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Future Saudi Cities Programme

Foundational Training Course: Climate-compatible, Sustainable and Resilient Cities

Climate Action Plan Los Angeles



GREEN LA

An Action Plan to Lead the Nation In Fighting Global Warming

MAY 2007

What the City of Los Angeles Is Already Doing

The path to a greener Los Angeles will be challenging, but with strong municipal leadership, Angelenos have always been at the forefront of the conservation movement, rising to meet ambitious environmental goals. These include:

- Recycling 62% of solid waste, a figure that exceeds California's strict recycling goals and represents the highest diversion rate among the nation's top five big cities;
- Investing in renewable energy to generate 20% of total power from clean sources by 2010 and reduce municipal CO2 output by 17.5% below 1990 levels;
- Holding water use steady through aggressive conservation despite overall population growth of 15% since 1990;
- Reducing the number of smoggy days from more than 200 in 1978 to 30 in 2005;
- Mandating green building standards for all new public buildings and providing incentives for private green development; and
- Investing in a fleet of alternative fuel vehicles that includes nearly half of the city's refuse collection trucks and street sweepers, all 188 DASH buses, and nearly 1,000 hybrid passenger cars, saving more than 10 million gallons of fuel in 2006.

Los Angeles continues to be an environmental leader, but we can and must do more to address global climate change.

Framework for a Green Los Angeles

Our vision is nothing less than the transformation of Los Angeles into the greenest big city in America. This plan comes at a time of increased civic engagement in the public and private sectors. Never before have so many major environmental organizations, community groups, environmental justice organizations, academics, and private businesses worked together to advance a progressive green agenda for Los Angeles. City departments and proprietary agencies need to ensure their activities work toward improving the environment and making Los Angeles a sustainable city.

The objectives are:

1. Improve public health by enhancing the environment

Neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles are exposed to environmental hazards that adversely impact public health. Too many children suffer from asthma, respiratory illnesses, and cancer. Improved air and water quality will reduce exposure to toxic pollution. City actions will reflect the principle of precaution, avoiding creation of new public health threats. The decisionmaking process must focus on community needs and global interconnectedness while remaining transparent, democratic, and accountable.

2. Unpave paradise by increasing green space

With limited green space—where few children live within walking distance of a park—the city must create a more equitable distribution of open space, greenery, and recreational opportunities. The Million Trees Los Angeles initiative is aimed at increasing the tree canopy for the entire city, which is low compared to other communities nationwide, but emphasizes those neighborhoods where the ratio of trees to pavement is even worse.

3. Promote environmental stewardship for the city and its residents

The city must care for its natural environment and protect our scarce and fragile resources. All neighborhoods and sectors of the community must also be good stewards of the environment. We understand that there are long-term social impacts to the decisions we make.

4. Create a new urban form

Smart growth strategies will play a significant role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Smart growth is about developing a livable city, and takes a holistic approach to planning, including transportation, water conservation, energy, social justice, economic development, environmental protection, and community development. We strive to promote social, economic, and geographic equality as the basis of environmental sustainability.

5. Build a new green economy in Los Angeles

Focusing on the green sector can result in new jobs, improved human health, and both a more sustainable environment and economy. Catalyzing the growth of green economic activity could serve as a foundation for fundamental change. Los Angeles has significant market influence through its proprietary agencies; its purchasing, procurement, and contracting processes; as well as its regulatory, planning, and land use powers that can be coordinated to “grow green” and promote a robust green economy. The city has the power to provide leadership, stimulate market demand, model innovative and profitable green businesses, promote private investment, create a business-friendly regulatory environment for green companies, and invest in workforce development programs that facilitate growth of the green economy while improving the income of residents in disadvantaged communities.

How We Are Going to Get There

Energy

Green the Power From the Largest Municipal Utility in the United States

- Meet the goal to increase renewable energy from solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal sources to 20% by 2010;
- Increase use of renewable energy to 35% by 2020;

- Let contracts for power imports from coal-fired power plants expire;
- Increase the efficiency of natural gas-fired power plants; and
- Increase biogas co-firing of natural gas-fired power plants.

Make Los Angeles a Worldwide Leader In Green Buildings

- By July 2007, present a comprehensive set of green building policies to guide and support private sector development.

Transform Los Angeles Into the Model Of an Energy Efficient City

- Reduce energy use by all city departments to the maximum extent feasible;
- Complete energy efficiency retrofits of all city-owned buildings to meet a 20% or more reduction in energy consumption;
- Install the equivalent of 50 “cool roofs” per year by 2010 on new or remodeled city buildings;
- Install solar heating for all city-owned swimming pools;
- Improve energy efficiency at drinking water treatment and distribution facilities; and j
- Maximize energy efficiency of wastewater treatment equipment.

Help Angelenos Be “Energy Misers”

- Distribute two compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs to each of the 1.4 million households in the city;
- Increase the level and types of customer rebates for energy efficient appliances, windows, lighting, and heating and cooling systems;
- Increase the distribution of energy efficient refrigerators to qualified customers; and
- Create a fund to “acquire” energy savings as a resource from LADWP customers.

Water

Decrease Per Capita Water Use

- Meet all additional demand for water resulting from growth through water conservation and recycling;
- Reduce per capita water consumption by 20%; and
- Implement the city’s innovative water and wastewater integrated resources plan that will increase conservation, and maximize use of recycled water, including capture and reuse of stormwater.

Transportation

Lower the Environmental Impact And Carbon Intensity of Transportation

- Require 85% of city fleet to be powered by alternative fuels;
- Convert 100% of city refuse collection trucks and street sweepers to alternative fuels; and
- Convert 100% of Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) buses to alternative fuels.

Focus on Mobility for People, Not Cars

- Complete the automated traffic signal synchronization and control system (ATSAC);
- Expand flyaway shuttles serving Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and other regional airports, and convert existing flyaway buses to alternative fuels;
- Make transit information easily available, understandable, and translated into multiple languages;
- Expand the city employee rideshare program;
- Promote walking and biking to work, within neighborhoods, and to large events and venues; and
- Expand the regional rail network.

Create a More Livable City

- Promote high-density housing close to major transportation arteries;
- Promote and implement transit-oriented development (TOD);

- Make available underutilized city land for housing and mixed-use development;
- Make available underutilized city land for parks and open space;
- Clean up brownfields sites for community economic revitalization projects and open space; and
- Make available underutilized city land within 1,500 feet of transit for housing and mixed-use development.

Waste

Shift From Waste Disposal to Resource Recovery

- Recycle 70% of trash by 2015.

Port of Los Angeles

Green the Port

- Fully implement the San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP).
- Complete strategic plan for the Port of Los Angeles, including sustainable and green growth options.
- Complete economic development plan for the port, identifying opportunities to link the port's investment in green growth to new economic opportunities in the green sector.

Airport

Green the Airports

- Fully employ the Sustainability Performance Improvement Management System as requested by the City Council and developed by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to track and improve sustainability initiatives;
- Develop and implement comprehensive policies to green Los Angeles airports to meet green building specifications, improve recycling, use alternate fuel sources, use recycled water, employ water conservation methods, reduce energy requirements, and reduce GHG emissions; and
- Evaluate options to reduce aircraft-related GHG emissions.

Open Space and Greening

Unpave Paradise/Create New Paradises

- Create 35 new parks by 2010;
- Revitalize the Los Angeles River to create open space opportunities along the 32-mile corridor within the city of Los Angeles;
- Plant 1 million trees throughout Los Angeles;
- Identify opportunities to "daylight" streams;
- Identify and develop promising locations for stormwater infiltration to recharge groundwater aquifers; and
- Collaborate and partner with schools to create more parks in neighborhoods.

Green Economy

Create Demand and Catalyze Growth Of the Green Economic Sector

- Leverage city policy, purchasing, and regulation, and deepen local university partnerships, to promote local research, development, and production of green technology and products;
- Strengthen global economic relationships to promote investment in Los Angeles's green sector and help local environmentally focused companies penetrate both local and foreign markets;
- Identify and promote locations for green businesses;
- Develop targeted programs to train residents of low and middle income communities for jobs in the green economy;

- Collaborate with the private sector to offer effective incentives for the growth of local green businesses; and
- Collaborate with local educational institutions such as universities, community colleges, and adult education programs to create more curricula that provide city residents with the skills and knowledge to work for competitive green businesses.

Adaptation

Climate Proof Los Angeles

- Improve capacity to respond to an emergency through education and outreach;
- Develop comprehensive plans to prepare for climate change effects on the city, including increased drought, wildfires, sea level rise, and public health impacts;
- Review current zoning and building codes to minimize climate change impact; and
- Reduce the heat island effect by planting 1 million trees throughout the city and increasing open space.

Finally, the plan outlines a public process to conduct community outreach and foster public-private partnerships to reduce CO₂ emissions beyond the city's jurisdiction. Working together, Angelenos can reduce their personal carbon footprints while contributing to the overall reduction of the entire city's CO₂ emissions.

