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# City Desk

By Carolyn Schuk

## **Paperless Agenda Moves Council into Digital Age, Saves Tons of Paper**

Some 85,000 pages of photocopies – enough to reach across 216 football fields – will no longer be needed by Santa Clara since the City Council converted to a paperless agenda packet. Instead, Council Members will now receive their agenda packets electronically for viewing on a tablet or laptop. The public's ability to look at agenda reports individually through the city website has also been expanded to allow download of the entire agenda packet in one PDF document.

“An electronic agenda packet allows Council Members to more efficiently make policy on behalf of the public,” said Council Member Debi Davis. “Here in Silicon Valley, using less paper and being cost effective is a natural fit.”

Not only does this save paper – conserving forests and natural habitats – it also reduces fossil fuel and water use, and greenhouse gas created by paper production, shipping and recycling, according to the City Clerk Rod Diridon, Jr.

The electronic format also makes it easier to find individual agenda reports, review lengthy documents, and search for key words.

The project was an inter-departmental effort including the city's IT Department, City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Office and City Clerk's Office. Research and testing began in late 2013 and the first Council meeting to go digital was Apr. 22. “Paper agenda packets have been in place ever since the City was chartered in 1852,” said Santa Clara IT Director Gaurav Garg. “The City Council's shift to iPads represents a significant culture shift in leading by example as the City progresses into a digital world.”