

# Environmental Quality Commission



## REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

**Date:** 7/19/2023  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m.  
**Location:** [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID# 879 3070 9093 and  
City Hall Downtown Conference Room, 1st Floor  
701 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Members of the public can listen to the meeting and participate using the following methods.

- How to participate in the meeting
  - Access the meeting, in-person, at the Downtown Conference Room
  - Access the meeting real-time online at:  
[Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) –Meeting ID 879 3070 9093
  - Access the meeting real-time via telephone at:  
(669) 900-6833  
Meeting ID 879 3070 9093  
Press \*9 to raise hand to speak

Subject to change: The format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the city website [menlopark.gov](https://menlopark.gov). The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information ([menlopark.gov/agendas](https://menlopark.gov/agendas)).

### Regular Session

#### A. Call To Order

#### B. Roll Call – Evans, Chair Hedley, Kissel, Lin, McKenna, Pelegri-Llopart, Vice Chair Schmidt

#### C. Public Comment

Under “Public Comment,” the public may address the Commission on any subject not listed on the agenda. Each speaker may address the Commission once under public comment for a limit of three minutes. You are not required to provide your name or City of residence, but it is helpful. The Commission cannot act on items not listed on the agenda and, therefore, the Commission cannot respond to non-agenda issues brought up under public comment other than to provide general information.

#### D. Regular Business

- D1. Approve the June 21, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission meeting minutes ([Attachment](#))
- D2. Approve the fiscal year 2023-24 agenda calendar ([Presentation](#)) ([Attachment](#))

- D3. Approve scope, timeline, and deliverables for building decarbonization and climate outreach ad hoc subcommittees ([Presentation](#))

## **E. Reports and Announcements**

- E1. Reports and announcements from staff and Commissioners

## **F. Adjournment**

At every Regular Meeting of the Commission, in addition to the Public Comment period where the public shall have the right to address the Commission on any matters of public interest not listed on the agenda, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during the Commission's consideration of the item.

At every Special Meeting of the Commission, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during consideration of the item.

For appeal hearings, appellant and applicant shall each have 10 minutes for presentations.

If you challenge any of the items listed on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or before, the public hearing.

Any writing that is distributed to a majority of the Commission by any person in connection with an agenda item is a public record (subject to any exemption under the Public Records Act) and is available by request by emailing the city clerk at [jaherren@menlopark.gov](mailto:jaherren@menlopark.gov). Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids or services in attending or participating in Commission meetings, may call the City Clerk's Office at 650-330-6620.

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## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT

**Date:** 6/21/2023  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Teleconference and  
 City Hall Downtown Conference Room, 1st Floor  
 701 Laurel St., Menlo Park. CA 94025

**A. Call To Order**

Chair Hedley called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**B. Roll Call**

**Present:** Evans, Kissel, Hedley (Chair), Lin, McKenna, Pelegri-Llopart, (Vice Chair) Schmidt  
**Absent:** None  
**Staff:** Sustainability Manager Rebecca Lucky, Management Analyst II Ori Paz

**C. Public Comment**

None.

**D. Regular Business**

- D1. Approve the May 17, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission regular meeting minutes (Attachment)

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Evans/ Kissel), to approve the May 17, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission regular meeting minutes, passed unanimously.

- D2. Review and discuss the annual City Arborist report (Presentation)

City Arborist Jillian Keller and Management Analyst Joanna Chen made the presentation (Attachment).

- Kirsten Mouradi requested clarification on the dashboard.
- Pam Jones requested clarification on follow-up for tree replacements and updating the approved arborist list.
- Lynne Bramlett spoke on concerns related to a tree in a median.
- Megan Green spoke in support of the arborist and team.

The Commission discussed the presentation, future plans for an Urban Forest Master Plan, and including it as a priority in the upcoming budget process.

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Schmidt/ McKenna), to make a statement of support for the tier 1 priority for the fiscal year 2023-2024 capital improvement program (CIP) budget, passed unanimously.

The Environmental Quality Commission took a recess at 7:38 p.m.

The Environmental Quality Commission reconvened at 7:44 p.m.

- D3. Consider and advise on possible programs to expend \$4.5 million in state funds for communitywide electrification projects (Presentation) (Attachment)

Sustainability Manager Lucky made the presentation.

- Tom Kabat spoke on the urgency of the climate crisis and the opportunity to partner with Peninsula Clean Energy in order to take advantage of federal incentives.
- Pam Jones requested that a strong knowledgeable person engage with residents on the electrification offering.

The Commission discussed options for spending the state grant and structuring administration of the spending program.

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Kissel/ Hedley) to advise the City Council to consider the following in moving forward with the \$4.5 million in state funding from the California Energy Commission for citywide electrification project:

- Partner with Peninsula Clean Energy to be the program administrator,
  - Provide no cost home electrification for low income single-family homeowners in District 1,
    - At least two appliances per home transitioned to electric (at minimum include replacing gas-fired water heating and gas-fired space heating), and support homeowners with a roadmap to electrification
    - Establish a goal to achieve a high volume of homes
  - Enable a quick start program to convert gas-fired heating equipment that would also include cooling features to support high-need populations in extreme heat,
  - Provide seed funding for existing building electrification workforce development,
  - Provide portable resilience package (e.g. solar and battery) for power outages in District 1, medical needs, and elderly,
- passed unanimously.

## **E. Reports and Announcements**

- E1. Reports and announcements from staff and Commissioners

Chair Hedley requested the Commissioners and staff send out reports and announcement by email.

## **E. Adjournment**

Chair Hedley adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.

Ori Paz, Management Analyst II



# ANNUAL ARBORIST REPORT

June 21, 2023 EQC meeting



# TREE DIVISION OVERVIEW

- City staff
  - 4 Maintenance Workers, Public Works Tree Supervisor, City Arborist, Management Analyst
  - Permit review and tree maintenance contractors
- Tree City USA for 24 years
  - Maintain a tree board or department
  - Have a community tree ordinance
  - Spend at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry
  - Celebrate Arbor Day
- Growth Award for 8 years
  - High level of tree care and community engagement



## 2022-2023 Developments

- Promoted Natividad Alamo from Senior Maintenance worker to Public Works Tree Supervisor
- Added 3 new tree maintenance workers to the team
- Updated tree work equipment
- Obtained new licenses and certifications
- Updated the City's standard tree protection specifications for development
- Created and implemented a review process for emergency tree removal requests





# URBAN FOREST CANOPY



- 18,955 street and park trees
  - Routine maintenance every 5 years
  - Residents may request evaluation of work needs outside of 5-year cycle too
- Top 3 public tree species
  - Coast Live Oak: 2,350
  - American Sweetgum (pictured to the right): 1,325
  - London Plane: 1,046
- Fiscal year 2022-2023
  - Number of Trees planted: 185
  - Number of Trees pruned: 5,350
  - Number of Trees removed: 176





## STORM DAMAGE DECEMBER 2022 TO APRIL 2023

- Unprecedented numbers of tree failures due to the combined impact of years of drought stress, saturated soil conditions, and strong wind gusts
- Approximately 340 tree related calls
  - 50 trees blocking public right-of-way
  - 120 branch failures
  - 125 whole tree failures
  - 95 miscellaneous tree issues
  - Reporting challenges



## POST-STORM RECOVERY

- Removal and replacement of significantly damaged trees
  - Nealon Park long term replacement plan
- Inspection and corrective pruning for remaining trees
  - Communication with public
- Emergency tree removal permit process



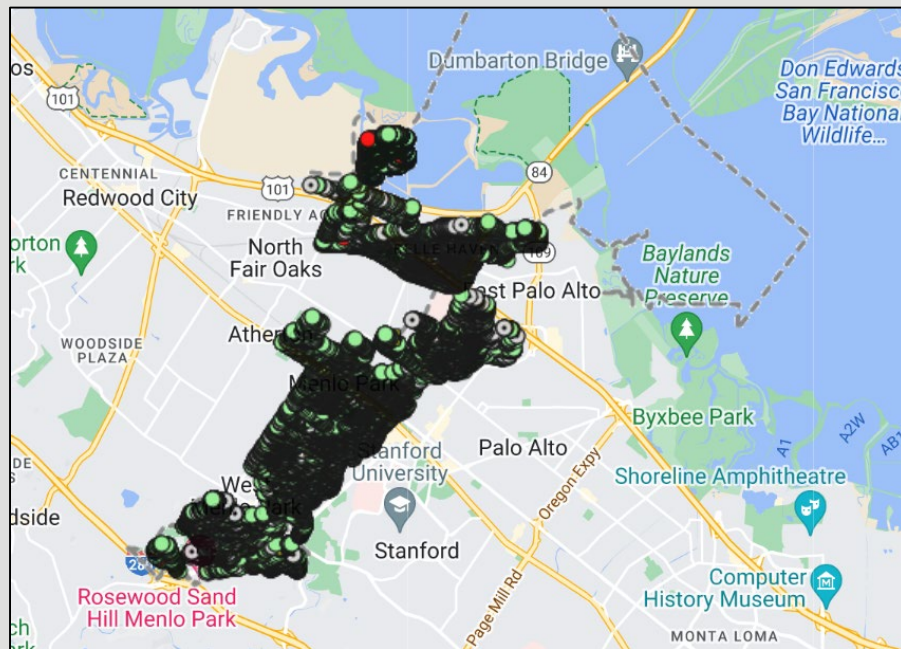
Photo credits: David Schwartz



# STREET TREE REQUESTS AND REPORTING



- Residents can request that street trees be planted in front of their property in the public right-of-way
  - City's street tree management plan
  - Partnership with Canopy
- Residents can also report tree-related issues to ACT Menlo Park
  - [menlopark.gov/Services/ACT-Menlo-Park](https://menlopark.gov/Services/ACT-Menlo-Park)





# OTHER TREE DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES



- Organize annual Arbor Day celebration
- Provide City tree root pruning consultation for hardscape work
- Review and update administrative guidelines
- Evaluate heritage tree permits for removals and heavy pruning
- Review building and demolition permits
- Help ensure protection of trees during construction
- Investigate potential heritage tree violations



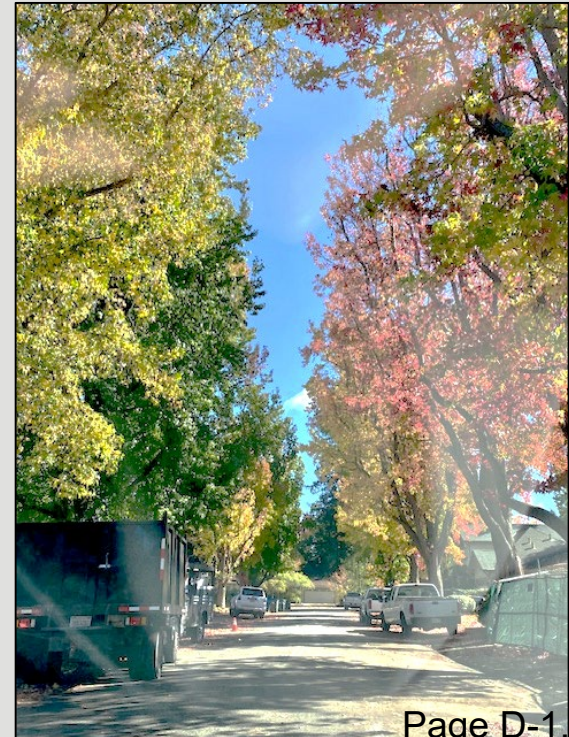


# HERITAGE TREE ORDINANCE



## Purpose

- To ensure that there will be a significant population of large, healthy trees over the long term; and
- To protect and preserve the scenic beauty and natural environment, prevent erosion of topsoil and sedimentation in waterways, encourage quality development, provide shade and wildlife habitat, counteract pollutants in the air and decrease wind velocities and noise.



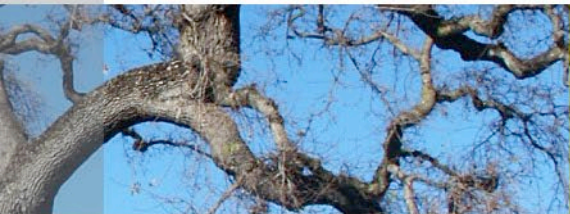


## HERITAGE TREE DEFINITION

- Any tree other than oaks that has a trunk with a circumference of 47.1 inches (diameter of 15 inches) or more, measured at 54 inches above natural grade
- Any oak tree native to California that has a trunk with a circumference of 31.4 inches (diameter of 10 inches) or more measured at 54 inches above natural grade
- A tree or group of trees specifically designated by the City Council for protection because of its historical significance, special character or community benefit

## CHANGES TO THE HERITAGE TREE ORDINANCE IN 2020

- More application requirements
- Clearer decision making criteria
- City-approved consulting arborist list
- New appeal process
- Tree replacement requirement
- Include tree appraisal values for mitigation requirements (development only)



# PERMIT PROCESS



Type of heritage tree permit	Application requirement	Replacement tree requirements	Appeal process
Non-development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dead</li> <li>• Tree risk</li> <li>• Tree health</li> <li>• Low desirable tree species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application form</li> <li>• City-approved arborist report</li> <li>• Replacement tree plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correlates to trunk diameter size</li> </ul>	Only the permit applicant may appeal
Development-related	Additional requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed construction plans</li> <li>• Cost analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correlates to the tree's appraisal value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any community member may appeal</li> <li>• Notices are mailed out within 300 feet of the property</li> <li>• On-site postings are required</li> </ul>
Emergency removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents contact city arborist directly</li> <li>• Tree must show signs of overall extreme risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correlates to trunk diameter size</li> </ul>	N/A



# RESOURCES



- For more information about applying for a permit, visit: [menlopark.gov/trees](https://menlopark.gov/trees)
- To submit and search for a heritage tree permit application, visit: [Menlopark.org/permitcenter](https://Menlopark.org/permitcenter)
- For statistics for permit application submittals, visit: [menlopark.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/90ab3ab183ad4ece9a936c9446d3bd59](https://menlopark.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/90ab3ab183ad4ece9a936c9446d3bd59)

Home Building Planning **Public Works** Special Event Permits

**Search Applications**

**Search for Records**  
Enter information below to search for records.  
• Site Address  
• Parcel Number  
• Record Information  
Select the search type from the drop-down list.

**General Search** General Search

Record Number:  Record Type: Heritage Tree Permit

Project Name:

Start Date:  End Date:

Street No.:  -  Street Name:  Unit No.:

City:  State:  Zip:

Parcel No.:

► Search Additional Criteria

# FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 DASHBOARD



## Heritage Tree Removal Permit Applications

Fiscal year 2022-2023, Last update: May 12, 2023

District

All

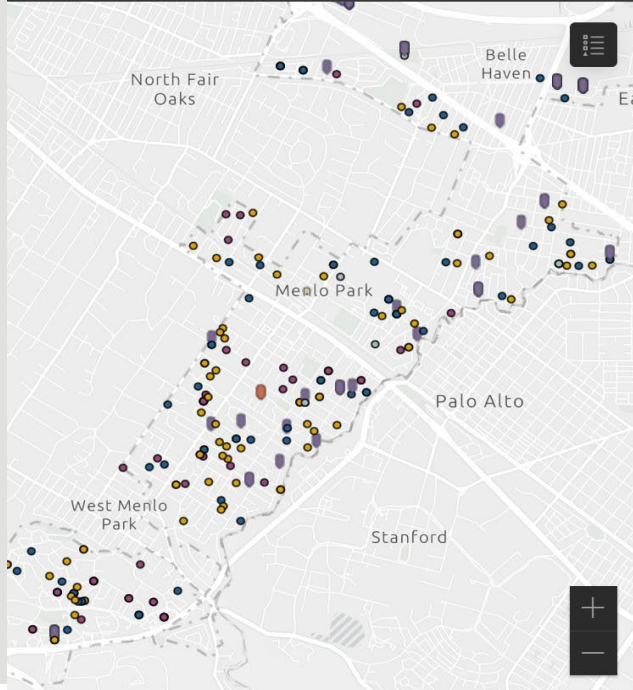
1

2

3

4

5



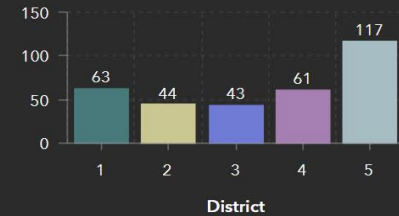
County of Santa Clara, California State Parks, Esri, HERE, ... Powered by Esri

### Tree removal requests

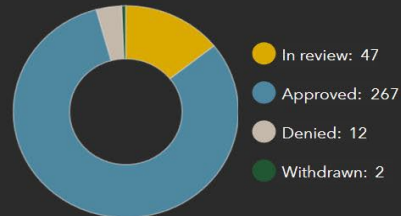
# 328

Total removal permit application: 188  
Average tree removal per application: 2

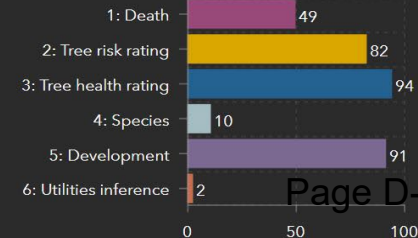
### Tree removal requests by district



### Application status



### Approved based upon



Page D-1.16



# FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON



Fiscal year	Heritage tree permit applications	Heritage tree removal requests	Top three tree species for removal	Top three primary removal reasons
2020 – 2021	202	401	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monterey Pine</li> <li>Coast live oak</li> <li>Coast redwood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree health</li> <li>Tree risk</li> <li>Death and development</li> </ul>
2021 – 2022	178	318 (Doesn't include ~790 tree removal requests from 2 large development projects)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Death</li> <li>Development</li> <li>Tree health</li> </ul>
2022 – May 2023	188	328		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree health</li> <li>Tree risk</li> <li>Development</li> </ul>

## IN PROGRESS

- Updating the administrative guidelines
- Adding more city approved consulting arborists to list
- Working towards urban forest master plan
- Implementing certain phases now
- Setting aside funds as a Capital Improvement Project:  
[stories.opengov.com/menlopark/publicized/gGRiXj6-OR](https://stories.opengov.com/menlopark/publicized/gGRiXj6-OR)
- Partnering with Canopy







**THANK YOU**

## OUTCOME OF THE ORDINANCE

- Application requirements more stringent for development
  - Cost analysis in construction and tree preservation
  - Alternative design
  - Replacement tree requirement based on tree appraisal value
  - Replacement tree plan includes specific details: location, container size, and tree species
- More incentive to preserve trees



# APPROVE 2023-24 AGENDA CALENDAR

## WHY AN AGENDA CALENDAR?

- Provides additional transparency and information regarding the commission's future activities and potential decision making points on sustainability topics
- Provides advance notice and adequate time to prepare agenda items and for public participation
- Helps the commission prioritize topics

## PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR AGENDA

- To be presented to the City Council in September/October and can serve as the annual fiscal year work plan
- The proposed 2023-24 fiscal year agenda focuses on the commission reviewing each Climate Action Plan strategy in detail and providing feedback on potential scope of work for 2025 through 2030
- The Climate Action Plan's last scope of work was approved by the City Council in 2021 with the intent of updating the scope of work for each strategy on a regular basis



# Proposed Environmental Quality Commission Agenda Topics for Fiscal Year 2023-24

Agenda schedule may change based on City Council, Chair and Vice Chair, and staff requests/direction

Month	Topics	Author/Presenter	EQC role
2023			
July 2023	Approve fiscal year 2023-24 agenda calendar	Sustainability staff/Chair and Vice Chair	Action by commission
	Approve building decarbonization and climate outreach ad hoc subcommittees scope, timeline and deliverables	Sustainability staff/Ad hoc subcommittees	Action by commission
August 2023	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan strategy No.1 to electrify 95% of existing buildings by 2030	Sustainability staff/ad hoc building decarbonization ad hoc subcommittee	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
	Chair report to the City Council	Chair	Action by commission
September 2023	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan strategy No.2 to set citywide goals for increasing electric vehicles to 100% of new vehicles by 2025 and reducing gasoline sales each year by 10% starting in 2018	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan strategy No.3 to expand access to electric vehicle charging for multifamily and commercial properties	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
October 2023	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan strategy goal No.5 to eliminate fossil fuels from municipal operations	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
	Review and discuss ad hoc subcommittee recommendation on outreach and education strategies for Climate Action Plan strategy No.6 that addressed climate adaption	Climate outreach ad hoc subcommittee	Feedback from commission to ad hoc subcommittee or feedback for staff to consider
November 2023	Cancel due to holiday		
December 2023 Early December meeting to avoid holiday conflicts	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan strategy No.4 to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 25% or an amount recommended by the Complete the Streets Commission	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
2024			
January 2024	Review and discuss Climate Action strategy No.6 to develop a climate adaptation plan to protect the community from sea level rise and flooding	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, policies, and programs
2024			
February 2024	Review and discuss permit streamlining for existing building electrification projects	Sustainability staff	Feedback to staff on ideas, processes, or programs to consider
	Review and discuss subcommittee project deliverables and disbandment	Sustainability staff/ad hoc subcommittees	Action by commission

<b>March 2024</b>	Receive Climate Action Plan progress report	Sustainability staff	Informational item/no action
<b>April 2024</b>	Annual City Arborist Report	Public Works staff	Informational item
	Receive update on City operations electric handheld gardening equipment transition	Sustainability and Public Works staff	Informational, provide feedback to staff
<b>May 2024</b>	Elect Chair and Vice Chair	Chair	Action by commission
	Update on building electrification outreach and education	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff
<b>June 2024</b>	Review and discuss Climate Action Plan proposed scope of work for 2025-2030	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff
	Approval of annual agenda calendar to submit to the City Council	Sustainability staff/Chair and Vice Chair	Action by commission
<b>July 2024</b>	Approve Climate Action Plan 2025 to 2030 scope of work	Sustainability staff	Advice to City Council
	Review and discuss subcommittee project deliverables and disbandment	Sustainability staff/ad hoc subcommittees	Action by commission

#### Active ad hoc subcommittees:

- Building Decarbonization (Commissioner Evans, Kissel and McKenna)
  - Scope, deliverable, and timeline TBD-July 2023
- Climate Outreach (Chair Hedley, Commissioner Pegri-Llopert and Lin)
  - Scope, deliverable, and timeline TBD- July 2023

#### Other topics TBD:

- Reach Codes for existing buildings
- Urban Forest Master Plan
- Waste management
- Water conservation
- Stormwater/water quality
- Tesla patrol pilot results
- Review and discuss climate action plan outreach and education
- Advise on participation in Peninsula Clean Energy's program to install photovoltaic system on city facilities

#### Regular items

- Annual Election of Chair and Vice Chair (May)
- Chair report to the City Council (at minimum once per year)
- Set fiscal year commission agenda calendar (June/July)
- Annual informational presentation on existing building electrification outreach and education (annual)
- Annual City Arborist Report (Spring)
- Zero Emissions Landscaping Equipment (ZELE) Policy progress (requires two years of reporting to the commission)
- Review and discuss ad hoc subcommittee deliverables and disbandment (every 6 months)



# APPROVE AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES' SCOPE, TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

# SUMMARY OF CONTENT

- Background on ad hoc subcommittees
- Climate outreach ad hoc subcommittee proposed scope of work
- Building Decarbonization ad hoc subcommittee proposed scope of work





## BACKGROUND

- In May the Commission received a presentation on roles, responsibilities, and constraints of ad hoc subcommittees
- As a result the Commission disbanded four ad hoc subcommittees and generally supported not forming more than two ad hoc subcommittees at a time
- The remaining ad hoc subcommittees are:
  - Building Decarbonization
  - Climate Outreach
- The next step for remaining subcommittees is to develop a scope of work and determine when a report or recommendation will be provided to the commission

## WHAT IS AN AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE

- An ad hoc subcommittee is:
  - Limited in duration- typically less than 6 months
  - Scope is narrow and within the roles and responsibilities as defined for commissions
  - Appointed by the Commission to consider a specific matter
  - Dissolved automatically upon submitting its final report/recommendation to the Commission
  
- Generally ad hoc subcommittees result from an agenda item or topic where the commission is having difficulties reaching a decision or they would like to explore an alternative policy, program, or recommendation to present back to the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC)

# Outreach Subcommittee Proposed Scope of Work

Nancy Larocca Hedley, Jeffrey Lin, Eduardo Pelegri-Llopart

July 11, 2023

# Current Scope

- ▶ Devise strategies for educating members of the public about Menlo Park's climate action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2030. Work included:
  - Identifying opportunities for Staff and the EQC to educate the public about climate change and Menlo Park's climate action plan
  - Preparing educational materials and promoting them, either in conjunction with Staff or as private citizens with a focus on student/teacher/school outreach
  - Devising a plan, including proposed venues, for regularly presenting the public with information about ways to electrify buildings, decrease gasoline consumption, reduce vehicle miles traveled and prepare for climate-related emergencies
  - Relaying to EQC any public feedback on the CAP and related policy proposals
  - Supporting the City's formal outreach effort on climate policies, as directed by Staff
  - Facilitating City collaboration with key regional nonprofits and agencies
  - This subcommittee supports CAP action #1, 2, 3, 4 and 6



# Proposed Scope

- ▶ This subcommittee of 3 people will recommend strategies for educating members of the public about Menlo Park's climate action plan with an emphasis on CAP #6 – climate adaptation. Work will include:
  - ▶ Reviewing current city strategies for sharing information about climate change and adaptation with residents and other stakeholders
  - ▶ Recommending changes and enhancements to current city strategies, including specific strategies for different populations
- ▶ This subcommittee primarily supports CAP action #6 – climate adaptation. This action was initially focused on sea level rise but will likely expand to include other threats from climate change that must be adapted to including wildfire risk, extreme heat, poor air quality, etc.
- ▶ This subcommittee's duration will be three months with an expected report to the EQC in October 2023.

Building Electrification Ad Hoc Subcommittee of Three Commissioners to:

Report on strategies for the City to implement to meet its Climate Action Plan - Action #1 (Convert 95% of existing buildings to all-electric by 2030):

Mechanisms to explore:

- Zoning updates;
- Permit streamlining (overall process and possible waiver of “Plan Checks” for same location water heater replacements, incl possible mass permits mailed to residents);
- Explore flexibility/leniency programs for underserved residents during electrification permit inspections
- Reach codes or other policies to require electrification at replacement in existing buildings
- Methods to cost effectively construct all-electric lab buildings and to convert existing lab buildings to all-electric
- Others

The Subcommittee’s duration will be four (4) months with an expected report to EQC December 2023