



Staff Liaison
Christina Leard | (510) 215-4338
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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Howdy Goudey; Vice-Chair Simrun Dhoot; Members Buddy Akacić, Pamela Austin, Fred Bialy, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Sheila Tarbet, Rose Vekony
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC** *(Estimated time: 5 minutes)*
Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first, as well as introduction by individuals interested in serving on the advisory body. Remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS** *(5 min.)*
Staff and/or Mayor Lisa Motoyama may report on policies, priorities, and actions taken by the City Council, and/or on matters of general interest to the EQC.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** *(5 min.)*
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting held on November 14, 2023.
5. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE** *(10 min.)*
Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the City's Urban Forest Committee.
6. **CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN (CAAP)** *(5 min.)*
Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding development of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.
7. **EQC ANNUAL WORK PLAN** *(60 min.)*
Review and comment on the EQC Work Plan and Calendar, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding updating the Work Plan for 2024.
 - Draft 2024 Calendar, Work Plan and 2023 Achievements attached.
8. **EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS** *(20 min.)*
Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding planning, logistics, and expenditures for the EQC calendar of events, including:
 - Green Team 2023 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
 - Dec. 3, Sunday, Baxter Creek Park cleanup (with regular Baxter volunteers) (Debrief)
 - Dec. 10, Sunday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, HNA, Regency Ct. (Debrief)
 - Jan. 20, Saturday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, location TBD
 - Feb. 17, Saturday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, location TBD
 - Additional dates TBD
 - Earth Day - April 20, 2024

9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** (10 min.)

Hear committee member announcements and suggestions for future EQC agenda items. Potentially engage in discussion and make decisions regarding logistics of EQC consideration of items including:

- Support for Kiosks on Ohlone Greenway
- Don't Litter Campaign to encourage businesses that don't pick up after their events
- An EC Drive Electric Event
- Composting Enforcement
- MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission Updates
- Environmental, Social, And Racial Framework - Link to the [JEDI Tool](#)
- Climate Adaptation, Severe Weather Events, and Emergency Preparedness
- Environmental Films Series
- Integrated Pest Management Report from City Staff
- EQC Collaboration with Young People in El Cerrito
- Tool/Toy Lending Library
- Urban Greening Plan Implementation
- Community Member Suggestions (e.g. Meatless Green Mondays)
- Open Space Preservation
- Mitigation of heat effects; Federal Inflation Reduction Act

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison, Christina Leard, at (510) 215-4338. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I). Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (7501 Schmidt Lane) during normal business hours.



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DRAFT MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING Chair Goudey called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Howdy Goudey; Members Buddy Akacić, Pamela Austin, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Rose Vekony **Absent:** Vice-Chair Simrun Dhoot; Members Fred Bialy, Sheila Tarbet **Also Present:** Christina Leard, Staff Liaison; Mayor Lisa Motoyama, Council Liaison
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC** (5 min.)
There were no communications from the public.
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS** (5 min.)
Council Liaison Motoyama provided updates on City Council meeting items, including the temporary suspension of public comments via Zoom, the adoption of the Strategic Plan, and the City Council Ad-Hoc Subcommittee recommendations on Advisory Bodies scheduled for December 5th. EQC Members provided comments.

Staff Liaison Leard announced the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience And Forest Conservation Management Plan Public Workshop scheduled for November 15, a Fix-It Clinic in Hercules sponsored by RecycleMore scheduled for December 2, and the recruitment for the vacant Environmental Specialist position in OESD.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** (5 min.)
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting held on October 10, 2023. **Move/Second:** Vekony/Akacić, **Action:** Passed a motion to adopt the Minutes of the October 10, 2023 EQC meeting. **Ayes:** Goudey, Akacić, Austin, Miner, Vekony **Noes:** None **Abstain:** Pavel, O'Connor
5. **ENVIRONMENTAL ART** (5 min.)
Members Akacić and Pavel briefly discussed the aesthetics of environmental art and how art shapes cities. The Committee also agreed to the Environmental Art item being scheduled as needed instead of a standing monthly item.
6. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE** (10 min.)
Urban Forest Committee Member Robin Mitchell gave updates from the recent Urban Forest Committee meeting.
7. **UPDATE ON HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING** (5 min.)
In Member Bialy's absence, EQC Members received an update from Member Austin who participated in the recent Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience And Forest Conservation Management Plan Stakeholder Group meeting on behalf of the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers.
8. **CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN (CAAP)** (5 min.)
EQC Members heard brief updates from Staff Liaison Leard regarding development of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

9. EQC ANNUAL WORK PLAN (45 min.)

The Committee reviewed the draft 2024 work plan and 2023 accomplishments and provided comments on updates to be made prior to the next meeting. Member Vekony volunteered to make the edits as discussed for the December meeting for final approval.

10. OVERVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADVISORY BODIES (20 min.)

EQC Members participated in discussion and considered action items regarding the City Council Ad-Hoc Subcommittee recommendations on Advisory Bodies.

Move/Second: Goudey/O'Connor **Action:** Passed a motion to recommend to the City Council Ad-hoc Subcommittee on Advisory Bodies that youth members be allowed to be voting members if they choose to complete the required trainings. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

11. EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS (10 min.)

Staff and Committee members provided updates on recent events the EQC has supported and discussed plans for future events in 2023, including:

- Green Team 2023-24 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
 - Oct. 22, Sunday, Northern Gateways cleanup (Debrief)
 - Dec. 3, Sunday, Baxter Creek Park cleanup (with regular Baxter volunteers)
 - Dec. 10, Sunday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, HNA, Regency Ct.
 - Jan. 20, 2024 Saturday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, location TBD
 - Feb. 17, 2024 Saturday, 10am, Broom pull w/ Trail Trekkers, location TBD
- Sat. Oct. 21, 11am-3pm – Annual Ride Electric event adjacent to N. Berkeley BART (Debrief)

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (5 min.)

Staff and Committee members made announcements and suggestions for future EQC agenda items including:

- Support for Kiosks on Ohlone Greenway
- Don't Litter Campaign to encourage businesses that don't pick up after their events
- An EC Drive Electric Event
- Composting Enforcement
- MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission Updates
- Environmental, Social, And Racial Framework - Link to the [JEDI Tool](#)
- Climate Adaptation, Severe Weather Events, and Emergency Preparedness
- Environmental Films Series
- Integrated Pest Management Report from City Staff
- EQC Collaboration with Young People in El Cerrito
- Tool/Toy Lending Library
- Urban Greening Plan Implementation
- Community Member Suggestions (e.g. Meatless Green Mondays)
- Open Space Preservation
- Mitigation of heat effects; Federal Inflation Reduction Act

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Howdy Goudey, Chair

This is to clarify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Environmental Quality Committee meeting of November 14, 2023 as approved by the Environmental Quality Committee.

Christina Leard, Staff Liaison



2024 Regular Meeting Schedule

City Holiday/Closed

Regular Meeting

Location: In person at
Council Chambers (10890 San Pablo Ave)

Meeting Time: 7:00 p.m.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

JANUARY 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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FEBRUARY 2024

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MARCH 2024

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APRIL 2024

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MAY 2024

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JUNE 2024

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JULY 2024

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AUGUST 2024

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SEPTEMBER 2024

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OCTOBER 2024

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NOVEMBER 2024

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DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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Environmental Quality Committee

2024 WORK PLAN

AND

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Members: Chair Howdy Goudey; Vice-Chair Simrun Dhoot; Buddy Akacić, Pamela Austin, Fred Bialy, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Sheila Tarbet, Rose Vekony

Because the City of El Cerrito recognizes that environmental quality is an important issue that demands immediate and ongoing attention, the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) was established in 2008 by Resolution 2008-13 as a Council-appointed body of up to 15 El Cerrito residents and business owners. It typically meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 PM in City Council Chambers (or virtually as required). The enabling resolution identifies the whole City's role and responsibility in reducing environmental impacts and the EQC's role in providing environmental leadership and effecting cultural change in the way that the City and its residents relate to the environment.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Environmental Quality Committee's **mission** is to educate, inspire, and activate our community to thrive in a socially just, equitable, and regenerative manner.

The EQC **duties and responsibilities**, as stated in its enabling resolution, are

1. To serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, staff, other boards, commissions, and committees, and the citizens of the City with regard to environmental quality issues within the City of El Cerrito
2. To recommend programs, policies, and ordinances to the City Council and promote the City's environmental quality efforts
3. To promote and foster public awareness, education, interest and support for environmental quality efforts, foster volunteer opportunities, and educate El Cerrito residents regarding environmental quality and issues relating to environmental impacts

The EQC **goals** are

- To reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to meet or exceed targets of the El Cerrito Climate Action Plan, also proposing revised goals as appropriate
- To apply a framework of social, racial, and environmental justice in the implementation of our work
- To promote environmental education, action, engagement, equity, and justice
- To involve learners of all ages
- To help businesses and residents work and live in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly fashion
- To inform and champion the City's environmental policies and ordinances
- To change material use patterns by encouraging Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, and Composting
- To champion energy/water efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable transportation
- To minimize hazardous chemical use and human/environmental exposure to toxins
- To protect, expand, and steward green spaces with public path/trail connectivity; maintain and restore natural areas with an emphasis on native ecosystems; and encourage a network of human/wildlife-friendly green habitat throughout the City
- To support water quality, healthy creeks and forests, and green infrastructure to increase resiliency in the face of climate change
- To bring attention to disadvantaged community members who are inequitably impacted by environmental degradation

The EQC's work is guided by the 2015–2020 El Cerrito Strategic Plan (excerpted below):

Goal F: Foster environmental sustainability citywide

- Be a leader in setting policies and providing innovative programs that promote environmental sustainability.
- Promote environmental education to facilitate behavioral changes by working with the school district and other community groups.
- Implement policies to promote waste diversion (i.e., mandatory commercial recycling and green waste).
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation to the single occupancy vehicle.
- Implement and monitor the City's Climate Action Plan to:
 - Reduce vehicle miles traveled (by creating well-connected, pedestrian, bicycle and transit-oriented urban forms that will make it easier for residents and visitors to leave their car behind.)
 - Facilitate energy and water efficiency and greater use and generation of clean energy
 - Reduce the amount of waste generated in El Cerrito
 - Make municipal operations more resource-efficient and environmentally friendly

On August 20, 2019, the City of El Cerrito approved a resolution (2019-52) and joined hundreds of jurisdictions across the globe in declaring a climate emergency. This resolution, which sets a target to reduce GHG emissions further, with the ultimate goal of reaching zero GHG emissions, has heightened both the urgency and import of the EQC's work.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the EQC's establishment in 2008, the committee's emphasis has cycled between public education, community volunteer organization, and environmental policy, but the general commitment to all forms of action envisioned for the EQC has remained consistent over time. The committee has also consistently maintained a high fraction of the 15 member capacity, with both long-serving members and a rotation of new members.

2024 WORK PLAN

OBJECTIVE	PROPOSED ACTIVITIES	PRIORITY RANKING	TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION
1. Public Education and Outreach	a) Use “Champion the CAAP” [Climate Action and Adaptation Plan] as the EQC’s theme for 2024.	1	1 year
	b) Implement our JEDI tool (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) as part of all our EQC work.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	c) Host public events (e.g., films, lectures, webinars, workshops, youth activities) to mobilize residents about the Climate Emergency and educate them on electrification, sustainability, and resiliency.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	d) Provide outreach and resources to inform residents of tax incentives for electrification and the income-qualified rebates that will become available in 2024 through the federal Inflation Reduction Act, as well as local and state incentives and rebates, with special emphasis on new programs for those with lower incomes.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	e) Provide public outreach and education about active transportation alternatives to automobiles, including public transit and micromobility options, as well as programs offered in our city to reduce car ownership.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	f) Participate in events and programs that encourage energy efficiency and electrification of buildings and transportation.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	g) Pilot public education and outreach to promote electrification in home retrofits and encourage the replacement of gas-powered home appliances and landscaping equipment; survey East Bay HVAC companies on what would help their businesses take advantage of electrification; continue enrollment outreach for MCE Deep Green 100% renewable power and other MCE programs; compile informational resources and promote tool and appliance lending programs to facilitate electrification.	1	1 year (ongoing)

Rose Vekony: NEW: we are going to revise priority rankings member’s proposed engagement with the topic. In the Priority Ranking column, please put your initials beside each item that you: (1) would like to lead or (2) will support with your participation. Include either 1 or 2, as defined here, after your initials. (E.g., “RV1” = an effort that I (RV) would volunteer to lead; “RV2” = one that I will participate in under someone else’s lead.) Please pick at least one #1 and one #2. If you do not plan to lead or participate on the issue, leave that item blank.

Rose Vekony: These two items to be combined, eliminating redundancies and anything that we aren’t actively doing (e.g., “survey East Bay HVAC companies”?). Fred also asked about breaking out landscaping equipment as a separate item, referencing Lafayette’s ban on gas.

	h) Lead public outreach on water-saving measures and fire-safe practices (defensible space, xeriscaping). i) Co-sponsor the Hillside Festival and other related hikes and educational events. j) Co-sponsor Fix-it Clinic and El Cerrito Free Market events to promote waste reduction. k) Expand outreach to youth in the city's schools and invite El Cerrito High School's Eco Club to collaborate with the EQC on climate issues. l) Engage with the public at major City events that take place in 2024 and perform other outreach activities to spread awareness.	1 1	1 year (ongoing)
2. Volunteer Work Parties	Hold a Green Teams work party every other month (~ 6/year); diversify work party activities; organize broom pulls and other regular habitat improvement projects.	1	1 year (ongoing)
3. Policy Development and Recommendations	a) Provide input to, and host public meeting for, the CAAP update to accelerate achievement of zero net GHG emissions, as stated in our declared climate emergency; to promote electrification to reduce residential and commercial natural gas usage; and to focus on equity. Engage in the budget process to assure it includes CAAP goals and provide recommendations to help achieve social, racial, and environmental justice goals. b) Provide input and review of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan c) Develop and promote policies to increase electrification of new buildings and decrease or eliminate use of natural gas citywide, with a focus on new developments included in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan update. d) Support efforts to promote and expand the use of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure in the City; support current City efforts such as including charging infrastructure as part of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan; provide more public charging in logical places as City budget permits.	1 1 1 1	1 year 1 year (ongoing) 1 year (ongoing) 1 year (ongoing)

	e) Participate in the development of new active transportation and parking management changes expected for the transit oriented development project at El Cerrito Plaza BART station. f) Interface with other relevant City commissions and committees to help develop environmentally friendly policies		
4. Implementation of City Environmental Programs	a) Help implement City policies related to new State solid waste regulations for businesses and residents.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	b) Expand stewardship of Hillside Natural Area (invasive plants; deferred maintenance) and support wildfire risk reduction while preserving native plants and habitat (as a resource, provide access to the fire-safe plant list from ECFD/Diablo Fire).	1	1 year (ongoing)
	c) Support the work of the Urban Forest Committee and the potential Hillside Master Plan.	1	1 year (ongoing)
	d) Support future acquisition of public open space or public access easements; help implement Urban Greening and Green Infrastructure Plans.	2/3	1 year (ongoing)
	e) Work to enhance and promote active transportation modes and access in El Cerrito and support the initiatives of the Sustainable Transportation Program.	1	

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING GOAL
1. Public Education and Outreach	a) Promoted electric vehicle outreach and education in collaboration with Drive Clean Bay Area. b) Participated in National Drive Electric Week events. c) Tabled at Bike to Work Day and the WorldOne 4th of July festival to promote electrification of vehicles, home heating and cooking, including induction cooktop loaner programs. d) Promoted the SunShares program. e) Promoted and hosted 2023 Earth Day work parties. f) Co-sponsored 2023 East Bay Green Home Tour. g) Promoted the postponed 7th Annual Hillside Festival, co-sponsored with El Cerrito Trail Trekkers. h) Maintained steady coordination with the Urban Forest Committee, including participation in Arbor Week event. i) Received presentations from the Sustainable Transportation Program manager and from El Cerrito Strollers and Rollers (now El Cerrito/Richmond Annex Walk & Roll). j) Co-hosted a screening of <i>The Street Project</i> with El Cerrito Strollers and Rollers at the Rialto Cinemas. k) Co-sponsored El Cerrito Free Market events and secured a site for them in the library parking lot. l) Continued recurring agenda items to present an example of environmental art at each meeting.
2. Volunteer Work Parties	a) Organized in-person Green Teams work parties, including trash removal from streets, parks, and creeks and participation in Coastal Clean-up Day; held broom pulls in the Hillside Natural Area.
3. Policy Development and Recommendations	a) Hosted public meetings on the CAAP and provided recommendations and feedback to the CAAP consultant. Two EQC members serve on the CAAP stakeholder advisory group. b) Provided a member to represent the EQC on the new Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group c) Provided advise to Council about changes to the communications between advisory groups and Council, Staff and other advisory groups, as well as other aspects of how advisory bodies operate
4. Implementation of City Environmental Programs	a) Supported City programs through public education, outreach, and work parties.

ONGOING PROJECTS

PROJECT	ACTIVITIES
1. Green Team Work Parties	Coordinate roughly six trash clean-up events each year in various City parks, the Ohlone Greenway, and City streets. Organize other volunteer work parties focused on weed/invasive plant removal, pollinator habitat restoration/stewardship, tree planting (in collaboration with the Urban Forest Committee and City arborist), and maintenance/stewardship of the Hillside Natural Area.
2. Hillside Festival	Assist Trail Trekkers in production of the annual event celebrating the Hillside Natural Area with many hikes, talks, and activities.
3. Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Implementation and Progress Metrics	Work with City staff to complete development of the CAAP and begin to implement it, including timely progress on “early wins.” Explore opportunities to reduce residential natural gas use and promote electrification of home appliances and automobiles as a complement to 100% renewable electrical power. Promote improved municipal electric vehicle infrastructure/readiness and fleet management. Explore ways to achieve greater social, racial, and environmental justice.
4. Urban Greening Implementation	Organize volunteer work parties and aid in policy/program development to strengthen pollinator habitat and green infrastructure.
5. Future Project Ideas/Areas to Explore	a) Liaise with other City commissions/committees to ensure sustainability considerations. Increase EQC participation on related topics in City budget process. b) Explore embodied carbon emissions of construction materials. c) Participate in regional climate action information sharing and coordination. d) Provide education about the El Cerrito Real Property Transfer Tax (RPTT) rebates for seismic upgrades and energy and water conservation. e) Provide emergency preparedness education (e.g., PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs). f) Review how the City cares for its creeks and riparian habitats.

Howdy Goudey: Maybe have to think about these in the context of the recommended topics that are part of the CAAP, which is more comprehensive; perhaps these need to be a short list of what we think we might focus on after the coming year?