



## **REPORT OF THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL Regarding the U.S. MAYORS CLIMATE PROTECTION AGREEMENT**

(Updated 7/15/08)

On May 23, 2006, then Mayor, Tom O'Malley, issued a letter to Mayor Greg Nickels, in care of the Office of Sustainability and Environment expressing the City of Atascadero's support of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. The letter noted that Atascadero has implemented some local strategies identified in the Climate Protection Agreement and will continue to look for opportunities to implement more.

It is the policy of the City Council and City Staff to provide the citizens of Atascadero quality customer service with an emphasis on high ethical standards, accuracy and economy. Within this context, the City is rigorous in its efforts to comply with applicable laws and standards to include those related to the environment.

With regard to "The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement," the City Council responds to the twelve protocols within the Agreement as follows:

### **1. "Inventory global warming emissions in City operations and in the community, set reduction targets and create an action plan."**

The County of San Luis Obispo is the lead environmental agency, and the City of Atascadero, by law, defers to the County, State, and Federal agencies with regard to environmental monitoring and the larger issue of Global Warming. The City does not have the financial resources or expertise to engage in this activity, and must rely on the appropriate governmental agencies for leadership in this regard.

### **2. "Adopt and enforce land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space, and create compact, walkable urban communities."**

The City of Atascadero's General Plan is based on the Smart Growth Principles of encouraging infill and reuse of existing land and infrastructure. The Land Use, Open Space and Conservation Element include the following goals:

- preserve a greenbelt around Atascadero

- encourage mixed use infill development
- revitalization of the Downtown Core
- preserve the oak woodlands
- protect creeks and wetlands
- minimize hillside grading
- encourage compact development with a pedestrian scale and trails.

### **3. "Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs."**

The City of Atascadero has recently approved an expanded public transportation system, which is anticipated to reduce SOV rates in the north county. The new service will provide hourly transportation along all major shopping, education, health service and housing corridors. Working with the local community college, free transportation will be provided for all registered students. The vehicles are all equipped with bicycle racks and the system interconnects to regional and national bus service as well as rail, for complete multi-modal opportunities.

The Community Services Department has worked with the community to establish, build and maintain a number of the trails in Atascadero to promote pedestrian and bicycle friendly, non-automotive transportation. Some of the trails established in Atascadero include the historic Juan Bautista De Anza Trail (approx. 4 miles) along the Salinas River, the Jim Green Trail in partnership with San Luis Obispo County Parks Department, and the trail system in Stadium Park at Pine Mountain.

The most recent trail system was approved by the City Council on April 2006, which includes more than four miles of trails along Atascadero Creek to be built in partnership with the Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District. One of the goals of Atascadero's trail system is to promote alternative transportation routes throughout the City. The trails systems are in addition to formal bike paths on City Streets, which are designed and maintained by the Public Works Department. The trail system within the community is shaped by the goals in the City of Atascadero's General Plan.

The City has sought opportunities to create pedestrian and bicycle trails that parallel the riparian tributaries and connect to the aforementioned on-street bicycle routes. Additional bicycle lanes have been installed on Traffic Way and El Camino Real.

The City is adopting educational and interpretive signage to promote trail use, and highlight the natural features connected with the trails. The Juan Bautista De Anza trail also accommodates equestrian uses, and is an alternative north-south transportation route. No motorized vehicles are permitted on any of the City's trails, and the City has signage informing the public of same.

The City uses its Recreation Guide to promote trail use, fitness and alternatives to get people out of their cars and into the community using the pedestrian routes in the City.

**4. "Increase the use of clean, alternative energy by, for example, investing in "green tags", energy production, and supporting the use of waste to energy technology."**

The City is in compliance with Section 2022. Diesel Particulate Matter Control Measures for Municipally-owned On-road Heavy Duty Diesel-fueled vehicles, and installed particulate filters on specified vehicles.

Two diesel-powered generators were replaced at a lift station with one natural gas powered generator.

**5. "Make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, retrofitting city facilities with energy efficient lighting and urging employees to conserve energy and save money."**

City activity in this regard includes:

- Replaced all existing lighting fixtures with energy efficient lighting.
- Replaced weather striping on all exterior doors.
- Re-caulked all window sills on all older buildings
- Installed reflective window tinting on certain south and west facing windows.
- Replaced all traffic signal bulbs with LED lights.
- Promote alternative work schedules, such as the 9-80, to reduce energy demand in buildings.
- Installed a new energy efficient "Green Roof" on City hall. This 32,000 square foot, "Green Roof" is 98% UV Reflective and has a 7-10 year payback time in energy savings.
- Instituted City Council adopted Energy Conservation Initiative in 2001. (Pre-earthquake).

**6. "Purchase only Energy Star equipment and appliances for City use."**

It is the City's policy to purchase energy efficient equipment and appliances.

**7. "Practice and promote sustainable building practices using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program or a similar system."**

The building department vigorously enforces the Title 24 energy requirements for all new construction in Atascadero. The latest changes to Title 24 require significant energy efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

The City of Atascadero signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SLO Greenbuild on 2006. In early 2007 our City Hall permit counter installed a kiosk with SLO Greenbuild information and information on environmentally friendly construction methods and materials. The Community Development Department currently has two liaisons to the SLO Greenbuild organization, Ken Forman, Building Official and

Callie Taylor, Associate Planner. The Public Works Department is now considering using environmentally friendly methods and materials for our City's construction project, and even possibly looking towards obtaining LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certifications on newly constructed buildings.

**8. "Increase the average fuel efficiency of municipal fleet vehicles; reduce the number of vehicles; launch an employee education program including anti-idling messages; convert diesel vehicles to bio-diesel."**

**Police Department:**

PD has given directions to staff to minimize idling of vehicles when possible.

PD has adjusted the standby backup generator settings to the lowest settings possible to maintain proper generator testing and operation. The diesel generator is maintained regularly for fuel efficiency. Fuel used is in compliance with Air Quality Pollution standards.

In the past the Atascadero Police Department has had two police bicycles for enforcement duties. Recently two additional bicycles have been purchased through a local vendor as the result of a law enforcement grant project. These bicycles are used for special events such as Colony Days, Hot August Nights, and Winter Wonderland. The bicycles' versatility, ease of maintenance, and agility work well working events involving large crowds.

Further the human power aspect requires a level of fitness for the trained bicycle officers, and the issue of fuel, oil, and pollution is nonexistent. Repair costs are minimal and associated repair and maintenance is completed by the local vendor.

**Fire Department:**

All engines and command vehicles are tested for emissions every other year per state standards. The two new engines exceed the 2007 EPA specs for trucks and heavy equipment.

All standby generators are fueled by the cleanest fuel available - natural gas.

The new Ladder Truck which is expected to enter service June 1<sup>st</sup> will exceed the 2009 EPA emissions requirements.

The new wildland fire fighting engine to be purchased next FY08/09 will also exceed the 2009 EPA emissions requirements.

All engines and staff vehicles have been outfitted with shorelines. Shoreline power maintains batteries and increases reliability. A secondary benefit of shore-power is that the vehicles are maintained at operating temperature. Rather than starting cold, the diesel engines start when the motor is at 180 degrees; this dramatically improves the "clean burn" of diesel engines.

## **Public Works Department:**

Streets Division: Replaced aging diesel Dump Truck with compliant dump truck that meets current APCD Diesel Emissions requirements.

Wastewater: Installed Diesel Emissions Particulate trap filter on WW Dredge engine.

### **9. "Evaluate opportunities to increase pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems; recover wastewater treatment methane for energy production."**

City activity in this regard includes:

- Continual redesign and improvement of the sewer system to reduce energy requirements by taking advantage of gravity flow. Two lift stations have recently been eliminated by the installation of additional sewer line and a third lift-station is proposed for elimination within the year.
- Four older, in-efficient pumps have recently been replaced with more efficient pumps. In addition, all remaining older pumps are being re-wound with more efficient wiring,
- The City of Atascadero Wastewater Treatment Plant is a pond-type treatment facility that does not generate methane gas in a manner to allow for energy production.
- A new, citywide, central irrigation control system for all City parks and landscape areas. This new control system includes low-flow meters to detect leaks, water-auditing tools to manage the amount to water used and ET gauges to automatically adjust irrigation amounts based on evaporation.
- Purchased and installed a solar-powered water-circulator at Atascadero Lake instead of a hard-wired version.

### **10. "Increase recycling rates in City operations and in the community."**

City activity in this regard includes:

- Provide recycling bins at all personal workstations for all employees.
- Work with local trash hauler to provide a location for two annual "city-wide clean-up days" at which residents can recycle a variety of household waste at no cost.
- Established free curbside co-mingled recycling program with the local, contracted trash hauler.
- Established free curbside "green-waste" recycling program with the local, contracted trash hauler.
- Became the first municipal agency in San Luis Obispo County to reach the targeted 50% diversion of citywide trash going to the landfill.

**11. "Maintain healthy urban forests; promote tree planting to increase shading and to absorb CO2."**

The City of Atascadero is a Tree City USA with a significant native oak woodland forest. The City has a tree preservation ordinance that requires the protection of all native trees. Native trees that are removed require mitigation planting to replace them. The City has just completed a state of the art tree and habitat survey utilizing the City's GIS mapping system. This native tree inventory will be used to track the health and extent of the oak forest. The tree inventory will also be used for land use planning purposes to minimize the impact of new development on the oak forest.

**Public Works Department:**

Parks Division: Planted 235 Native trees and shrubs at Hielman Grove near the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

**Fire Department:**

The chipping program run by the fire department is funded through a grant from the Fire Safe Council and the City's general fund. To date we have diverted from the fire hazard reduction burning program 292 tons material. Instead of burning this material has been chipped and returned to environment in the form of mulch.

**12. "Help educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, business and industry about reducing global warming pollution."**

No current programs.

**Other City activities:**

At Fire Station One (1) we have: upgraded most windows to dual glaze and tinted or used e-glass on the windows on South and West sides of the station, upgraded heaters and appliances to more modern and efficient units, constructed walls between the engine bay and living quarters and offices, installed low flow toilets, showers and bath faucets and installed an exhaust extraction system.

At Fire Station Two (2), a much more modern station, (by 35 years) we have: installed low flow toilets, showers and bath faucets. At both stations we have tinted engine bay windows and installed an exhaust extraction system, installed new efficient refrigerators, washers and dryers and installed propane or natural gas standby generators.

Additionally, drip-watering systems are used to every extent possible. The lawns at both stations (our current training grounds) are kept long and the water used in training is rarely wasted and generally coordinated with the water co. Our current and future radio sites use propane standby generators or batteries for backup power.

The Recreation Center Project was built with many green principles and concepts in mind. First and foremost, environmental consideration was given to the site

prior to the building being constructed. An arborist was hired to survey trees and a tree protection plan was created. The established tree plan saves more trees than called for by the arborist. An arborist inspects the site each week to ensure tree health. Environmental documents for the project called for filters to be placed on the storm drains going into the creek. In addition to the filters that were called for, oil-sand separating tanks were installed to give an additional element of protection to the creek. Gravel and decomposed granite have been spread throughout the site to reduce dust and unnecessary erosion.

As for the building, several green materials were utilized. Low VOX paint is being used in the interior. The paint is much less toxic and improves air quality throughout the building. Several recycled materials are being used including compressed recycled paper for bathroom partitions and counters, recycled plastics for flooring and countertops, and recycled rubber for the sports court. The hallway flooring will be polished concrete, a flooring material that does not require glue or hazardous materials.

The building has also been designed to be a low maintenance building which should reduce water and power use and the use of chemicals.

Lastly, staff attending training events and meetings frequently carpool to save money and promote efficiency.

**Conclusion:**

The City is committed to good stewardship of the financial and personnel resources under its management. This includes consistently working to improve the quality of life of the community through policy, the services provided, and the public and private development projects approved.

Through various surveys, the citizens of Atascadero has made clear their desire that the best use of limited financial and personnel resources is the improvement of City services to include Police, Fire, Parks and Recreation, roads, water and sewer, etc., and the maintenance of a good quality of life.