



Legislation Text

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To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): General Services

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Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): All

Title:

Sonoma County Energy Sustainability Workshop

Recommended Actions:

Accept report on collaborative efforts between the County, Regional Climate Protection Agency, and Sonoma Clean Power and programs that support local climate actions reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Executive Summary:

This report focuses on how General Services Energy and Sustainability and Fleet divisions, Regional Climate Protection Authority, and Sonoma Clean Power serve individuals and the community, how they coordinate with one another, program successes to-date, and opportunities going forward.

Discussion:

Background

Previous comprehensive reports to the Board of Supervisors in 2002 and 2014, identified the essential role that local programs have in promoting sustainability in the residential, commercial and municipal government sectors. The County General Services Energy and Sustainability and Fleet Divisions, Permit Sonoma, the County Health Services Environmental and Public Health departments, Economic Development Board, the Sonoma County Water Agency, as well as the Regional Climate Protection Authority, Sonoma Clean Power, the Center for Climate Protection, PG&E and BayREN all sponsor and administer programs promoting sustainability and contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Each organization's contribution based upon their expertise and resources is critical to accomplishing locally and regionally defined GHG reduction objectives, changing behaviors and choices, and ensuring social equity and access to programs. Today we are taking a closer look at how the County's Energy and Sustainability and Fleet divisions, Regional Climate Protection Authority, and Sonoma Clean Power serve the community, how they coordinate with one another, and opportunities for further cooperation going forward.

In service to local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

- General Services Energy and Sustainability and Fleet Divisions serve the internal operations of the

County campus and provide business, residential and community focused programs targeting building and vehicle fleet efficiency.

- Sonoma Clean Power is the community choice aggregator that procures power for all of Sonoma County's jurisdictions except Healdsburg. In that capacity they offer customer facing programs related to energy efficiency, renewable energy and electric vehicles.
- The Regional Climate Protection Authority is a special district that represents all of Sonoma County's jurisdictions. RCPA fosters collaborative efforts on a government to government level to ensure best practices are available to member agencies with a focus on planning, advocacy, and coordination.

In 2002 the County Board of Supervisors and all the cities within the county in pledged to measure and reduce GHG emissions. They joined the Cities for Climate Protection campaign and committed to milestones to generate GHG inventories, reduction targets and plans for meeting and monitoring those targets. In September 2006 the Board adopted a Climate Protection Action Plan with the goal of reducing emissions from internal County operations by 20% from 2000 baseline emission levels by the year 2010. By 2010, the County exceeded its 20% goal by implementing projects that reduced greenhouse gas emissions in fleet operations, employee commute, and County building energy use.

By 2004, all of the cities within the county had completed baseline emission inventories and established targets for municipal operations. In 2006, the County formed the General Services Energy and Sustainability Division to implement the measures identified in the County's plan. In 2009, the County and cities formed the Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) to coordinate climate protection activities countywide and to provide regional advocacy, planning, grant administration, and research. In 2014, Sonoma Clean Power, a not-for-profit public agency was created to generate cleaner sources of electricity, compared to PG&E, for customers in Sonoma and Mendocino counties. Programs that support consumer's choices to reduce consumption of electricity and water, to use cleaner sources of power, and lessen their footprint require consistent sources of funding and ongoing outreach and education. Many programs launched in Sonoma County have become models replicated in other regions due to the track record of success. Sonoma County is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in promoting sustainability through local and regional actions.

Collaboration, Coordination and Outreach

In order to advance the County's climate action objectives, programs require continuous and consistent community outreach and the communication of accomplishments which build trust within and across the residential, commercial and government sectors. Demonstrated leadership from the County, RCPA and Sonoma Clean Power, among others, has the effect of encouraging other municipalities to replicate programs to achieve similar results. Changing behaviors and consumer choices is necessary in order to meet GHG reduction objectives. All three organizations conduct outreach activities that target consumer decisions regarding energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable power generation, electric vehicles and charging

stations, and green building practices.

Examples of successful collaboration include highly visible programs such as the Do-It-Yourself Home Energy and Water Toolkits (DIY). This project was managed through the General Services Energy and Sustainability Division during the pilot phase and is now administered by Sonoma Clean Power. The Program is funded by the Energy and Sustainability Division, Sonoma Water, and Sonoma Clean Power and is supported by the Sonoma Library. The DIY kits assist community members in adopting energy and water conservation measures where they live.

The Energy Watch and BayREN programs complement the SCEIP program by assisting community members in identifying energy and water conservation measures, training local contractors on current codes and standards, and identifying funding sources for specific improvements. RCPA now administers the regional on-bill water financing program, Pay As You Save (PAYS) that supports implementation of energy and water efficiency measures. The Town of Windsor implemented the first such program in 2012 and contracted the County Energy and Sustainability Division to manage the daily operations including customer service, qualification, contractor and supplier oversight, and invoicing. To be successful, community facing programs require skilled customer service expertise. Help-desks, educational programs and consultative services are necessary to address questions from members of the community. Changing behavior requires constant messaging. Local climate actions rely upon strong collaboration, coordination and partnerships between all of the organizations described above.

Programs Offered and Program Evolution

Over the past twelve years the programs offered, funding sources, and areas of focus have shifted as the County, RCPA and SCP have matured and approaches to addressing climate change have evolved. Program evolution is to be expected as early innovative programs are refined and replicated on a broader scale.

Sonoma County Energy and Sustainability Division

The General Services Energy and Sustainability Division, created in 2006, was launched initially to implement energy and water conservation measures within County owned buildings. To help meet the County's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Comprehensive Energy Conservation Program for County operations in December 2008 and again in March 2009, totaling \$22.72 million in project funding. In addition to energy conservation measures over 1.4 MW of renewable energy systems were installed at County facilities at Los Guilicos and the County center campus to offset electrical use. Through these efforts the Energy and Sustainability Division exceeded the GHG reduction goals identified by the County for municipal operations. Following the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Energy Conservation Program, the Board of Supervisors launched the Sonoma Energy Independence Program (SCEIP), a community facing Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program. Although financed through the Auditor Controller Tax Collector's office, the County's Energy and Sustainability division was a natural choice to provide the SCEIP program administration and outreach to residential and business consumers given the

Division's staffing expertise. SCEIP has since its inception, in 2009, responded to over 38,000 program queries, signed 2,632 contracts with funding requests totaling \$121.6 million, resulting in GHG reductions of 80,819 MTCO₂E. SCEIP staff is drafting a five (5) year Program business plan outlining Program growth and continued success. Staff proposes to return to your Board within the next several months with further analysis of PACE trends and Program options for your Board to consider.

Since 2009, the County Energy and Sustainability Division has provided the Sonoma County Energy Watch local government partnership with PG&E. In 2018, the program upgrades completed saved over 2.3 million kWh of electricity and distributed over \$809,000 of rebates and incentives paid to homeowners and businesses throughout Sonoma County. Following the October 2017 wildfires, the Energy and Sustainability Division specifically tailored consultative services to support fire rebuild efforts. The outreach and consultations to fire survivors has received highly positive feedback. Energy and Sustainability's fire rebuild consultations assist homeowners in learning about and applying for the Sonoma Clean Power Advanced Energy Rebuild financing.

Over time, the reach of the Energy and Sustainability has been both internal and external providing services to County departments, County internal operations and to the community. Budget reductions in 2018 cut general fund to the Division which has largely impacted internal County programs. For the past year the focus of Energy and Sustainability has been on external community facing programs which rely on outside revenues, as opposed to county General Fund. The Division has actively worked with RCPA and SCP to expand upon existing services provided by the County, such as the BayREN contract recently approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Sonoma County Fleet Division

To help meet emission reduction targets, the County installed its first Electric Vehicle Charging Station to support a Toyota Prius that was converted to a Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) in late 2009. The project was funded through the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The pilot project demonstrated and achieved fuel savings between 20 and 60 miles per gallon. An additional eight Toyota Prius models were converted and deployed in various County Departments with additional charging stations to support their operation.

Lessons learned from installing EV charging infrastructure led to the County creating the first comprehensive Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program and Installation Guidelines in the nation. The guidelines were released in July of 2011. The document was used as foundational material by the State of California in its own development of installation guidelines and eventually new building codes that were adopted in 2017 to support the growth of EVs in the state.

In 2010 the County and Water Agency joined a coalition of 10 Bay Area counties, cities and water districts to pursue a grant through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to fund a collaborative purchase of "fleet" electric vehicles and the supporting charging infrastructure. A successful application resulted in the

largest nationwide deployment of 90 EVs and charging stations in government fleets by the end 2013.

The County has installed or facilitated the installation of 64 charging stations with a total of 126 charging ports at 27 different site locations throughout the County with a majority of these stations funded through successful grant applications. The total includes 16 different sites and 59 charge ports available for public use. Staff has performed preliminary evaluations of 29 additional sites for public use that include Regional Parks and Park & Ride locations.

The County Fleet of hybrid, plug-in hybrid, extended range, and all- electric vehicles have traveled more than 13 million miles, saved 200,000 gallons of fuel, and reduced CO2 emissions by 1,900 metric tons since 2002.

Regional Climate Protection Authority

The Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) launched in 2009, focused initially on planning, government to government collaboration, research and advocacy. Key achievements over the past decade include:

- Leadership in creating the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) in order to expand energy efficiency programs opportunities available through local government
- Created Shift Sonoma County - a low carbon transportation plan to address fuel shift (electric vehicles) and mode shift (travel demand management, bike share, car share) in order to reduce emissions from the transportation sector
- Developed Climate Action 2020 - a multi-jurisdictional climate action plan. While the plan was not CEQA certified it lays the groundwork for General Plans and resulted in each jurisdiction adopting resolutions establishing GHG reduction goals and identifying the types of projects/programs required to achieve the goals
- Wrote the Hazards and Vulnerabilities Assessment
- Incorporated GHG and climate adaption principles in multiple planning and data tools such as Urban Footprint
- Developed the 2010 and 2015 GHG inventories for Sonoma County and our nine member cities
- Serving as lead for the regional Water Bill Savings Program under BayREN
- Advocating for climate related policy and funding at the State level to enable local action (e.g. Water Bill Savings Program)
- Maintaining strong lines of communication across jurisdictions on policies, programs, funding and other opportunities to advance emission reductions and build community resilience.

- Creating forums and facilitating information sharing among cities, the county and our partner agencies on best practices, data and grant opportunities

Sonoma Clean Power

Launched in 2014 as a not-for-profit agency, Sonoma Clean Power (SCP) has focused on providing clean electricity to 600,000 customers in Sonoma and Mendocino counties. SCP has sponsored numerous residential and commercial building programs to incentivize the use of clean power and reduce greenhouse gas emissions including offering free energy saving toolkits through Sonoma County libraries, lending customer induction cooktops to test, sponsoring programs supporting residential consumer's adoption of electric vehicles and charging stations, and launching the "Energy Store" in Santa Rosa, offering support for jurisdictions looking at all-electric reach codes, and expanding GridSavvy Community to help technologies connect to the grid.

Recently SCP also launched the Advanced Energy Rebuild Program, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emission impact of fire rebuilds by providing up to \$17,500 in energy efficient incentives with one easy online application. The program is a collaboration between Sonoma Clean Power, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The program goes beyond existing program models by adding in non-standard measures like electric vehicle charging, grid responsiveness, battery storage, and water measures. Up to \$17,500 in incentives with one easy online application. As of February 2019, 168 homes have applied for the program, approximately 38% of which are all-electric. Homes are projected to be 26% better than current energy code and are predicted to save \$650 annually on utility bills.

Factors Contributing to Success

The successful track record of all of the organizations supporting climate action is a result of a unique mix of local attributes. The County's long standing regional political leadership, the consistently communicated GHG emissions reduction goals and objectives and targets, a willingness to launch and sustain innovative organizations, initiatives and programs, strong collaboration and cooperation across multiple stakeholders, expertise in program administration, and community trust, have all contributed to the widely acknowledged local success. Sonoma County's climate action efforts are nationally and internationally recognized as exemplary models of collaboration and coordination. Another important factor contributing to successful programs is staff expertise within the County's Energy and Sustainability Division, as well as at Regional Climate Protection Authority and Sonoma Clean Power.

Future focus

Local governments are essential partners in achieving California's GHG emission reduction goals. County departments have significant authority and ability to influence emission sources through planning and permitting processes, local ordinances, outreach and educational efforts, consultative and financing programs and services, and municipal operations.

In the face of accelerating climate change impacts there is much work to be done. Electricity use and transportation sectors are the largest aggregate producers of GHG emissions. Energy efficiency and switching to lower-carbon or zero-net carbon fuels is the key to reductions. Opportunities exist for Sonoma County and our cities to support new programs.

One new program proposed by the County to address some of the transportation impacts is a Clean Commute Pilot Program for employees. The County will work in coordination with Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) to establish a pre-tax commuter benefit program for employees to purchase discounted SMART Eco-Passes or participate in a Commute with Enterprise vanpool. SCTA will be looking into offering the program to other municipal employers in the County as well.

Sonoma Clean Power recently launched an initiative to encourage cities and the County to switch municipal electrical accounts to the Evergreen product. The first of its kind in California, Evergreen is a 100% renewal power product that uses solar power by day and geothermal energy by night. The General Services Department has evaluated the opportunity to move existing accounts, for County accounts that are managed by the department, that are not already 100% renewable to Evergreen. Currently the County uses SCP's Clean Start product, which includes a 45% renewable power mix. Based on the 2018 kWh usage from these accounts, the County would have paid an additional \$132,617 in utility costs for the 100% renewable Evergreen as compared to the Clean Start product. The Board may want to consider during Budget hearings the opportunity and the additional cost of adopting Evergreen. Staff will bring a program improvement for Board consideration. In addition, the Board may want to consider revisiting energy efficiency programs in existing buildings as a best practice.

The relentless focus of all of the organizations working on local actions in Sonoma County are absolutely critical to continued local success. Statewide, national and global efforts have all been modeled on programs launched in Sonoma County. We are proud of our local accomplishments and determined to continue working towards a cleaner, more equitable and sustainable world.

Prior Board Actions:

2019-12-04: Report on 2014 Board Priority: Climate Action

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 18-19 Adopted	FY19-20 Projected	FY 20-21 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			

State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll)	Monthly Salary Range (A - I Step)	Additions (number)	Deletions (number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There is no staffing impact related to this item.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Powerpoint presentation

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

None