



## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Title:** Interim County Executive Officer requests discussion and direction regarding preparation of a Regional Climate Action Plan.

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** David Morrison, Interim County Executive Officer

**REPORT BY:** David Morrison, Interim County Executive Officer

**SUBJECT:** Discussion and direction regarding preparation of a Regional Climate Action Plan.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Interim County Executive Officer requests discussion and direction regarding preparation of a Regional Climate Action Plan.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Over the past year, the Climate Action Committee (CAC) has prepared and completed an updated GHG emissions inventory for the unincorporated area and the five cities/town. The creation of the inventory has enabled the CAC to better understand the current sources and levels of emissions, as well as estimates for future emissions through 2030. The CAC is turning their focus towards effectively reducing GHG emissions. Many of the strategies and measures to be implemented to reduce GHG emissions require strategic inter-governmental coordination.

Staff has made presentations to the Napa County League of Governments (NCLOG); Cities of American Canyon, Calistoga, and St. Helena; and the Town of Yountville (city staff made the presentation to the City of Napa), all of whom have joined the County in broad support for a Regional Climate Action Plan.

At their May 16, 2023, meeting, the Board of Supervisors requested that staff return with a discussion of funding for the Regional Climate Action Plan, so that direction may be provided.

### **FISCAL & STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	No
Is it currently budgeted?	No
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	Coordination between the cities, town, and county would provide more effective implementation of GHG reduction measures, result in greater efficiency and cost in developing a Regional Climate Action Plan, as well as create more consistency for businesses and landowners within Napa County.
Is the general fund affected?	No
Future fiscal impact:	If staff is able to obtain grant funding for preparation of a Regional Climate Action Plan, there would be no additional cost to the County budget. However, additional costs would likely be needed for any accompanying CEQA document, with the County's share estimated at up to \$200,000.
Consequences if not approved:	Climate planning for Napa County would continue for the unincorporated area, without benefit of coordination or joint implementation with other regional jurisdictions.
County Strategic Plan pillar addressed:	Vibrant and Sustainable Environment

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

Over the past two years, the CAC has been awarded a \$50,000 grant, prepared a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, participated in a discussion of climate change at the Napa County League of Governments (NCLOG), and has reviewed various options for preparing a Regional Climate Action Plan. A great deal of progress has been made in the last 12 months, but more work still lies ahead. With the acceptance of the greenhouse gas inventory, the Climate Action Committee (CAC) has a basis for understanding the current levels of emissions, as well as estimates for future emissions through 2030. The next step is to develop a Regional Climate Action Plan to set goals, timelines, and measurable actions to be taken by the six jurisdictions to reduce both current and future GHG emissions.

Actions taken by the six jurisdictions, either collectively or individually, to reduce both current and future GHG emissions. Many of the strategies and measures that will need to be implemented to reduce GHG emissions will require effective inter-governmental coordination. All of us are bound together in the same economy, transportation network, air basin, watershed, and ecosystem. The implementation of actions will be more effective and more efficient if carried out consistently among the CAC members.

At the October 6, 2023, meeting of the Napa County League of Governments (NCLOG), there was general support for proceeding with a Regional Climate Action Plan to provide a policy and implementation framework for reducing GHG emissions. There was also general agreement that each jurisdiction should consider the proposal for a Regional Climate Action Plan at a future Council/Board meeting, to guide Climate Action Committee (CAC) representatives as they move forward. After the NCLOG meeting, County staff made presentations regarding a Regional Climate Action Plan to the following jurisdictions:

American Canyon Open Space, Active Transportation, and Sustainability Committee - December 7, 2022

Calistoga City Council - January 17, 2023

St. Helena City Council - January 24, 2023

Napa County Board of Supervisors - February 7, 2023

Yountville Town Council - February 9, 2023

City staff made a presentation to the Napa City Council on March 7, 2023.

During these series of meetings, all six jurisdictions supported the preparation of a Regional Climate Action Plan. At their May 26, 2023, meeting, the CAC approved two priorities for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, preparation of a: (1) Regional Climate Action Plan; and (2) Electric Vehicle Recharging State Plan.

## FUNDING

In support of this effort, staff from the County, City of Napa, and Resource Conservation District (RCD) submitted a \$595,000 grant application for the Adaptation Planning Grant from the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) at the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). The grant would have provided funding to prepare a Regional Climate Action Plan, with the County and RCD acting as co-applicants. However, staff was notified on May 31 that the grant had been denied.

In addition, County staff requested \$500,000 from Assemblymember Aguilar-Curry for the Regional Climate

Action Plan. If approved, these funds could be used for the preparation of a CEQA document.

If the State budget request is not approved, funding the Regional Climate Action Plan would fall on the CAC member jurisdictions. In accordance with Exhibit C of the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) (Agreement No. 210344B), costs for the Countywide Climate Action Program are shared as follows:

Napa County: 33.0%

City of Napa: 29.9%

City of American Canyon: 12.8%

City of Calistoga: 8.3%

City of St. Helena: 8.5%

Town of Yountville: 7.5%

Based on the grant and state budget requests already submitted, the budget for a Regional Climate Action Plan would be \$1,095,000. That would include both plan and CEQA document preparation. The Regional Climate Action Plan would incorporate the recent Regional GHG Inventory, as well as supplemental memos regarding short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) and carbon sequestration, and a robust public outreach and education program. Assuming this amount would result in the following cost breakdown:

Napa County: \$361,350

City of Napa: \$327,405

City of American Canyon: \$140,160

City of Calistoga: \$90,855

City of St. Helena: \$93,075

Town of Yountville: \$82,125

The member jurisdictions could direct staff to look at a more streamlined Regional Climate Action Plan, including more directed public outreach, and a focused CEQA document to reduce potential costs.

Once the scope of work has been determined and funding has been secured, staff would work with City Managers from participating jurisdictions and the CAC to develop a Request for Proposals, including budget and scope of work for the Regional Climate Action Plan and appropriate CEQA document. As the Administering Agency under the JPA, the consultant contract to prepare the Regional Climate Action Plan and CEQA document would be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

## VARIABLES

Decisions made by the CAC and/or its member agencies in developing and implementing the Regional Climate

Action Plan could affect the cost of preparation. Some examples are provided below:

#### Goals:

The Regional Climate Action Plan could set a goal of net zero GHG emissions by 2050 (Federal standard), 2045 (State standard), or 2030 (local proclamations). Reducing the timeframe to reach a net zero GHG threshold would likely require more extensive regulations and requirements, as well as more expensive implementation to ensure compliance.

#### Actions:

Choosing either qualitative or quantitative action items will have different impacts. Gathering data, applying models and metrics, and developing specific measurable action items results in more accountability and greater success in achieving the desired goals. However, creating these actions is more costly and the issues themselves can be more controversial and harder to get to consensus. It is less expensive to develop vague and/or aspirational actions, which can gain greater general agreement, but they can make it more difficult to determine whether significant progress in reducing GHGs is actually being met.

#### Public Outreach:

A Regional Climate Action Plan would apply to six jurisdictions and would be relevant to a broad span of economic, environmental, and community activities. Additional public and private partners may be involved in order to reach the level of effectiveness needed to achieve net zero GHG goals. Ongoing public education will likely be critical to the success of the Regional Climate Action Plan. The cost of plan development will vary depending on the extent, frequency, depth, and timeline of public outreach.

#### Governance:

If the Regional Climate Action Plan is prepared jointly, it could be implemented separately by each jurisdiction, or implemented by a joint oversight body. If implementation is done separately, there would need to be mechanisms put in place to ensure consistent and timely action by all jurisdictions. If implementation is done jointly, coordination could occur through the existing CAC, a new Regional Authority similar to Sonoma County, an expanded Sonoma authority to include Napa County, an existing regional entity, or other option. Each of these models will have different efficiencies, start-up costs, and ongoing operational funding needs.

#### CEQA:

Unless otherwise exempted, any action taken by a public agency that may result in a physical change to the environment is subject to CEQA. Depending on the scope and type of actions proposed in the Regional Climate Action Plan, a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) may be required. Any CEQA document certified for the Regional Climate Action Plan would be subject to legal challenge, and the associated costs of defending the document. It should be noted that any jurisdiction implementing actions related to the Regional Climate Action Plan would be able to tier off the Program EIR, rather than prepare separate CEQA documents.

