

STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 18, 2023

TO: City Council

FROM: Sherri Metzger, Director, Community Development & Sustainability
Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, Staff Liaison to the Natural Resources Commission

SUBJECT: Earth Day Proclamation and 2023 Environmental Recognition Awards

Recommendations

1. Receive an informational staff report on the Earth Day Proclamation.
2. Present Proclamation Recognizing April 22 as Earth Day 2023.
3. Present Proclamations to the 2023 Environmental Recognition awardees and (5) and the Environmental Legacy awardee.

Fiscal Impact

Incidental award and celebration costs are included in the FY 22-23 Natural Resources Commission (NRC) program budget.

Background

Earth Day is April 22, 2023. Globally, more than a billion people celebrate Earth Day to protect the planet from pollution, deforestation, health and safety impacts and other effects of climate change. As noted on the Earth Day website, <https://www.earthday.org/>, “This is the moment to change it all. Now is the time for the unstoppable courage to preserve and protect our health, our families, and our livelihoods. We need to **act (boldly), innovate (broadly), and implement (equitably)**. Businesses, governments, and citizens — everyone accounted for, and everyone accountable.”

The City of Davis has completed the 2020-2040 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) process in order to chart an ambitious, actionable, measurable and equitable course for the community’s path to carbon neutrality by 2040. The adoption of the CAAP environmental review and final report is on tonight’s City Council agenda. If approved tonight, this marks a fitting local action in recognition of Davis’s commitment to addressing climate change in convergence with over fifty years, since 1970, of celebrating Earth Day worldwide to celebrate the beauty of our planet.

2023 Environmental Recognition Awards (ERA)

The Staff Report with background on the Environmental Recognition Award winners was provided at the April 4, 2023 City Council meeting. The following awardees will receive Proclamations tonight, followed by a brief City Council recess to attend the ERA reception.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEGACY AWARD: Explorit Science Center

This year, the Explorit Science Center is receiving the Environmental Legacy Award following their 40th anniversary in 2022. Explorit’s vision is to ignite and foster curiosity about science and nature through inquiry and discovery by providing opportunities for hands-on science exploration. Encouraging environmental awareness through science education is a crucial component of sustainability and youth engagement. Davis has been fortunate to have the Explorit Science Center located in the community to provide science and environmental programming for generations.

Explorit is also active regionally, as it provides off and onsite programs to schools in 18 Northern California counties, and has reached 30,000 students last year alone. As stated by Explorit, “Nothing today is more important than the future of our environment. Teaching our youth how to be good stewards of our earth is a top priority at Explorit.”

INDIVIDUAL/GROUP: Cathie Bullis; Davis Picks it Up

The work of Cathie Bullis epitomizes the intention of recognizing individuals for their environmental actions through these awards. Just one year ago, Cathie Bullis started Davis Picks It Up (DPIU) which has now grown to more than 300 members, and has collected more than 4 tons of trash. This is a tangible, hands-on action, highlighting one individual’s energy and initiative, inspiring other individuals, church groups, service clubs and student organizations to participate, and helping create a clean environment in Davis.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Rancho Yolo

Rancho Yolo is a 200-plus unit, 400-resident senior community in Davis with a strong sense of “neighborliness” and a commitment to sustainable living and resilience. Residents and management have consistently shown their eco-friendly approach by connecting with local environmental organizations and businesses, providing on-line discussions, offering seminars and classes, promoting ride-sharing, resident food assistance, an intra-community help line and other efforts. Management recently invested in a community solar energy system and advanced water conservation by reducing lawn areas and upgrading irrigation systems. Residents mulch and compost, reduce waste by upcycling and recycling and promote safety by having established the Rancho Yolo Community for Emergency Response (RYC4ER). Rancho Yolo offers a broad range and depth of sustainable community actions embodied in their approach to quality of life in the neighborhood.

NON-PROFIT: Davis Electric Vehicle Association (DEVA)

DEVA, a working group of Cool Davis, has educated and advised the Davis public about electric vehicles (EVs) through its annual Show-and-Tell car shows, monthly pop-ups at the Farmers Market and online meetings over the last five years, providing substantive and informative discussions between DEVA volunteers and the “EV curious” that have contributed to more awareness of EVs. DEVA’s work has been very significant, and has contributed to improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

BUSINESS: Active4me (Founded by Tim Starback)

Active4me is a computer application and business that helps assure safe student travel to school using active transportation. Since 2010, it has encouraged tens of thousands of students in Davis and other communities to bike and walk to school resulting in significant vehicle trip reductions, reduced congestion, cleaner air and safer streets for all. At the same time, students gain self-confidence and pride in being able to take concrete action to reduce their environmental impact, which is deeply motivating for them.

Attachments

1. Proclamation Recognizing April 22 as Earth Day 2023.

**PROCLAMATION
RECOGNIZING APRIL 22, 2023 AS EARTH DAY**

WHEREAS, Earth Day, April 22, 2023, established in 1970, is now recognized annually to celebrate the beauty of our planet, recommit to actions to promote a healthy environment, and maintain a peaceful, just and sustainable world; and

WHEREAS, the City of Davis is considering adoption of the 2020-2040 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan in convergence with Earth Day 2023 in order to chart an ambitious, actionable, and measurable course for the community’s path to carbon neutrality by 2040, in support of our City and our planet; and

WHEREAS, the City has prioritized environmental justice, equity and inclusion in developing the 2020-2040 CAAP; and

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the Davis City Council unanimously approved the “Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Proposing Mobilization Efforts to Restore a Safe Climate,” committing to significant actions for carbon reduction actions; and

WHEREAS, Davis has a long history of demonstrating sustainable practices, community advocacy and innovative policy approaches; and

WHEREAS, this is the City of Davis’ 29th consecutive year of honoring business, non-profit and individual / group Environmental Recognition Award winners who have significantly contributed to quality of life in the community and the seventh annual Environmental Legacy Award; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to addressing regional climate resiliency and adaptation issues through leadership and participation in the Yolo Climate Compact, the Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative and other regional planning and implementation efforts; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that, to meet the goals of Earth Day to raise awareness, ensure environmental equity, education, stewardship and community sustainability, and help guide local decision-making, the City Council will provide leadership, employ the expertise and talent of our community, and engage the hearts and minds of our citizens;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, Davis City Council, on behalf of the citizens of Davis, do hereby proclaim that the City of Davis recognizes Earth Day April 22, 2023.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Davis.

Date: April 18, 2023

Will Arnold
Mayor

Josh Chapman
Vice Mayor

Gloria Partida
Councilmember

Bapu Vaitla
Councilmember