



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Community Services
Department
Department No.: 057
For Agenda Of: July 7, 2020
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 1 hour
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department George Chapjian, Community Services Director
Director(s) 805-568-2467

Contact Info: Garrett Wong, Climate Program Manager
805-568-3503
SUBJECT: 2030 Climate Action Plan

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management, Planning and
Development
As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive and file an update on progress towards the County's Energy and Climate Action Plan goals and actions taken to implement the Board's direction to develop a 2030 Climate Action Plan that employs a regional approach and incorporates resiliency measures (Attachment A);
- B. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute an Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with Rincon Consultants, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$516,235 for climate action planning services (Attachment B);
- C. Authorize the Director of the Community Services Department, or designee, to amend the Agreement for Services with Rincon Consultants, Inc. to increase the amount of the Agreement up to a 5 percent contingency amount not to exceed \$25,812, for services within the scope of the Statement of Work of the Agreement, for a total Agreement amount not to exceed \$542,047;
- D. Determine that the recommended actions do not constitute a project subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306, as the actions consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, and Section 15378(b)(4), as the actions are the creation of government

funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project, and Section 15378(b)(5), as the actions are the organizational and administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

After receiving an Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) Progress Report showing greenhouse (GHG) emissions had risen 14% from 2007 levels, the Board established a new goal to reduce emission to 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 (50x30) during its December 11, 2018 hearing. The Board also directed staff to update the ECAP employing a regional approach inclusive of local jurisdictions and the community, and to incorporate resiliency measures. Updating the ECAP is currently in Planning and Development's Long Range Planning Division's Fiscal Year 19-20 work plan, but after internal discussions, the Community Services and Planning & Development Departments determined that development of the new ECAP should be led by Community Services Sustainability Division. The Sustainability Division recommends that the County follow the same naming convention used by almost all other local governments and hereafter refer to the 2030 document as the Climate Action Plan (CAP) rather than the ECAP.

At the direction of the Board, various projects have moved forward that will significantly reduce emissions, including implementation of Community Choice Energy and the Tajiguas ReSource Center project. State policies will also help meet the 50x30 emission reduction target, but an emissions gap of approximately 320,000 annual metric tons remains. This amount of carbon is equivalent to over 69,000 vehicles' worth of driving or almost 37,000 homes' energy use for one year. The 2030 CAP would be responsible for identifying policies, programs, and projects to meet this gap by 2030 and continue reducing emissions beyond.

Staff recommends approving the selection of Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to provide consulting services to develop the 2030 CAP. Rincon would provide technical assistance to County staff by developing a climate action planning toolkit, implementing the Coordinated Community Activation Plan, and ensuring the CAP is CEQA-qualified with a Program EIR for tiered review of future projects.

Background:

In response to "Santa Barbara County Climate Change Principles" (Resolution 09-059), the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the County of Santa Barbara Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) in May 2015. The ECAP was developed by the Planning & Development Department's Long Range Planning Division. After adoption, the Community Services Department's Sustainability Division was tasked with tracking and reporting on the ECAP's progress and coordination of the County Sustainability Committee. The ECAP established a goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the unincorporated county by 15 percent below 2007 levels by 2020 and identified 53 emissions reduction measures (ERMs) to achieve this goal.

On December 11, 2018, Sustainability Division staff presented an ECAP Progress Report to the Board which identified that GHG emissions in the unincorporated part of Santa Barbara County had actually increased 14 percent above 2007 levels as of 2016. In response, the Board directed staff to develop a 2030 ECAP and set a new GHG emission reduction target of 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 (50x30). The

Board also directed staff to employ a regional approach inclusive of interested neighboring jurisdictions and community representatives and to incorporate resilience measures into the updated plan.

Developing the 2030 CAP is currently in the Planning and Development (P&D) Department's FY 19-20 work plan. However, after internal discussions, the Community Services Department (CSD) and P&D determined that development of the 2030 CAP should be led by the Sustainability Division, which recently hired a Climate Program Manager with experience developing climate action plans. Staff from Long Range Planning will remain involved in the project.

Achieving 50x30 and Beyond

Staff recommend that the new plan follow the same naming convention used by almost all other local governments and hereafter refer to the new document as the 2030 Climate Action Plan (CAP) rather than the ECAP.

Staff would like to clarify the Board's direction to use 1990 as the baseline for the 2030 CAP target. The earliest greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory for the unincorporated County was conducted for the year 2007. With limited available data, recreating a 1990 inventory for a baseline would be a resource-intensive effort with low utility. For this reason, staff recommends continuing to using 2007 as a proxy for 1990.

The use of historical baselines for target setting beyond 2030 has been obviated by Governor Brown's Executive Order B-55-18, which establishes a new statewide policy to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. Regardless of historical baseline or past performance, the goal for all communities should be to achieve as much 'neutrality' or 'balance' between carbon sources and carbon sinks. This absolute target (versus a relative one) will simplify tracking, measurement, and communication to the public. Staff will return to the Board for direction on a potential carbon neutrality target beyond 2030 once Rincon has analyzed the potential pathways to achieve such a target.

By 2030, business as usual population and job growth will modestly increase overall emissions. Under a business as usual scenario, 2030 annual emissions from the unincorporated County would be just over 1.5 million metric tons. This amount of carbon is equivalent to over 324,000 vehicles' worth of driving for one year. The development of a CAP that involves coordination with other local jurisdictions, robust stakeholder and community engagement, and environmental impact review will take roughly two years. This means that the County would not have an adopted CAP until 2022.

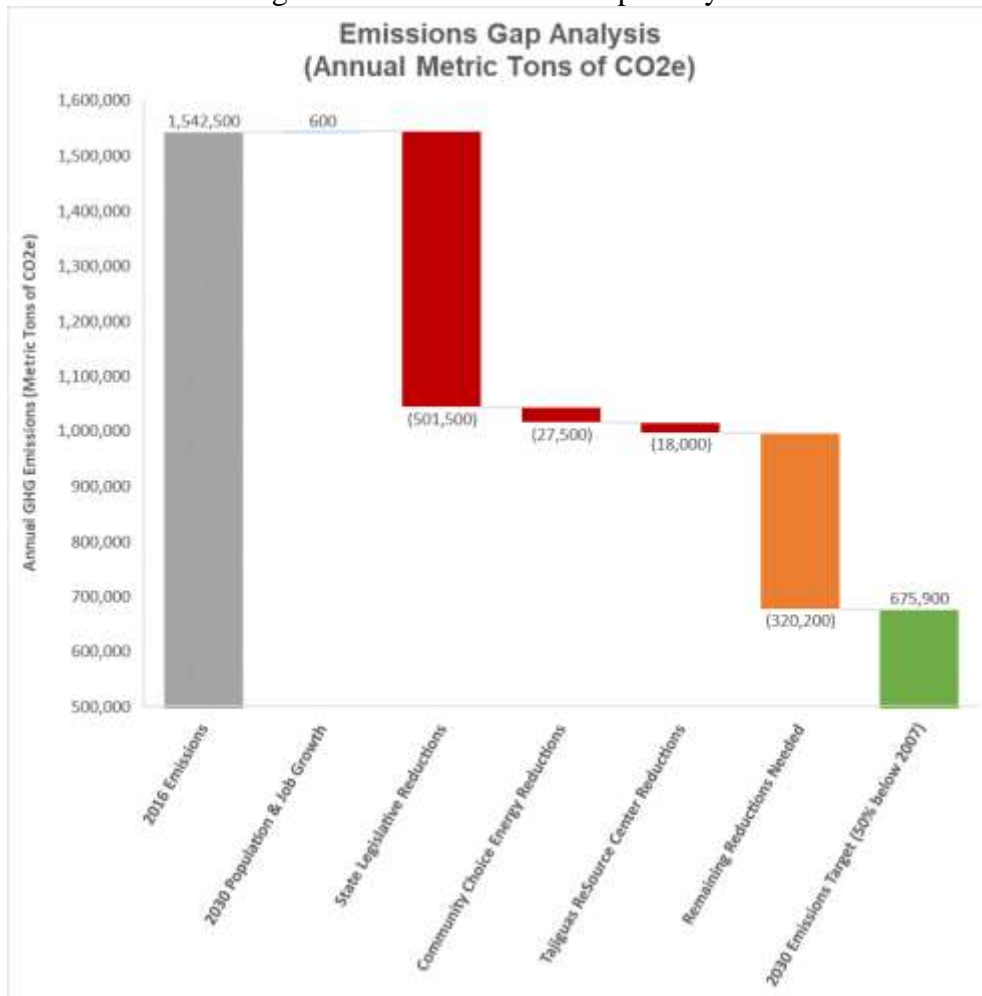
There are many current and future efforts that will continue to reduce emissions in the near term or lay the foundation for future reductions. These efforts are summarized in the 2015 Energy & Climate Action Plan Update (Attachment A). There are several measures from which staff have estimated future emission reductions, including:

- State policies concerning building energy standards, renewable energy portfolios, vehicle fuel efficiency and low-carbon fuels, and local policies such as SBCAG's Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategies are expected to reduce emissions by over 500,000 metric tons.
- In 2021, the implementation of community choice energy will deploy mostly carbon free power to nearly all County residents, virtually eliminating emissions associated with electricity use by 27,000 metric tons.

- The Tajiguas ReSource Center, once operational, will divert recyclable and compostable materials, reducing solid waste emissions roughly by 18,000 metric tons.

After these measures, an emissions gap of approximately 320,000 metric tons remains (Figure 1). This amount of carbon is equivalent to over 69,000 vehicles' worth of driving or almost 37,000 homes' energy use for one year.

Figure 1. 2030 Emissions Gap Analysis



In order to close the gap, aggressive programs and policies need to be developed and enacted in order to significantly shift consumer behavior and business operations to more efficient and less polluting practices and technologies. Additionally, the County's vast working and natural lands must be cultivated and maintained to increase their ability to remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it within biomass and soil.

The 2030 CAP would be responsible for identifying policies, programs, projects, and partners to close this gap by 2030 and continue reducing emissions beyond.

Consultant Selection

On February 13, 2020, staff released a Request for Proposals for consulting services to develop the 2030 Climate Action Plan, create a climate action planning toolkit, implement a Coordinated Community Activation Plan, and ensure the CAP is CEQA-qualified with an EIR for tiered review of future projects. Staff received three proposals, with costs ranging from \$542,047 to \$725,000, and interviewed three consultant teams. Based on the experience, innovation, and budget of the proposal, staff recommend selecting Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon). Rincon's budget proposal offered the lowest cost option for the County at an amount not to exceed \$542,047.

Rincon has previously provided Climate Action Planning services for jurisdictions across California, including Santa Clara, San Mateo, Merced, Kings, and Imperial Counties.

In order to develop a CAP with a regional approach, inclusive of the incorporated cities and community organizations, Rincon will develop a climate action planning toolkit. The toolkit would feature tools to support the County and cities in climate action planning, while also allowing the community to engage as well. The toolkit would include a public dashboard that features greenhouse gas inventories, an emissions reduction target setting tool, a measure prioritization tool, and an emissions reduction analysis tool.

Rincon would support staff in a series of stakeholder and community engagements to identify, prioritize, and analyze emission reduction measures that best fit the region.

In addition to the 2030 CAP, P&D is initiating an update to the Safety Element, which will include a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adaptation Plan, and the development of an Active Transportation Plan (which combines the Circulation Element update with the Public Works Department's Bicycle Master Plan update). To support the 2030 CAP and these other projects, Rincon will develop and implement a Coordinated Community Activation Plan (CCAP), which would feature a digital engagement campaign, in-person community engagement activities (when possible), and online resources that can be shared by these and other various projects in an effort to streamline communication, reduce logistical costs, and increase each projects' engagement with the community. The CCAP will be implemented under a new countywide initiative, called One Climate.

Rincon will prepare a financial analysis and funding strategy to align the CAP with Federal, State and local funding opportunities. Additionally, Rincon will ensure that the County's new CAP would be CEQA-qualified. A CEQA-qualified CAP must meet legal and other requirements established by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to enable streamlined development review for later projects. This would allow the County to utilize information from previously prepared and certified environmental documents during individual project review, thereby avoiding duplication of environmental analysis and instead focusing only on the issues that are relevant to that specific project. This would benefit project applicants and P&D staff by reducing the cost and time associated with environmental review as it relates to GHG emissions. Rincon will prepare all CEQA-related documentation, conduct public review and circulation for public comment, and develop recommended GHG thresholds of significance for future projects.

The 2030 CAP will feature fewer, yet more effective strategies and actions to reduce emissions and increase community resilience. The community activation process will provide meaningful engagement opportunities for traditional and non-traditional stakeholders to lend their ideas and voice support for future policies, programs and projects. The 2030 CAP will ensure that measures are primed to benefit from existing County resources, external funding, and collaborative partnerships. The 2030 CAP will also

provide a robust system of tracking, reporting, and evaluation that would support course corrections and adjustments to meet the County's goal.

Staff originally submitted a budget expansion request to cover a portion of the costs to hire a technical consultant and add an additional (1) FTE to support development and implementation of the 2030 CAP. However, given the fiscal impact of COVID-19, staff will utilize existing funds to cover costs associated with executing a contract with Rincon and provide an increase in funding available for existing staff to support development of the 2030 CAP.

Given the importance of the CAP, staff will use Strategic Energy Plan (SEP) funds to supplement the budgetary gap for the consultant contract. CSD can utilize \$340,000 in in SEP funds and \$218,500 in for the Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative funds for the 2030 CAP. P&D also has approximately \$60,000 remaining in its budget for ECAP updates. In total these sources provide \$618,500 in funding which can be used to execute a contract with Rincon and increase the funding available for existing staff to support development and implementation of the 2030 CAP.

With current staffing levels and the number of strategies in SEP Phase One and Phase Two, it will likely take several years before SEP Phase Three tasks could be addressed. These include: 1) Develop a low-interest loan loss reserve program for solar energy projects; and, 2) Provide financial incentives for solar energy projects. Developing the 2030 CAP is a more urgent priority that would generate broader community benefits engendering greater impacts, while the SEP would offer benefits to fewer constituents (e.g. property owners developing solar projects).

Performance Measure:

Annual rate of unincorporated county area community greenhouse gas emissions, with a target of 50% below baseline year 2007 by 2030

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Given the importance of the CAP, staff will use SEP funds to supplement the budgetary gap for the consultant contract. CSD can utilize \$340,000 in SEP funds and \$218,500 in Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative funds for the 2030 CAP. P&D also has approximately \$60,000 remaining in its budget for ECAP updates. In total, these sources provide \$618,500 in funding which can be used to execute a contract with Rincon and increase the funding available for existing staff to support development and implementation of the 2030 CAP. Funds would be used to execute a contract with Rincon for \$542,047 and to provide \$76,453 in funding for existing staff to support development and implementation of the 2030 CAP. Without these funds the County would not be able to develop and implement a 2030 CAP, and the County would not meet its emission reduction goals.

Key Contract Risks:

Rincon has provided environmental consulting services in Santa Barbara County for 26 years. Rincon has previous and existing contracts for work on a variety of projects for the County. It has previously provided Climate Action Planning services for jurisdictions across California, including Santa Clara, San Mateo, Merced, Kings, and Imperial Counties.

Special Instructions:

Please send two copies of the signed agreement and one copy of the minute order to Garrett Wong.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Update on the 2015 Energy & Climate Action Plan

Attachment B: Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor

Attachment C: PowerPoint Presentation

Authored by:

Garrett Wong, Climate Program Manager