



## Legislation Text

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**To:** County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** County Administrators Office, Climate Action & Resiliency Division

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Simone Albuquerque, (707) 565-2132

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** County-Wide

**Title:**

Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan Workshop

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Receive overview of approach and content for the draft Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan.
- B) Provide direction on the draft approach and scope of actions to reduce both municipal and community GHG emissions, increase carbon storage, and reduce municipal waste.

**Executive Summary:**

Staff is developing a Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan that will lay out the actions needed to achieve your Board's goal of making County facilities carbon free, zero waste, and resilient, and support community progress to carbon neutrality and resilience by 2030. The purpose of this workshop is to provide an overview of the progress to date and receive guidance on the draft structure and content of the Comprehensive Action Plan.

To develop the proposed approach for the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan, staff established a baseline for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, carbon sequestered in the Sonoma County landscape, and waste generated by municipal operations. Staff also engaged a comprehensive energy audit of County facilities. Together these studies identify measures for County operations to become carbon neutral by 2030, should significant investment of resources be committed to implement. Increased carbon sequestration will play a critical role in achieving carbon neutrality and will also build resilience in the landscape to the hazards of climate change.

During today's Workshop, staff is seeking direction from your Board on the proposed approach and content of the draft Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan. A complete list of potential Climate Resilience actions can be found in Attachment 7. Staff seeks direction on the following policy issues:

1. The general approach and proposed content for the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan.
2. The proposed scope of municipal emission reduction and carbon sequestration actions, specifically if there are any identified that your Board decides should not be included, and alternatively if there are any categories of actions, or specific actions, that should be added.
3. The proposed scope and phasing of energy upgrades proposed for County facilities (see also Attachment 1).
4. The proposed approach to support community progress to carbon neutrality and resilience, and any specific actions staff should evaluate for inclusion in the Plan.
5. Any questions or concerns that staff should evaluate in the cost-benefit analysis and/or the multi-criteria analysis of the draft Plan.

### **Discussion:**

In March of 2021, your Board approved Sonoma County's [Five-Year Strategic Plan <https://socostrategicplan.org/>](https://socostrategicplan.org/) which includes the Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar. The overarching goal of that pillar is to make Sonoma County carbon neutral by 2030, with specific goals to: (1) support wildfire resilience; (2) support community progress to carbon neutrality and resilience; (3) make County facilities carbon free, zero waste, and resilient; (4) maximize sustainability and emission reductions in the County fleet; and (5) maximize climate mitigation and adaptation through land use and conservation. Over the last two years, County departments and agencies have taken important steps toward implementing the Pillar. On August 29, 2023, your Board received an update on implementation, and an overview of studies underway to support the development of a Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan. The Comprehensive Action Plan will lay out the actions needed to achieve your Board's goal of making County facilities carbon free, zero waste, and resilient, and support community progress to carbon neutrality and resilience by 2030. It will also articulate how ongoing work by the County and its partners will collectively advance all of the Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar goals.

### **Establishing a Baseline:**

To develop the proposed approach for the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan, staff established a baseline for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, carbon sequestered in the Sonoma County landscape, and waste generated by municipal operations. Staff also engaged a comprehensive energy audit of County facilities.

#### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

On August 29, 2023, your Board accepted a [Municipal GHG Inventory <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6326370&GUID=C1AD234F-7823-4BE8-B3B7-1E5934F970D7>](https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6326370&GUID=C1AD234F-7823-4BE8-B3B7-1E5934F970D7) that included a business-as-usual forecast of County emissions from 2021 through 2030. The Inventory presented the GHG reduction impact of planned federal and state actions on that forecast and evaluated the impact of feasible County actions to reduce emissions by 2030. In 2021, County operations released 31,712 metric tons of GHG emissions in carbon dioxide equivalents, or MT CO<sub>2</sub>e. The analysis showed that even if the County implements all feasible operational GHG emission reduction strategies, in 2030 the County's operations will still release about 8 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e.

The Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) prepared a community wide [GHG Inventory for 2020 <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://rcpa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/RCPA-Community-GHG-Inventory-2020-Update-FINAL-2022-09-06.pdf>](https://rcpa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/RCPA-Community-GHG-Inventory-2020-Update-FINAL-2022-09-06.pdf). That inventory shows that a little over 3 million MT CO<sub>2</sub>e were emitted county-wide in 2020, with about 820,612 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e coming from unincorporated Sonoma County. Climate Action and Resiliency Division (CARD) programs support residents and businesses across Sonoma County, and they will continue to do so, however the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan will place an emphasis on actions to support unincorporated and underserved communities.

#### **Carbon Stored in the Landscape**

On November 7, 2023, your Board accepted the [County of Sonoma Carbon Inventory and Potential Sequestration Study Report <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6399747&GUID=42EF9CFA-1B23-4B80-BE5C-6DC2B882A484>](https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6399747&GUID=42EF9CFA-1B23-4B80-BE5C-6DC2B882A484). That report showed that Sonoma County landscapes stored 105,365,590 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2022. This is analogous to having over 105 million MT CO<sub>2</sub>e in the bank. The report also showed that carbon stocks declined from 2013 by about 10%, likely from wildfires and drought although some of the decrease may be attributed to underlying differences in the datasets used for the comparison. The decrease in stored carbon represents over 12 million MT CO<sub>2</sub>e which left the landscape bank that was released as GHG emissions - in addition to emissions from municipal operations and community-wide activities. It underscores the importance of preserving and conserving existing carbon stocks.

The Carbon Inventory and Potential Sequestration Study also evaluated opportunities to increase stored carbon through recognized conservation practices. The practice with the greatest potential to store carbon in the Sonoma County

landscape is urban tree planting, which could increase carbon storage by up to 701,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year if fully implemented in all areas identified by the study as potentially suitable. Other practices, such as riparian restoration, rangeland planting, and compost amendment, could store an estimated 49,692 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e, 222,099 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e, and 126,206 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year, respectively, if fully implemented in all suitable locations.

### **Municipal Waste Generation**

On September 26, 2023, your Board accepted the [Zero Waste Audit and Characterization Study <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6358255&GUID=EFA7A076-148F-4055-9876-B33CCFCEFB16>](https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6358255&GUID=EFA7A076-148F-4055-9876-B33CCFCEFB16). The Study characterized waste streams at eighteen facilities selected to represent the types and quantities of waste generated by County operations. The Study found that County facilities generated a total of 1,413 cubic yards (or 179,239 lbs) of waste in a week. Organic material was the most frequently encountered element within the landfill waste stream followed by paper and metal. These items are divertible, meaning they do not need to enter the landfill. Approximately sixty-seven percent of the waste generated at county facilities could be recycled, composted, or otherwise diverted from the landfill.

### **Facility Energy Audits**

Building energy use accounted for 29% of the County’s Municipal GHG emissions in 2021. With an overarching goal to achieve carbon neutrality, and a specific goal to make County facilities carbon free, the County needs a plan to eliminate natural gas use and increase energy efficiency and renewable energy. In July 2021, the County engaged the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Sustainable Solutions Turnkey (SST) program through a Master Services Agreement to evaluate County buildings and propose a scope of work for equipment and other retrofits that improve energy efficiency, reduce utility costs and provide resiliency upgrades to meet the County’s Strategic Plan goals of making County facilities carbon free and resilient. Under the SST Program, contractors and County staff performed a preliminary assessment of County facilities. After considering factors such as future facility use scenarios and the expected life of the building, the project team (including CARD and Sonoma Public Infrastructure (SPI) Facility Operations and Capital Projects staff) identified 87 buildings to receive utility usage analyses. Based on those analyses, the team selected 66 existing County buildings to receive detailed investment grade audits (IGAs) of their energy use and opportunities to reduce that use, associated GHG emissions, and utility costs. The preliminary findings are included later in this item for discussion and Board direction.

### **Preparing a Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan:**

The Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan will lay out discrete actions to reduce GHG emissions from County operations that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. Staff proposes to organize municipal actions to reduce GHG emissions around key sectors: energy, transportation, resilient lands, waste, water, and wildfire resilience. The Plan will also outline an equity-centered process to engage communities to identify barriers they face to becoming carbon neutral and resilient, and to develop strategies and actions to reduce those barriers. The process will be collaborative and will build partnerships and foster community leadership. It will be coordinated with the cities, with RCPA, Sonoma Clean Power, Resource Conservation Districts and others.

The Comprehensive Action Plan approach and content has been shaped by input from your Board in the August 29, 2023 Workshop, a staff survey in Summer 2023, and a public survey in Fall 2023. A Climate Resilience Town Hall on November 1, 2023, yielded about 90 questions and comments that are also informing staff development of the draft Plan. In addition, staff is conducting individual interviews and focus groups of internal and external partners to further develop the Comprehensive Action Plan approach and content. Key input so far is summarized in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Key Input Received	
County Staff	Community Members

Identify high priority climate resilience actions and streamline processes for approval & implementation	Increase collaboration opportunities with County elected officials and department leaders
Assess economic impacts to inform objectives and actions	Expand availability of online materials and resources
Consider funding mechanisms other than grants, like public-private partnerships	Strengthen and leverage partnerships with community-based organizations
Foster opportunities for staff to serve in internal leadership roles on climate resilience actions	Broaden virtual education opportunities
	Augment rebate programs, cost incentives, and cash assistance

Today’s Workshop offers an opportunity for additional public input.

### Climate Resilience Actions for Municipal Operations:

#### **Reducing Facility Energy Use**

Energy upgrades are recommended for 66 County facilities based on an evaluation of energy use, age of the equipment, and the expected life and future use of the facility; none of the recommended upgrades would affect facilities anticipated to be replaced by the new County Center. Through the PG&E SST program, investment grade audits (IGAs) of energy use were initiated. Based on your Board’s guidance during today’s Workshop, an Energy Conservation Assessment will be prepared, with fixed and firm contractor pricing, to be included in the final Comprehensive Action Plan for Board consideration. The recommended energy upgrades are presented in two phases. Phase I energy upgrades likely would meet the requirements of Government Code 4217 by paying for themselves with avoided costs over the life of the equipment. These are upgrades that can be implemented through the streamlined contracting and financing procedures of the SST program. Phase II upgrades are more capital-intensive and likely do not meet the requirements of Government Code 4217. The measures in Phase II are not anticipated to pay for themselves in energy savings, however, your Board may wish to consider advancing some, or all, of these upgrades in the future. Phase II includes actions such as electrifying and upgrading existing, end-of-life equipment and installing Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure are projected to result in substantial GHG emission reductions. Executing on all identified measures is estimated to reduce yearly GHG emissions by more than 8 million lbs. of CO<sub>2</sub>e or 3,628 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e, a reduction that represents about 30% (29.7%) of the baseline GHG emissions from energy use by County facilities.

#### Phase I upgrades include:

- Lighting upgrades at 55 buildings (\$5,071,200);
- High efficiency heating and cooling at the Juvenile Justice Center, Facility Operations, Maintenance, and Animal Services (\$1,154,800);
- Advanced building management systems in 45 buildings (\$7,083,600);
- upgrade high-flow water fixtures (\$1,483,500);
- Install high efficiency transformers in up to 5 buildings (\$700,000);
- Install high efficiency heat pump water heaters with pre-reserved incentives (\$119,900, less \$103,800 in rebates);
- Install solar to offset 25% of County Center electricity use, including 270 kW roof-mounted solar (\$1,334,100, less \$340,000 in tax incentives), and 2 MW carport solar (\$12,427,700, less \$3,169,100 in tax incentives); and
- Install up to 5,000 kWh of battery storage at the County Center and Los Guilicos (\$6,600,000, less \$2,435,000 in tax incentives).

None of the upgrades would affect buildings that may be replaced by the new County Center. The preliminary cost for all

upgrades is estimated at \$35,974,800, with a total of \$6,048,100 in incentives; those costs would be recovered through energy savings in 17 years. The upgrades would reduce utility costs by \$1,273,000 per year, reduce energy used by 5,752,700 kWh/yr & 34,000 therms/yr, and reduce 846,500 lbs. or 384.0 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e (about 3.1% of baseline energy GHG). Note that while the estimated energy savings are large, the expected GHG emissions reductions associated with these improvements appear small; this is in large part because the County purchases electricity that is already very clean from Sonoma Clean Power. More details about the proposed upgrades can be found in Attachment 1.

Phase II upgrades include:

- High efficiency heating and cooling at remaining buildings (\$29,682,100);
- Install 120 ports of Level 2 vehicle charging (\$4,893,400);
- Additional high efficiency hot water heating at remaining buildings (\$2,713,300);
- High efficiency heating and hot water at the Central Mechanical Plant (\$17,765,400); and
- Replace the failing icehouse at the Spud Point Marina (\$3,200,000).

None of the upgrades would affect buildings that may be replaced by the new County Center. The total cost is estimated at \$58,254,200, with a total of \$869,800 in incentives. The upgrades would increase utility costs by \$303,500 per year, increase 3,807,550 kWh/yr and decrease 531,000 therms/yr, and reduce 7,203,000 lbs. or 3,267.3 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e (about 26.7% of baseline energy GHG).

Additional information about the recommended upgrades, estimated installation and other costs, and other details is provided in Attachment 1, along with discussion of alternative, more limited project scoping for Phase I upgrades. The preliminary energy upgrade pricing estimates shown in this report are based on initial site walks, historic information, and standard estimating rules, with an accuracy of +/- 20%. Fixed and firm pricing will be provided as part of the final IGA report. These upgrade estimates reflect lease financing costs, which are subject to market variation and other changes and will be calculated when fixed and firm pricing is in hand. Cost estimates also do not reflect other project- and financing-related costs, such as internal county project management and outside financing services. The cost of the Investment Grade Audits (\$275,000) will be due when the final report is delivered but may be rolled into the cost of any upgrades selected for implementation through the SST program.

The funding sources available for the proposed upgrades include Tax Exempt Lease Purchase financing, bonds and grants, on-bill financing, utility rebates, Power Purchase Agreements, and County contributions. Up to \$4 million of Phase I lighting upgrades are eligible for on-bill financing at zero interest with approval of the California Public Utilities Commission. On October 3, 2023, your Board approved a Master Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement for up to \$9 million in energy equipment purchases, of which about \$1.8 million has been dedicated to the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building energy upgrades; the remaining financing capacity could be used with approval by your Board.

Staff seeks direction from your Board to identify which of the Phase I and/or Phase II proposed energy upgrades to prioritize for further analysis, costing, and proposal for funding and delivery. Based on that direction, staff will work to obtain fixed and firm pricing proposals for the identified Phase I energy upgrade packages, as well as estimates for any identified Phase II upgrades. For all identified upgrade proposals, direction and any questions, concerns, or guidance related to funding and financing will help inform options for later presentation on further decision on if and how to proceed on any actual implementation. IGAs for all 66 County facilities are scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023 and fixed and firm pricing will be secured for the energy upgrades prioritized by your Board and included in the draft Comprehensive Plan for Board consideration.

### ***Reducing Transportation Emissions***

The transportation emissions associated with the County's operations come from the light duty fleet (passenger cars and light trucks), the heavy-duty fleet (heavy trucks, and on-road and off-road equipment), and employee commute. There are currently zero-emission light duty vehicles on the market with suitable range and function for fleet use. The Comprehensive Action Plan could develop a Fleet Electrification Plan based on the replacement schedule for the existing light duty fleet and other factors identified in the Draft EV Investment Road Map. Staff is expecting the award of federal funding to complete the Fleet Electrification Plan in 2024. There are limited zero emission heavy duty vehicles currently on the market, and the heavy-duty vehicle pipeline is lagging. For this reason, the Comprehensive Action Plan could focus instead on developing a longer-term Heavy-Duty Fleet Decarbonization Strategy, which would evaluate near-zero emission, and other low-emission alternatives for heavy duty fleets.

Shifting the fleets to zero and near-zero emissions will require investment in supporting infrastructure. Staff expects the Fleet Electrification Plan will include a Municipal EV Infrastructure Plan that will ensure that charging infrastructure is expanded as needed to support the transition to electric vehicles. The Fleet Electrification Plan will also identify maintenance infrastructure needs as well as staff training and potentially changes to job specifications.

There are 1,770 County employees living in the City of Santa Rosa, and 3,735 employees living within 25 miles of the Sonoma County Airport. The County has a Clean Commute incentive program for employees and has implemented an online tracking system for employees to log alternative commute trips. On October 17, 2023, your Board approved enhancements to the Clean Commute program, including: (1) a reciprocal bus pass pilot program with City of Santa Rosa for employees to ride free by showing their County ID; (2) free EV charging for County employees for up to 3 hours per day; (3) free bike parking at bike lockers located on County campus; and (4) an increase in the Clean Commute Monthly Incentive from \$40 to \$100 per month per employee. The Comprehensive Action Plan could optimize the telework policy to further reduce commuting; provide additional pre-tax benefits for commuting in other than a single-occupancy vehicle; further optimize transit incentives; initiate shuttle service from SMART to the County Center; expand rideshare support; and expand worksite EV charging availability.

Staff is seeking feedback on the approach to reducing municipal transportation emissions, the measures identified, and any additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### ***Reducing Waste***

To reduce the amount of divertible materials in the waste disposal stream, the County needs to provide clear information about proper disposal, and make separating materials easier. Using the results of the Waste Audit, the Comprehensive Action Plan could identify preparing waste disposal guidelines for each location type and ensure the appropriate receptacles are located where waste is generated. The Plan could also expand outreach and education to staff about proper disposal, and promote it through contests, prizes, and other forms of recognition.

Other actions to reduce municipal waste generation include:

- Develop integrated, holistic waste management at public-use facilities (Vets Halls, parks, campgrounds, marinas);
- Develop and implement seasonal programs and staffing for seasonal waste locations;
- Incentivize vendor contracts to meet zero waste goals;
- Establish policy to audit facilities run by subcontractors;
- Provide ongoing technical/compliance assistance with Zero Waste Sonoma and Recology;
- Adopt the Zero Waste Sonoma Construction, Demolition, & Diversion Model Ordinance for County projects, and establish an internal tracking and verification program for waste diversion.

Staff is seeking feedback on the approach to reducing municipal solid waste disposal, the measures identified, and any

additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### ***Increasing Carbon Storage & Land Resilience***

To protect and increase carbon storage and climate resilience in the landscape, the Comprehensive Action Plan could establish an annual sequestration goal and outline a collaborative process to identify specific actions to achieve the target.

The Plan could also:

- Support the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) on strategic land protection and stewardship;
- Work with Permit Sonoma to implement existing and develop new land use policies;
- Track specific landscape type conversions to understand where/how landscapes have changed over time;
- Implement Climate Smart Practices on County facilities and lands;
- Develop a Street Tree Plan;
- Support carbon sequestration training for landscape professionals, and County and municipal parks and recreation staff; and
- Continue to develop equity criteria to evaluate and prioritize County investments on private lands.

Staff is seeking feedback on the carbon sequestration measures identified, and any additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### ***Increasing Water Resilience***

To improve municipal water resilience, the Comprehensive Action Plan could:

- Evaluate and prioritize water saving opportunities at existing County facilities;
- Incorporate water saving features into new construction of County facilities;
- Coordinate with and support Sonoma Water's implementation of its Climate Adaptation Plan; and
- Coordinate with and support Sonoma Water's implementation of its Energy & Climate Resiliency Policy.

Staff is seeking feedback on the water resilience measures identified, and any additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### ***Increasing Wildfire Resilience***

To improve the wildfire resilience of County facilities, the County should complete the study, currently in the Request for Proposals stage, for development of a sustainable, integrated wildfire risk management program. The 2-year project is being overseen by the County Administrator's Office in collaboration with Ag + Open Space, County Counsel, Permit Sonoma, and Sonoma Water, and includes a series of technical advisory committees. Building on the findings and recommendations of that study, the Comprehensive Action Plan should incorporate steps to develop sustainable funding and implement the integrated program. The Plan could also evaluate and prioritize wildfire risk reduction opportunities on County-owned lands, including parks, public rights of way and other vegetated spaces, and partner with Ag + Open Space and Sonoma Water to evaluate their lands. Similarly, the Plan could evaluate and prioritize wildfire structure hardening opportunities for County facilities, and develop a wildfire risk reduction action plan for County lands and facilities, integrated into other emergency planning efforts.

Staff is seeking feedback on the approach to increasing wildfire resilience, the measures identified, and any additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### ***Operationalizing Coordinated Implementation***

The Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan will propose organizational structures and processes to ensure coordinated implementation of the municipal actions in the Plan. Key elements include:

- Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and organizational placement and ownership for implementing actions;
- Establishing coordination structures and forums;
- Streamlining implementation of high priority actions, as well as simple but effective tracking and reporting processes;
- Ensuring progress is tracked and updated on a dashboard; and
- Providing an annual report to your Board, with recommended course corrections as needed.

### **Climate Resilience for Communities:**

The County's approach to community climate action and resiliency has evolved over the last two decades. The County first established an internally focused service area for energy efficiency in 2006 with an emphasis on utility management. In 2009, that municipal focus broadened to include community support with the creation of the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP), a "whole house" energy audit rebate program with education and outreach. At the same time, the County began supporting "green" workforce development with the establishment of the Tool Lending Library to help contractors develop energy efficiency services without having to invest upfront in expensive, specialized tools. That community effort has continued to grow through partnerships with Sonoma Clean Power, the Bay Area Regional Energy Network, the PG&E Local Government Partnership, and collaborations with cities, libraries, and RCPA. Today, the County's Home Resilience Guide is available in English and Spanish in print and online, and the County offers workshops, consultations, webinars, and a video library covering energy efficiency and renewable energy topics, drought resilience, earthquake safety, and wildfire home hardening, as well as approaches to funding, financing, and incentives for climate resilience improvements.

In collaboration with partners across the Bay Area, staff is evaluating the effectiveness of different strategies to support community action to increase climate resilience. An expansion of the unified service delivery model forms the basis for the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan approach to community support. The existing model provides access to meaningful information through a wide variety of forms, venues, and platforms. It supports project identification and planning with a range of one-stop services and offers resources such as access to grants, rebates, and financing, a participating contractor search, and responses to questions in-person, by phone, and online. Under this model, the program tracks, quantifies, and reports on outcomes, and supports residents and businesses, commercial, industrial, and agricultural interests, property owners and renters, and public sector entities. The expansion of this model is based on the identification and understanding of the unique needs for specific regional communities. One way to determine the specific needs of communities is determining the climate resilience risks based on ecoregions. Every ecoregion has distinct climate risks due to its landscape and can benefit from tailored resilience ideas, implementation, and monitoring over time. To ensure that different localities are being equitably engaged on barriers to climate resilience implementation, collaboration between the County and community-based organizations (CBOs) will enhance community outreach options and data collection opportunities.

The County could develop surveys, facilitate focus groups, and engage with communities to gather data for equitable distribution of climate resilience resources, in alignment with other County-wide programming and services provided. Understanding this information will allow for a more fulfilling program design that addresses climate resilience and carbon neutrality goals for the County of Sonoma by 2030. Additionally, the expansion of the model presents a robust opportunity for equitable implementation of climate resilience solutions, by directly addressing situational barriers to progress.

By taking community support to the next level, the Comprehensive Action Plan can center equity in the support model by systematically engaging communities, residents, and businesses to identify the specific barriers they are facing that



prevent them from making progress to carbon neutrality and climate resilience. Working with and through local partners and community-based organizations, the Plan can develop a more specific and nuanced understanding of these barriers for different geographic regions, different ethnic and socio-economic groups, and different sectors of the local economy. The Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan can lay out a community engagement process that supports community members in identifying and prioritizing the climate challenges that are most meaningful in their lives, identifying the barriers to building resilience to those challenges, and then prioritizing actions the County and the community can take together to reduce those barriers.

Staff is seeking input on the proposal to develop an equity-centered process opportunities to support community progress towards carbon neutrality and resilience. In particular, staff seeks your Board's input regarding the expansion of the unified service delivery model working with diverse focus groups of residents, businesses and partners to build community capacity for climate resilience, as well as any additional questions, concerns, or other policy direction your Board may wish to give. Please see summarized outline provided in Attachment 7.

### **Costs, Benefits, and Next Steps:**

Staff will soon be releasing a Request for Proposals to engage a consultant to perform a cost benefit analysis of the municipal actions in the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan, and cost estimates for the community support elements in the Plan. The cost benefit analysis will quantify cost and benefits of proposed actions and their consequences to the County - and, as applicable, to businesses, individual residents, communities, the environment, and the economy at large. To evaluate and relatively rank the non-cost benefits of different actions, staff is applying a multi-criteria analysis that is based on the Climate Action, Resilience, and Equity (CARE) framework your Board approved for evaluating projects seeking Climate Resilience Funds. The CARE framework prioritizes actions based on their potential to deliver multiple benefits.

A key aspect of economic impacts of the Comprehensive Action Plan is considering how it addresses economic impacts of climate change on underserved residents. The Plan can promote workforce development and a just transition to the green economy by integrating green job infrastructure into project planning and funding applications. The Plan can also outline partnerships with educational institutions and trade organizations to expand and develop job skills training in areas such as: Climate Smart Practice Planning/Implementation, Green Building Technology, Building Energy Use Assessment, Electric Vehicle Maintenance, Advanced Energy Technology Installation and Maintenance, and Specialized Contractor Trainings. The Comprehensive Action Plan will also design actions and implementation to ensure equitable distribution and access to County services and outcome benefits.

The Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan will evaluate a potential funding framework. The framework could consider a five-year funding strategy that incorporates complimentary funding sources in line with the findings of the cost benefit analysis. In evaluating the framework, staff will leverage federal technical assistance support, and coordinate with departments and agencies in the County family that work on climate resilience issues to identify the resources needed to implement the Plan. Potential funding sources include: discretionary budget funds, financing, use surcharges and mitigation fees, public-private partnerships, a county-wide funding initiative, and grant opportunities.

Attachment 3 summarizes recent climate resilience grant awards and current applications for funding, as well as funding opportunities on the horizon.

For residents and businesses, the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) is an important source of funding for climate resilience projects in the home or business. In its 14-year existence, SCEIP has financed over \$100 million in climate resilience improvements to homes and businesses. The SCEIP bond balance continues to show strong growth and is on track to exceed 20% growth from last fiscal year. The Comprehensive Action Plan can evaluate opportunities to expand the use of SCEIP as a tool to support community climate resilience, and in particular outline

partnerships to promote SCEIP financing for climate resilience improvements at multi-family residential housing.

**Next Steps**

At the end of today’s Workshop direction received from your Board on the items listed below will be integrated into the next steps items shown in the subsequent table. Staff will use this direction to prioritize actions for analyzing costs and benefits and developing the draft Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan for your Board’s review in May 2024.

1. The general approach and proposed content for the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan;
2. The proposed scope of municipal emission reduction and carbon sequestration actions, specifically if there are any identified that your Board decides should not be included, and alternatively if there are any categories of actions, or specific actions, that should be added;
3. The specific scope and phasing of energy upgrades proposed for County facilities;
4. The proposed approach to support community progress to carbon neutrality and resilience, and any specific actions staff should evaluate for inclusion in the Plan; and
5. Any questions or concerns that staff should evaluate in the cost-benefit analysis and/or the multi-criteria analysis of the draft Plan.

Follow-up Items	2024-Q1	2024-Q2	2024-Q3	2024-Q4
Energy Upgrades	IGA & ECA Report, funding analysis	Proposed upgrade and funding (April)	Funding agreements & contracting	Construction & installation
Comprehensive Action Plan Actions	Refine & evaluate actions	Proposed Plan (May)	Develop tracking & implement Plan	Implement & report to Board (Dec)
Cost Benefit Analysis	Contracting & analysis	Analysis in Plan (May)		
Coordinated Implementation Plan	Collaborate with departments	Collaborate with partners	Proposed Plan (July/August)	Implement
Outreach and Engagement	Focus groups on draft actions	Maintain current outreach	Maintain current outreach	Expand outreach in communities

**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 3: Make all County facilities carbon free, zero waste and resilient; and Goal 2 Invest in the Community to support carbon neutrality and resilience. Also supports other CAR Pillar goals

**Objective:** all

**Racial Equity:**

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

Yes

This item is a Board workshop to inform development of a Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan.

Staff completed the Racial Equity Toolkit Analysis for the process currently underway to develop the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan. The Analysis (see Attachment 4 delineates the connections between the Comprehensive Action Plan and other efforts in the County to advance racial equity. The community support element of the Comprehensive Action Plan is being designed through an equity-centered lens and will specifically address mechanisms to promote climate equity and a just transition to the green economy. A more extensive Racial Equity Analysis will be included when the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan is proposed for Board consideration.

**Prior Board Actions:**

November 7, 2023: County of Sonoma Carbon Inventory and Potential Sequestration Study  
September 26, 2023: County of Sonoma Municipal Zero Waste Audit and Characterization Study  
August 29, 2023: Board Climate Resilience Workshop

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Resources impacts are expected. Thus, a fiscal analysis will be completed using the cost-benefit analysis by an outside consultant and is expected to be presented to the Board with the proposed Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan in May 2024.

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

N/A.

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1: Summary of Recommended Energy Upgrades at County Facilities  
Attachment 2: Energy Upgrades Facility Implementation Details  
Attachment 3: Climate Resilience Grants Overview  
Attachment 4: Racial Equity Analysis of the Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan Process  
Attachment 5: Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan Workshop Agenda  
Attachment 6: Climate Resilience Comprehensive Action Plan Workshop Presentation  
Attachment 7: Outline of Potential Climate Resilience Actions

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

None.