



Legislation Text

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To: Board of Supervisors

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

Staff Name and Phone Number: Christel Querijero, Barbara Lee and Marissa Montenegro: 565-2431

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Board Update: Legislative Affairs, Strategic Plan and Climate Action & Resiliency

Recommended Action:

- A) Receive a Legislative Affairs update
- B) Receive a Strategic Plan update, accept Objective Implementation Plans, and approve Strategic Plan Funding recommendations
- C) Receive a Climate Action & Resiliency Division update, review the Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity Framework, and approve Climate Resiliency Funding recommendations

Executive Summary:

This item provides an update to your Board on the County's work related to Five-Year Strategic Plan implementation, Climate Action and Resiliency, and Legislative Affairs. It also includes County department and agency funding requests for both the Year 1 Strategic Plan Implementation Fund (\$5 million) and the Climate Resiliency Fund (\$10 million) for the Board's consideration.

Discussion:

Legislative Affairs:

The County participates in various levels of legislative advocacy led by the Board of Supervisors. Legislative advocacy is guided in large part by the legislative platform, which is approved on a biennial basis. The 2021-2022 Legislative Platform was created alongside the county's 5-year strategic planning document and approved on March 23, 2021. The County's legislative efforts over the past year were intentionally aligned with the county's strategic planning goals. Each of the county's legislative advocacy consultants have provided a summary of the 2021 legislative session in addition to opportunities for 2022 in attachments 1a., 1b., and 1c and will summarize this information in a presentation to your Board.

2021 State Legislative Session

The 2021 legislative session was largely focused on COVID-19 response efforts. The pandemic continued to impact legislative operations in how teams and caucus members met and deliberated and the narrowing of legislative topics that were heard to COVID-19 response and recovery and urgent and emergency issues.

2021 also saw the Legislature and Newsom Administration address many other issues of interest to

Sonoma County including, but not limited to, homelessness, housing (including evictions), public meetings, police reform, climate, broadband, emergency response, wildfire prevention and suppression, and the current drought.

Many of these issues comported with the County's 2021 priorities including COVID-19 response, Homelessness, Broadband, Climate Action, Accessibility and Social Equity. Many pieces of legislation in 2021 set the path toward investments called out in the Governor's proposed 2022-23 state budget, released on January 10th.

2021 Federal Legislative Session

The 2021 legislative session included several key legislative actions influencing local government. As of this report, 2022 appropriations bills have not been enacted and the federal government is operating pursuant to a Continuing Resolution enacted in early December and in effect through February 18, 2022.

2021 Federal legislative highlights include:

Appropriations/Earmarks

2021 saw the return of the solicitation of earmarks in the transportation reauthorization/infrastructure legislation and the various appropriations measures. The County submitted the following requests:

- **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST**

Airport Boulevard Widening from Regional Parkway to Ordinance Road

Funding Request: \$3,840,000 - Submitted by Congressman Thompson

Status: Transportation earmarks did not move forward and may be resubmitted.

- **APPROPRIATIONS COMMUNITY FUNDING REQUESTS**

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration

Accessing Coordinated Care and Empowering Self Sufficiency (ACCESS)

Funding Request: \$1,600,000 - Submitted by Congressman Thompson

Status: In House-passed Labor-HHS bill will continue to monitor.

- **TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES**

Economic Development Initiative Projects

SOLAR PV: Resiliency and Grid Independency

Funding Request: \$640,000 - Submitted by Senator Padilla

Status: will continue to monitor.

American Rescue Plan Act

In March, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act; the \$1.9 trillion package was the 5th major COVID relief package passed by Congress since the start of the pandemic in 2020. As part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the \$362 billion Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund provides local fiscal aid to support urgent COVID-19 response efforts, cover increased expenditures, replenish lost revenue and mitigate economic harm from the COVID-19 pandemic. \$96 million was allocated to the County of Sonoma and the Board is leading efforts to allocate locally.

Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act

On November 15, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law. IIJA provides \$1.2 trillion in infrastructure spending over five years, including \$550 billion in “new money”. Within that funding there is \$284 billion for U.S. Department of Transportation programs, including significant funding in areas like \$110 billion for roads and bridges and \$7.5 billion for electric vehicle charging. The bill also raises the off-system bridge set-aside to \$1 billion annually and \$40 billion for a new Bridge Investment Program. In 2022, federal agencies are starting to formulate spending plans for each program.

Build Back Better

On November 19, 2022, the House passed the Build Back Better Act (BBBA) on a 220-213 party-line vote. BBBA is the President’s \$1.9 trillion legislative proposal of health care, childcare, climate, tax initiatives, and immigration provisions. Since passage of the Build Back Better Act in the House, challenges have arisen in the Senate to pass the bill over several disagreements on policy issues and the overall price of the bill. The County has advocated in support and the bill is currently with the Senate and will continue to be negotiated in 2022.

Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs will continue to monitor state and federal efforts on the counties’ legislative and strategic planning priority areas.

Strategic Plan:

Background

After a broad engagement effort with department/agency heads, employees, City and community partners, and members of the public, your Board adopted a Five-Year Strategic Plan on March 2, 2021. The County’s Strategic Plan provides the context to inform policies and projects in the upcoming years

and guides how we align short and long-term objectives with operations and funding decisions.

The Plan has five pillars, each with multiple goals and objectives to achieve the goal. The five pillars are Healthy and Safe Communities, Organizational Excellence, Racial Equity and Social Justice, Climate Action and Resiliency, and Resilient Infrastructure.

Board Liaisons

During the June 2021 Budget Hearings, your Board assigned Strategic Plan Board Member Liaisons. The role as Liaisons was to provide input on outcomes and measures for objectives, implementation phasing and priority projects to achieve outcomes, and city and community partner engagement. Pillar Liaison assignments were as follows:

- Healthy and Safe Communities - Supervisor Coursey and Supervisor Gorin
- Organizational Excellence - Supervisor Coursey and Supervisor Rabbitt
- Racial Equity and Social Justice - Supervisor Gore and Supervisor Hopkins
- Climate Action and Resiliency - Supervisor Gorin and Supervisor Hopkins
- Resilient Infrastructure - Supervisor Gore and Supervisor Rabbitt

Although the Board Liaison role for Strategic Plan was intended for the Year 1 process only, your Board may wish to continue the role to allow for periodic discussions on implementation. Checkpoints over the next year could focus on progress updates on:

- Objective implementation
- Project progress for projects funded with Year 1 funding
- High priority projects
- City and community partner collaboration
- Pursuit of external funding

Implementation Plans

The County Administrator's Office (CAO) Policy, Grants, and Special Projects (PG&SP) Division leads overall Plan implementation. PG&SP Analysts have been coordinating and supporting the Implementation Leads to develop implementation plans, and working to identify areas of potential overlap and collaboration among pillars.

A steering committee of selected Implementation Leads provided guidance and insights to the PG&SP team on the implementation process, project prioritization, and approach; they also participated in the discussions with the Board Liaisons. Implementation Leads identified or developed metrics and/or

measures to indicate progress towards achieving the goals in each plan. All implementation plans are included with this item as attachments (Attachment 2d).

Year 1 Strategic Plan Funding Requests and Recommendations

At the June 2021 Budget Hearings, your Board also approved the County Administrator's recommendation to set aside \$5 million for Year 1 Strategic Plan projects. Implementation Leads prepared and submitted funding requests that are included for your consideration and discussion today. (Attachment 2e) Twenty-seven requests were submitted, totaling \$5.7 million.

With input from each pillar steering committee and CAO Operation and Budget Analyst, the PG&SP team compiled and assess projects in consideration of the following:

- Whether the project needs to be completed before another one can begin
- Whether the project be completed within the proposed timeframe
- Operational feasibility of the project
- Racial equity lens
- Climate lens
- Geographic equity lens
- Degree of city collaboration or partnerships
- Availability of other funding sources for the project

This assessment criteria was used by staff to prioritize which projects should be funded since total project requests exceed the funds set aside for this purpose. A summary of requests and staff recommendations for funding is included in (Attachment 2c).

Reporting and Tracking

Updates to the Board on Strategic Plan implementation and progress to achieve desired outcomes will be shared through an Annual Report. The first such report will come to the Board at the beginning of 2023. CAO-PG&SP will continue to engage with Implementation Leads, especially as items come before the Board indicating Strategic Plan alignment. Additionally, CAO-PG&SP will periodically coordinate gathering selected metrics and measures from Implementation Plan Leads so that they can be tracked and posted to the County's Strategic Plan website for transparency to the public.

Next Steps

If directed by your Board, staff will program funding allocations for approved projects from Strategic Plan Year 1 funds through the consolidated budget adjustment process.

CAO-PG&SP will continue to support Implementation Leads and track progress and further develop the Strategic Plan public website. If there is interest to continue the Board Liaison role, the team will also begin scheduling checkpoints and plan for key topics for discussion and input. The Strategic Plan website may be accessed at <https://socostrategicplan.org/>

Climate Action & Resiliency:

Climate Action & Resiliency Division Update

The Climate Action & Resiliency Division (CARD, or Division) was established within the County Administrator's Office (CAO) in May 2021. The Division is responsible for implementing your Board's vision for climate action and building climate resiliency in the County, in particular the CAR Pillar of the Strategic Plan.

In addition to developing a framework for prioritizing climate/resilience projects and actions, and preparing recommendations for Climate Resilience Fund allocations (both discussed in detail below), the Division is collaborating with the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) on the development of a Natural and Working Lands Climate Adaptation Plan. The Plan will provide the county with recommended actions to best prepare natural and working lands for a changing climate, and will assist with pursuing related state and federal funding opportunities. The Plan development includes technical and implementation advisory committees to ensure it is built on the most complete, and relevant data, and is shaped by diverse perspectives.

The Division is also collaborating with the Energy and Sustainability Division (ESD) in the General Services Department (GSD) and is looking forward to the joining of the two divisions in February. The opportunities created by this closer collaboration are shaping staffing decisions for both Divisions. Over the next six months staff will evaluate the benefits and opportunities realized by the closer collaboration and will present recommendations regarding a permanent merging.

As the Division develops a more comprehensive work plan for the coming fiscal year, staff will continue to emphasize collaboration with climate and resiliency partners within and outside of the County family. In the near term, your Board will have the opportunity to consider joining the Geothermal Opportunity Zone. This Zone has been spearheaded by Sonoma Clean Power to explore and promote the further development of geothermal power using new small-scale, closed-loop technology that requires less steam resource pressure and results in significantly lower environmental impacts. Your Board will consider a resolution regarding the Geothermal Resource Zone at its meeting on February 8, 2022.

Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity (CARE) Framework

In order 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. 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 to your Board's identified priorities, the 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 was used to evaluate potential projects and is the basis for recommendations for the allocation of the \$10 million Climate Resilience Fund, discussed below. CARD will continue to refine, enhance and update the Framework based on broad collaborations and the development of Federal and State priorities. The CARE Framework can also be used to develop robust and impactful climate projects, or to compare and evaluate other groups of projects from a climate perspective.

Climate Resiliency Funding (CRF) Recommendations

County departments and agencies submitted 19 potential projects to consider for funding. CARD staff worked to help refine the potential projects. CARD staff recommends the following allocations of the CRF:

1. Reserve roughly 50% of the CRF, or roughly \$5 million, for future projects, especially ones leveraging outside funds
2. Allocate the remaining amount to projects from this round, as recommended below:
 - a. **Tier 1:** Strongly recommend funding for ten (10) projects based on their relatively high Performance Score and relatively low County Cost
 - b. **Tier 2:** Recommend funding for two (2) projects based on their overall high Performance Score and relatively high County Cost
 - c. **Tier 3:** Consider funding for one (1) project based on its low Performance Score but potential for high indirect impacts not accounted for, and low County Cost
3. Direct staff to support and encourage departments/agencies whose projects were not selected for funding to refine projects guided by the CARE Framework and identify outside funds for leveraging
4. Reconsider the remaining projects with refinements and leveraging, and possibly other projects, in a second round of funding

Prior Board Actions:

Legislative Affairs:

March 23, 2021 - Approved 2021-2022 State and Federal Legislative Platform

November 10, 2020 - Received 2020 State Legislative End of Session Report

Strategic Plan:

March 2, 2021 - Approved 5-Year Strategic Plan

Climate Action & Resiliency:

September 17, 2019 - Climate Emergency Resolution adopted and signed

January 6, 2020 - Created the Climate Action Ad Hoc Committee and reviewed four climate staffing options

February 4, 2020 - Amended the County Administrator’s Office position allocation list to add 1.0 full-time equivalent Climate Analyst

April 6, 2021 - Climate Town Hall

May 11, 2021 - Created the Climate Resilience Fund, reviewed potential climate projects, and approved staffing structure to add three more 1.0 full-time equivalent climate staff and move into new Climate Action and Resiliency Division.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/PG&E Settlement	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The Fiscal Year 21-22 Budget contains expenditure appropriations for both the Strategic Plan (\$5 million) and the Climate Resiliency Fund (\$10 million). Staff will return via Q2 Consolidated Budget Adjustments to authorize departmental budget adjustments based on the approvals outlined in this item.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

1. Legislative Affairs:
 - 1a: State 2021 End of Session Report - Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
 - 1b: Federal 2021 End of Session Report - Thorn Run Partners
 - 1c: Federal 2021 End of Session Report - Van Scoyoc Associates

2. Strategic Plan:
 - 2a: Implementation Plan Summary
 - 2b: Strategic Plan Implementation Timeline
 - 2c: Year 1 Funding Request Summary
 - 2d: Implementation Plans
 - 2e: Year 1 Funding Requests

3. Climate Action & Resiliency:
 - 3a: Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity (CARE) Framework Overview
 - 3b: Climate Resiliency Fund (CRF) Summary of Potential Projects
 - 3c: Climate Resiliency Fund (CRF) Project Scoring Breakdown
 - 3d: Climate Resiliency Fund (CRF) Project Descriptions
 - 3e: Climate Action, Resiliency and Equity (CARE) Framework Detail

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

1. Strategic Plan