



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email PublicComment@losaltosca.gov

From: [Connie Sheehan](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: AGENDA ITEM #5 - TUESDAY, FEB. 8, 2022
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 2:18:27 PM

Dear City Council,

We are Los Altos residents who fully support the City's adoption of the updated CAAP. Moreover, we would strongly encourage the City to go even further and have the CAAP target carbon neutrality by 2030. The sooner that we can eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, the better for our planet, our children/grandchildren, and all future generations. Other cities have targeted neutrality by 2030, we can do the same or better. Every dollar that we spend today on climate action will save countless dollars in the future.

Respectfully,
Tim and Connie Sheehan

From: Connie Sheehan [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 2:18 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: [SPAM] AGENDA ITEM #5 - TUESDAY, FEB. 8, 2022

Dear City Council,

We are Los Altos residents who fully support the City's adoption of the updated CAAP. Moreover, we would strongly encourage the City to go even further and have the CAAP target carbon neutrality by 2030. The sooner that we can eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, the better for our planet, our children/grandchildren, and all future generations. Other cities have targeted neutrality by 2030, we can do the same or better. Every dollar that we spend today on climate action will save countless dollars in the future.

Respectfully,
Tim and Connie Sheehan

From: [Debbie Mytels](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: 2022 Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (Agenda item #5, 2/8/22 meeting)
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 4:40:36 PM

Dear Members of the Los Altos Town Council,

Thanks for your efforts to review the proposed update of the CAAP for Los Altos. As Council members you have a responsibility to look out for the current and future needs of your community, and you are doing an essential service to the residents of Los Altos via all the work you are doing regarding climate protection.

You have joined with 26 other jurisdictions in Silicon Valley and 53 other cities in California to pass a Reach Code that will ensure that Los Altos residents in new homes are not straddled with out-moded gas appliances. It's now time to continue the path of eliminating methane gas from under city streets where leaks can cause fires and where the pipes can rupture during an earthquake. It's also time to educate residents about the health impacts (such as increased likelihood of childhood asthma and lung problems in older adults) from burning methane gas in their furnaces, water heaters and other appliances.


As a resident of nearby Palo Alto, I commend you for furthering your efforts with this proposed CAAP and hope to hear soon that the CAAP has been passed. I also hope that you will soon take additional steps to encourage Los Altos residents to replace their gas-burning appliances when they remodel or sell their properties.

With appreciation for your leadership on this important issue of climate protection and adaptation.

Sincerely,

Debbie Mytels

Debbie Mytels
2824 Louis Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303


[Methane leaks occur at all places along its pressurized system - at the wellhead, in transmission and distribution lines and compressors, in supply lines, and in the appliance itself. That is because methane gas is pressurized up to 1400 pounds per square inch, in order to get it to the point of use.](#)

[Methane gas leaks are quite normal and can not be fixed - that is a problem! Getting rid of methane is the solution.](#)

From: [Barbara Weinstein](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Please approve the CAAP
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 5:01:42 PM

Dear Los Altos City Council,

I'm writing to urge that you approve the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) as prepared by the Los Altos Environmental Commission. There will be time later to delve into the details, but approving the overall plan now is critical for upping our game on climate and taking meaningful steps to do our part.

As the climate crisis intensifies, we can't effort to wait.

Thank you,
Barbara Weinstein
1525 Siesta Dr.
Los Altos.

From: [Tamara Fagin](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEM #5 - FEB. 8, 2022
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 8:26:21 PM

Honorable Councilmembers,

I have resided in Los Altos for over 17 years and have long supported efforts to address climate change, including bike to school initiatives.

I fully support the City's adoption of the updated CAAP. Moreover, I would encourage the City to contemplate going even further. Please consider taking steps to target carbon neutrality by 2030. Our city can and should be a leader on this.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tamara Fagin

Los Altos Climate Action Plan Suggestions

TO: Los Altos City Council council@losaltosca.gov
Los Altos Environmental Commission via Staff Liaison Emiko Ancheta
eancheta@losaltosca.gov

CC: Gabriel Engeland City Manager gengeland@losaltosca.gov
Jolie Houston, City Attorney administration@losaltosca.gov
Ranu Aggarwal, Staff Liaison ragnarwal@losaltosca.gov

Dear Environmental Commissioners and City Council Members,

[Los Altos for Racial Equity](#) (LARE) is a local community group focused on building a more welcoming, vibrant, and diverse Los Altos. We want to ensure that all those who live, work, and play in Los Altos, especially BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) members, are treated equitably in all aspects of their lives - from education, to housing, to access to resources.

LARE is concerned about the lack of urgency in our community to address climate change and reduce our contribution toward greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving environmental equity is a significant part of achieving racial equity as communities of color are disproportionately affected by environmental pollutants¹. In the Bay Area, “historically underserved communities such as Black, brown, and Asian American, already bear higher asthma rates, greater exposure to extreme heat and air pollution, and more unaffordable energy costs. Climate change is making this worse.”²

The wealthiest 10% of the world were responsible for more than ½ of global emissions in 2015³. Los Altos’ Climate Action Plan is an opportunity for our community to lead by example, and to make dramatic and substantive changes to address the impacts our lives have on others.

Recommended Improvements to Address Climate Change:

1. Create a Task Force of local experts to advise on specific implementable actions under the CAAP, such as the following:
 2. Urban Planning
 - a. Hire and implement [best practices from world renowned urban planning experts](#)⁴ that move away from optimizing for vehicle flow and toward a greener, more liveable, walkable, safer, cooler, cleaner community.

1

<https://www.axios.com/epa-report-climate-change-marginalized-communities-391492c7-bedf-4d98-9208-58e84ed03f48.html>

² <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/elizabeth-stampe/san-jose-council-votes-go-carbon-neutral-2030>

³ <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20211025-climate-how-to-make-the-rich-pay-for-their-carbon-emissions>

⁴ <https://gemeente.groningen.nl/sites/default/files/New-Space-For-Living---Quality-Of-Public-Space.pdf>

- b. Make a [Vision Zero](#)⁵ Pledge and Plan.
- c. Convert some area of the parking lots downtown to small, green park spaces.
- d. Focus on walking and biking rather than car/EV infrastructure, as alternate modes of transportation are 10x more important than EVs in reaching net zero⁶.
- e. Create a Traffic Calming Program and hire staff dedicated to making our community safer and less car dependent.
- f. Create a protected walking/biking boulevard route to downtown/City Hall from north and south Los Altos.
- g. Provide physical barriers for all bike lanes to increase bike safety. Recent research on painted bike lanes concluded “cities need to design and install physical barriers between vehicle and bike lanes to reduce the risk of collision”⁷.
- h. Provide Pedestrian traffic lights and improve traffic signals at various dangerous school crossings. The Walk Or Wheels (WOW) to schools program has seen a notable decline in students walking/biking to school in the past 10 years.
 - i. Solid red light button at Campbell on Cuesta (similar to springer school on Cuesta). There have already been dozens of incidents with school aged children and adults being hit or almost hit there.
 - ii. Solid red light (not flashing) on San Antonio at Pine.
 - iii. Flashing No Right Turn on Red at Covington Rd and El Monte when the crosswalk is activated. A mom was hit there while walking with kids, and it is extremely dangerous. She has been advocating for years to get this addressed and nothing has changed.
 - iv. Make an assessment of every main artery in Los Altos on a school route to determine what other intersections require a full red light. Of note, I am unable to locate crash data on pedestrian incidents in Los Altos, and so any data should not be deemed reliable.
- i. Sidewalks
 - i. Create a sidewalk ordinance for all retail areas including all of downtown. Loyola Corners, El Camino Real, San Antonio Rd.
 - 1. Require a landscaped strip between the curb and sidewalk, including street trees in the landscape strip or in bulb outs if that is the only feasible option.
 - 2. Specify a minimum space from the sidewalk to any parking structure gates to ensure cars do not queue and block the sidewalk.
 - ii. Legalize all sidewalks currently designated as Safe Routes to School to allow parking enforcement. Upgrade the existing Safe Routes sidewalks over the next 10 years to include a planting strip separation or bulb outs with plants/trees whenever possible.
- j. Redwood Grove

⁵ <https://visionzeronetwork.org/about/what-is-vision-zero/>

⁶ <https://theconversation.com/cycling-is-ten-times-more-important-than-electric-cars-for-reaching-net-zero-cities-157163>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/06/business/lithium-mining-race.html>

⁷ <https://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/study-shows-painted-bike-lanes-arent-enough/>

- i. Designate Redwood Grove as a Passive Rewilding Zone⁸.
- 3. Create an Environmental Fund to be used for rewilding public spaces, more parks, gas powered equipment trade-in programs, climate change education, and improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Institute fines for violations of climate impact regulations, such as those listed, to be used toward making our community greener and cleaner. Waive these fees for low income applicants whenever possible.
- 4. Construction
 - a. Insulation - it can take up to 65 years of energy savings to offset the carbon impact of insulation⁹.
 - i. Allow only closed cell spray foam, no open cell spray foam. Open cell spray foam has chemicals 1030x worse than carbon dioxide¹⁰.
 - ii. Check receipts at insulation inspection to ensure only closed cell spray foam is used.
 - iii. Consider restricting closed cell spray foam insulation to only be used in remodels where batting and other insulation types won't provide the Title 24 required insulation value for the existing framing or in detached ADUs under 500 square feet (the roof requirements for Title 24 are overly stringent on small detached ADUs and the alternative would require oversized framing and wasted lumber).
 - b. Pavement
 - i. Prohibit non-permeable surfaces other than landings directly adjacent to the structure on residential projects. Ensure pavers utilize permeable sand.
 - ii. Require Gravelpave¹¹, Geopave¹², or similar fire truck-approved, ADA complaint equivalent permeable surfaces for parking strips. Disincentivize or prohibit permeable paver solutions that include compacted polymeric sand, which negates permeability.
 - iii. Prohibit the use of astro-turf, asphalt, and any other fossil fuel based solid products for all decorative landscape projects.
 - iv. Explore UC Verde¹³, DeltaBluegrass¹⁴, and other drought tolerant, ecological, resilient alternatives for sports fields.
 - v. Actively seek alternatives for slurry seal and repaving of city streets, including recycling asphalt, dyes/paints to reduce heat reflectivity, etc.
 - c. Roofing
 - i. Consider Imposing a \$2/square foot Environmental fee for any composite shingle, PVC, TPO, concrete shingle, or tar roof (new and re-roof) due to

⁸ <https://truenaturefoundation.org/what-is-rewilding/>

⁹ <https://www.buildinggreen.com/news-article/avoiding-global-warming-impact-insulation>

¹⁰ <https://www.ecotelligenthomes.com/environmental-impacts-of-spray-foam-insulation/>

¹¹ <https://www.invisiblestructures.com/products/gravelpave-2/>

¹² <https://2y2qpw2op3o93ygu164frm9z-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/PPS-Geosystems-LEED-Credits.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.ucverdeplugs.com>

¹⁴ <https://www.deltabluegrass.com/sports-turf/sod-blends-varieties/>

lack of recyclability, short lifespan, heat effect, and fossil fuel based materials. Exempt detached ADUs under 500 square feet.

- d. Concrete is responsible for 8% of global carbon dioxide emissions, more than double the emissions from flying or shipping¹⁵.
 - i. Require fly ash in all concrete. The use of a ton of fly ash to replace a ton of cement saves enough electricity to power an average American home for 24 days. It also reduces carbon dioxide emissions equal to two months use of an automobile¹⁶.
 - ii. Verify receipts from concrete suppliers at time of inspection.
 - e. Natural Gas - A recent Stanford study shows that gas appliances have the same impact on the environment as 500,000 cars, with 76% of the emissions happening while the appliances are not being used¹⁷.
 - i. Eliminate Gas connection in new residential homes.
 - ii. Phase out gas appliances and fixtures in remodels.
5. Construction Debris
- a. Require a certified recycler for all construction debris. Berkeley requires signed weight receipts by material type as part of the building permit, and receipts are checked before final inspection to ensure compliance.
 - b. Require deconstruction of any structures by The Reuse People or similar. Several other cities like Berkeley and Palo Alto require certified deconstruction from only one or two vendors to prevent building materials from ending up in a waste site.
 - c. Disallow demo and dump, and create a steep fine for non-compliance.
6. Solar
- a. Allow for a flat solar array on an unenclosed, open structure in the front setback, for example an arbor over a patio or a covered parking space. Exclude the solar structure from lot coverage calculations. Write the code in such a way that this structure cannot ever be converted into an ADU or other housing in the future unless it complies with the existing ADU law.
 - b. Allow arbors in the rear for solar array only to achieve net zero, exempt from FAR. Write the code in such a way that this structure cannot ever be converted into an ADU or other housing in the future unless it complies with the existing ADU law.
7. Pools
- a. Prohibit new pools, except for a public, community pool.
 - b. Require fully integrated covers for all pool permits and pool renovations to reduce evaporation and heat loss.

¹⁵ <https://www.dw.com/en/concrete-cement-climate-carbon-footprint/a-60588204>

¹⁶ <https://www.everything-about-concrete.com/fly-ash-concrete.html>

¹⁷ <https://time.com/6142988/gas-stoves-methane-emissions/>

- c. Prohibit gas pool heaters. Pool renovation permits such as replastering, or changing the size or shape, must include conversion to all electric.
- d. Require all pool permits to ensure net zero energy with solar energy offset mandate.

8. Landscapes

- a. Phase out all gas powered landscaping equipment use through a full ban within the next three years.
- b. Require a permit for any landscape project to ensure compliance with water conservation regulations, lot coverage, and drought-tolerant plantings.
- c. Limit lawns to 200 sq ft. per parcel, 10% of front yard, or 10% of rear yard open space, whichever is smallest.
- d. Consider applying an open space minimum in rear yards to allow for trees to provide cooling effects.
- e. Prohibit parking in the front yard on landscaped or open, non-parking areas.
- f. Limit driveways and parking areas to <25% of the front yard.
- g. Trees
 - i. Allow for a selected list of small trees in the utility right of way to provide street shade.
 - ii. Ensure Building reviews the Arborist report, ensuring the approved plans comply with the arborist report. Example 510 Benvenue allowed a 20' deep concrete shoring pile inside a tree protection zone in violation of the tree protection plan.
 - iii. Do not allow any site work within the protection zone of a native oak, even landscaping.
 - iv. Impose clear Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) regulations to protect native oaks, to eliminate any subjective interpretation by a Planner. Another similar sized Bay Area suburb's TPZ regulations prohibit any construction or landscaping related activity within the TPZ as:
 - 1. Live oaks: 1/2 foot for every inch of trunk diameter (ex. 12" trunk at 4.5 ft above grade = 6' protection radius).
 - 2. Valley oaks: 3/4 foot for every inch of trunk diameter (ex. 12" trunk at 4.5 ft above grade = 8' protection radius) .
- h. Require a certified arborist sign off on construction protections:
 - 1. Pre-construction meeting with all subs.
 - 2. On-site inspection during excavation and digging with photos.
 - 3. Verified large roots were protected.
 - 4. Signed Letter of Compliance with the tree protection plan. submitted prior to Final inspection.
 - 5. Impose a significant fine for non-compliance (10K).
- i. Require a licensed arborist and a permit to prune any native oak. Disallow pruning more than once every 3 years except if a safety issue. Provide wording on the permit that any over-pruning that causes death of the tree will be the responsibility of the arborist.

- j. Create a list of climate resilient trees adapted to our area, with a preference to natives.
 - i. Require a drought tolerant, climate resilient replacement tree for every tree removed. Since most of the larger older trees that are dying are native, we need to replace them to limit habitat loss.
 - ii. If space does not allow replacement, collect a \$500 fee. Provide a city fund for trees which can be planted on city property and at local parks, schools, churches, medical facilities, and businesses.
 - iii. Ban certain water intensive trees from being planted such as redwoods, magnolias, non-native willow and other water hungry non-adaptive species.
 - k. Allow removal of 20 redwood trees on residential properties (no more than one per property per year) within the city each year if replaced by climate resilient trees, preferably natives such as coast live oak.
 - l. Mandate that certain species such as redwood & black walnut be cut and milled, rather than chipped and dumped. I have a list of arborists and millers, some of whom have portable mills, who can do this. Contact Big Creek Lumber for more information.
 - m. Prohibit parking under native oaks within the parking strip/easement area in areas where there is no sidewalk improvement or curb. Require large stones or other mitigation measures on new projects to prevent cars from parking on roots within the TPZ (see above under Trees).
 - n. Impose a significant fine for acts that violate tree protections and result in harm to a protected oak tree.
9. Water - Approximately 19% of energy in CA is used to move water. We are in an extended drought which has no end in sight, and we are mandated to add housing. We have to act quickly to preserve the potable water for food production and human consumption.
(<http://ww2.kqed.org/climatewatch/2012/06/10/19-percent-californias-great-water-power-wake-up-call/>)
- a. Greywater
 - i. Require laundry to landscape for all plumbing permits involving a laundry appliance connection.
 - ii. Require greywater systems for all plumbing permits related to bathroom remodels and new homes (exempt detached ADUs under 750 sq ft). This is no more of a burden than the current ordinance requiring underground power lines.
 - b. Rainwater sequestration
 - i. Require ecological rainwater collection and rainwater disbursement methods to offset up to 70% of their carbon footprint¹⁸, and eliminate carbon intensive concrete and gravel drywells.

¹⁸ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1364032118305057>

The CAAP document states that we should be ‘coordinated’ in our approach to climate action as adjacent cities. Los Altos’ policies lag behind several progressive Bay Area suburbs when looking through an environmental lens. Our streets are less walkable, bikeable, and shady. Planning guidelines, Building codes, and tree permit requirements are inconsistent depending on who is reviewing the project. Many of the suggestions in this letter are established policies in other Bay Area jurisdictions, have low implementation costs, and are based on best practices that will help us reduce our carbon footprint as a community. Now is the time to make bold changes to do our part in the fight against climate change, and join San Jose in making a commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030¹⁹.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our suggestions.

Respectfully,

Jill Woodford on behalf of LARE

<https://www.losaltosforracialequity.org>



¹⁹ <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/elizabeth-stampe/san-jose-council-votes-go-carbon-neutral-2030>

From: [Stern, Ben](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: FW: PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEM #5 - TUESDAY, FEB. 8, 2022
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 8:56:16 PM

Dear City Council,

I am a Los Altos resident. My family and I fully support the City's adoption of the updated CAAP. Moreover, we would strongly encourage the City to go even further and have the CAAP target carbon neutrality by 2030. The sooner that we can eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, the better for our planet, our children, and all future generations. Other cities have targeted neutrality by 2030, we can do the same or better. Every dollar that we spend today on climate action will save countless dollars in the future.

Respectfully,

Ben Stern

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From: [Barbara O'Reilly](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Climate Actions
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 9:37:03 AM

Dear Los Altos City Council:

Climate Change has long been my #1 environmental concern and my hope is that all of you share that concern. Please take all actions possible at the city level and encourage our citizens by letting residents know which of their actions will have the most impact. Some actions are very simple...like getting something green in the ground i.e a tree, or smaller plants.

Be sure the Town Crier knows what actions you are taking so we all can appreciate and learn from your example.

Sincerely,
Barbara O'Reilly

From: [Sybil J. Cramer](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Council Meeting - CAAP Support
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 10:32:33 AM
Attachments: [uc.png](#)

Dear Mayor Enander and Honorable Council Members,

I have been a Los Altos resident for 22 years and was happy to participate in some of the resident zoom webinars with the consultants, Environmental Commissioners, and other Los Altos residents — during the formulation and writing of the current Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) for our city.

At 170 pages, the CAAP is a bit daunting to get through, but I feel it is an effective plan for meeting our city's climate goals.

I urge you to vote to approve and accept the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan at tonight's council meeting.

I've worked with the students of the Los Altos High School Green Team for many years and I know how concerned the students are about the consequences of the current warming of the atmosphere.

Last week I spoke about community service opportunities to the students of the LAHS National Honor Society class. Many are eager to commit to community service agencies and nonprofits that are devoted to improving the environment. When I asked the class of approximately 40 students to raise their hand if they are worried about global warming, 98% of the students raised their hands! Frankly, I was surprised by such a strong response!

I realize that it is important to accept the current CAAP as written this evening — not only for the sake of meeting the city's goals — but also to lessen the anxiety of our youth about the consequences of global warming, which they refer to as the “climate crisis”.

Thank you for taking the time to read my e-message and, again, I urge you to approve the CAAP as written.

Respectfully,

Sybil Cramer
291 Margarita Court
Los Altos 94022

Sybil Cramer
Parent Liaison, LAHS Green Team
Co-Chair, LAHS PTSA Sustainability Committee



From: [Ken Branson](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Support for Los Altos CAAP
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 3:39:17 PM

As a 20 year Los Altos resident and strong advocate for climate action, I urge the council to endorse the climate action and adaptation plan (CAAP) at tonight's meeting. As state senator Josh Becker's policy advisor for climate, energy, and environmental issues, I work every day to advance climate policy in Sacramento. While we can accomplish a lot at the state level (and others at the national level), a lot of progress is possible from local governments at the city and county level. As an example, many Bay Area cities paved the way with reach codes for all-electric buildings that have given the CEC enough evidence and courage to implement stronger building codes statewide. Cities can continue to take action through local education efforts, building codes and other ordinances to reduce the use of natural gas, transportation infrastructure investments to encourage ZEVs and reduce VMT, improvements to organic waste diversion efforts, and efforts to make the city government itself net zero in its own operations. These are important steps that go beyond just the impact in our own community. They set an example and show what is possible, making it easier for other cities and eventually the entire state (and beyond) to follow in our footsteps. The path you choose for Los Altos will matter far beyond our town's borders. Don't miss this chance to make a positive difference in the fight to reduce climate change and prepare our community to handle the unavoidable changes.

Thank you,
Ken Branson
701 Los Ninos Way
Los Altos, CA 94022

From: [Paul George](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Steffy Reader](#)
Subject: Please approve CAAP
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 1:39:16 PM

Dear Council Members,

We strongly urge you to adopt the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan as it currently stands. It is imperative that Los Altos move forward without further delay.

Sincerely,

Paul George
Stephanie Reader
501 San Luis Ave, Los Altos, CA 94024