



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2021-0303, **Version:** 1

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**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

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

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Christel Querijero 565-7071, Jane Elias 565-6483

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Climate Action and Resiliency Workshop

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Receive a summary of community input from the April 6, 2021 Board Climate Town Hall
- B) Consider Climate Ad Hoc Committee recommendations to advance near-term climate projects that support County Strategic Plan Climate Action and Resiliency goals and objectives

**Executive Summary:**

In September 2019, your Board declared a Climate Emergency and made addressing climate change impacts a top Board priority. In early 2020, your Board established a Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee, authorized the addition of a Climate Analyst position, and approved Climate Action and Resiliency as a pillar of the draft County Strategic Plan. COVID-19 impacts in the County and community shifted many priority efforts, and although the Climate Action Ad Hoc convened and provided a report to your Board on August 11, 2020, several challenges impeded staff's ability to advance work and implement projects.

The purpose of this item and workshop is to provide an update on recent community input from the Board's April 6, 2021 Climate Town Hall and to share Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee recommendations for the Board's consideration. These recommendations identify the following: the need for additional staffing resources to achieve County Strategic Plan objectives and outcomes; a shortlist of potential near-term climate projects based on broad stakeholder input; and funding sources to implement projects and establish dedicated staff resources to ensure capacity for sustainable and efficient progress.

**Discussion:**

On January 6, 2020 your Board established the Climate Action Ad Hoc and adopted the Climate Action Ad Hoc Charter. The purpose of the Climate Action Ad Hoc is to receive input from County department and agency staff, and to solicit input from stakeholders, including other public entities (e.g., cities, Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA), Sonoma Clean Power, local air districts, etc.) and community members. Initial input from department and agency staff informed the Board's January 28, 2020 strategic planning session.

On February 4, 2020, your Board adopted a resolution on to add a 1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) Administrative Analyst III to support the Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee and climate resiliency coordination.

On August 11, 2020, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to begin work with the Climate Action Ad Hoc to identify a climate staffing model.

On March 2, 2021, your Board adopted the County's five-year Strategic Plan that includes Climate Action and Resiliency as one of its pillars along with Resilient Infrastructure. The Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar includes five major goals:

- Continue to invest in wildfire preparedness and resiliency strategies
- Invest in the community to enhance resiliency and become carbon neutral by 2030
- Make all County facilities carbon free, zero waste and resilient
- Maximize sustainability and emissions reductions in all County Fleet vehicles
- Maximize opportunities for mitigation of climate change and adaptation through land conservation work and land use policies

These goals will guide the County's efforts moving forward serving as an overarching guide for the Climate Action Ad Hoc's efforts.

#### Climate Town Hall

On April 6, 2021, the Climate Action Ad Hoc hosted a virtual Town Hall. The format included short presentations from some of the County departments and agencies, special districts, Sonoma Clean Power, and nonprofit community partners that address factors related to climate. Each presenter focused their discussion on three (3) of their climate projects, initiatives, programs, or purposes of their organization. After hearing from presenters, the community was given the opportunity to provide input on what was important to them and ways the County can solve the climate crisis. The nearly 1,000 comments received either prior to or during the Town Hall spanned across 35 climate-related topics. The input was categorized into broad sectors of transportation, vegetation management, energy and built environment, zero waste, and adaptation and social resilience

The Town Hall yielded a total of 429 participants and 980 comments. Specifically:

- Zoom: 249 total participants; 895 English comments
- Facebook: 68 viewers; 23 comments in English from 14 participants
- YouTube (Spanish language): 50 viewers; no comments
- 62 emails sent to [climate@sonoma-county.org](mailto:climate@sonoma-county.org)
- There were no Spanish language comments or emails

The detailed Town Hall report (Attachment A) is included in this report and provides a summary of the comments captured.

#### Climate Action Staffing

On January 6, 2020, four climate staffing options were presented to your Board for consideration. Your Board adopted a resolution on February 4, 2020 to amend the County Administrator's Office (CAO) Recovery and Resiliency Division (since renamed Policy, Grants and Special Projects Division) position allocation list and add a 1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) Administrative Analyst III to support the Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee and climate resiliency coordination. The position was postponed last year due to COVID-19, however, the recruitment for this position closed on April 26, 2021 and interviews will begin the week of May 10, 2021. The delay allowed the opportunity for additional discussions to refine staffing options and to consider which job

responsibilities are most critical for the near and long term to accomplish the County's declared climate action and resiliency goals. It also provided the opportunity to reassess where and at what level in the County organization responsibility and accountability to achieve these goals would live, so that the County climate lead would be positioned to be most effective and successful.

The Climate Action Ad Hoc has held several discussions on how best to staff and address climate actions, given both the urgency of climate issues and the challenges posed by budgetary constraints. Consideration was given to the need for central coordination, communication and leadership of County-wide climate initiatives, as well as the need for staff with climate policy, technical and scientific knowledge, and staff support for grant writing for climate-related funding. Attachment B in this summary report reflects the Climate Action Ad Hoc's recommended staffing plan for your Board's consideration. These three (3) proposed positions would exist within the County Administrator's Office, along with the previously approved Climate Analyst (CST: Administrative Analyst III), and would be considered the County's Climate Action and Resiliency Division. The three recommended positions consist of a Climate Action and Resiliency Director (Deputy County Administrator), a Principal Administrative Analyst, and an Administrative Aide. The Ad Hoc recommends funding these positions for a three-year period. New position costs and total position costs for the Climate Action and Resiliency Division for the next three fiscal years are included in the table below. The costs of the three new positions for three years is \$1,952,605. Years 2 and 3 costs assume a 3% increase in position costs each year.

<b>New Position Costs</b>	<b>FY 21-22</b>	<b>FY 22-23</b>	<b>FY 23-24</b>
Climate Action and Resiliency Director	\$276,553	\$284,850	\$293,395
Principal Analyst	\$240,177	\$247,382	\$254,804
Administrative Aide	\$114,997	\$118,447	\$122,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$631,727</b>	<b>\$650,679</b>	<b>\$677,199</b>
Climate Analyst	\$221,369	\$228,010	\$234,850
<b>Total Climate Action and Resiliency Division</b>	<b>\$853,096</b>	<b>\$878,689</b>	<b>\$905,090</b>

#### Climate Action and Resiliency Projects

The Climate Action Ad Hoc reviewed many specific climate objectives and proposed actions that have been developed by County departments and agencies through the strategic planning process, the development of the Recovery and Resiliency Framework, input from the community regarding the Pacific Gas and Electric settlement funds, and discussions with a larger county Climate Work Group that includes several external partners. In addition, the April 6, 2021 Climate Town Hall showcased climate work currently underway or planned by County of Sonoma departments and agencies, special districts, a utility, and nonprofit community partners in the county. One Town Hall goal was to engage the community in identifying what the County's priority projects should be to combat climate change and enable Sonoma County to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Having considered all this input, the Climate Action Ad Hoc has now identified a list of projects and initiatives for your Board's discussion and input. The identified short-term projects and initiatives would have multiple

benefits and could be implemented relatively quickly (within the next 18 months).

Attachment C included in this summary report is a matrix of proposed short-term projects, generally, no more than 18 months to complete. These are divided between County and Community projects and initiatives. The County list consists of actions or initiatives over which your Board has oversight or authority. The Community list includes actions your Board may wish to support. These projects generally fall into three buckets: decarbonization, carbon sequestration, and resiliency/climate adaptation. The projects included in the matrix consider a wide range of potential impact and benefits. Some of these considerations include: alignment with the strategic plan, reduction or elimination of greenhouse gas emissions, equity, social justice, resiliency, durability, ability to store or sequester carbon, leveraged with other funds, etc.

The Climate Ad Hoc and staff anticipate some projects may require further scoping to determine exact cost and complete impact.

#### Climate Resiliency Fund

The Climate Action Ad Hoc recommends that the Board consider establishing a Climate Resiliency Fund for staffing and unfunded short-term climate projects identified by the Ad Hoc, County departments and community input from the Climate Town Hall. A Climate Resiliency Fund would fund the additional staffing needed to begin a coordinated effort towards addressing the climate emergency. This fund could be similar to the Infrastructure Fund that the Board approved for fiscal year 2019-2020 and could be accessed to leverage grant opportunities and provide matching funds, similar to the Recovery and Resiliency Fund established after the 2017 fires. With the climate and resiliency priorities established by your Board in the County Strategic Plan, there is a need to identify a funding source to support climate action and resiliency goals and objectives.

The Climate Ad Hoc recommends using PG&E settlement funds to establish the Climate Resiliency Fund. Given the clear nexus between climate resiliency and disaster preparedness and resiliency, PG&E settlement funds is an appropriate funding source. Staffing resources dedicated to advancing climate work would add critical capacity to aggressively pursue and leverage state and federal funding, including sustainable funding for the new climate positions beyond the three years of funding recommended.

The table below shows the balance of PG&E settlement funds available for Board allocation.

<b>PG&amp;E Settlement</b>	<b>149,300,000</b>	
Board-approved allocations		
Funds allocated at FY 20-21 budget hearings	26,800,000	Sept. 2020
Renewal Enterprise District/Housing	10,000,000	10/06/20
Vegetation Management	25,000,000	10/06/20
Transportation and Communications Infrastructure,		
Utilities Undergrounding, Emergency Preparedness	59,070,000	12/15/20
Fuels Map Decision Support Tool	1,600,000	12/15/20
Policy Planning Support (CLEE groups)	70,000	12/15/20
<b>Balance</b>	<b>26,760,000</b>	

#### **Prior Board Actions:**

9/17/19 Adopted the Climate Emergency Resolution

1/6/20 Established the Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee

2/4/20 Adopted resolution to add 1.0 FTE Climate Analyst position to CAO's Office of Recovery and Resiliency

8/11/20 Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee Update

3/2/21 County Board of Supervisors adopted the County Five Year Strategic Plan

4/6/21 County Climate Action Ad Hoc hosted a Climate Town Hall

#### **FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Adopted</b>	<b>FY21-22 Projected</b>	<b>FY 22-23 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>			

#### **Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>
Deputy County Administrator	\$135,637 - \$164,840	1	
Principal Administrative Analyst	\$115,232 - \$140,067	1	
Administrative Aide	\$56,368 - \$68,515	1	

#### **Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

If positions are approved, the County will have the capacity needed to achieve the County's Climate Action and Resiliency goals and objectives, coordinate more effectively with other county agencies implementing climate mitigation and resilience strategies, and partner with Cities and community partners to pursue and leverage funding available for climate work.

#### **Attachments:**

Attachment A: Climate Action Town Hall Summary Report

Attachment B: Proposed Staffing Model

Attachment C: Proposed List of Actions

Attachment D: Presentation

Attachment E: RCPA One-Pagers Decarb Resilient Sequester

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