



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 11/12/2024

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office, Public Infrastructure, Sonoma County Regional Parks

Staff Name and Phone Number:, Johannes Hoevertsz, 707-707-3585, Barbara Lee, 707-656-2510, Marcus Clarke, 707-565-5272; Tony Tsui, 707-565-5423

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Equitable Energy Resilience and Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Project

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt a Resolution delegating authority to the County Executive Officer or designee to enter into a funding agreement with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, to accept and expend \$791,200 of federal funds, and to authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee, to carry out the Equitable Energy Resilience and Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Project.
- B) Adopt a Budget Resolution to appropriate revenues and increase expenditures by \$2,736,706 to receive the grant, transfer previously committed Climate Resilience Fund balance and implement the project. (4/5 Vote Required)
- C) Determine and find that the purchase and placement of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and funding the associated electric vehicle workforce development program are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Executive Summary:

Through the efforts of Congressman Mike Thompson, the County of Sonoma was awarded \$791,200 in the FY22-23 federal budget for the Equitable Energy Resilience and Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Project (the "Project"). The Project includes the purchase and deployment of six (6) portable solar-powered EV chargers and one (1) trailer to provide clean, emergency back-up power that can be easily transported and rapidly deployed to areas without electricity to support critical operations and first responders. When the chargers are not providing emergency back-up power, they will be made available to the public free of charge at Andy's Unity Park in South Santa Rosa, a disadvantaged census tract, two Veterans buildings and other yet-to-be selected locations. This project overlaps with the Autonomous Renewable Chargers (ARCs) in Parks EV infrastructure project which received \$941,760 in Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) funding from your Board in October 2022, demonstrating your Board's commitment to climate resilience and sustainable infrastructure.

This grant project also includes funding for training and certification to bolster the number of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) certified electricians in the region, with the goal of developing the local EV infrastructure workforce. This program is designed to help electricians who may have limited access to

resources or face challenges with computer literacy, providing them with the necessary support to succeed.

Discussion:

In 2022, the CAO's staff submitted a proposal for a Congressional Appropriation to purchase and deploy solar-powered charging stations for electric vehicles, and to establish an electric vehicle workforce development program to be implemented by a yet-to-be selected qualified entity. Congressman Mike Thompson made the appropriation request, which was incorporated into the federal FY 22-23 Budget.

The Project: The Equitable Energy Resilience and Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Project is part of a larger County initiative to enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure, ensuring continued support for essential services and first responders during power outages. This project also focuses on ensuring that marginalized and underserved communities benefit from these programs.

As part of the appropriation, the County plans to purchase six (6) portable solar EV chargers, one (1) trailer, and a package covering operation and maintenance costs, depending on pricing at the time of purchase. These units will provide clean, portable and quickly deployable emergency backup power to support critical operations and first responders in areas affected by power outages. The chargers will be available to the public at no cost. When not in use for emergencies, they will be stationed at several locations, including Andy's Unity Park in South Santa Rosa, a disadvantaged census tract, and at two Veterans buildings. Their portability allows the chargers to be rotated between Veterans buildings based on need, usage, and the suitability of each site for solar collection and vehicle charging.

In addition to purchasing the EV chargers and the trailers, the Congressional Appropriation includes \$237,000 for the setup, operation, management, and remote monitoring of the charging stations. The County's purchase of all chargers includes ten (10) years of remote monitoring and equipment warranties. As the warranty period nears its end, staff will assess the equipment's condition and performance to determine whether to continue the program, and if so, will identify funding for its continuation.

The project allocates \$36,500 toward EV workforce development, focusing on recruitment, training, and certification through the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP). This initiative targets electricians facing barriers such as limited resources or computer literacy. CAO staff will use federal procurement processes to identify and recommend a qualified partner to administer these funds, ensuring compliance with federal purchasing guidelines.

Autonomous Renewable Chargers (ARCs) in County Regional Parks: On October 25, 2022, your Board approved a Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) award of \$941,760 for ARCs in County Regional Parks to the Department of Sonoma Public Infrastructure/Fleet Management to purchase and deploy twelve (12) EV ARC solar charging stations in Helen Putnam Park, Andy's Unity Park, Spring Lake, Schopflin Fields, Ragle Ranch, and Spud Point Marina. The CRF award includes \$67,000 for setup, operation, management, and remote monitoring of the charging stations. Of the \$941,760 allocated from the original \$1,027,200 request, 20% of the project was to be secured through external sources, such as grants or federal appropriations. This congressional appropriation fulfills that matching requirement.

As part of the ARCs in County Regional Parks CRF award, your Board directed that any portion of the project that received funding through the Congressional Appropriation should not also receive CRF funds, and the duplicated funds should be returned to the CRF. The overlap in scope between the two projects is the

purchase, set-up, operation, management, and remote monitoring of the solar charging stations. Cost increases since the original scoping of these projects will be covered between the two funding sources resulting in a net duplication of funding in the amount of \$346,357, which will remain in the CRF and will be utilized to fund near term implementation of the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan, as directed by your Board on September 10, 2024.

Overall Investment & Combined Project

The overall investment of funding in solar-powered EV charging, operation and maintenance, and job skills training will be \$1,386,603 including the Congressional Appropriation and the non-duplicative elements funded through your Board’s CRF. The breakdown of combined expenditures is summarized in the table below:

Breakdown of Funding by Congressional Appropriation & CRF*			
	Congressional Appropriation	CRF	Total
Solar Charging Units, Safety Bollards & Trailers	\$453,801	\$477,791	\$931,592
Operation & Maintenance	\$237,000	\$67,200	\$304,200
Job Skills Training	\$36,500	\$0	\$36,500
Taxes	\$63,899	\$50,412	\$114,311
Total	\$791,200	\$595,403	\$1,386,603

*The Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) was established by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and designed to enhance the County’s ability to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to the Class 3 categorical exemption of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR § 15303) for New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures and Equipment. Class 3 consists of installation of a limited number of small new equipment and facilities and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. The Project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Class 11 categorical exemption (14 CCR § 15311(c)) for Accessory Structures, which involves the placement of seasonal or temporary use items generally in the same locations from time to time in publicly owned parks and facilities designed for public use. The placement of six (6) mobile electric vehicle chargers in existing County-owned parking locations involves minor installation and no new utility connections or construction will be required. The proposal to install EV chargers at existing County locations meets the requirements of the Class 3 and Class 11 categorical exemptions and no further CEQA review is required.

The Project is also exempt pursuant to the “common sense exemption” of CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b) (3), which provides that CEQA applies only to projects that have potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. The provision of funding for the electric vehicle workforce development program does not have the potential for significant effects on the environment. Additionally, the acceptance of the federal grant award and associated budgetary adjustments will not have any significant effect on the environment.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County’s Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Climate Action and Resiliency

Goal: Goal 2: Invest in the community to enhance resiliency and become carbon neutral by 2030

Objective: Objective 1: Support carbon eliminating microgrid technology in communities and energy grid resilience to reduce impact of power loss during power shutdowns and natural disasters (floods, fires, earthquakes) through education and legislative advocacy, prioritizing critical infrastructure and vulnerable populations.

Pillar: Climate Action and Resiliency

Goal: Goal 3: Make all County facilities carbon free, zero waste and resilient

Objective: Objective 2: Invest in electric power resiliency projects at County facilities, including Veteran’s Buildings, used for evacuation sites, warming/cooling centers, or as alternate work facilities for delivery of critical services.

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

10/25/22 - Climate Resilience Fund: Round #2 (2022-0802)

09/10/24 - Approval of the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan, Near Term Funding, and Staffing Changes (2024-0991)

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$0		
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$1,386,603		
Total Expenditures	\$1,386,603		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$791,200		

Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$595,403		
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$1,386,603		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

In the Spring of 2022, CARD sought a federal appropriation to purchase and deploy portable and solar powered electrical chargers at Andy’s Unity Park and Veterans’ buildings, and to provide relevant workforce training to under-resourced electrical contractors. On October 25, 2022, when the federal appropriation was still under consideration by Congress, your Board approved a Climate Resilience Funding (CRF) award of \$941,760 to Department of Sonoma Public Infrastructure/Fleet Management to purchase and deploy portable and solar powered electrical chargers and trailers at Regional Parks locations. Through the leadership of Congressman Mike Thompson, the federal appropriation was funded. Because the CRF project overlapped with the federal appropriation request, \$346,357 of CRF funding is no longer needed for this project. This funding will not be transferred from the CRF and will be available for future near-term climate projects.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None.

Attachments:

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1. Grant Agreement_HUD_11.12.24
2. Authority Resolution_11.12.24
3. Budget Resolution_11.12.24

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

1. Award Letter B-23-CP-CA-0135