



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0802, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office

Staff Name and Phone Number: Anna Yip 565-2132; Barbara Lee 565-2510

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Climate Resilience Fund: Round #2

Recommended Action:

- A) Approve Climate Resilience Funding Round #2 recommendations
- B) Adopt a Concurrent Resolution adjusting the FY 2022-23 Budget Appropriations as described

Executive Summary:

Staff is presenting for the Board's consideration a list of recommendations for awarding the second round of funding from the Climate Resilience Fund financed from the 2017 Wildfires PG&E Settlement funds, with prioritization and project evaluations based on the Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity Framework and your Board's direction to maximize leveraging of outside funds.

Discussion:

Background

Your Board created the Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) in May 2021 by committing \$10 million from the 2017 Wildfires Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) settlement fund to County climate projects. The Climate Action & Resiliency Division of the County Administrator's Office (CARD, or Division) is responsible for implementing your Board's vision for climate action and building climate resiliency across the County. The Division was asked to review a list of County department/agency project proposals for consideration for funding from the CRF and present funding recommendations to your Board. Staff first developed an evaluation framework to review and compare projects that addressed a broad range of climate-related issues and presented the framework and recommendations for project funding in February of 2022. Your Board allocated just over half of the CRF funds in the first round of funding and directed staff to work with the departments and agencies whose projects were not funded as they rescope their projects and improved their leveraging of outside funding; these rescope projects were resubmitted for potential funding in the second round.

Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity (CARE) Framework

To objectively review projects across a wide spectrum of program areas, and to guide development and implementation of climate and resiliency actions, CARD created a framework to ground decision-making in science and metrics around expected impacts.

This framework, titled the Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity (CARE) Framework, has been guided by your Board's climate and resiliency policy priorities, and was presented to your Board on February 1, 2022. It incorporates partner collaborations, State and Federal climate priorities and tools, and the latest climate science. The CARE Framework was designed to measure and compare different types of climate projects by assigning an overall Performance Score that reflects project performance against specific policy priorities. In addition, the CARE Framework takes into consideration many potential co-benefits, or co-disbenefits, a project may have, as well as the extent to which it leverages outside funding opportunities and partnerships.

The CARE Framework is used by staff to evaluate potential projects and is the basis for recommendations for the allocation of the \$10 million Climate Resilience Fund. CARD staff will continue to refine, enhance, and update the CARE Framework based on broad collaborations and the development of Federal and State priorities. The CARE Framework is also used to develop robust and impactful climate projects, and to compare and evaluate other groups of projects from a climate perspective. Please see Attachment A: CARE Framework Overview for more information on the CARE Framework.

CRF Round #1

The Division presented its first set of recommendations to your Board on February 1st, 2022. Your Board approved funding for 13 different climate projects proposed by County departments/agencies that covered topics like drought resiliency, bikeway acquisition, and solar installation. Please see Attachment B: Summary of CRF Round #1 Funded Projects for an overview of projects funded in Round #1. The attachment also includes a brief update from project leads that describes the status of each project's implementation.

The total amount allocated during Round #1 was \$5,052,148. Since the Climate Resilience Fund was established with \$10 million, this leaves \$4,947,852 to be allocated to County climate projects. Additionally, the Board requested that staff work with proposed projects not selected for funding during Round #1 on rescoping for a second round of consideration.

CRF Round #2 Recommendations

CARD staff worked with County departments and agencies to help refine their project proposals that were not selected for funding in Round #1. Staff also highlighted the importance of and opportunities for leveraging outside funds and worked to secure external project funding. County departments and agencies re-submitted 10 potential projects to consider for funding. Please see Attachment C: CRF Round #2 Proposals Received to review the original project proposals as submitted by County departments. Note that the Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure projects were submitted by the Public Infrastructure Department (SoCo Pi, formerly Transportation and Public Works) under one proposal but were evaluated independently.

Staff scored the submissions using the CARE Framework. CARD staff brought in other CAO staff to assist with scoring. Additionally, following your Board's direction to better use the Climate Resilience Funds to leverage outside funds, staff built their recommendations to prioritize full funding for projects with at least 20% of their total projects cost secured with outside leveraging, and offer partial funds for projects that leveraged less than 20% contribution from outside funding sources. These partial funding levels are recommended to encourage project leads to secure the remaining amounts from other outside sources, which would bring each project up to the minimum of 20% non-County leveraging.

Based on staff reviews using the CARE Framework and your Board's direction to prioritize leveraging outside

funds, CARD staff created the following base recommendations for CRF Round #2 (also summarized in Table 1). Please see Attachment D: CRF Round #2 Funding Recommendations for a summary of all recommendations, as well as an overview of all projects and their scores based on the CARE Framework.

Base recommendations:

1. Allocate the funds as follows:
 - a. Fund the following projects, which performed well in their CARE Framework evaluations relative to their County Cost **and** have leveraged at least 20% of their total project cost with outside funds, for their fully requested amount:
 - i. Bikeable Sonoma County (SoCo Pi) - \$500,000
 - ii. EV Infrastructure: Park and Charge (SoCo Pi) - \$100,000
 - iii. EV Infrastructure: Electrifying Patrol (SoCo Pi) - \$685,000
 - b. Partially fund the following projects, which performed well in their CARE Framework evaluations relative to their Count Cost, at the following amounts to encourage securing a minimum of 20% outside leveraged funds:
 - i. Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan (Regional Parks) - \$100,000
 - ii. EV Infrastructure: Autonomous Renewable Chargers (ARCs) in Parks (SoCo Pi) - \$941,760
 - iii. Fare Free Transit for Youth (Sonoma County Transit) - \$861,756
 - iv. Prescribed Grazing (University of California Cooperative Extension, or UCCE) - \$300,000
 - v. Rainwater Catchment (Regional Parks) - \$303,320
2. Direct staff to support and encourage departments/agencies whose projects were not selected for funding to seek other funding sources.

Project Name	Department	Recommended Allocation
Bikeable Sonoma County	SoCo Pi	\$500,000
EV Infrastructure: Park and Charge	SoCo Pi	\$100,000
EV Infrastructure: Electrify Patrol	SoCo Pi	\$685,000
Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan	Regional Parks	\$100,000
EV Infrastructure: ARC Chargers in Parks	Regional Parks	\$941,760
Fare Free Transit for Youth	Sonoma County Transit	\$861,756
Prescribed Grazing	UCCE	\$300,000
Rainwater Catchment	Regional Parks	\$303,320
TOTAL		\$3,791,836

Table 1: Base recommendations as proposed by staff

Approving the base recommendations listed above would allocate \$3,791,836 of the remaining Climate Resilience Fund. In total, the fund currently sits at \$4,947,852, leaving a remainder of \$1,156,016 unallocated. In support of your Board’s direction to leverage the CRF with outside funds, staff recommends the following allocation:

- 3a. Reserve the remaining funds (\$1,156,016) to be used as County match dollars on future State, Federal,

and other climate-related funding opportunities, with a required minimum of 50% outside leveraging for total project cost and Board approval.

OR

Alternatively, should your Board decide to fund either of the two projects not selected for funding (EV Infrastructure: Big EVs, or Fare Free Transit for Youth plus Express Lines), staff offers the following options:

- 3b. Fund the Fare Free Transit for Youth plus Express Lines project *in lieu of* the Fare Free Transit for Youth project for \$1,447,266 (partial funding to encourage securing a minimum of 20% outside leveraged funds)
 - a. Follow the rest of the base recommendations, excluding the Fare Free Youth project, as listed above
 - b. Reserve \$570,506 to be used as County match dollars on future State, Federal, and other climate-related funding opportunities, with a required minimum of 50% outside leveraging for total project cost and Board approval.

OR

- 3c. Fund the Big EVs project for \$792,500 (partial funding to encourage securing a minimum of 50% outside leveraged funds, given the costliness of project)
 - a. Follow the rest of the base recommendations, as listed above
 - b. Reserve \$363,516 of the CRF to be used as County match dollars on future State, Federal, and other climate-related funding opportunities, with a required minimum of 50% outside leveraging for total project cost and Board approval.

Additionally, staff would like to note that the EV Infrastructure project titled ARC Chargers in Parks may receive funding through the Federal Budget that would provide up to \$791,200 the project as described in its project proposal. Staff makes the following contingency recommendation for funding allocations if the ARC Chargers in Parks project receives federal funding:

- 4a. Fund the remaining amount of the ARC Chargers in Parks project costs after receiving the federal funding award using CRF funds, assuming the federal funding award brings the leveraged amount to at least 20% of the total project cost, and:
 - a. Reserve any remaining amount of the CRF from this project request to be used as County match dollars on future State, Federal, and other climate-related funding opportunities, with a required minimum of 50% outside leveraging for total project cost and Board approval.

OR

- 4b. Fund the remaining amount of the project costs after receiving the Federal Earmark award using CRF funds, assuming the Federal Earmark award brings the leveraged amount to at least 20% of the total project cost.
 - a. Re-allocate any remaining amount of the CRF from this project request to the Big EV project.

Please see Attachment D: CRF Round #2 Funding Recommendations for a summary of all recommendations, as well as an overview of all projects and their scores based on the CARE Framework. Please see Attachment E: Summary of CRF Round #2 Project Proposal Review and Evaluation Detail for a summary of staff's evaluation notes and a breakdown each project's evaluation score.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan in many potential ways, depending upon which projects are selected for funding. Please see the summary below for an overview of how proposed

projects directly align with the Strategic Plan.

Bikeable Sonoma County

Resilient Infrastructure Pillar

Goal 3: Continue to invest in critical road, bridge, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Objective 3: Invest \$5 million by 2024 on new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and adopt maintenance guidelines on roads to consider bicyclists and pedestrians.

EV Infrastructure Projects

Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar

Goal 4: Maximize sustainability and emissions reductions in all County Fleet vehicles

Objective 1: Where feasible, phase out County (owned or leased) gasoline powered light-duty cars, vans, and pickups to achieve a 30% zero-emission vehicle light-duty fleet by 2026.

Objective 3: Upgrade the existing County owned Electric Vehicle charging station infrastructure by 2023.

Prescribed Grazing

Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar

Goal 1: Continue to invest in wildfire preparedness and resiliency strategies.

Objective 2: Expand outreach and education on vegetation management and provide additional resources to land owners to help mitigate fire risk.

Rainwater Catchment

Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar

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

Objective 1: Design or retrofit County facilities to be carbon neutral, zero waste and incorporate resilient construction techniques and materials.

Prior Board Actions:

February 1, 2022 - Allocated \$5,052,148 in Round #1 Climate Resilience Fund

May 11, 2021 - Created the Climate Resilience Fund with \$10 million from the 2017 PG&E Settlement Funds and reviewed potential climate projects

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$3,923,956		
Total Expenditures	\$3,923,956		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/PG&E Settlement			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$3,923,956		
Contingencies			

Total Sources	\$3,923,956		
---------------	-------------	--	--

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The above total reflects the projects being recommended for funding. Should the Board elect to fund a different combination of proposals, the actual budget adjustment will align with the Board-approved projects. Funding for these projects is available within 2017 PG&E Settlement Funds earmarked for the Climate Resilience Fund.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

- Attachment A: CARE Framework Overview
- Attachment B: Summary of CRF Round #1 Funded Projects
- Attachment C: CRF Round #2 Project Proposals Received
- Attachment D: CRF Round #2 Funding Recommendations
- Attachment E: Summary of CRF Round #2 Project Proposal Review and Evaluation Detail
- Attachment F: Concurrent Budget Resolution
- Attachment G: Presentation

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None