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**Sustainability and Climate Policies in California’s Central Valley**

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**Abstract**

In the absence of national policy to address climate change in the United States, many scholars shifted focus to examine state and local level actions (see Hughes et al. 2018, Levesque et al. 2017, Rosenthal et al. 2015, Feiock et al. 2017). Mayors, city managers, and city councils are now central actors in the climate policy domain. Unlike large, liberal cities on the Coasts, less is known about climate policy decisions in the Central Valley of California (Lubell 2009). These cities present an interesting political climate and contain unique geo-physical characteristics as the agricultural center of California. While being one of the most agriculturally productive regions in the country, they rely primarily on low-wage immigrant workers, presenting the prospect for environmental justice considerations (Zuk 2013). This project analyzes content from city plans along with elite surveys and interviews of municipal staff to capture the ways that communities in the Central Valley tap into environmental policymaking. This research specifically asks how and why Central Valley cities choose to act on climate given their unique agricultural viewpoints. This project explores economic development and agricultural framing in the context of climate change in the Central Valley with broader implications for urban and rural governance.

**Framing and Values**

Framing shapes the institutions and cultural practices public officials use (Lakoff 2010, Romsdahl et al. 2019). Frames (or schemas) are shortcuts that create logical and emotional responses when people hear certain topics or phrases by relating these to other ideas with which we are familiar. Political ideology is an example of a frame that contains certain moral values and understanding for people (Lakoff 2010). Increasingly, framing has been viewed as an important way of studying and evaluating climate change policies (Howarth et al. 2021, Meerow et al. 2021). Recent literature has studied frames around climate emergency declarations (Howarth et al. 2021) and the idea of “resilience” in urban climate change policy (Meerow et al. 2021).

Within the urban politics (and urban climate) literature, economic growth and development has been a common frame that scholars have identified (Mossberger et al. 2012, Hughes et al. 2018, Peterson 1981). Similarly, the international sustainability literature has relied on themes of growth and development starting as early as the Bruntland report (1987). Growth in the urban climate context has meant initiatives such as encouraging private investment in “green” municipal activity (Long 2021), encouraging a proliferation of new “green” businesses, increasing technology (Rees 1999), and other ways of relating economic development with city climate initiatives. This framing has at times proven useful for cities to be able to act on climate while maintaining existing political and business connections (Rasmussen 2017, Romsdahl et al. 2019), though scholars have increasingly criticized the “green growth” framework and question whether it is truly compatible with sustainability and climate change goals in the long term (Eastin and Prakash 2011, Bakari et al. 2016, Metze 2018).

Cities have fiscal incentives for certain types of land use planning, which discourages high density and smart-growth neighborhoods which would be more beneficial for sustainability and climate change planning (Lubell et al 2009). Particularly in California, after Proposition 13, which reduced cities’ abilities to use property taxes, they have had to carefully consider sales taxes and user fee models of funding and have faced revenue challenges. Part of the recent focus on economic development in urban policymaking also connects to municipal financial difficulties in the wake of the Great Recession and the municipal bankruptcy crisis that followed which led to financial challenges and increased austerity in city governments (Davidson and Ward 2018). This meant that even before COVID-19 caused major budget concerns for municipalities, budgetary considerations were central in city climate policymaking.

However, while economic development itself is a frame used worldwide, there are deeper value bases in different areas and for different communities which are useful for understanding the types of policies pursued. Instead of excluding localities with more conservative citizens and leadership, it is important to understand their real values and political priorities when it comes to climate change governance (Sanderson et al. 2018, Homsy and Warner 2013, Foss 2018). Scholars have noted that in areas with an agricultural history, there are types of values and framings that are present which can coexist with climate change policy (Sanderson et al. 2018, Niska et al. 2012). For instance, traditional peasant values including a connection to nature, community, and continuity in a farming lifestyle have been observed in agricultural communities worldwide (Guarin et al. 2020, Niska et al. 2012, Mayberry 2005). Farmers and policymakers with these values emphasize a stewardship with the land and a desire for continuation of the lifestyle for generations (Niska et al. 2012). This stewardship view is more commonly found outside of the United States (Homsy and Warner 2013).

An alternative value base centers entrepreneurial farming values such as individual growth, profit, and sustainable development. This frame has also been identified worldwide, particularly in the last 40 years and corresponds more with United States’ competitiveness and economic productivity focused agriculture (Guaran et al. 2020, Niska et al. 2012, Mayberry et al. 2005, Adams 2002, Homsy and Warner 2013). Research has found evidence of this frame within small farms which are shown to connect with sustainability and sustainable agriculture (Guarin et al. 2020). However, while entrepreneurial farming values are closely tied to economic growth and profit, they are not purely reduced to profit maximation, but also involve environmental wellbeing through the lens of profit and autonomy (Niska et al. 2012). This frame does not share the strong emphasis on community of the peasant farming frame, but still can coexist with sustainability.

Not only do we see the connection between values and sustainability among citizens, but also among local government leaders and practitioners who maintain personal and organizational values. Organizational cultures and values in municipal governments can determine how climate risks are assessed, how technologies are utilized, and how power operates (Bremer et al. 2021, Aylett 2013, Schneider and Ingram 1997). Aylett (2013) found that in two large municipalities, a culture of stability led to gradual climate change policymaking while shifts in bureaucratic arrangements led to broader changes in policy. Other case study research has shown that framing by city authorities closely relates to citizen narratives around the historical experience of a city, but that authorities tend to focus more on safeguarding the city and budgetary constraints rather than the more holistic views of citizens (Marschütz et al. 2020). Similarly, research by Foss has shown that public participation can help build meaningful policy while cultural frames of economic development and competition can pose challenges for meaningful climate action (2018). Research by McClintok and colleagues has shown that formal urban governments in North American cities prioritize sustainable development in areas such as urban agriculture, while citizens might sometimes resist these values as they conduct work on the ground (2021). The values and frames of formal actors then give shape to the direction of policy at local levels.

**Framing and the Central Valley**

To get a better sense of how political frames work in unique types of communities, this study examines municipalities in the Central Valley of California, an area known for heavy agricultural production and a political prioritization of agriculture. As in other areas in California, water resources and the impacts of climate change are concerns for policymakers and citizens, but unlike the expectation of the more liberal coasts, the Central Valley has been more politically conservative, sometimes deemed the “Mississippi West” or the “Texas of California” (Rosales 2012) because of its history of supporting “states’ rights” policies. Cities such as Fresno and Bakersfield have reputations for poor air quality and struggles with environmental justice (Zuk 2013). According to Yale public opinion data, Central Valley Counties are above and around the national average for adults who think global warming is caused by human activity (ranges from 58-60% in the valley, national average= 57%) (Yale 2022). In comparison to the rest of California, the Central Valley is slightly below the state average (64%) (Yale 2022).

The Central Valley of California is a rich agricultural region, often deemed the “breadbasket” of the state. It contains a diverse population and a range from large metropolitan areas to small rural farming communities. Its location also creates a high risk for climate impacts such as drought and wildfires (Ayres et al. 2021, Lal et al. 2011). Despite its significance, regions like the Central Valley are often overlooked in the study of urban climate change policy, which has tended to emphasize the actions of cities broadly and highlighted innovative new policy. As such, this study investigates the climate policy framing of municipalities in this important region. While still part of California, and motivated in part by state policies, we anticipate that the region has a particular way of framing climate change that emphasizes modern agricultural values of entrepreneurial individualism and sustainable development (Lubell, Feiock, and Handy 2009, Niska et al. 2012).

This research asks how political frames operate in the Central Valley of California. Specifically, it examines whether these two agricultural frames make their way into the views of city planners and their climate change programs. We anticipate that the narratives and framing in the Central Valley contain useful insight for understanding climate policy framing and challenges in other parts of the country.

**Research Propositions**

1. *Central Valley municipalities will demonstrate entrepreneurial farming values that emphasize economic development priorities in their climate change policymaking rather than farming values that center the community and land or social sustainability.*
2. *Central Valley cities will prioritize budgeting and staff considerations in their climate change policymaking and will be motivated by the state of California.*
3. *Central Valley cities will report challenges as a result of Covid-19, specifically related to economic limitations, further highlighting entrepreneurial values*

**Methods and Case Selection**

The research examines municipal climate plans within these Central Valley cities and also employs surveys and interviews with municipalities to understand how frames translate into policy, particularly around climate change, a highly polarized issue.

Potential cases initially included municipalities in the Central Valley with populations of more than 50,000 people. This provided a sample of 21 municipalities, of which 9 responded to an online survey. Survey questions were replicated from the Integrated City Sustainability Database (Feiock et al. 2014). The survey was distributed via Qualtrics in October of 2021 and concluded in December, 2021. Questions included those about how sustainability and climate change are defined in the city, motivations for acting in this area, questions regarding challenges and barriers to related to climate change policy, and questions about how Covid-19 has impacted policymaking (Appendix A). This research provides an updated look from Lubell et al.’s earlier studies (2009), while specifically focusing on the framing of policies in the Central Valley rather than policy action by itself.

In addition to the survey, city greenhouse gas and climate plans were also examined for insights into the framing used within the plans. Searches for technological, agricultural, economic, social and community framing were all conducted within the documents. This was completed through searches of the documents of keywords including technology, agriculture, economic, equity, community, justice, and variations on these terms.

The final step will be conducting detailed interviews with city administrators for more insight into their organizational culture and framing which guides local climate policy. The plan is to interview individuals from the 9 cities surveyed as well as potentially expanding interviews to county-level officials.

**Results: Entrepreneurial Framing of Sustainability and Climate**

Looking at the results of the surveys, cities reported a high priority for economic development in their understanding of climate change and sustainability policies. All 9 cities noted that they included economic development in their definition of sustainability (Figure 1). In contrast, 7 (77%) cities included environmental protection and climate protection in their definitions and 5 (55%) included social equity components. When asked about results of sustainability and climate change efforts, 5 (55%) of the 9 cities reported that there is an improved image of the city among citizens and businesses and 4 cities reported monetary savings. This confirms expectations that municipalities would initially frame sustainability and climate in economic development terms.

Looking at individual climate plans for the cities, there were several mentions of economic and technology considerations. For instance, one plan used the word economic 20 times and begins the document by noting the priority to “keep dollars in the local economy” while “creating jobs” (Fresno). The same plan noted the importance of “creating innovative technology and new businesses enterprises” with regards to solar power. One of the main priorities noted by this city in their climate action plan was “Green Enterprises and Economic Development”. These ideas are consistent with the entrepreneurial agriculture framing. Another municipality again used economic phrasing several times (15) throughout the document as well as focusing on technological innovations (Madera). This plan also noted that climate change has the potential to negatively impact agricultural production and suggested that this is a high priority concern for them within the Valley.

Another city’s climate action plan mentioned the impacts of climate change on the city’s “health, water, agriculture, ecosystems, and, future prosperity” (Visalia). This plan explicitly noted the connection between agriculture in the valley and economic productivity. Similarly, the plan described the importance of technological innovations in areas such as irrigation, electric vehicles, and lighting. The plans confirmed economic development and technological framing by the cities, as well as an incorporation of agricultural considerations expected for this region.

**Priorities for Action**

In terms of budgeting, four cities in the sample reported having a dedicated budget for climate change work at any time. Similarly, four cities had or were in the process of assigning individuals the responsibility of managing city climate protection activities. When asked about the specific barriers and challenges Central Valley municipalities face regarding climate change policies, lack of funding and staff were two of the most frequently noted (Figure 2). Eight of the nine cities surveyed noted that funding and staff were at least a significant barrier for them (89%). This contrasts with other reported barriers such as a lack of information, of which 5 cities reported it is only of limited significance (66%). A lack of leadership from elected officials was also noted as a significant barrier by 5 cities (55%). This confirms the expectation that budgetary and staff considerations would rank highly as areas of consideration for these cities and how they consider climate action.

Half of the municipalities noted that their initial choice to become involved in climate protection policy was a result of requirements from the state legislature. One city plan also noted the importance of the range of funding from State and federal agencies that they need to pursue climate policies (Fresno). This suggests a reliance on practical considerations about state support and resources.

In contrast to the motivation from the state, cities did not report much public cooperation (6 cities reported minimal or some cooperation with the public). City plans noted the potential for improved effectiveness with community involvement, but mostly in terms of outreach and informing citizens of plans. Of potential citizen involvement activities on the survey, most cities selected information provision activities, community visioning, and citizen boards and commissions (6 cities). A smaller number of cities used surveys or consensus-building (1 city for each), or other community involvement strategies.

Within the plans, cities did not mention ideas like neighbors, families, lifestyles, or history that we might expect to see if the traditional peasant framing were present. Plans did include mention of neighborhood planning related to land use in some cases, but as real-estate priorities rather than community-based usage. In contrast, words such as business, sustainability, and “green” were used frequently and directly related to agriculture. Similarly, evidence was lacking of social sustainability. Though some cities mentioned social sustainability and environmental justice in their climate plans (Fresno, Visalia, Chico), they did not discuss clear plans or implementation in the same detail as they did for technological and economic innovation.

**Covid-19 and Climate Policy**

As a result of Covid-19, Central Valley municipalities primarily reported challenges related to budgeting, as anticipated (6 cities, 67%, Figure 3). However, they also reported that community input and collaboration with other city departments and officials were more challenging as a result of the pandemic (5 cities, 55%, and 3 cities, 33%).

One municipality noted in the open-ended portion of the survey that: “living in a more rural and generally more conservative county/city, covid and the economic crisis greatly affected our sustainability work”. Others similarly noted that Covid-19 and accompanying economic situation has stopped their work related to sustainability and climate change. Another city said regarding Covid-19 and racial justice uprisings that they are seeing a

Greater focus and attention to equity and environmental justice. Also significant focus of City resource investment to the local economy and strong sensitivity and economic priorities to protect and strengthen local business out of the pandemic**.**

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Central Valley municipalities showcase a distinctive type of framing which highlights the values of entrepreneurial farming. Exploring this type of framing and how cities use and understand it could be beneficial for understanding municipal climate action across the country in other agricultural regions. We see this in the way they define their terms, the language they use in their climate plans, and the priorities they list for climate action. Though this work is preliminary, it begins to highlight the way that these municipalities prioritize technology and economic innovation in their plans. In surveys, they mostly report priorities and concerns about the budget, particularly in the wake of Covid-19.

While these cities do try to involve citizens, and report increased challenges with involving citizens because of Covid-19, they mainly prioritize economic considerations and mostly engage citizens in the form of explaining ideas and providing information rather than asking for citizen input. The exception was that several cities reported using community visioning workshops; however, more work needs to be done to understand exactly what these cities mean by community visioning workshops and how they are conducted.

Central Valley municipalities reported a motivation to initially act on climate change because of state priorities and a desire for state funding remains important to these cities. At the same time, they have taken their own path in how they frame and conduct this work. Future research should continue to understand the specific motivations and framing of different regions throughout the United States.

Municipalities in the Central Valley are in a unique position in California and the country. They represent a heavily agricultural area, which reflects agricultural values and priorities. At the same time, they are still a part of California and operate within the larger state context. This brief examination of these municipalities demonstrates that they use aspects of entrepreneurial agricultural framing in their climate change policymaking.

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APPENDIX A:

Municipal Sustainability and Climate Change Survey

Q1 I have read the consent form and agree to participate in the following survey.

* I consent to participate (1)

Q2 Name of your municipality

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Q3 Your current position (check one)

* City Manager, or Chief Executive Officer, or Chief Administration Officer (1)
* Planning Director (2)
* Sustainability Manager (3)
* Other (Please state your position) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q4 Which form of government best describes your municipality? (Select the best answer)

* Council-Manager (1)
* Mayor-Council (2)
* Representative Town Meeting (3)
* Commission (4)
* Other (please list) (5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q5 Does your city have a chief administrative officer (CAO) or city manager? (Check one)

* We have a CAO/city manager (1)
* We do not have a CAO/city manager (2)
* Don't know (3)

Q6 In recent history, which political party do the majority of elected officials identify with in your municipality? (Select the best answer)

* Republican (1)
* Democratic (2)
* All elected officials are nonpartisan (4)
* Other (Please list) (3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q7 How much revenue does your city have from its own sources? (Please enter your best estimate)

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The following questions will specifically ask about sustainability in your city. Please consider sustainability in your responses.

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Q8   
What components are included within your city's definition of or approach to sustainability? (select all that apply)

* Environmental protection (1)
* Energy (2)
* Climate protection (3)
* Economic growth (4)
* Social equity (5)
* Public health (6)
* Racial and economic justice (11)
* Our city has not defined sustainability (7)
* Other (please specify) (8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Don't Know (10)

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Q9  Does your city have a dedicated budget for sustainability work?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* Don't Know (3)

Q10 Which scenario best describes staffing for sustainability activities in your city? (Please check the response that best applies)

* No dedicated staffing for sustainability (1)
* Dedicated staff based in the city manager office or equivalent (2)
* Dedicated staff based in the mayor or city council office (3)

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Q11 To what extent do the various departments in your city coordinate activities with one another on the following issues? (Select the best answer; 1= very low coordination, 3= moderate coordination, 5= very high coordination)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Very low coordination (1) (1) | Low coordination (2) (2) | Moderate coordination (3) (3) | High coordination (4) (4) | Very high coordination (5) (5) |
| Economic Development (6) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Land Use and Permitting (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Environmental Protection (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Energy/Climate Protection (4) |  |  |  |  |  |

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Q12 Which entities support sustainability initiatives in your city? (check all that apply)

* The Mayor’s office (1)
* The City Manager’s office (2)
* Most department heads in the city (3)
* Most managers in the city (4)
* Most supervisors in the city (5)
* Most employees in the city (6)
* Most legislators in the city (7)
* Most citizens of the city (8)
* Local business leaders of the city (9)
* Agencies in other governments (10)
* City staff capable of using the green technology (11)
* Universities or research communities specialized in green technologies or strategies (12)
* Private consultants specialized in green technologies or strategies (13)
* Professional institutions of green initiatives such as USGBC and ICLEI (14)
* Others. Please specify: (15) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Q13 To practice social sustainability, our city has...(check all that apply)

* Offered incentives for construction of green affordable housing (1)
* Offered incentives for location efficient affordable housing (2)
* Offered orientation classes for residents of affordable housing (3)
* Promoted and accommodated bicycle use (e.g., bike lanes) (4)
* Installed appropriate bicycle security at public amenities (5)
* Arranged carpool/vanpool assistance (6)
* Promoted and educated the public on water conservation (7)
* Monitored water quality (8)
* Improved water infrastructure in the municipality (9)
* Maintained organic community gardens (10)
* Offered education on organic farming (11)
* Worked to address issues with environmental justice by seeking community feedback (13)
* Taken steps to address public health issues like air and water quality problems (14)
* Included cultural education in sustainability initiatives (16)
* Included black and indigenous community leaders in decision-making (15)
* Included poor and minority neighborhoods in resilience planning (17)
* Other: (12) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Q14 To encourage citizens’ involvement in sustainability initiatives, our city has used… (check all that apply)

* Community visioning workshops (1)
* Consensus building workshops (2)
* Citizen surveys (3)
* Conflict resolution techniques and mediation roundtable discussions (4)
* Information provision activities (e.g., newspaper articles, web-based announcements) (5)
* Citizen boards and commissions (6)
* Local neighborhood organizations (7)
* Chambers of commerce (8)
* Other citizen initiatives (please explain) (9) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* We do not use citizen involvement in this area (10)

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Q15 How significant have the following barriers been in deterring your city's work on sustainability? (Select the best answer on the scale from 1-5, where 1= Not Significant; 3 = Significant, and 5= Extremely Significant)

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|  | Not significant (1) (1) | Limited significance (2) (2) | Significant (3) (3) | Very Significant (4) (4) | Extremely Significant (5) (5) |
| Lack of community support and awareness (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of leadership or support from elected officials (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of funding (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of staff capacity (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of information needed to get started (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of support from private sector (6) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of support from nonprofit sector (7) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Opposition from community based groups or organizations (8) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other: (9) |  |  |  |  |  |

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Q16 The sustainability efforts in our city have resulted in…(check all that apply)

* Monetary savings (1)
* More business relocating to our city (2)
* Increased economic activities (3)
* A transformed local economy with significantly more green businesses (4)
* Saving in natural resources such as water, forest, and open space (5)
* Reduction in pollution (water, air, etc) (6)
* Improvement of the quality of life for citizens (7)
* Increase in awareness of city officials and employees on the need of sustainability (8)
* Increase in public awareness on the need of sustainability (9)
* Improved image of our city among citizens and businesses (10)
* Other sustainability benefits (please specify) (11) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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The following questions will ask specifically about climate change in your city. Please specificallly consider climate change in your responses.

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Q17   In your view is climate change a part of your overall sustainability strategy or is it a separate initiative?

* A part of the sustainability strategy (1)
* A separate initiative (2)
* Climate change is not something we consider (3)
* Other (Please describe) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If In your view is climate change a part of your overall sustainability strategy or is it a separat... = A separate initiative

Q18 Which scenario best describes staffing for climate change activities in your city? (Please check the response that best applies)

* No dedicated staffing for climate change (1)
* Dedicated staff based in the city manager office or equivalent (2)
* Dedicated staff based in the mayor or city council office (3)

Display This Question:

If In your view is climate change a part of your overall sustainability strategy or is it a separat... = A part of the sustainability strategy

Q18 Which scenario best describes staffing for climate change activities in your city? (Please check the response that best applies)

* No dedicated staffing for climate change (1)
* Dedicated staff based in the city manager office or equivalent (2)
* Dedicated staff based in the mayor or city council office (3)
* Dedicated staff as part of sustainability position (4)

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Q19  Please indicate if your city has done any of the following (Please select only one answer for each: Yes, No, or In-Progress)

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|  | Please check one of the following: | | |
|  | Yes (1) | No (2) | In-Progress (3) |
| Conducted an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions from city government operations (1) |  |  |  |
| Developed a Climate Action Plan to reduce emissions from city government operations (2) |  |  |  |
| Conducted an inventory of community-wide greenhouse gas emissions (3) |  |  |  |
| Developed a Climate Action Plan to reduce community-wide emissions (4) |  |  |  |
| Formally adopted a local Climate Action Plan (5) |  |  |  |
| Assigned a specific individual or group of individuals the responsibility to manage city climate protection activities (6) |  |  |  |
| Designated money in the city budget to fund climate protection activities (7) |  |  |  |
| Formally engaged with the public or other community stakeholders to develop climate strategies and/or priorities (8) |  |  |  |

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| Q20 To what extent does your city work cooperatively on energy or climate issues with the following organizations? (Select the best answer on a scale from 1-5, where 1= Not at all; 3=Somewhat; 5= To a Great Extent) | Not At All (1) (1) | 2 (2) | Somewhat (3) (3) | 4 (4) | To a Great Extent (5) (5) |
| Other cities within your county (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other cities within your region or metro area (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| County officials (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Public (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Utility companies (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Universities (6) |  |  |  |  |  |
| State agencies (7) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Federal agencies other than Department of Energy (8) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Regional organizations or partnerships (9) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Community (10) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hospitals/public healthcare providers (11) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Community-based organizations (12) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other: (13) |  |  |  |  |  |

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21 Has your city ever participated in any of the following municipal climate change networks/initiatives? (Check all that apply)

* International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) (1)
* Climate Mayors (2)
* Sierra Club's "Ready for 100" (4)
* C40 Cities (6)
* Zero Cities Project (5)
* Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (7)
* 100 Resilient Cities/Global Resilient Cities Network (10)
* United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) (8)
* STAR Communities (9)
* Other (Please list) (3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Q22 Would you identify any of the categories of specific individuals below as actively encouraging the city to become involved in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? (check all that apply)

* Key Members of the Public (2)
* Elected Official(s) (3)
* Member(s) of city staff (4)
* Other (Please list) (5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* None (1)

Display This Question:

If In your view is climate change a part of your overall sustainability strategy or is it a separat... = A separate initiative

Q23 To encourage citizens’ involvement in climate change initiatives, our city has used… (check all that apply)

* Community visioning workshops (1)
* Consensus building workshops (2)
* Citizen surveys (3)
* Conflict resolution techniques and mediation roundtable discussions (4)
* Information provision activities (e.g., newspaper articles, web-based announcements) (5)
* Citizen boards and commissions (6)
* Local neighborhood organizations (7)
* Chambers of commerce (8)
* Other citizen initiatives (please explain) (9) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* We do not use citizen involvement in this area (10)

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Q24 Which of the following was the single most important motivation for your city’s original decision to become involved with greenhouse gas reduction and/or climate protection efforts? (Please select only the best answer)

* Reducing the risk of weather-related disasters (flooding, drought, storms, etc.) affecting your community (1)
* Interest group or citizen demands (2)
* The preferences and priorities of particular city official(s) (3)
* The influence of neighboring or “peer” cities involved in climate protection (4)
* Requirements or legislation from your state government (5)
* Assisting in the global effort to minimize world-wide climate change (6)
* Developing a reputation as a “green city” in order to attract economic investment (7)
* Increasing your city’s ability to attract grants and external funding (8)
* Improving local air quality (9)
* Reducing local traffic congestion (10)
* Achieving energy and cost savings for the city government (11)
* Other (Please Specify) (12) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Display This Question:If In your view is climate change a part of your overall sustainability strategy or is it a separat... = A separate initiativeQ25 How significant have the following barriers been in deterring your city's work on climate change? Select the best answer on the scale from 1-5, where 1= Not Significant; 3 = Significant, and 5= Extremely Significant) | Not significant (1) (1) | Limited significance (2) (2) | Significant (3) (3) | Very Significant (4) (4) | Extremely Significant (5) (5) |
| Lack of community support and awareness (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of leadership or support from elected officials (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of funding (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of staff capacity (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of information needed to get started (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of support from private sector (6) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of support from nonprofit sector (7) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Opposition from community based groups or organizations (8) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lack of support from state government (10) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other: (Please list other barrier) (9) |  |  |  |  |  |

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Q26 In your opinion, does your city work independently from the state and federal government in terms of climate change policies? (Please select the scenario that best describes your city)

* We work independently from all other government entities (1)
* We work in conjunction with state/federal actions on climate policy (2)
* We work independently from state/federal actions, but in conjunction with other municipalities (3)
* Other (Please describe) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q27 In your opinion, does your city have an easier or more difficult time adopting and implementing climate change policies than other municipalities? (Please select the scenario that best describes your city)

* We have an easier time adopting and implementing climate change policies than other cities (1)
* We have a more difficult time adopting and implementing climate change policies than other cities (2)
* We have the same difficulty as other cities (3)
* Other (please describe) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q28 In your opinion, has your city's location within the Western region helped your city implement climate change policies? (Please select the best answer)

* Being part of the Western region has helped us implement climate policies (1)
* Being part of the Western region has made it more difficult to implement climate policies (2)
* Being part of the Western region has had no impact on our implementation of climate policies (3)
* Other (please explain) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Q29 Finally, in consideration of current circumstances, please share your experiences (both positive and negative) with how the public health crisis (COVID-19), economic impacts (recession), and/or racial justice uprisings may have impacted your climate or sustainability work.

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Q30 How significant have the following circumstances been in altering your city's climate change plans in 2020 and beyond? Select the best answer on the scale from 1-5, where 1= Not Significant; 3 = Significant, and 5= Extremely Significant)

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|  | Click to write Column 1 | | | | |
|  | Not Signficant 1 (1) | Limited Significance 2 (2) | Significant 3 (3) | Very Significant 4 (4) | Extremely Significant 5 (5) |
| COVID-19 (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Economic impacts from the 2020 recession (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Racial justice uprisings (3) |  |  |  |  |  |

Q31 Which areas of your work have been most impacted by the circumstances listed above (COVID-19, economic impacts, racial justice uprisings)? (Please select all that apply)

* Staffing (1)
* Budget (2)
* Community input (3)
* City plans (4)
* Collaboration with other city departments and officials (8)
* Collaboration with neighboring cities (5)
* Collaboration with state actors (6)
* Other (please explain) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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