Fresno

Fresno had its best performances in the buildings policies and energy and water utilities categories, mostly due to the efforts of the state and the utility serving the city. California’s energy code stringency and state benchmarking requirement contributed to the city’s score in buildings policies. Likewise, Pacific Gas and Electric’s (PG&E) efficiency programs influenced Fresno’s score. The city can improve across all categories to advance its rank in the next edition, most notably in local government operations, community-wide initiatives, and transportation policies.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (0 OF 10 POINTS)
Fresno has adopted greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and renewable energy goals for local government operations, but the goals are not ambitious. ACEEE was unable to project whether the city will achieve its near-term goal for local government operations to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 because insufficient GHG emissions data were available for our analysis. Otherwise, Fresno has few initiatives to reduce GHG emissions and energy use in local government operations. Fresno can reduce emissions from its existing buildings by benchmarking building energy use, developing a comprehensive retrofit strategy, and conducting energy retrofits.

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES (0 OF 15 POINTS)
Fresno has GHG emissions reduction goals, but its near-term goal is not stringent. ACEEE was unable to project if the city will achieve its community-wide GHG emissions reduction goal of 1990 levels by 2020 because insufficient GHG emissions data were available for our analysis. To inspire future clean energy efforts, the city can adopt citywide energy efficiency and renewable energy goals, take an equity-driven approach to clean energy planning, and adopt a formal policy, rule, or agreement that supports the creation of clean, distributed energy systems within the community.

BUILDINGS POLICIES (12 OF 30 POINTS)
Commercial and residential building owners in Fresno must comply with CalGreen, and with solar- and electric vehicle-readiness requirements. California’s Assembly Bill 802 requires large commercial and multifamily buildings to benchmark their energy use annually. Fresno can do more to reduce GHG emissions in its buildings by adopting energy efficiency policies for existing buildings (like retrocommissioning requirements) and developing an equitable clean energy workforce.

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES (8.5 OF 15 POINTS)
Compared to other utilities, PG&E shows moderate savings as a percentage of sales for both electric and natural gas efficiency programs. Fresno partners with PG&E to conduct retrofits in municipal buildings and promote utility programs to local small and medium businesses. PG&E offers energy efficiency programs to both low-income customers and multifamily properties. Fresno is considering allowing Community Choice Aggregation for its residents. The city can increase the energy and water efficiency of water services and wastewater treatment plants.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (3 OF 30 POINTS)
Fresno’s Tower District promotes mixed-used and compact development. Fresno has not adopted a sustainable transportation plan or goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled/GHG emissions from transportation. Adopting and tracking progress toward these goals would help lay the groundwork for transportation action. Relative to other city systems, Fresno’s transit system is underfunded and can improve in accessibility; ensuring continued financial support for service and operations will be crucial in a post-COVID world. Fresno can further promote sustainable transportation within the city by offering incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles and the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.