



Sierra Club  
Loma Prieta Chapter  
San José Cool Cities Team  
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August 11, 2009

Co-Chairs Sam Liccardo & Shirley Lewis, Members of the General Task Force  
cc: Andrew Crabtree and Michael Brilliot, Senior Planners  
Envision 2040, San José PBCE  
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RE: Adopting Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Goals in the San José General Plan

Dear Envision 2040 Task Force Members:

The Sierra Club's Cool Cities San José team urges the task force to recommend a community-wide GHG reduction goal of 40% below 2006 levels by the year 2020. This goal is far more achievable than the city's current goal of 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.<sup>i</sup> We also recommend a community-wide reduction goal of at least 80% below 2006 levels by 2040 and inclusion of the previously approved municipal reduction goals<sup>ii</sup> in the San José general plan. Governor Schwarzenegger and the California Air Resources Board recommend, and AB32 mandates, GHG reduction below 1990 levels by 2020 (roughly equivalent to a 25% reduction from 2006 levels by 2020<sup>iii</sup>) and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. San José, the 10th largest city in the U.S., in adopting a more aggressive standard, will not only be in compliance with AB32 and SB375 but will be serving as a leader and visionary in carbon reduction among U.S. cities.

These reductions will benefit residents, commerce, and the environment. San José can readily achieve these 3% per year reductions through energy efficient and renewable resource models, mixed-use, transit-oriented, brownfield and infill development, as well as affordable housing, green building standards, pedestrian and bicycle-oriented design with connected trails, and preservation of open space including Coyote Valley. High-density housing and mixed-use development creates jobs, places people close to shops, jobs, and services – creating a stable, local customer base for shopping areas and leading to increased property values and sales tax revenues. More pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use creates an urban community feeling – improving the safety, convenience, and attractiveness of neighborhoods, reducing transportation-related GHGs, and improving air quality.

For these reasons we urge you to recommend community-wide GHG reduction goals of at least 40% below 2006 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2006 levels by 2040 as well as the previously approved municipal goals as standards in the San José general plan. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Annie Stauffer  
Co-Leaders, Cool Cities Team, San José

David Marsland  
Co-Leader, Cool Cities Team, San José

<sup>i</sup> San José City Council Meeting December 18, 2007

<sup>ii</sup> San José City Council Meeting June 5, 2007

<sup>iii</sup> <http://gov.ca.gov/press-release/4111>