



Office of the Mayor
Tom Bates
Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

January 17, 2006

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Tom Bates

Subject: Resolution in Support of the “Plug-In Berkeley” Campaign

RECOMMENDATION

That the Berkeley City Council adopt a resolution which 1) supports the effort to create a viable market for “plug-in” hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs); 2) supports policy initiatives at all levels of government that encourage the use of PHEVs; 3) encourages the City to strongly consider the purchase of PHEVs when they become available; and 4) directs the City Manager to report to the Plug-In Hybrid campaign the possible number of PHEVs the City may be interested in purchasing in the future.

BACKGROUND

As of September 2005 the national average gasoline price was \$3.00/gallon and transportation accounted for 30% of total California climate change emissions. The Plug-In Partners National Campaign spearheaded by the City of Austin, Texas seeks to offer a more cost-effective and cleaner alternative to gasoline powered vehicles through the use of Plug-In Hybrid Vehicles (PHEVs). PHEVs are hybrid gasoline/electric vehicles that can also be plugged in to an outlet to recharge the vehicle’s electric battery. The campaign is a grass-roots effort to convince manufacturers that there is a market for PHEVs and to encourage individuals, governments and other organizations that operate fleets of vehicles to purchase PHEVs.

According to the Plug-In Hybrid Municipal Plan, PHEVs use the same technology as popular hybrid vehicles but are outfitted with larger batteries that can be recharged using a standard home outlet. With a battery pack providing a 40-mile electric range, PHEVs driven in the all-electric mode could cover 60% of the total annual miles traveled by the average U.S. driver. In addition to significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, driving in the all-electric mode supported by PHEVs is also much cheaper. An “electric” gallon of gas will cost between 70 and 80 cents at

prevailing electric rates, less than one third the cost of a gallon of gasoline. Although California's energy supply has emerged as a major issue in the last several years, PHEVs would not likely add to the existing burden on our energy infrastructure. Over 40% of the generating capacity of the U.S. sits idle or operates at reduced load overnight, the time when most PHEVs would be recharged.

The campaign hopes to send a clear message to automakers that the general public supports, and would consider purchasing, PHEVs through a petition drive in which the signer indicates that they would strongly consider purchasing a PHEV at a later date. Finally, the campaign hopes to create an organizational base of support for PHEVs through garnering endorsements from state and local governments as well as major consumer groups and other interested organizations. This council resolution would signal the City of Berkeley's support of this campaign.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONTACT PERSON

Tom Bates, Mayor (510) 981-7100

REFERENCES

Plug-In Partners National PHEV Initiative. < <http://www.pluginpartners.org>>, September 2005.

Reducing Climate Change Emissions From Motor Vehicles. California Air Resources Board.
<<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/factsheets/ccfactsheet.pdf>>

**RESOLUTION NO. ##,### - N.S.IN SUPPORT OF THE “PLUG-IN BERKELEY”
CAMPAIGN**

WHEREAS, the over-reliance of America on foreign oil has become a growing and serious threat to the economic vitality and national security interests of the United States; and

WHEREAS, automobile emissions are a major contributing factor to global warming and to smog in our cities, which threaten the health of our citizens and the sustainability of our planet; and

WHEREAS, the imbalance between gasoline resources and worldwide demand is escalating gasoline prices at an alarming rate and to levels that overburden commerce, hurt economic growth and cause serious hardship; and

WHEREAS, the technology exists today to build a flexible-fuel plug-in hybrid electric automobile that could reduce oil imports, fuel costs to our citizens and our economy and air emissions by dramatic margins; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is partnering with Austin and others of the nation’s largest cities, to urge automakers to mass produce plug-in hybrid vehicles for the substantial economical, environmental and strategic reasons outlined; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is officially launching “Plug-In Berkeley,” a community-wide campaign to promote the mass production of plug-in hybrid vehicles.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Berkeley City Council strongly supports the effort to create a viable market for “plug-in” hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley makes a commitment to support local, state and federal policies that will promote flexible-fuel plug-in hybrid vehicles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City will strongly consider the purchase of PHEVs when they become available; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager will report to the Plug-In Hybrid campaign the possible number of PHEVs the City may be interested in purchasing at some point in the future.