

# Ukiah commits to energy efficiency, sustainable water, and more with new climate emergency resolution

By Kate Fishman | June 21, 2022



Ukiah Civic Center

UKIAH, CA, 06/21/2022 – Eileen Mitro has solar panels installed on the roof of her house and relies on battery storage to power her home. To avoid using their gas stove, she and her husband cook the majority of their meals on a plug-in induction burner. A former teacher by trade, she wasn't always worried about climate issues – but a few years ago, that all changed.

Mitro is one of the founding members of Climate Action Mendocino, a group that formed in fall of 2017 and played a key role in creating Ukiah's 2022 Climate Emergency Resolution.

The resolution to declare a climate emergency passed in the City Council unanimously on last Wednesday night; with it, the city is committing to bolster renewable power sources and energy-efficient lighting; maintain wild lands; promote biodiversity and carbon sequestration; and expand sustainable water practices – among many other provisions for the health of the local environment.

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“I’m just beyond proud of the city and the staff and the people that participated in making these changes,” Councilmember Juan Orozco said before becoming one of four members – Douglas Crane was absent – to vote to approve the resolution. Both councilmembers and citizens spoke in favor of the motion, commending the city and Climate Action Mendocino on their efforts.

Getting here took a few years.

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The advertisement features a background image of a forest with a helicopter in the upper left and a fire hydrant spraying water in the lower center. The text is overlaid on this background. In the top right corner is the logo for West Business Development Center, which consists of a stylized human figure with arms raised inside a circle, followed by the text 'West BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER'. The main headline is in large, bold, yellow letters: 'BE AWARE AND BE PREPARED!'. Below this is a black banner with white text: 'FIRE SEASON IS HERE! LEARN HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS ASSETS AND WHAT TO DO WHEN DISASTER STRIKES.' Underneath the banner is another line of text in yellow and white: 'SIGN UP TODAY FOR OUR DISASTER PLANNING WORKSHOPS: JUNE 16 & JULY 6; EN ESPAÑOL EN JUNIO 29 E JULIO 27'. At the bottom is the website address 'WWW.WESTCENTER.ORG/TRAINING' in large yellow letters.

<https://www.westcenter.org/training>

“The sense was that the city wouldn’t go for it,” Mitro said, referring to initial discussions of a climate resolution in Ukiah. But then, she said, her group met with Pete Gang, an activist from Petaluma who worked to mobilize climate declarations throughout cities in Sonoma County. From him, her group learned how to connect with city council and Ukiah residents to build a movement from the ground up – rather than just introducing a motion cold.

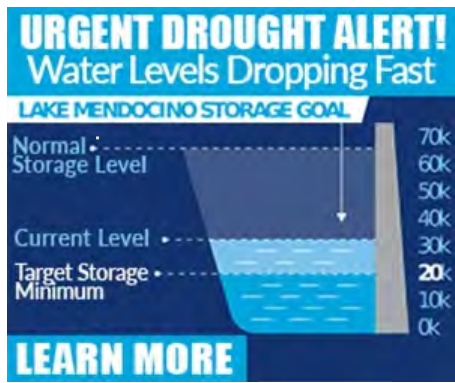
They found city staff were “very receptive” at that point, she said.

When Deputy City Manager Shannon Riley introduced the resolution on Wednesday, she said that many members of the group had been surprised to learn of work around climate issues that was already ongoing in Ukiah. As such, she said that greater transparency in communicating its actions to the public would be a key part of the city’s focus in carrying out the resolution.

Increased popular discussion of climate change helped lay the groundwork for Climate Action Mendocino’s efforts with Ukiah, Mitro said. She found environmental issues used to be something neighbors would nod to but that mainstream news was largely silent on. Then the topic became critical during the pandemic.

“With the media and the fires and the droughts and water issues, everyone’s on board now,” she said.

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(<https://www.sonomawater.org/current-water-supply-levels>)

This led Climate Action Mendocino to adapt resolutions from Sonoma County to suit Ukiah’s needs and circumstances, speak one-on-one with city councilmembers, and begin connecting with residents around climate issues by phone. Mayor Jim Brown particularly appreciated this comprehensive element of the group’s approach.

“You reached out to all of the councilmembers,” he said. “You came prepared with the science.”

In turn, city staff were able to dialogue effectively with Climate Action Mendocino, Riley said. These conversations led staff to ask certain language be removed – such as a proposed moratorium on new gas stations, which would have been a precedent-setting interference in local business – but also add provisions where they believed “the city of Ukiah could do more,” including the entire section of the document on land use and zoning.

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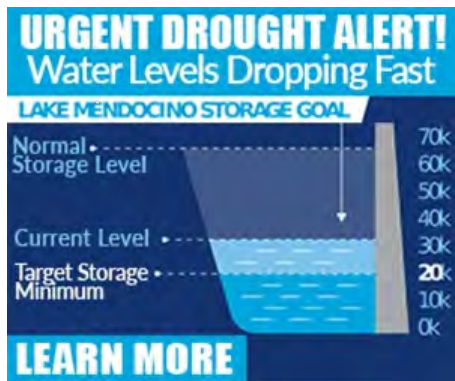


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Ultimately, “literally every single department in the city of Ukiah” had a chance to review the document, Riley said.

It was important to all that the resolution not be an “empty” document, making dire declarations about human-caused climate change in the area without offering solutions. As such, the resolution includes [27 bullet points](https://ukiahca.civicclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=6048) of actions the city is committing to take “toward restoring a safer climate.” City staff and climate activists alike were excited for its impact to diffuse across the plans, budgets, and priorities of the entire city, evolving as Ukiah’s needs evolve.

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(<https://www.sonomawater.org/current-water-supply-levels>)

“This is a blueprint not only for the city council and the city to work on – but it’s also for people in our area, our city, and our citizenship that are frustrated and don’t know what you’ve been working on,” said Sharon Thomas, a member of Climate Action Mendocino, prior to the vote.

One notable provision in this blueprint is an energy and waste audit, which would allow Ukiah to gather valuable information about where to put its efforts in making usage changes. An audit company will offer the city a report on its energy data; officials will then choose how to use that information to inform future environmental decisions.

“If you’re going to make changes, you have to have data to tell you where to make your changes,” Mitro said. “There’s a lot of climate information out there [that] EVs [electric vehicles] are the way of the future, and you have to do that and get rid of your expensive gasoline, the whole electrification of your home or business. But it’s useful to know what those things cost.”

She found that the same principle applied when she had experts come and assess what using solar energy at her home would mean for her personal energy costs.

She added, “That audit makes me pretty hopeful.” Mitro also hopes other municipalities around the county, such as Fort Bragg and Willits, will follow suit.

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The changes in Ukiah were themselves inspired by strides at the countywide level when, after organizing efforts including those by the [Grassroots Institute Climate Crisis Work Group](https://www.grassroots-institute.org/climate-crisis.html) (<https://www.grassroots-institute.org/climate-crisis.html>), the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in 2019 ([https://mccaac.org/vwpdf.php?pdf=AC/B\\_oS\\_Resolution.pdf](https://mccaac.org/vwpdf.php?pdf=AC/B_oS_Resolution.pdf)) establishing the [Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee](https://www.mendocinocounty.org/community/mendocino-county-climate-action-advisory-committee) (<https://www.mendocinocounty.org/community/mendocino-county-climate-action-advisory-committee>). With a “citizen-driven structure,” that committee works in tandem with tribal nations, fire safety councils, water and fire districts, and community organizations. Its members advise the board on environmental issues. Riley said Climate Action Mendocino also contributed to organizing a subsequent declaration and list of actions for Mendocino County in 2020.

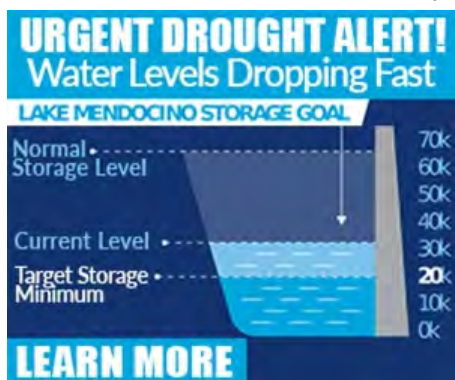
While establishing an environmental committee in Ukiah specifically is not part of the plan at this stage, the city will be creating a page on its website dedicated to education and information on local climate issues. The web page will identify environmental resources for residents including incentives, rebates, and an energy efficiency tool lending library.

Ultimately, many council members and constituents alike expressed hope that the resolution will be a defining document for Ukiah going forward. For Councilmember Mari Rodin, publicizing this work when it happens is not just a pat on the back; it’s a critical component of cementing its value.

“It just becomes part of the culture of the place and people come to expect it,” she said.

Seeing these commitments being made, Mitro believes Mendocino County has momentum toward creating more sustainable climate futures.

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She said around 270 people receive Climate Action Mendocino's emails bi-monthly, and that residents respond frequently saying they picked up the phone or wrote a letter to their representatives around a key climate issue. While they used to meet at the Ukiah Methodist Church pre-pandemic, now usually about 10 members meet monthly on one member's back porch to plan Climate Action Mendocino's initiatives, sharing their discussions afterward with the email listserv. Their work will now include maintaining communication with the city of Ukiah on key points from the resolution.

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“Our plan is to [each] volunteer to take on certain actions as our issue and follow through with that department in the city, instead of having the whole group take on every item,” she explained.

Addressing the council prior to Wednesday night’s vote, Mitro emphasized her gratitude.

“In passing this resolution, the city council is directing the city staff to work on climate action for a much more resilient and strong community,” she said.

[Read the Ukiah Climate Emergency Resolution 2022 here. \(https://ukiahca.civiclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=6048\)](https://ukiahca.civiclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=6048)

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# Ukiah enters water sharing agreement, passes climate emergency resolution

Mendocino County Public Broadcasting | By **Sarah Reith**

Published June 18, 2022 at 8:13 AM PDT



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Trees and drought-tolerant, pollinator-friendly plants in front of the courthouse on State Street in Ukiah.



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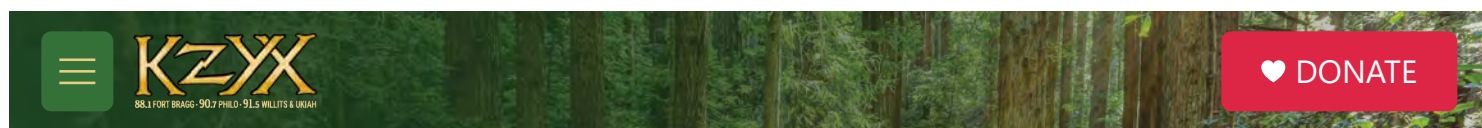
## The Ukiah City Council voted unanimously to reduce water use to help junior water rights holders, and passed a resolution to continue and expand environmentally conscious practices.

June 16, 2022 — The Ukiah City Council took two actions in response to drought and climate change at its Wednesday night meeting, when they unanimously approved a climate emergency resolution and agreed to participate in a voluntary water sharing agreement with other water users on the Russian River.

The city has a sturdy groundwater basin and holds durable senior pre-1914 water rights to flows in the East Branch of the river, which is also the destination for water that's diverted through the Potter Valley hydropower project.

The voluntary program affects water users in the upper Russian north of the Dry Creek confluence. The agreement was written by Phil Williams, Ukiah's special water counsel, and was approved by the State Water Board on June 7. The program is intended to provide water users with a framework within which senior rights holders can reduce their water use by a certain percentage so that junior rights holders are not left high and dry. Participants, who have until June 20 to sign up, will commit to reducing their surface water diversions using a monthly average based on their water use during the years 2017-2019. They'll continue to keep track of how much water they use, and agree not to challenge one another's water rights. The maximum water use reduction for pre-1914 water rights holders like the City of Ukiah will be 20%. The program will end when the Deputy Director of the Division of Water Rights determines that there has been enough rain to alleviate water supply shortage; when the drought emergency proclamation is withdrawn; or if the program starts having an adverse effect on non-participants' water availability.

Sean White, the city's director of water and sewer, told the City Council that the current legal structure for water rights makes it hard to distribute the diminishing resource in a way that benefits the community at large. He said the water-sharing agreement was



“Under the current water rights system, the way it works is juniors in a really dire



everything...I don't think myself or Phil have any real opposition to existing California water rights, there are a lot of things that are based on that, and this doesn't undo any of that. What's In front of you, this creates an alternative path. If you don't want to go down that road, and you want to just do something that is voluntary, that you feel is more equitable, then really, by being equitable, it's kind of better for your overall community, than having people who have nothing and people who have nothing, then that is sort of the overall premise of the agreement that's in front of you."

The program depends on how much water makes it into the East Branch of the Russian River, through natural means or by way of the diversion from the Potter Valley Project, which is owned by PG&E. PG&E has asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to approve a variance, a request to reduce the amount of water coming out of Lake Pillsbury to five cubic feet per second. Water managers were expecting five times that much, plus a five cfs buffer. Williams said he expects a decision from the Commission in a few weeks, and that approval of the variance request would probably put a hold on the agreement.

"If PG&E is only hitting a 5 cfs release, this program likely will not become viable, meaning it won't become operative until September one," the start of the next water year, he said. "If there's more water than that, this program will become operative and viable before then. But what happens in this program is we essentially create a separate block of water. Participating water right holders would agree to not divert a certain amount of water, thereby keeping that water in the stream that would be available to other participants further downstream...we won't be inundated with requests for this water because it's more passive than that. We would be creating a block of water, along with other participants, that makes that water available."The program is a little like an insurance pool, in that it only works if enough healthy people, or, in this case, senior water rights holders, sign up for it. White said that's why he thought it was important for the city to sign on.

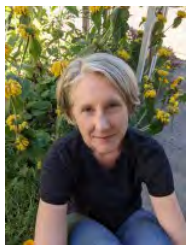
"There's a certain level of critical mass that needs to happen for this program to be viable," he explained. "One of those is people signing up, in particular senior right holders, because they are the people who will have a resource that can be reallocated to juniors. So if only juniors sign up, then it really won't work. So I think that's one of the reasons that it's important that the City agrees to participate. But there also does need

situation. And even if it ends up sort of negating this program for a while, having this in place and having us be a signatory, still creates an alternative path for the next drought, which we know is probably not that far away.”

The climate emergency resolution, crafted by Climate Action Mendocino, cited drought among the many reasons for the city to endorse the declaration of a climate emergency. It builds on the city’s current environmentally conscious efforts like recycling water and cooling the streets by planting more trees. It also calls for rigorous policy practices, like updating the zoning ordinance and conducting energy and waste audits on city buildings. Helen Sizemore summed up the gist of the 16 letters and all the public comment on the item. “We all voted for you, and this is what we want,” she said simply.

Mayor Jim Brown did so, along with his colleagues, and praised the group for its work on the resolution. “You came prepared, with the science,” he said. “I met with Ms. Mitro (of Climate Action Mendocino) personally. She provided me information that I found very rewarding. So I really want to thank the Climate Action Group on their preparedness.”

Local News



## Sarah Reith

Sarah Reith is the lead reporter for KZYX News. She joined the KZYX News team in 2017, and covers local politics, water, law enforcement and the arts in Mendocino County.

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**RESOLUTION 2022-****A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UKIAH ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND A CALL TO ACTION TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE**

**WHEREAS**, human activities have warmed the Earth, destabilizing the climate and setting in motion catastrophic changes to the Earth's systems, including fresh water scarcity and droughts, floods, extreme weather events and increased heat, wildfires, species extinction and accelerating ice mass decline resulting in sea-level rise; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 27, 2022 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II reported, "The scientific evidence is unequivocal: climate change is a threat to human well-being and the health of the planet. Any further delay in concerted global action will miss the brief, rapidly closing window to secure a livable future"; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. moving toward rapid decarbonization will avoid economic losses and take advantage of entirely new economic opportunities that are likely to emerge; governments at all levels need to focus on setting regulation and policy; rapidly deploying and scaling advanced technologies; and accelerating critical infrastructure programs; and

**WHEREAS**, California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the United States are worsening, predicting increased drought cycles and heat waves in the western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined water supply and snow pack, increased flooding, impacted agriculture, as well as substantial damages to the U.S. economy and human health, unless greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are curbed; and

**WHEREAS**, current global warming is contributing to the increased frequency and intensity of wildfires, floods, droughts, heat waves, and other extreme weather, including the Northern California wildfires of 2017 and 2018 that destroyed at least 38,333 structures, killed 118, displaced thousands, and caused serious reductions in air quality; in 2020, in California, four million acres were burned, 112 million tons of GHG's released, 11 million gallons of fire retardant used and 31 lives lost; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2021, drifting smoke from wildfires in California caused haze on the other side of the United States; the Pacific Northwest was gripped by a heat wave that caused thousands of emergency department visits for heat-related illness and likely killed hundreds; extreme heat has killed an estimated 3,900 people in California over the last decade; and

**WHEREAS**, the California State Legislature has set clear climate objectives for the next decade, including a 40% reduction in 1990 level GHG emissions by 2030; 50% renewable energy; and reduce petroleum use by 45% by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, the economic impacts of climate change if left unabated will have catastrophic implications on the global economy with direct impacts at the federal, state, local and household level including storm damage, real estate losses, energy costs, water costs, and food availability; and

**WHEREAS**, the current pace and scale of worldwide and national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 21, 2020, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution proposed by their appointed Climate Action Advisory Committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ukiah and its surrounding areas have been profoundly affected by several natural disasters due to climate change including severe drought, flooding, devastating wildfires and accompanying days-long power outages and related Public Safety Power Shutoff events; and

**WHEREAS**, marginalized communities including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income people, those with disabilities, and the unhoused—are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts and must be supported in the transition to a sustainable environment and economy; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to avoid irreversible, catastrophic climate change impacts, we must significantly decrease our carbon emissions, incorporating new technologies, setting new policies and accelerating critical infrastructure, thus preparing for significant ecological and economic impacts due to climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, during emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic and wildfires, the City of Ukiah, along with the County of Mendocino and the State of California demonstrated a remarkable capacity to protect human health in the face of crises, based on early, preventative action in response to evidence and warnings issued by scientists, that same focus must be an ongoing focus to eliminate any activities that threaten our climate stability and the overall health of our City residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ukiah must actively work for a clean environment, to improve environmental standards and promote sustainable energy policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ukiah is committed to doing everything in its power to encourage an ecologically, socially and financially sustainable economy.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the City of Ukiah declares that a climate emergency threatens humanity and the natural and built environments; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Ukiah joins a global call for supporting ecologically sustainable livelihoods creating a fair and more equal society that moves away from fossil fuels and supports an urgent collaborative climate mobilization effort, focused on enacting policies that dramatically reduce heat-trapping emissions both inside and outside the City's borders across all sectors to accelerate the necessary systems change required to restore a safe climate; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that an urgent global climate mobilization effort to address global warming is needed to address global warming is needed to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and that full community participation, inclusion and support is integral to our efforts to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere and accelerate adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying climate impacts; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Ukiah commits to ongoing education and active engagement of all City staff, members of committees and commissions, contractors, consultants, residents and independent community groups in alignment with the goals of mitigation, drawdown; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Ukiah commits to address the climate implications of all policies and actions that come before the Council that have the potential to impact greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sequestration, and disaster preparedness within the City; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Ukiah will identify and consider an initial list of actions toward restoring a safe climate and meeting State goals by 2030 as detailed in Exhibit A attached hereto, and the City Council will continue to implement, evolve and update the list based on changing conditions, regulations, constraints, and policy direction;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that these actions be reflected throughout the new General Plan currently being developed.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 15<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

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Jim O. Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Kristine Lawler, City Clerk



## EXHIBIT A

### CITY OF UKIAH ACTIONS TOWARD RESTORING A SAFE CLIMATE

#### Energy Efficiency

**Implement a 100% Green Rate option to all City electric customers.**

**Increase Renewable Power Production and Storage:** Install renewable energy with storage capacity on City-owned land within City limits, where feasible.

**Install Energy Efficient Outdoor Lighting:** Replace all streetlights and lighting in public facilities (parking lots, field lots, etc.) with LEDs. Continue to install “dark sky compliant” streetlights to reduce light pollution and eliminate light trespass into residents’ homes.

**Continue Plan to Meet Statewide Goals for Purchased Power by 2030:** Prepare for an increase in overall renewable power to meet 2030 50% emission reduction plans pursuant to federal and state guidelines.

**Decarbonize Existing Building Stock:** Explore opportunities to provide incentives for electrification and increased energy efficiency of existing residential and commercial buildings—both appliance-by-appliance and as whole building retrofits.

**Continue to Explore Rebate Programs:** Explore additional options for rebate programs for fuel shifting and energy efficiency improvements to benefit commercial and residential properties, ensuring access to affordable power for all, including tenants.

**Perform Energy and Waste Audits:** Contract with a reputable private company to conduct energy and waste audits on City buildings.

#### Transportation

**Transformation of the Fleet:** Continue replacement of City fleet vehicles, light-and-heavy-duty trucks, and other mobile equipment, where feasible, with models that run fully on electricity or green hydrogen.

**Encourage Active Transportation as a viable alternative to automobiles:** Encourage more walking and biking by ensuring safe and attractive paths.

**Encourage Clean Vehicles when Active Transportation is not Feasible:** Continue to support the expansion of the number of Level 2 and 3 vehicle-charging stations in the City through direct installation of public charging stations and through public/private partnerships. Continue efforts to offer electric utility rebates for installation of residential and workplace EV chargers.

**Continue to Expand the Great Redwood Trail – Ukiah:** Continue to extend the Trail to the north and the south, while also adding amenities like water, shade, and connectivity throughout. This trail provides direct access to major employment centers, services, shopping, residential areas, the future Mendocino County Courthouse, and connectivity to other bicycle routes throughout the city.

**Educate the Public About the Dangers of Idling Vehicles:** Utilize public service announcements and social media to discourage drivers from letting their engines run when their vehicles are not moving, which is hazardous to children’s developing lungs, wastes gasoline and causes unnecessary GHG emissions.

### **Solid Waste**

**Continue to lead the way in solid waste diversion including the diversion of compostable food:** Take measures to ensure that the City’s waste removal contractor informs and monitors customers’ adherence to California’s new compost law that went into effect January 1, 2022. Senate Bill (SB) 1383 was passed in September 2016 as part of a statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants. SB 1383 set the targets of reducing organic waste disposal 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025.

### **Urban Greenhouse Gas Drawdown**

**Implement Nature Based Climate Solutions:** Manage parks, community gardens, greenways, riparian and aquatic zones with best practices for carbon sequestration.

**Maintain wild lands:** The State of California Executive Order N-82-20 identifies land management actions that protect climate-vulnerable communities and achieve carbon neutrality; promote biodiversity protection, habitat restoration and wildfire-resilience; sustainably manage landscapes; and steward natural and working lands, building climate resilience and economic sustainability.

**Continue to Develop the City of Ukiah’s Tree Management Guidelines:** To reduce the City’s heat island effect, continue developing the City’s Tree Management Guidelines to cool streets with trees, prioritizing shade equity in neighborhoods. Explore opportunities to better protect existing trees inside the City limits and support efforts to strengthen oak protection efforts.

**Enhance Carbon Sequestration Capacity:** Support regional efforts to encourage climate beneficial agriculture and land management, incorporating compost and other methods that increase urban soil carbon and nutrient cycling.

### **Land Use**

**Update Zoning Ordinance:** Educate the public and promote “gentle density” as a sustainable, climate friendly way to preserve small town quality of life. Utilize policies and programs within the City’s 2040 General Plan to implement environmental and sustainability goals.

**Protect Against Sprawl Through Completion of Annexations:** Implement the City’s Annexation Policy in Resolution No. 2020-06 to avoid the consequences of continued urban sprawl and protect open space and prime agriculture lands in the Ukiah Valley, encouraging urban, compact design that relies less on the automobile and reduces overall GHG emissions.

**Complete Update of 2040 General Plan:** Complete and adopt the 2040 General Plan, including a new Complete Streets policy and Climate Vulnerability Analysis. Set goals for implementation of programs and annually report to the City Council on status of completion of General Plan programs.

## **Community Engagement**

**Develop a Web Page with Informational and Educational Resources:** Create a dedicated page of the City's website identifying all the resources now available to City of Ukiah residents such as home energy audits, energy efficiency tool lending library, financing for energy efficiency, rebates and incentives. Also, include information on residential and commercial best practices (including all-electric), home performance best practices, green building best practices and more.

**Continue to Actively Promote Climate Matters on City Web Site/Social Media:** Actively promote the City's goals, efforts and initiatives related to climate on the City's website and social media.

**Ensure that climate responsibility is integrated throughout the City's departments and operations.**

## **Water Policy**

**Expand Sustainable Water Practices:** Continue to explore expansion of the Recycled Water Project, water conservation, and other practices that help ensure a healthy, sustainable, water supply.

## **Information Technology**

**Transition to Cloud Computing:** Continue to move our digital systems onto the cloud, reducing our reliance on energy intensive servers, which require batteries, battery back-up systems, and climate controls, as well as reducing paper usage.

## **Parks and Recreation**

**Eliminate Pesticide Use:** The City will continue to keep its parks 100% free of pesticides and use only approved organic materials for pest control, and reuse all mulch generated from those parks.

## **Fire Prevention**

**Protect from Dangerous Emission by Preventing Fires:** The City shall engage in multi-jurisdiction activities to reduce the risk of future fires throughout the County, including the acquisition of open space, putting in firebreaks, and clearing fuel. Additionally, the City shall use non-toxic alternatives to fire-fighting foam that are free from the PFAS and PFOS chemicals.

# Planning Commission Workshop

City of Ukiah

April 24, 2013

## City of Ukiah Climate Action Plan



Brian Grattidge, Jeff Caton, Claire Myers  
Environmental Science Associates

# Agenda

- Climate Action Plan Overview Presentation (30 minutes)
  - What is a “Climate Action Plan?”
  - Climate Change and greenhouse gases
  - Why plan for future greenhouse gas emissions reductions?
  - What are Ukiah’s emissions now and where do they need to be?
  - What kinds of emission reduction strategies is Ukiah considering?
  - Instructions for Breakout Session
- Community Feedback: We Want to Hear from You! (30-45 minutes)
  - Breakout stations for Energy, Transportation, Water, and Solid Waste:
  - What steps can the City take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
  - What are the challenges and barriers to reducing greenhouse gas emissions?
  - What programs or policies would help overcome these challenges and barriers?
- Breakout Results and Concluding Remarks (15 minutes)



# What is a Climate Action Plan?

- A Climate Action Plan identifies policies and programs that a public agency will use to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are within its jurisdiction.
- A Climate Action Plan will typically include an inventory of existing greenhouse gas emissions within the plan area, projected emission levels, a reduction target, policies and programs to achieve those reductions, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, and strategies to address climate change impacts.



# What is a Climate Action Plan?

- Relationship to the General Plan: most jurisdictions have developed “stand alone” plans which act as an implementing tool of the General Plan, although some jurisdictions have incorporated a climate action plan into the general plan. In order to be effective, a climate action plan should be consistent and build upon general plan policies.
- Relationship to CEQA: Under the CEQA Guidelines, the review of individual projects may be more efficient (and more effective) when the lead agency has adopted a plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (see CEQA Guidelines § 15183.5).

## Climate Change – the time to act is now

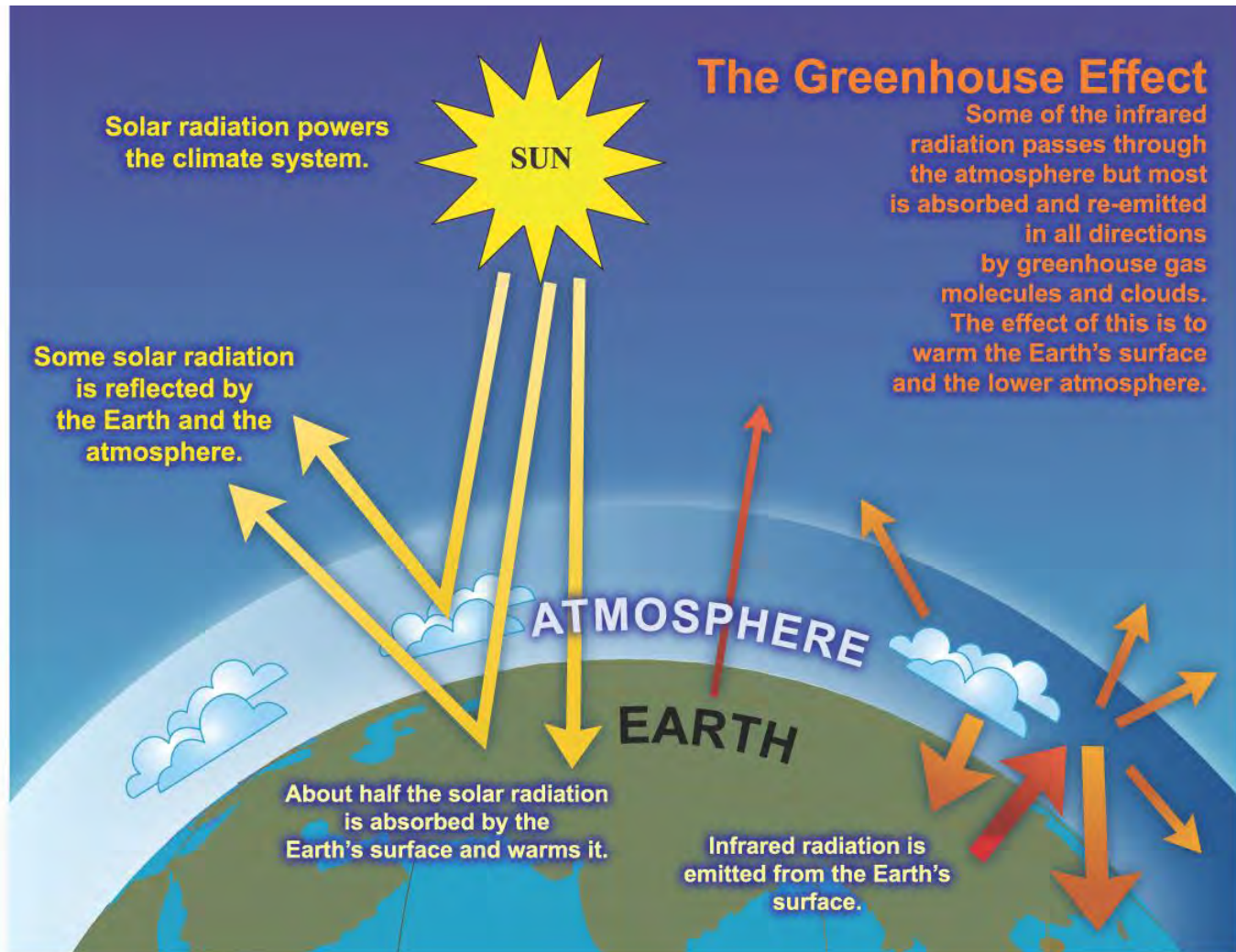


### **A global problem that requires local action**

- Changes already experienced; big challenges ahead
- Not just an environmental issue: an economic, social and political issue.
- Local governments – where meaningful action is possible
- Both mitigation and adaptation are needed



# The Greenhouse Effect



# Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)

## Primary Sources of GHGs:

### Carbon Dioxide

- Fossil fuel combustion

### Methane

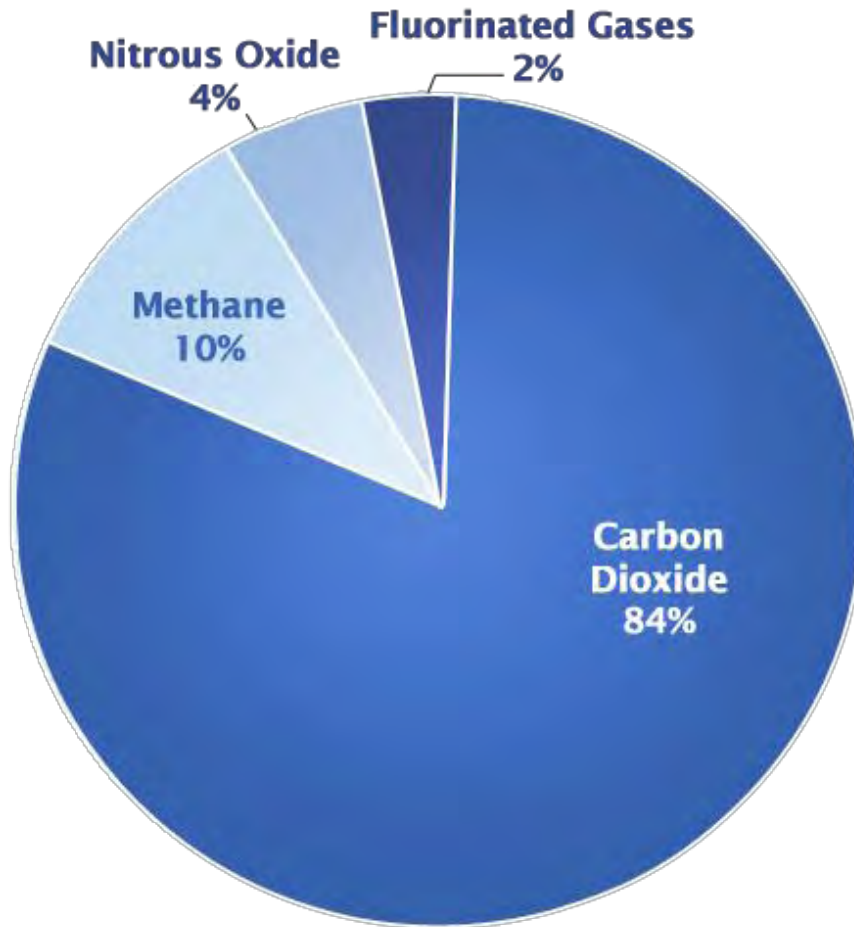
- Production of coal, natural gas, and oil
- Livestock & agricultural practices
- Decay of organic waste (landfills)

### Nitrous Oxide

- Agricultural and industrial activities
- Fossil fuel combustion

### Fluorinated gases

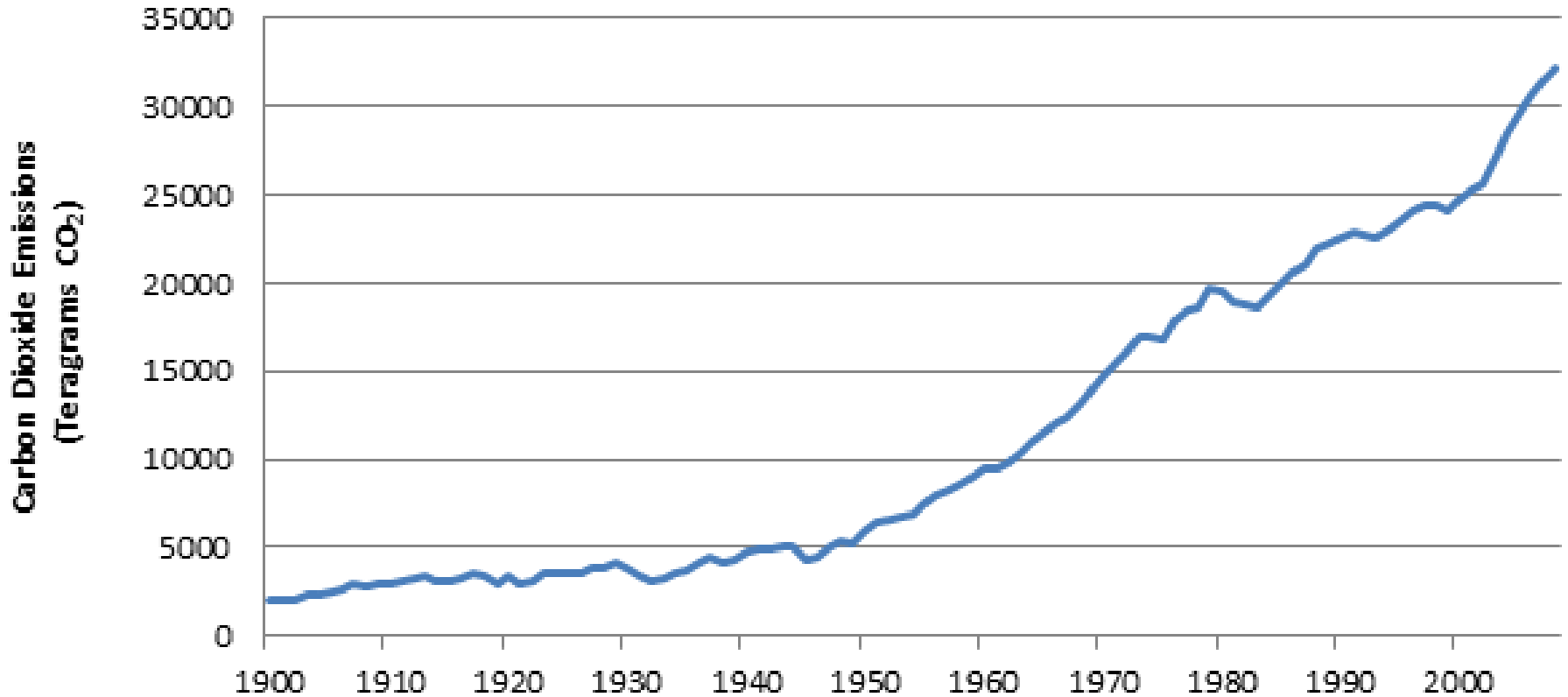
- Industrial processes



**U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions in 2010**

Source: EPA

# CO2 Emissions Rapidly Increasing



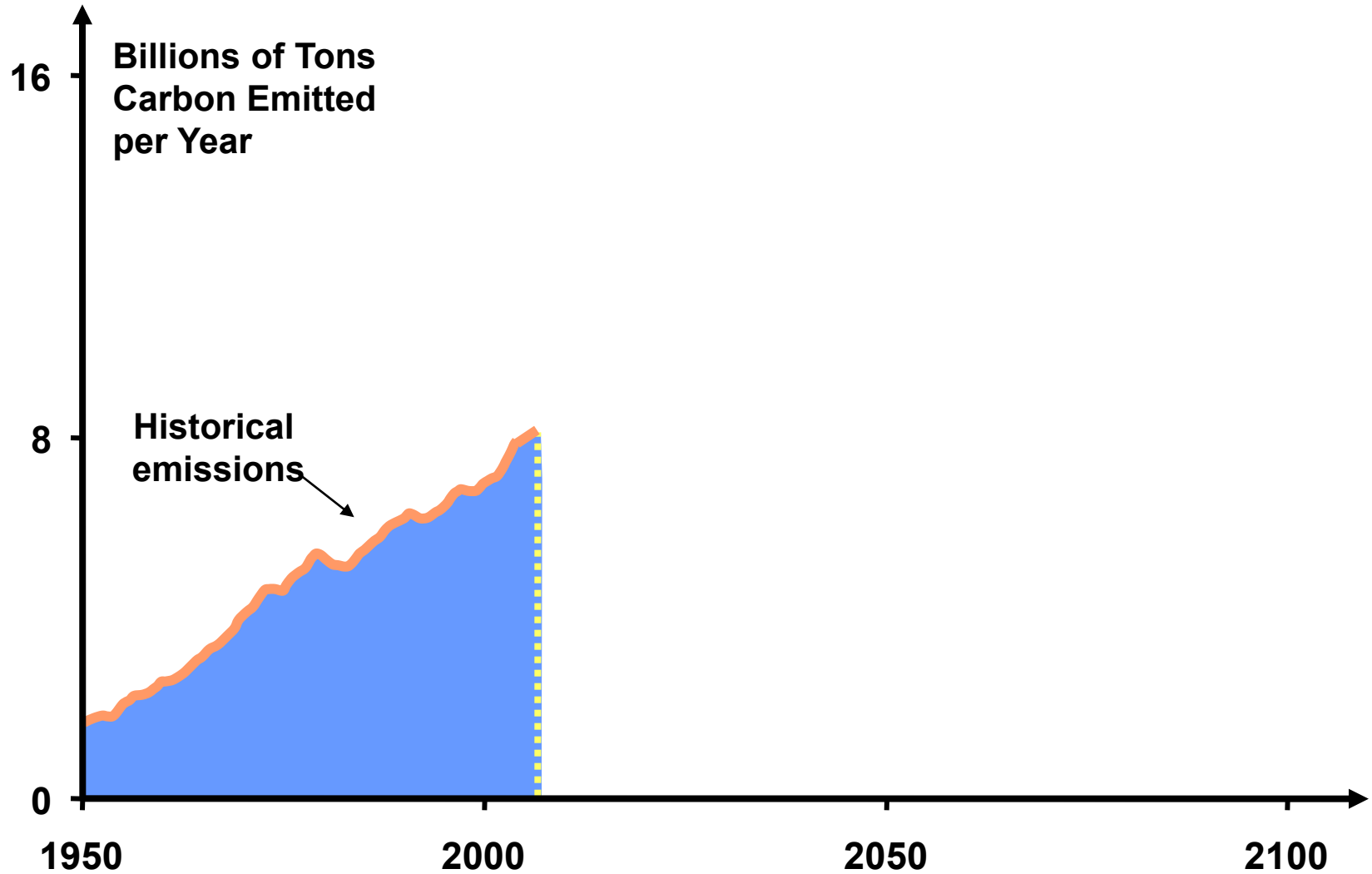
**Global Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from fossil-fuels 1990-2008**

# Climate Change in California

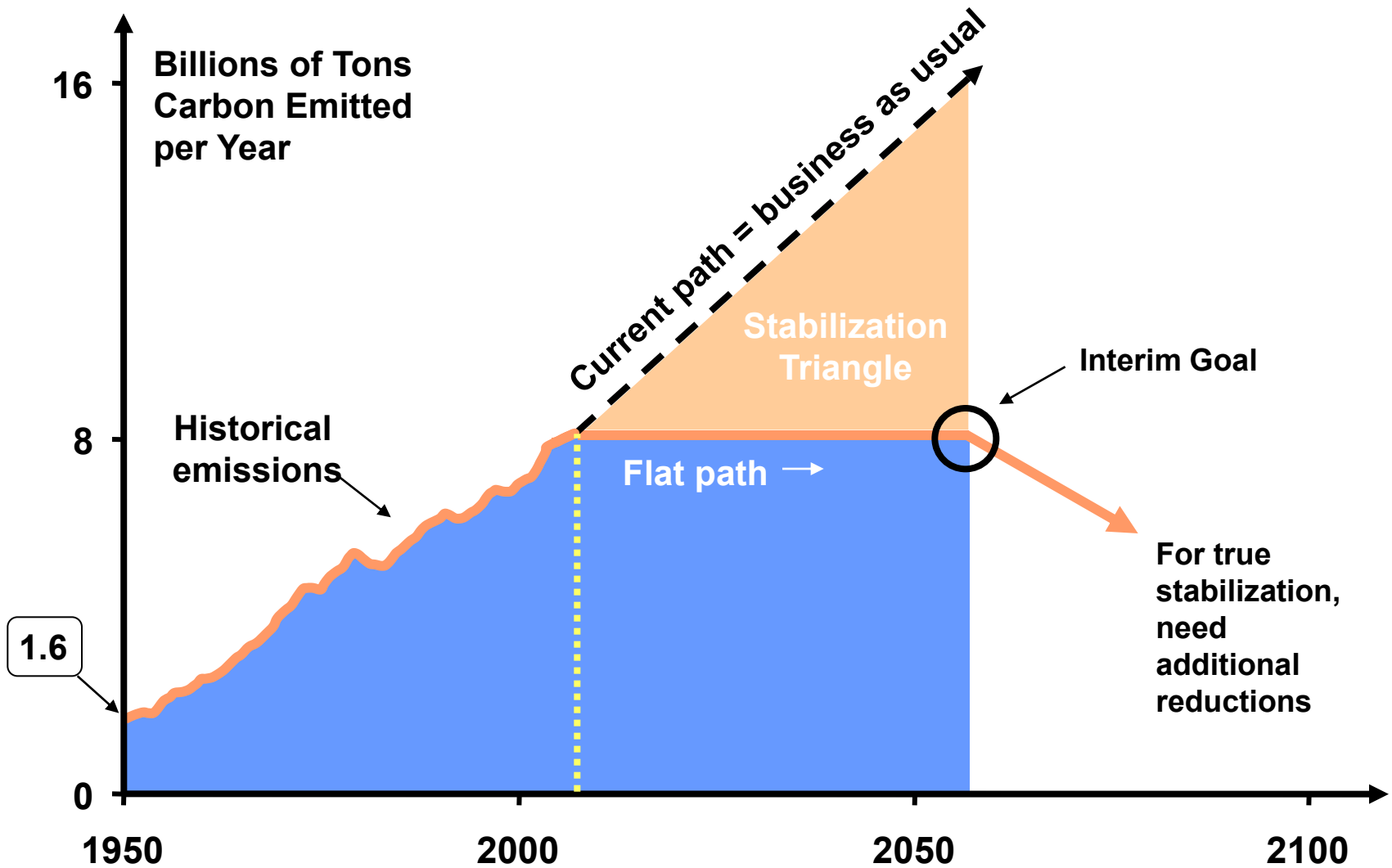
- Reduced snow pack
- More drought
- Impacts to agriculture
- Rising sea level
- Increased risk of wildfire
- More extreme weather events
  - Heat waves
  - Severe storms
  - Floods
- Loss of biodiversity
- Air pollution; human health



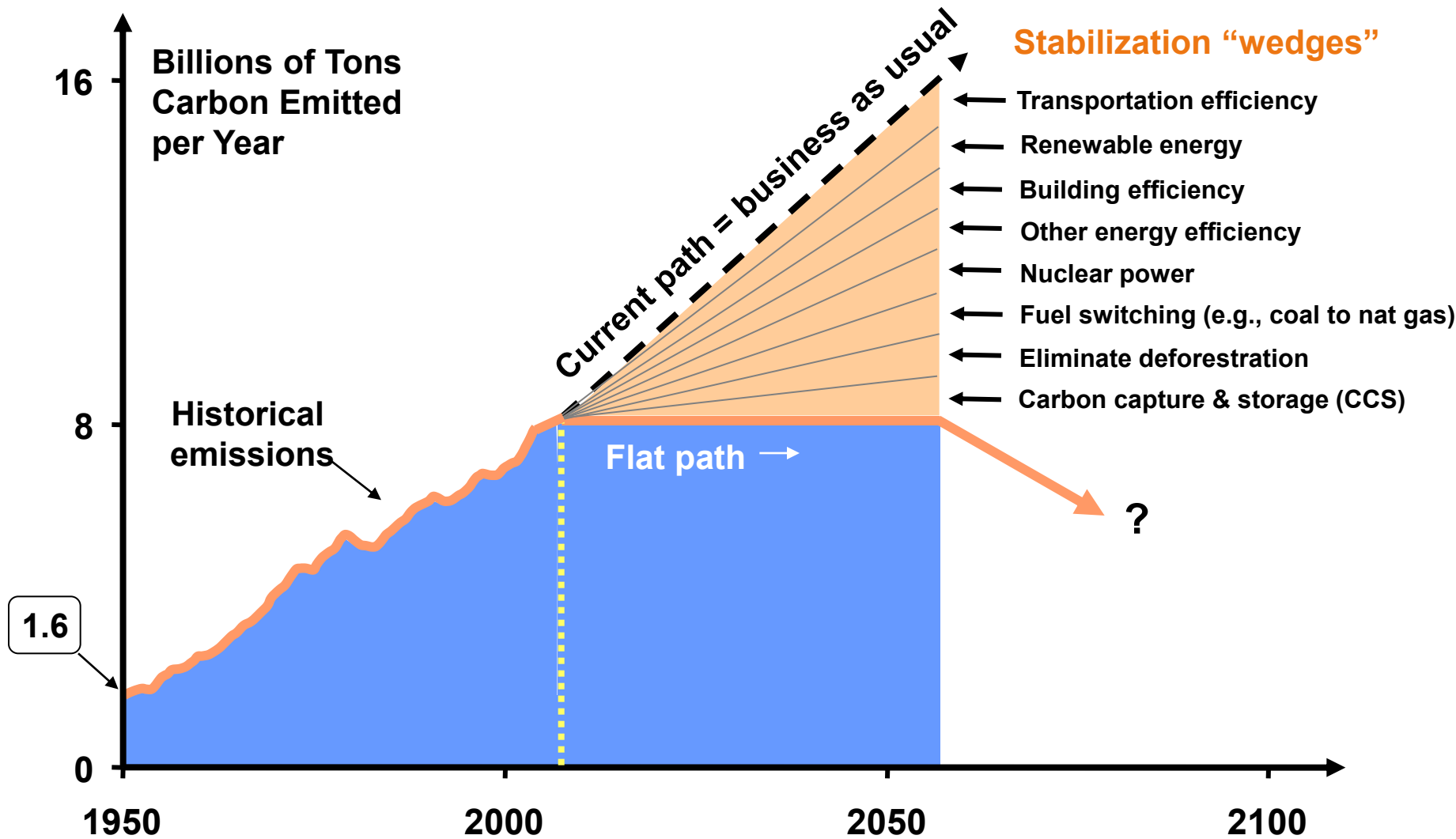
# Climate Stabilization



# Climate Stabilization



# Climate Stabilization



# California: A Global Leader in the Response to Climate Change

AB 32 and related laws:

- Long term target: 80% below 1990 GHG levels by 2050
- Near term target: 1990 levels by 2020
- More energy from renewables (RPS)
- Emissions cap for large emitters
- Vehicle efficiency standards
- Less sprawl and more transit-oriented development (SB 375)
- Green building code (Title 24)
- Statewide planning for adaptation

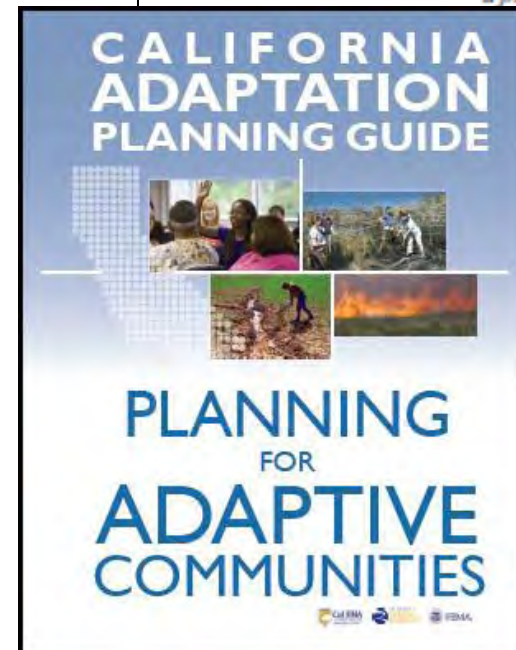


CLIMATE CHANGE  
SCOPING PLAN

*a framework for change*

DECEMBER 2008

*Pursuant to AB 32  
Climate Change  
Act of 2006*



CALIFORNIA  
ADAPTATION  
PLANNING GUIDE

PLANNING  
FOR  
ADAPTIVE  
COMMUNITIES



## Ukiah Climate Action Plan: Provisional Goals

- Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020
- Identify ways to achieve much greater GHG reductions after 2020
- Start preparing now for climate change impacts

# What is Ukiah Already Doing to Address Climate Change?

1. High % of electricity from renewable sources
2. Energy conservation programs
3. Bike- and pedestrian-friendly development
4. Diverting solid waste from landfills
5. Conserving water
6. Developing this Climate Action Plan!

# Steps to Climate Action Planning

1. Establish a GHG emissions baseline (2005) and forecast future emissions
2. Set emission reduction targets (AB32)
3. Develop & quantify GHG reduction measures
4. Prioritize & implement the measures
5. Monitor the results (e.g., 2015, 2020) and adjust the plan

## Ukiah Climate Action Plan: Co-benefits

1. Reduce air pollution
2. Save on energy costs
3. Help develop energy self-reliance
4. Reduce waste of all types
5. Help create green jobs & sustainable economy
6. Increase resilience and protect public health
7. Comply with State regulations

# What's in a GHG Inventory?



## Community-wide sources

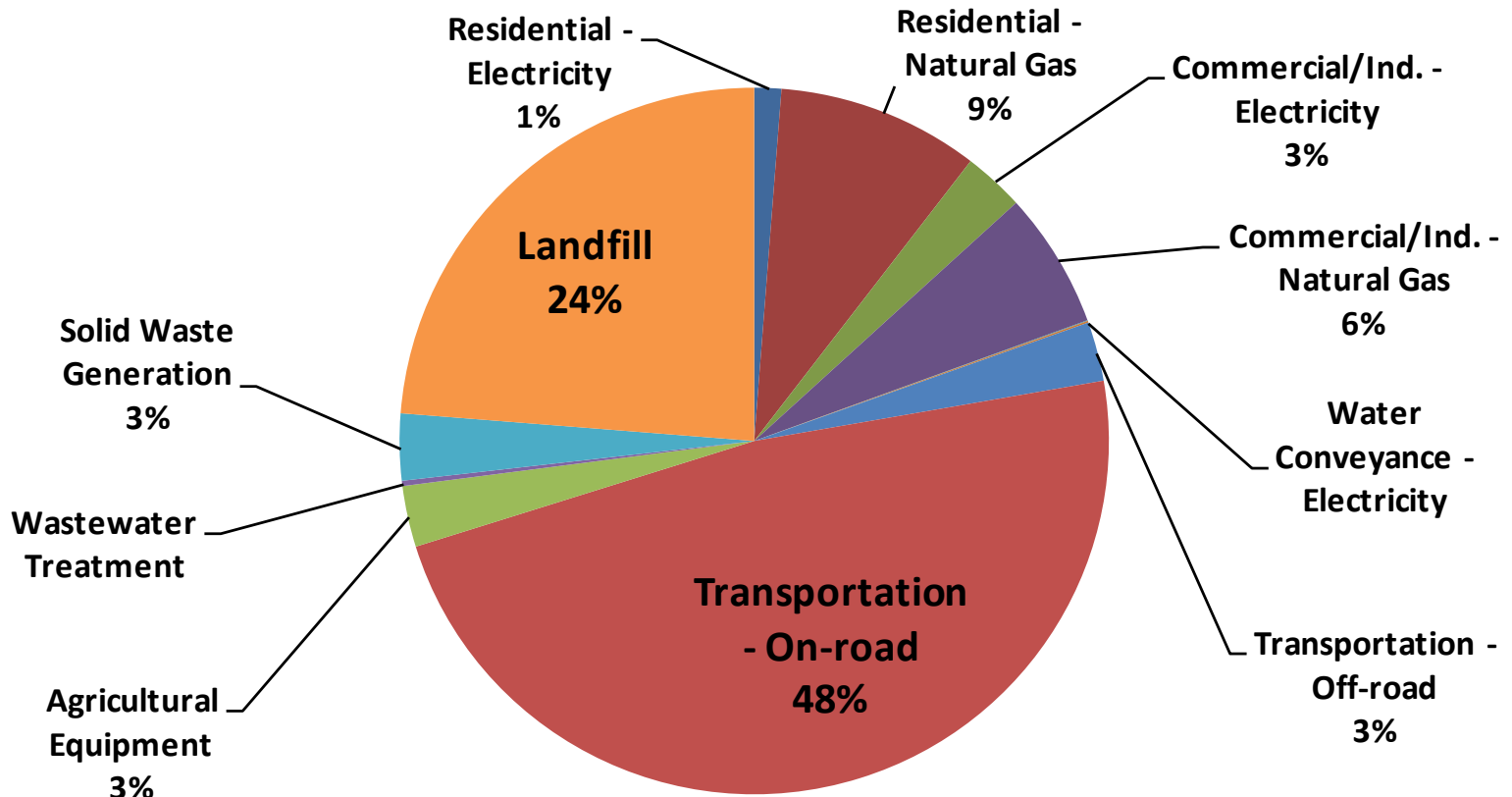
- Energy use
  - electricity, natural gas and industrial fuels
- Vehicle emissions
- Solid waste (landfill methane)
- Water supply (energy)
- Wastewater (energy and process emissions)
- Agriculture (fertilizer and dairy waste)

## Local Government Operations sources

- buildings, fleets, operations

# City of Ukiah Baseline Community GHG Inventory (2005)

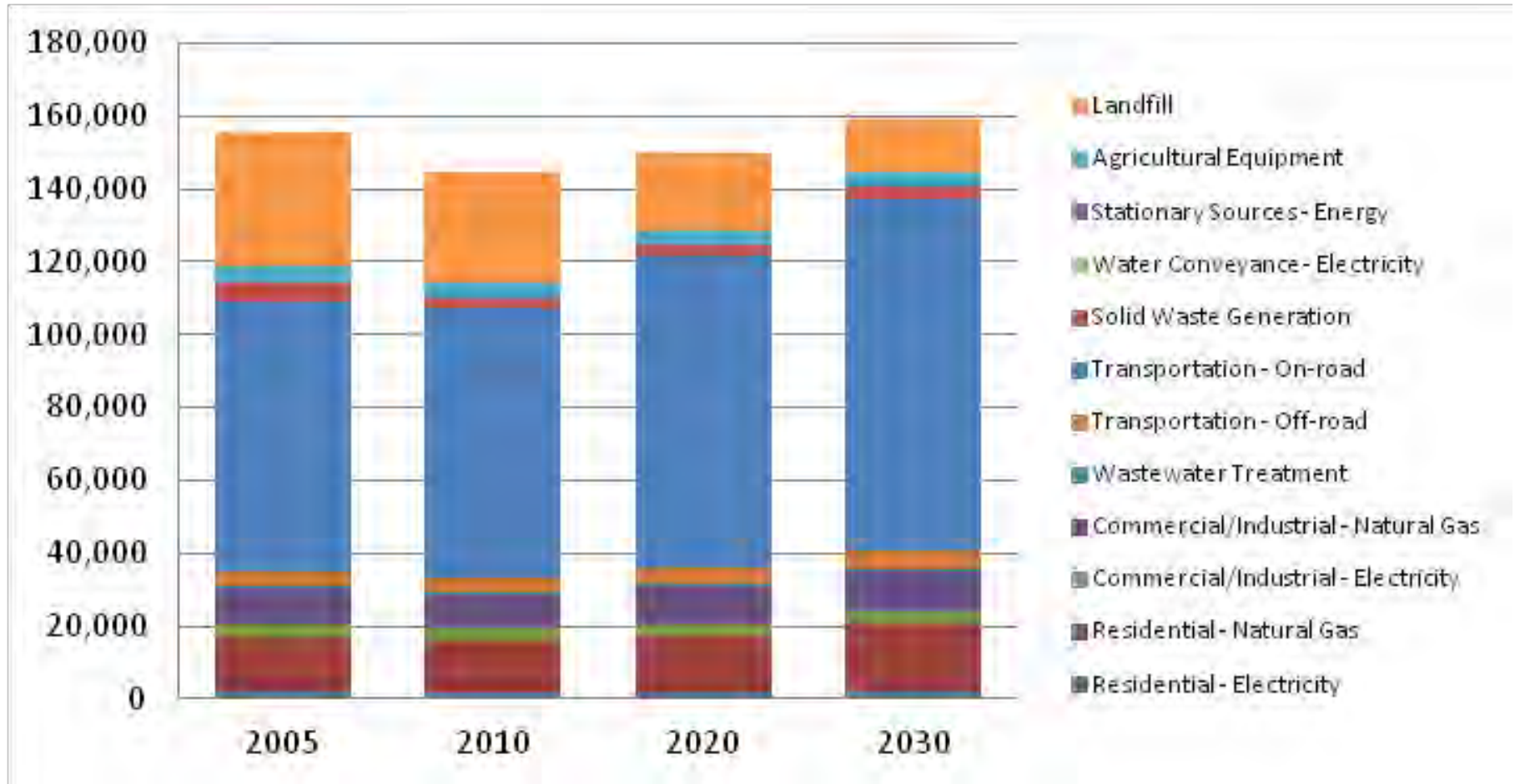
Total = 155,480 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e



# Ukiah GHG Emissions Forecast

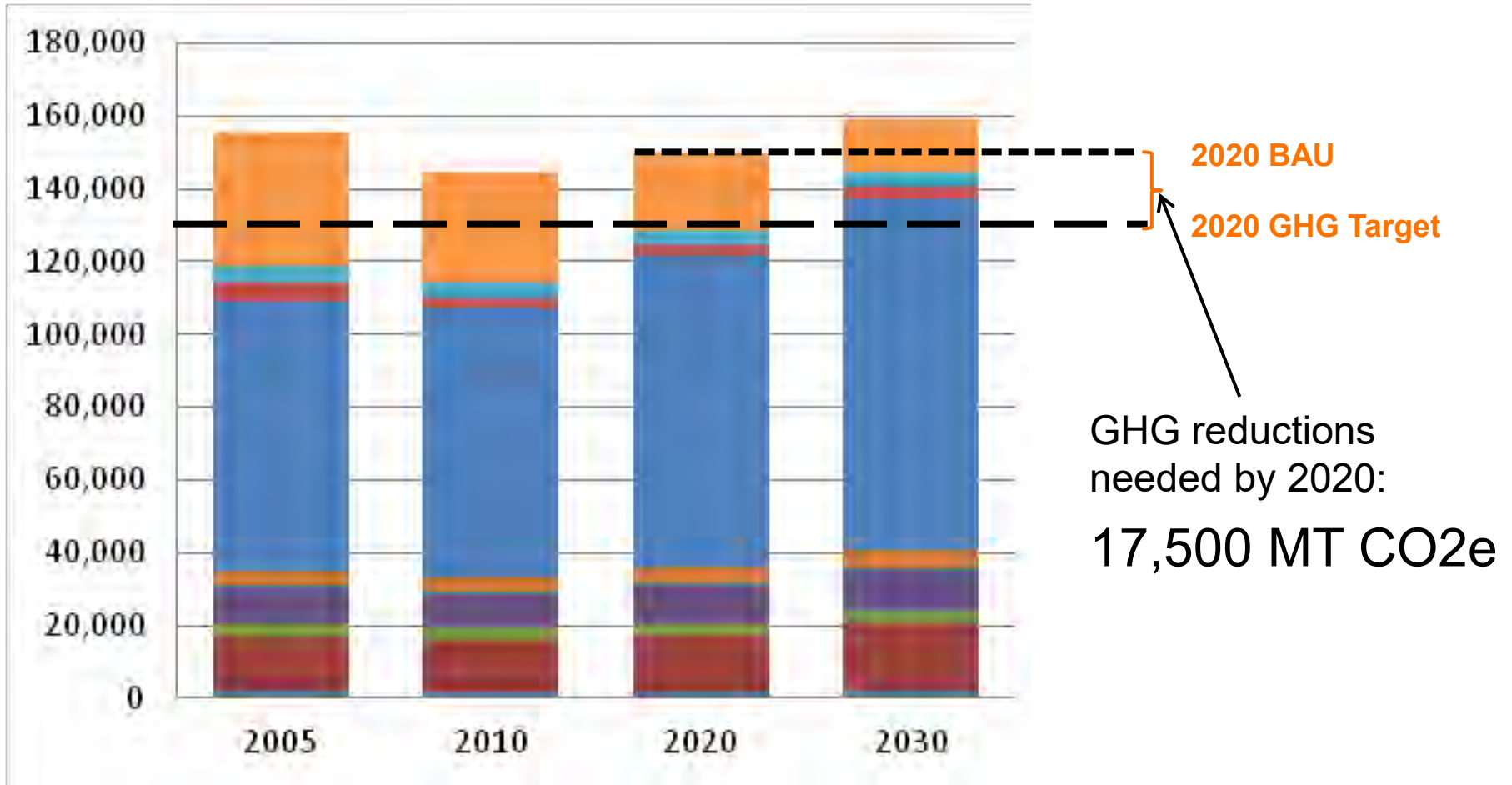
Business-as-usual scenario

MT CO<sub>2</sub>e



# 2020 GHG Target = 1990 levels = 15% below 2005

MT CO<sub>2</sub>e





# Where Will GHG Reductions Come From?

## **Majority from Statewide Measures**

- Vehicle Efficiency Standards (Pavley law)
- RPS (lower carbon energy)
- Title 24 (Green Building)
- Mandatory Commercial Recycling
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard

# Where Will GHG Reductions Come From?

## **The Rest from Local Actions**

Green Building Codes (new buildings & retrofits)

Energy Efficiency (existing buildings)

Land Use and Transportation – Reduce vehicle trips

Water Conservation & Reuse

Solid Waste Diversion

# The CAP Will Target Four GHG Categories

1. Energy
2. Transportation & Land Use
3. Waste
4. Water
5. + Adaptation



# Reducing GHG Emissions: Energy Use in Buildings



- Renewable energy (i.e., solar)
- Existing buildings:
  - Energy audits
  - Efficiency measures: heating, cooling & lighting
  - Smart meters; price signaling; demand response
- New buildings: design standards
  - LEED
  - EnergyStar
  - City/County programs & codes
- Community Choice/Green Power purchase agreements



## Reducing GHG Emissions: Transportation and Land Use

- Increase automobile alternatives
  - Bike, pedestrian friendly
  - Public transport
- Denser development, mixed use
- Infrastructure for alternative vehicles & fuels
- Commute programs/ride share/car share



## Reducing GHG Emissions: Energy Use in Infrastructure



- High efficiency streetlights & traffic signals
- More efficient water & wastewater systems
- Water conservation
- Support local sustainable agriculture



## Reducing GHG Emissions: Waste and Materials



- Recycling
- Divert organics from landfills, composting
- Landfill methane capture for energy
- Green Purchasing/  
Packaging Programs

## Preparing for Climate Change

- **Engage and educate the community** about the expected impacts and need for better planning.
- **Vulnerability analysis** to assess potential local impacts to infrastructure, economy, vulnerable communities and natural systems.
- **Develop Local Adaptation Plan** and/or amend General Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan – objectives, policies, and specific measures
- **Inherent Uncertainty** – *the Climate Action Plan itself must be adaptable*



## 2020 Target is just a start...

***How can we achieve deep cuts in GHGs?***

***Can we avoid chaos and conflict over resources?***

***Can we envision a carbon neutral future?***



- A transformed economy?
- “Progress” redefined?
- Less material consumption?
- Less travel?
- Are we dependent on governments and technology to save us?