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Climate Action Plan Consultant Hired

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga's Climate Action Plan Task Force recently submitted a report that lays out a long list of possible actions in the area of transportation, land use, energy, water, agriculture, and waste to achieve greenhouse gas reductions. The recommendation of the task force is to have a consultant evaluate what measurable impacts each of the actions could have; the Town Council agreed to a \$15,000 contract with Quest Consulting. Once the results are in, the Town Council will then decide what measures are appropriate.

In the area of energy, the task force proposed different measures to encourage energy retrofits for homes and businesses and to support the installation of solar energy. In the area of water and wastewater, the task force proposed the adoption of a water-efficient landscaping ordinance and encouraged water conservation measures for homes and businesses. For waste management, the task force recommended support of the state goal of a 75 percent diversion rate and to provide multi-family dwellings and businesses with the means to recycle. In addition, the task force recommended that 'green' purchasing be encouraged, asking suppliers to communicate on sustainability, and replace equipment when needed rather than on a schedule.

The area of land use and transportation boasted the longest list of suggestions and could have the largest impact. It includes elements such as providing a complete network of safe routes to schools for cyclists and pedestrians. The plan calls for a 10 percent reduction in car trips to schools, through carpooling, the use of transit and walking or cycling. It also proposes the goal of a 5 percent reduction in single vehicle occupancy trips and recommends the support of such programs as Real Time Ridesharing that uses a smartphone application to connect people with similar commutes, find each other and create effective car pools; and suggests that new residential and non-residential developments could be required to have a transportation demand management plan and ongoing program that provides incentives to individuals to utilize alternative means of transportation.

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