charter shared her research regarding how other California communities made the same transition. STF members Chastain and Stemen, as well as CivicSpark Fellow Charter, also shared details of their meeting with the City Clerk regarding potentially becoming a standing commission.

STF member Stemen shared "draft" language regarding the function of a standing commission, and emphasized the importance of forming ad hoc work groups with the City's other boards and commission to discuss topics of mutual interest.

The STF discussed the merits of different commission options, including ex officio members, and the need for diversity and equity on the panel, including reaching out to the Mechoopda Indian Tribe. There was also a discussion of the name of a future commission, as well as the purview of

the commission – focus on climate change related issues or broader role related to Sustainability in general.

In light of the fact that the City Council had not yet directed the creation of a standing commission, the STF made no recommendations.

7. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Deputy Director Vieg shared that the STF that the City Council authorized the Mayor to sign the resolution declaring a climate emergency that the Chico 350 group had shared with the STF at its February 28, 2019 meeting, and that Council had agreed to reconsider at a future meeting whether to transition the STF into a permanent standing commission.

Deputy Director Vieg also shared that he would be unavailable for the schedule May 23, 2019 STF meeting, and proposed sending alternative dates to the STF in order to reschedule to a date as close as possible to the May 23rd date.

8. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business from the STF, the meeting adjourned at 7:05pm to the meeting of Thursday, May 23, 2019 (or an alternate date).

Date Approved

Brendan Vieg, Deputy Director, CDD

The Municipal Biodiesel Opportunity

Matt Roberts | Springboard Biodiesel



Biodiesel emits the least CO₂ of all
the liquid fuels (CARB)

Biodiesel will run in any diesel engine...and you can make it from used cooking oil.



Alot of diesel engines in Chico,
CA...and 88,000+ people who eat
food.



The proposal:

COLLECT. City of Chico promotes a voluntary collection service to collect used cooking oil, year round.

CONVERT. The city converts that UCO into high grade, clean-burning, inexpensive fuel and

USES the fuel in municipal diesel engines, mixed with diesel or blended with regular diesel.



SB? Manufacturers:



- Established 2008
- 1000+ units in operation in 50 states and in 33 countries
- BioPro™ and SpringPro™ appliances make 2,000 – 90,000 gallons/yr
- Automated with repeatable ASTM results
- Safe
- Production costs = \$1.15 to 2.00/gallon + the price of feedstock

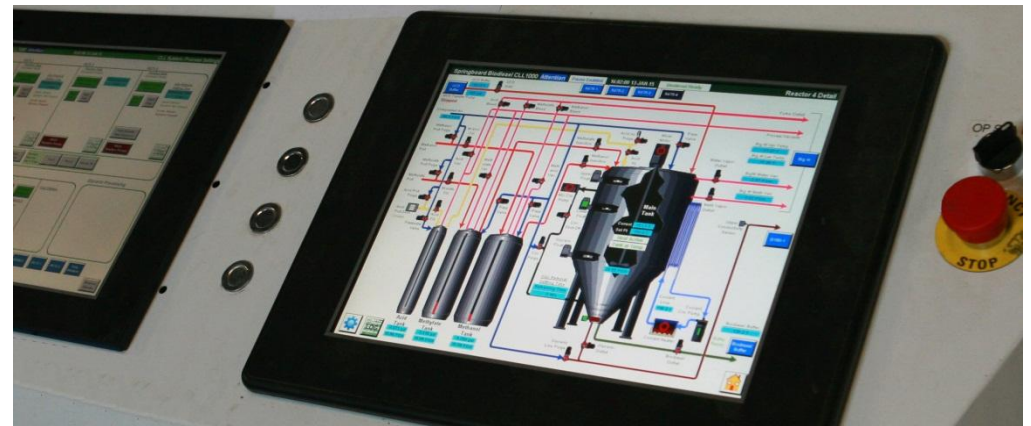
2,000 to 100,000 gallons per year



250,000 gallons sold locally '14-'16



Cal Trans, Northern Lights, ProPacific Fresh, The Green Station,
The City of Chico... +100



Municipalities: Daphne Utilities



- Daphne, Alabama has 22,000 residents
- Daphne Utilities has been using a BioPro™ 190 since 2007
- Initial interest in biodiesel was to keep grease out of the sewer systems; reduce maintenance costs.
- Started “Cease the Grease” customer grease collection program.
- They make approx. 300 gallons of biodiesel per month and save over \$15,000 per year on fuel (with diesel at \$3.00/gal) and reduce sewer maintenance costs by 40%)
- They run B20 in their utility trucks

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2ut8gaRg9E>

Daphne Utilities - collection



+



=



Daphne Utilities - conversion



<https://www.daphneutilities.com/about-us/our-awards/>

<https://www.daphneutilities.com/environment/bio-diesel-recycling/>

Daphne Utilities - conversion

“One of the greatest benefits biodiesel provides however is its ability to connect with the customer and get them excited about recycling used cooking oil so that the sewers and treatment plant processes are improved. This fact simply cannot be overstated: the customer holds the power to improve the sewer system. Getting him to want to do so is the responsibility of every utility.”

-Rob McElroy
Director
Daphne Utilities



Municipalities: Alachua County



- Remove F.O.G from muni. pipes.
- County Hazardous Waste Dept.
- 2000+ gallons per year
- They run a Caterpillar diesel generator on the biodiesel which powers a municipal bldg.

Caterpillar XQ20P2: 22.5 KVA, 18 Kilowatt.

5 years on straight biodiesel

Uses less than 20 gallons per 10 hr. work day.

They never had to do anything to the generator to run it on bio.

Municipalities: Alachua County

“We consistently make 2000+ gallons/year of B100 that gets blended with our fleet 10k gal tank and we have had no issues running it in our vehicles. Our generator runs on B100 and has never had any fuel quality issues...we’ve saved tens of thousands on our electrical bill”

-Josh Prouty
Alachua County Hazardous Waste Coordinator



Municipalities: The list grows

- NYC Parks Department
- NYC Sanitation Department
- San Francisco
- MO Dept of Transportation
- NJ Dept of Transportation
- City of Chula Vista
- City of Flagstaff
- City of Ft. Collins
- City of Irving
- City of Las Vegas
- City of Santa Monica
- City of Scottsdale, AZ
- City of Oceanside
- US Air Force
- US Marines
- Grand Canyon National Park
- Yellowstone National Park
- FL Power & Light
- Baltimore Gas & Electric
- Harvard University (MA)
- Odell Brewery
- Poland Spring
- Sysco Corporation
- Uinta Brewing Company
- UPS WorldPort
- Whole Foods
- City of Redding...



Identify vehicles that can run on it.

Muni. Vehicles. BCAG?

Who should run this program?

City of Chico Employees?

Work program?

Springboard Biodiesel?



We (BCAG) would like to thank you for providing the Biodiesel to our location for the pilot program. We started the Biodiesel Pilot on May 18th with four of our Revenue Vehicles. Two Revenue Vehicles were from our newer fleet and two were from our older fleet. The Biodiesel Pilot ended on June 10, 2016. **There were no mechanical issues observed from using the B20 Biodiesel in the four Revenue Vehicles. In addition, there were no noticeable change in the MPG based on using the B20 Biodiesel and the Diesel2.**

While we were using your product for the Biodiesel Pilot program, we (BCAG and Transdev) attended scheduled meetings with you and voiced our concerns. **Two of the main concerns mentioned were the inability to deliver the product already mixed at the B20 mixer and having the monthly quantity needed for our location.** These are still our top concerns with Springboard.

During the Biodiesel Pilot, Springboard delivered the totes with B100 and our Maintenance team had to dispense the Diesel into the totes to create the B20 mixture. First, **it would not be an economical benefit or an efficient process for BCAG to have the B100 delivered and then have another company deliver the Diesel2 in order to achieve the B20 mixture. Secondly, BCAG does not have any intentions to fuel the Diesel Revenue Vehicles off-site.** BCAG designed the facility to have on-site fueling for the Gasoline and Diesel fleet to provide a more efficient process to fueling the Revenue vehicles. In addition, **BCAG would need to have the B20 Biodiesel premixed before delivering to the facility.** As you have recently mentioned, in the future Springboard is looking to setting up a B20 filling station on Park Ave, this option would not be of any benefit to BCAG.

We appreciate the time from you and your staff with assisting us on the Biodiesel Pilot. Should circumstances change in the future where Springboard is equipped to deliver the B20 Biodiesel fuel (already mixed) and meet the usage demand of BCAG fueling requirements and efficiencies, then we would certainly consider working with Springboard.

Regards,
Michael Rosson
Transit Manager

326 Huss Drive, Suite 150
Chico, CA 95928
Main: 530-809-4616
Fax: 530-879-2444
www.bcag.org



What to call it?

Deep Fry for Blue Skies?

The Chico Biodiesel initiative...?

Links of interest:

[Biodiesel tops list as most popular alt- fuel for fleets - 2019](#)

[US Biodiesel production - 2.6 Billion gallons used in 2018](#)

[Biodiesel from UCO emits 88% less CO2 and 50% less particulate matter than diesel](#)

[Safer, cleaner *and less expensive* alternative for diesel fleets](#)

[Fact sheets from the National Biodiesel Board](#)



City of Chico Sustainability Task Force

Climate Action Plan | Solutions Oriented Listening Session Process

A Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted by the the Chico City Council in 2012. Subsequently, a Sustainability Task Force (STF) was appointed to assist with implementation of the plan. The existing CAP includes greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals and projects through 2020. On Feb 19, 2019, the Chico City Council voted to adopt new GHG reduction goals in accordance with the State of California and to pursue an update to the existing CAP.

New greenhouse gas reduction targets

40% reduction below 1990 levels by 2030

80% reduction below 1990 levels by 2050

Purpose of Listening Sessions

These sessions should seek to engage all members of the community in gathering priorities for inclusion in an update to the City of Chico's CAP. The STF seeks to hear a range of voices from within the community on what actions are the most important and/or impactful. It is important that as many voices as possible are heard and that the community fully supports and is ready to assist with implementation of the updated CAP.

Desired Feedback:

The CAP is written to reduce GHG emissions from three main sources:

- Energy (thermal and electrical)
- Transportation
- Solid Waste

These listening session should seek suggestions for GHG reduction in these source areas as well as potential sequestration and/or mitigation projects.

Suggestions regarding what incentives and pathways the STF can include to encourage and promote community buy in and action on a local level are highly desired as well as potential funding sources to accomplish suggested goals.

Suggested Session Structure

These listening sessions can take whatever structure is most appropriate for the group hosting. If there is a structure already in use by the hosting group to gather feedback, please feel free to use it. If not, below are some suggestions.

Each session should include at least one dedicated moderator and at least one notetaker. Prior to the listening session, moderator(s) should be briefed by a member of the STF on desired outcomes and deliverables. If you anticipate a larger group (15+), you may want to consider having multiple moderators to help facilitate. Moderators will be given brief summary page of previous CAP and important points to use in facilitation and to print as handouts (Courtney to create).

Moderators should be very intentional with questions and encourage attendees to stay on topic - stay focused on the fact that achieving GHG reduction targets is the goal. Adaptation and

resilience are important and should be woven throughout the CAP but gross reductions in GHG emissions is the primary focus.

Suggestions should be as SMART as possible:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Suggested Session Flow:

- Introduction of moderator(s) and notetaker(s)
- Recap previous CAP
 - Structure of previous CAP and GHG reduction areas: energy (thermal and electric), transportation, solid waste
 - Key accomplishments since adoption of previous CAP
 - *Courtney to create the document using memos to council with accomplishments*
- Current GHG levels + new targets
 - As of 2017, 23% below baseline year (2005) levels
 - New goal is 40% reduction below 1990 levels by 2030; 80% reduction below 1990 levels by 2050
- Share desired outcomes from the session including a mini training on what SMART goals are
- Sticky notes with writing stations for each section of the CAP (energy, transportation, solid waste, sequestration/mitigation) are a very efficient way to capture data. Each category of GHG reductions can be assigned to a different color sticky note

STF Commits to:

- Provide powerpoint slides with background info for those with powerpoint capabilities for their listening sessions (*Courtney*)
- Provide background documents and data for previous CAP targets, climate vulnerability assessment, and new climate targets (*Courtney*)
- Provide at least 30 min support and background “training” meeting prior to hosted listening session (*All STF/CivicSpark Members*)
- STF will keep a calendar of scheduled listening session and will assist with promotion of sessions (*Danielle*)
- Assemble all collected feedback and write a summary document for CAP consultant

Listening Session Hosts Commits to:

- Contacting STF prior to hosting session to understand purpose and deliverables
- Secure a space for hosting the session and schedule appropriately
- Promote listening session to target audience
- Follow suggested guidelines for listening session structure
- Providing a written summary including of topics discussed at their listening sessions to STF

Marketing/Outreach Strategy

We should encourage any interested/passionate/concerned citizen to host a listening session. STF members may target specific audiences they wish to hear from.

Create a Google Form to allow for online contributions for those who cannot attend an in-person meeting (*Danielle will create*)

Utilize social media, create poster template that any organization can customize with their session details (*Courtney/Molly*)

Ideas for key groups/hosts:

- Youth - K-12
- Property management associations
- Developers
- Chico State students, staff, faculty (*Cheri*)
- Butte College students, staff, faculty (*Danielle*)
- Local environmental non-profits
- Business community - DCBA, Chico Chamber
- Young folk - 21-35, not in college (*Danielle*)
- Park Commission (*Danielle*)
- Chico 350 (*Mark*)
- Butte Environmental Council - (*Danielle*)
- Utilities, service providers, local government (CalWater, PG&E, SGMA)
- BCAG

Promoting Scheduled Listening Sessions:

- Utilize social media - listening session hosts + city + STF
- Ecotopia
- City of Chico + STF website
- Posters, farmers market tabling

City of Chico Sustainability Task Force

Climate Action Plan | Solutions Oriented Listening

Session Process

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Purpose of Listening Sessions

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Climate Action Plan Listening Session Trial Run

MAY 30, 2019

Listening Session Structure

Introductions

Climate Change & Chico

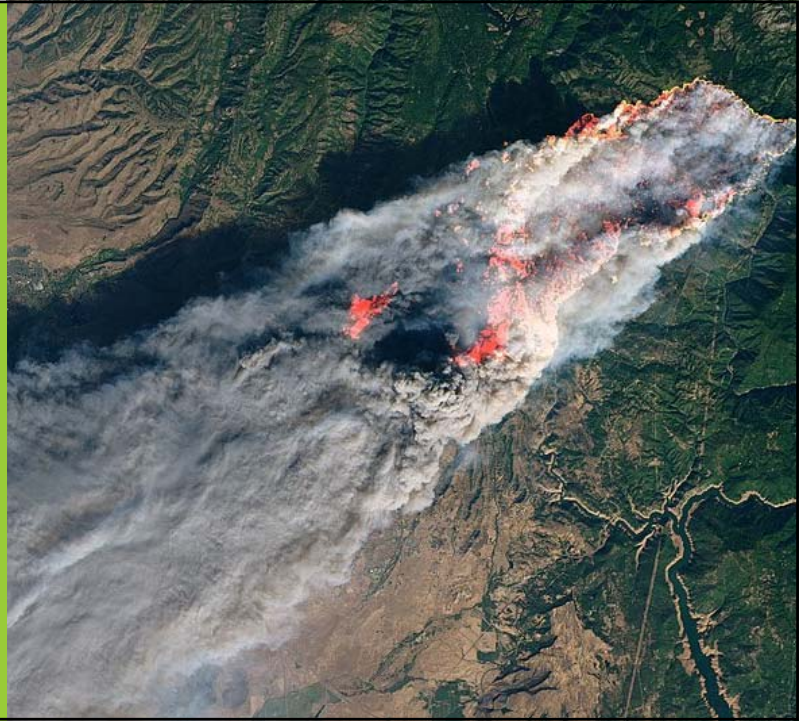
Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2020

Emission Trends & Progress to Date

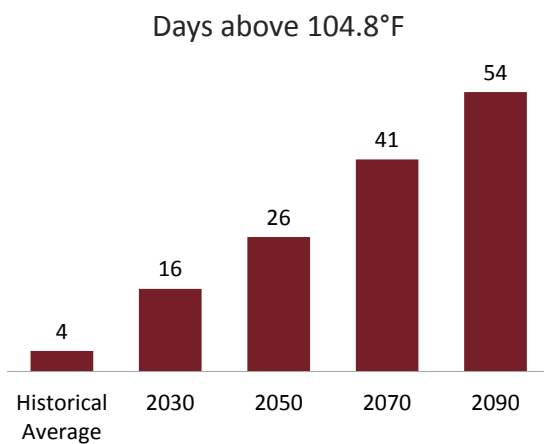
Desired Outcomes of Listening Session

Climate Change

How will it
effect Chico?



Rising Temperatures



- Increase in average day and nighttime temps
- Increase in the number of extreme heat days

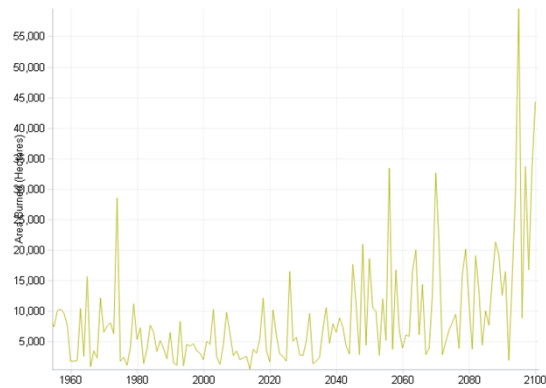
Annual Average of Area Burned

Butte County, California

Emissions continue to rise strongly through 2050 and plateau around 2100 (RCP 8.5), Central Population Growth Projections.

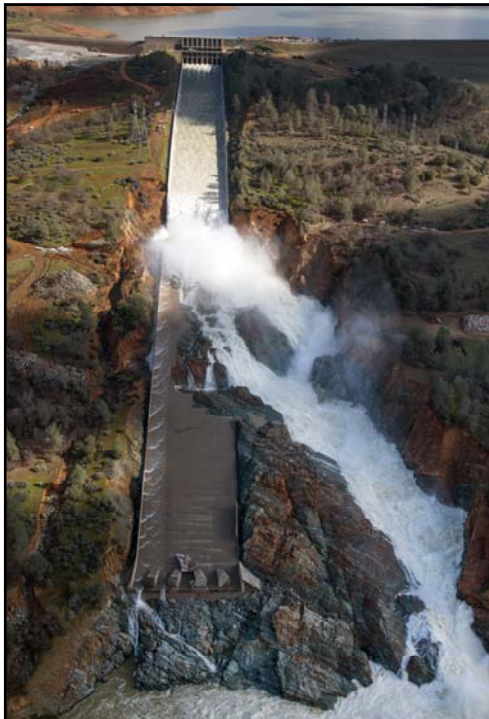
Modelled Data (2006–2099)

■ CanESM2



Increased Risk of Wildfire

- Prediction of future fire risk are uncertain
- However – rising temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns and reduced vegetation moisture content can cause an increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires



Changes in Precipitation & Increased Risk of Flooding

- Oscillating between prolonged periods of drought and risks of flooding
 - Increase in the frequency and intensity of storms
 - Decrease in snowpack and water supplies

Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2020

Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
25% below 2005 levels by 2020

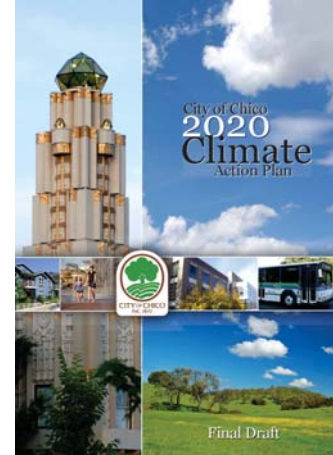
- Phase I: 10% reduction
- Phase II: Remaining 15% reduction

Emissions calculated under three sectors

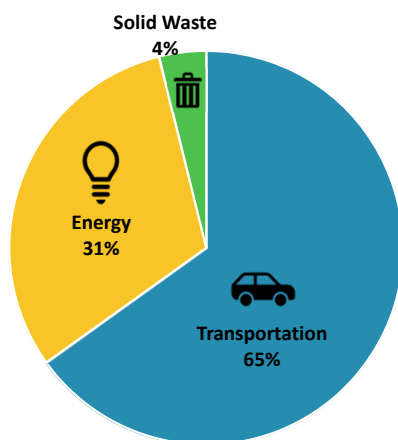
- Transportation
- Energy (electrical and natural gas)
- Solid Waste

Emissions calculated as MTCO₂e

- MTCO₂e = metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent
- Allows multiple GHGs to be expressed and compared using a common unit



2005 Baseline Breakdown



652,258 MTCO₂e

Transportation

- Calculated from gasoline and diesel sales

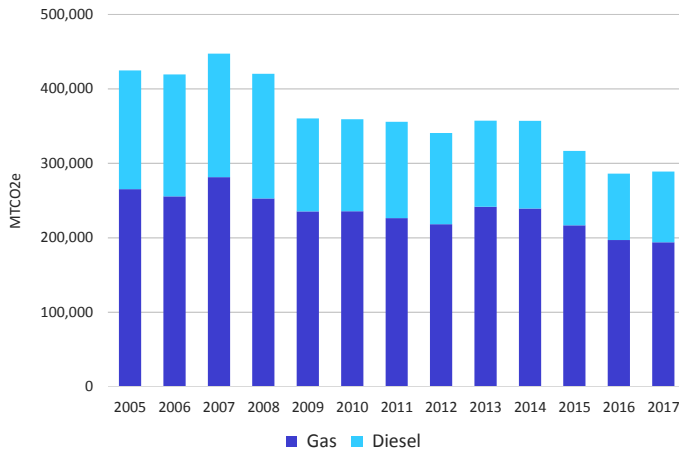
Energy

- Includes electricity and natural gas
- Calculated from data provided by PG&E

Solid Waste

- Calculated using tonnage of solid waste sent to landfill

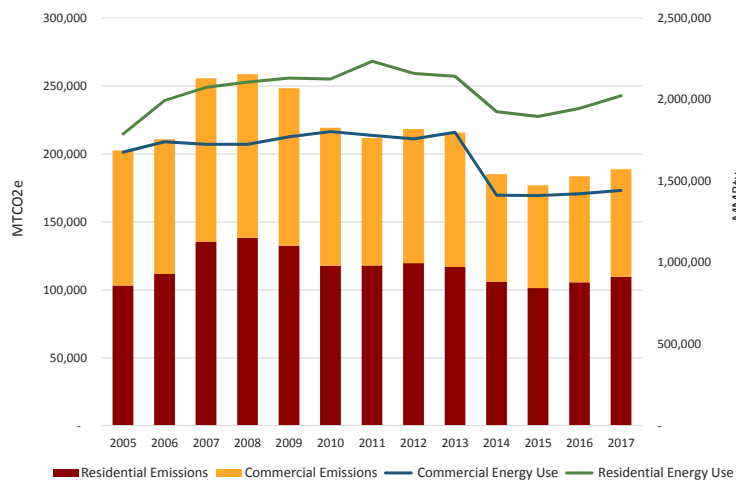
Emissions Trends – Transportation



32% Reduction in GHG emissions

- Sector with most significant decline in GHG emissions, but remains the largest source of GHG emissions

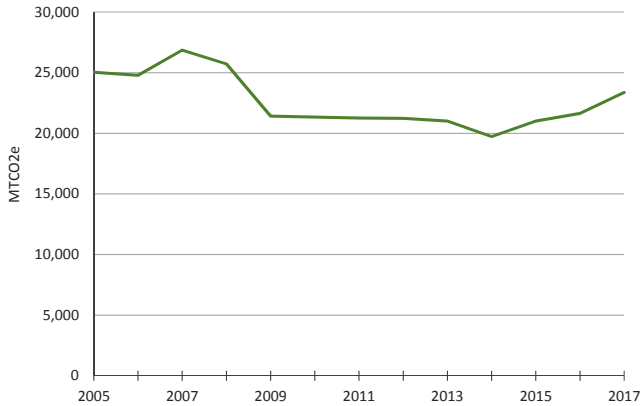
Emissions Trends – Energy



7% Reduction in GHG emissions

- Emission reductions are due to changes in sources of electricity distributed by PG&E and increases in Chico rooftop solar
- Electricity and natural gas consumption declined in the commercial sector but increased in the residential sector

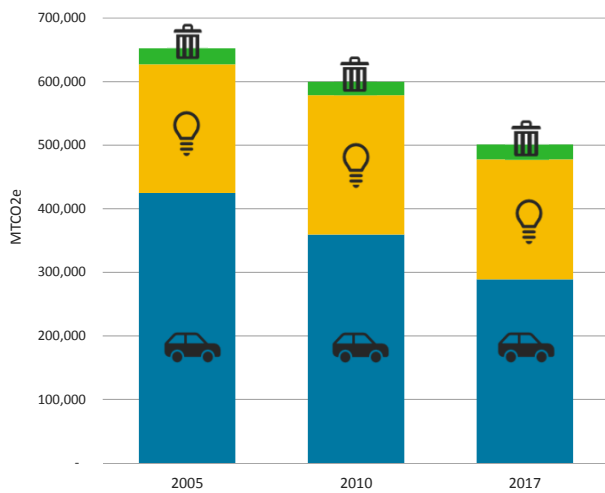
Emissions Trends – Solid Waste



7% Reduction in GHG emissions

- Declined from 2007 to 2014
- Since 2014, tonnage has been steadily increasing
- Most of the solid waste fluctuations are believed to result from the ebb and flow of construction in Chico

Emissions Trends – Total Emissions



Transportation

↓ 32%

Energy

↓ 7%

Solid Waste

↓ 7%

Where are
we now?

- As of 2017, 23% below baseline year (2005) levels
- On track to meet 25% reduction goal, but analysis shows a number of concerning trends
 - Particularly an overall increase in overall electricity use – while the grid may be improving, we are still using more

Where are
we going?

- Senate Bill 32 requires a reduction in GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030
 - *NOTE: Changes baseline year from 2005 -> 1990*
- Chico City Council has voted to adopt the state's new goals and to create a new Climate Action Plan
- Sustainability Task Force to transition to a standing commission

Desired
Feedback

- 1) Suggestions for GHG emission reductions from:
 - Transportation
 - Energy – electrical and natural gas
 - Solid Waste
- 2) Potential sequestration & mitigation projects
- 3) Suggestions for incentives and pathways to encourage and promote community action
- 4) Potential funding sources

SMART Input

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Examples

Encourage bicycling

- SMART: Conduct a bicycle education campaign in the spring of each year to include at least one workshop, one event, and three school safety visits

Carpool

- SMART: Work with large employers to develop and launch at least one incentivized carpool program in 2020

All ideas are welcome... the **SMARTer** you can make them the better!

Questions?

Tips for Effective Facilitation of Group Discussions/Consultations

An effective group discussion generally has a number of elements:

- All members of the group have a chance to speak, expressing their own ideas and feelings freely, and to pursue and finish out their thoughts;
- All members of the group can hear others' ideas and feelings stated openly;
- Group members can safely test out ideas that are not yet fully formed;
- Group members can receive and respond to respectful but honest and constructive feedback. Feedback could be positive, negative, or merely clarifying or correcting factual questions or errors, but is in all cases delivered respectfully;
- A variety of points of view are put forward and discussed;
- The discussion is not dominated by any one person;
- Arguments, while they may be spirited, are based on the content of ideas and opinions, not on personalities, and;
- Even in disagreement, there's an understanding that the group is working together to resolve a dispute, solve a problem, create a plan, make a decision, find principles all can agree on, or come to a conclusion from which it can move on to further discussion.

A group discussion:

- *Gives everyone involved a voice.* Whether the discussion is meant to form a basis for action, or just to play with ideas, it gives all members of the group a chance to speak their opinions, to agree or disagree with others, and to have their thoughts heard. In many community-building situations, the members of the group might be chosen specifically because they represent a cross-section of the community, or a diversity of points of view.
- *Allows for a variety of ideas to be expressed and discussed.* A group is much more likely to come to a good conclusion if a mix of ideas is on the table, and if all members have the opportunity to think about and respond to them.
- *Is generally a democratic, egalitarian process.* It reflects the ideals of most grassroots and community groups, and encourages a diversity of views.
- *Leads to group ownership of whatever conclusions, plans, or action the group decides upon.* Because everyone has a chance to contribute to the discussion and to be heard, the final result feels like it was arrived at by and belongs to everyone.
- *Encourages those who might normally be reluctant to speak their minds.* Often, quiet people have important things to contribute, but aren't assertive enough to make themselves heard. A good group discussion will bring them out and support them.
- *Can often open communication channels among people who might not communicate in any other way.* People from very different backgrounds, from opposite ends of the political spectrum, from different cultures, who may, under most circumstances, either never make contact or never trust one another enough to try to communicate, might, in a group discussion, find more common ground than they expected.

Effective Facilitation:

Facilitators are non-directive, and try to keep themselves out of the discussion, except to ask questions or make statements to advance the discussion.

A good facilitator:

- puts people at ease,
- helps the group set rules for itself,
- clearly defines the goals and topics for the discussion, and keeps participants on track,
- makes sure that everyone participates and that no one dominates,
- encourages the development and expression of all ideas, including “odd” ones, and
- safeguards an open process, where everyone’s ideas are respected.

Establishing “ground rules” for an effective group discussion:

The first step to a productive and effective group discussion is to establish ground rules that all participants agree to, and agree to adhere to. This can be done by facilitated discussion at the beginning of the meeting. If people have trouble getting started, here are some suggested ideas for ground rules.

- *Everyone should treat everyone else with respect:* no name-calling, no emotional outbursts, no accusations.
- *No arguments directed at people – only at ideas and opinions.* Disagreement should be respectful – no ridicule.
- *Don’t interrupt.* Listen to the whole of others’ thoughts – actually listen, rather than just running over your own response in your head.
- *Respect the group’s time.* Try to keep your comments reasonably short and to the point, so that others have a chance to respond.
- *Consider all comments seriously, and try to evaluate them fairly.* Others’ ideas and comments may change your mind, or vice versa: it’s important to be open to that.
- *Don’t be defensive if someone disagrees with you.* Evaluate others’ positions, and only continue to argue for yours if you continue to believe it’s right.
- *Stay on topic.* The purpose and subject matter of the discussion should be made clear. When participants stray from the purpose, the facilitator should (gently) lead the group back on track.
- *Everyone is responsible for following and upholding the ground rules.*

Other tasks of the facilitator include advancing the discussion, summarizing and clarifying points, recording insights and wrapping up the discussion.

Tips for advancing the discussion:

Using (standardized) questions as prompts. A series of group discussions on a particular topic may benefit from the creation of *prompts* that invite discussion and participation. The use of prompts can be crucial to gathering comparable information from focused group discussions convened for specific purposes.

Advancing the discussion -- ask questions or offer ideas to advance the discussion. The facilitator should be aware of the progress of the discussion, and should be able to ask

impromptu, relevant questions or provide information or arguments that stimulate thinking or take the discussion to the next step when necessary. If participants are having trouble grappling with the topic, getting sidetracked by trivial issues, or simply running out of steam, it's the facilitator's job to carry the discussion forward.

Summarize or clarify important points, arguments, or ideas. Make sure that everyone understands when a point is made, or the two sides of an argument. It can include restating a conclusion the group has reached, or clarifying a particular idea or point made by an individual ("What I think I heard you say was..."). The point is to make sure that everyone understands what the individual or group actually meant.

Record ideas or conclusions reached during and at the end of the discussion. Facilitators use a variety of means to do this but all involve *writing down* key points of agreement or disagreement, conclusions reached, next steps or other relevant information shared during the discussion. Use white boards, easels, butcher paper, blizzards of post-it notes. But write stuff down.

Wrap up the session. As the session ends, the facilitator should help the group review the discussion and make plans for next steps (more discussion sessions, action, involving other people or groups, etc.). The facilitator should also go over any assignments or tasks that were agreed to, make sure that all members know what their responsibilities are, and review the deadlines for those responsibilities. Other wrap-up steps include getting feedback on the session – including suggestions for making it better – pointing out the group's accomplishments, and thanking it for its work.

Effective facilitators

1. Model the behavior they expect of participants.
2. Use encouraging body language and tone of voice, as well as words.
3. Give positive feedback for joining the discussion. Smile, repeat group members' points, and otherwise show that you value participation.
4. Be aware of people's reactions and feelings, and try to respond appropriately.
5. Ask appropriate, relevant open-ended questions.
6. Control your own biases. While you should point out factual errors or ideas that are inaccurate and disrespectful of others, an open process demands that you not impose your views on the group, and that you keep others from doing the same.
7. Recognize conflict and help the group use it creatively. Everyone will not agree. Probing the underlying factors responsible of disagreement can be productive of insight and progress on issues.
8. *Keep your mouth shut as much as possible.* Discussion groups are for the group members. If you are a member of the group and have been asked by the others to act as leader, you certainly have a right to be part of the discussion (although not to dominate). If you're an outside facilitator, or leader by position, it's best to confine your contributions to observations on process, statements of fact, questions to help propel the discussion, and clarification and summarization.

Adapted with modifications from: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation/group-discussions/main>