COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS - LAND USE  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2022  

MINUTE ORDER NO. 6

SUBJECT: ADVANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES FOR COUNTY FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS AND THE UNINCORPORATED AREA IN SUPPORT OF THE REGIONAL DECARBONIZATION FRAMEWORK AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW
As a regional leader in addressing climate change, sustainability, and furthering the goals to reach zero carbon, the County of San Diego (County) has implemented programs and initiatives for County facilities and operations, as well as the unincorporated area. The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) has directed action and established goals to advance sustainability, address climate change and equity, and promote workforce development in the region. As a result, County programs have conserved open space, preserved land for agricultural operations, installed bike lanes, reduced employee commute miles through telework, planted trees, converted County vehicles to zero emissions alternatives, reduced energy and water use at County facilities, increased renewable energy resources for County facilities and the community, and more.

On January 27, 2021 (3), the Board further advanced sustainability efforts by directing the preparation of the Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) to provide a roadmap for the San Diego region to achieve a zero-carbon emissions future. The RDF, and the County’s upcoming Climate Action Plan Update (CAP Update) will be valuable tools guiding County actions toward achieving net zero emissions in County facilities and operations and throughout the unincorporated area. Both position the County as a sustainability leader within the region, State, and nation.

In addition, on April 26, 2022 (24), the Board requested staff provide an update on how the County operations’ energy load could be procured from renewable energy sources through direct access agreements, rooftop solar, or other renewable sources. Direct Access is a State program that allows entities like the County to purchase their electricity and natural gas from third party “energy service providers” instead of San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E). The recently implemented Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan for County facilities directly addresses the Board’s request and is further described below.

To reach the aspirational goal of zero carbon emissions throughout the region, the County must align with the RDF. This begins by analyzing opportunities to push existing plans, programs, and policies further to facilitate decarbonization of the electric grid, buildings, and transportation networks, while also sequestering carbon through natural solutions and evaluating food systems and the circular economy. The term, circular economy, is defined in federal law as “an economy that uses a systems-focused approach and involves industrial processes and economic activities that (A) are restorative or regenerative by design; (B) enable resources used in such processes and activities to maintain their highest values for as long as possible; and (C) aim for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems (including business models)”. Stakeholders have also expressed a desire for the County to expedite sustainability initiatives in response to the climate crisis.
The County’s existing plans, programs, and policies have resulted in significant greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions and advancements in enterprise sustainability to date. This will be discussed in more detail in the Background section.

The adoption of the RDF in 2023 will help the Board to identify the County’s own next steps toward decarbonization while working with other entities in the region on ways to get the job done regionally. Subsequently, the CAP Update will be presented to the Board in 2024, cementing the plan as one of the County’s most robust tools for decarbonization for the unincorporated area and for County facilities and operations throughout the region.

However, since climate change continues to intensify and the development of the RDF and CAP Update takes time, staff are presenting updates on items we are working on currently, and actions that can be taken now. These actions show how the County can align with the regional decarbonization effort with projects and plans that could also be replicated by other local jurisdictions in the future.

Today’s action is for the Board to receive an information update on the County Facilities Plan:

County Facilities Plan:
1. County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan
   - Provides six measures that result in County operational emissions being reduced by 90% from a 2008 baseline. This plan, which focuses on County facilities and has been in place since April of 2022, replaces and updates the prior Zero Net Energy Portfolio Plan. Key measures in the plan include using Direct Access contracts and local Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs) where feasible to convert all County electricity accounts to 100% renewable electricity by 2030. CCAs are state authorized entities made up of local cities and counties that can purchase and/or generate electricity for the residents and businesses located within their boundaries. Additionally, the plan seeks significant funding to convert natural gas equipment in existing County facilities to electric alternatives. Further measures include continuing to build all new County facilities to be Zero Net Energy and all electric, continuing energy management efforts and efficiency projects, and purchasing an SDG&E owned 600 kilowatts (kW) solar project located at the County Operations Center (COC).

Today’s action is also for the Board to provide input, direction, and/or funding on the five items presented below:

Community-Oriented Programs and Reports:
1. Equity-Driven Tree Planting Program in the unincorporated area
   a. Develop a program to identify priority sites for tree planting on County-owned land and explore opportunities to develop a tree adoption program for privately owned lands in unincorporated communities, with a focus on underserved areas. The program will reduce the urban heat island effect, increase climate resiliency, and reduce GHG emissions.
2. Pilot Carbon Farming Program in the unincorporated area
   a. Develop a carbon farming program in the unincorporated area, that can be used as a regional model, to encourage adoption and local scalability of carbon farming practices that account for GHG emissions reductions and promote soil health. Carbon farming refers to a suite of different farming techniques that increase the rate at which carbon is sequestered into the soil and plants. The program will identify relevant practices by crop and agricultural type, along with existing data and gaps, and will determine the actions the County can take to incentivize and support agricultural practices.

3. Energy Resiliency and Equity Report
   a. Prepare a report that examines rural communities in the unincorporated area for vulnerabilities due to heat impacts, power safety shutoffs, and/or utility costs due to economic conditions. The report will result in recommendations for new programs/incentives to strengthen critical infrastructure through the addition of new clean energy or related solutions (e.g., incentivize or subsidize electric generators, install solar EV charging infrastructure, provide emergency EV transportation services, expand options at cooling centers and other critical services, and offer rebates for air conditioning equipment).

4. Existing Building Electrification Options Report
   a. Prepare a report of the existing building stock of privately owned residential, commercial, and industrial buildings within the unincorporated area to understand existing conditions, fuel infrastructure and number of connections by type of energy currently used, and energy consumption characteristics. The report will evaluate challenges and barriers to electrifying existing buildings, accounting for local incomes and financial burdens, and climate zones and electrification effectiveness. The report will be used to evaluate options (e.g., rebates, incentives) to influence conversion of gas-powered infrastructure to electric options in existing buildings in the unincorporated area.

5. Hydrogen Fueling Station Report
   a. Prepare a report to analyze current and future hydrogen fueling needs and demand for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (i.e., trucks, buses, freight, construction equipment) in the unincorporated area to support regional fleets. Vehicles powered by hydrogen emit zero carbon emissions. This fuel is efficient for long distances, making it ideal for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles like buses or trucks. When paired with clean electricity sources, zero carbon emissions are generated from hydrogen fuel production and consumption. The report will identify high priority areas where hydrogen fueling stations could be efficiently located.

RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
1. Find that the proposed actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed actions do not commit the County to any definitive course of action and there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Subsequent actions would be reviewed pursuant to CEQA and presented to the Board for consideration prior to implementation.

2. Receive an update on the item below:
3. Provide direction on any or all of the following items below:
   a. Equity Driven Tree Planting Program for the unincorporated area: direct the CAO to solicit consultant to develop the program once funding of $50,000 has been identified for consultant support.
   b. Pilot Carbon Farming Program: direct the CAO to develop the program and return to the Board with options for program implementation, including a list of identified pilot projects.
   c. Energy Resiliency and Equity Report: direct the CAO to solicit a consultant to prepare the report once funding of $100,000 has been identified for the consultant, which will result in recommendations that can inform the CAP Update measure development or other future planning efforts.
   d. Existing Building Electrification Options Report: direct the CAO to solicit a consultant to prepare the report once funding of $150,000 has been identified for the consultant, which will result in recommendations that can inform the CAP Update measure development or other future planning efforts.
   e. Hydrogen Fueling Report: direct the CAO to solicit a consultant to prepare the report once funding of $100,000 has been identified for the consultant, which will result in recommendations that can inform the CAP Update measure development or other future planning efforts.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT
County initiatives such as the RDF and CAP Update prioritize environmental justice and equity as directed by the Board. County staff have conducted stakeholder outreach and engagement throughout the preparation of the CAP Update and RDF. Through this outreach, diverse stakeholder groups have urged the County to make sustainability initiatives a priority to address the climate crisis as soon as possible.

Activities identified within this Board Letter will advance the RDF and CAP Update efforts and facilitate immediate and future implementation of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency activities. These projects align with the Board’s Equity Strategic Initiative and will continue to be informed by community input that is centered on equity and climate change impacts experienced by the most vulnerable communities within the unincorporated area.

For outreach to be transparent and accessible, notices will be translated into County threshold languages, Spanish simultaneous-interpretation services will be available for attendees at County-led workshops, and interpretative services in other languages such as Somali, Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Korean, Persian (including Farsi, Dari), Tagalog (including Filipino) and Vietnamese, can be provided upon request, and translation services for online documents will be provided by Google Translate.

FISCAL IMPACT
Department of General Services
There is no direct fiscal impact as a result of today’s requested action to receive the County Facilities Zero Carbon Plan (action #1 in the list below). Costs for the implementation have yet to be identified and may be included in future Operational Plans, pending availability of funding. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years for Fiscal Year 2022-23.

AUGUST 31, 2022
Planning and Development Services
Funds for the proposed five community-based actions (actions b through f in the table below) related to supporting the achievement of the RDF goals and supporting the development of new CAP measures for inclusion in the CAP Update are not included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 Operational Plan in Planning & Development Services (PDS). If approved, this request will result in costs up to $400,000 in for consultant services and staff time for the development and study preparation of the proposed five actions. Pending availability of funding and Board direction, PDS will make budget requests in future Operational Plans. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years for Fiscal Year 2022-23.

The following table summarizes the fiscal impact for each of the six proposed actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Title</th>
<th>Activity Type</th>
<th>County Staff Costs</th>
<th>Other Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan</td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>Significant costs necessary to implement plan starting in FY2023-24; however, no funding being requested currently. Funding requests will be pursued via the annual budget process beginning in FY2023-24.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Equity-Driven Tree Planting Program</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>$50,000 for consultant support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Pilot Carbon Farming Program</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Energy Resiliency and Equity Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>$100,000 for consultant report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Existing Building Electrification Options Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>$150,000 for consultant report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hydrogen Fueling Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>No impact; existing staff will be utilized</td>
<td>$100,000 for consultant report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total request pending availability of funding $400,000

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT
The following table summarizes the business impact for each of the six proposed actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Title</th>
<th>Activity Type</th>
<th>Business Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan</td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Implementing this plan will result in additional opportunities for local and regional contractors to compete for resulting County projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Equity -Driven Tree Planting Program</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Increased demand for trees will likely drive local nursery market production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Pilot Carbon Farming Program</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Investment in agricultural production economy for the implementation of carbon farming practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Energy Resiliency and Equity Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>The scope of the report will not directly impact business activities, but it could lead to future action to increase demand of air conditioners, generators, and other energy related equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Existing Building Electrification Options Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>The scope of the report will not directly impact business activities, but it could lead to future action to increase the demand of electric based appliances and associated energy infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hydrogen Fueling Report</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>The scope of the report will not directly impact business activities, but it could lead to future action that would create opportunities for hydrogen fueling station construction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTION:**

ON MOTION of Supervisor Vargas, seconded by Supervisor Lawson-Remer, the Board of Supervisors took the following actions:

1. Found that the proposed actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed actions do not commit the County to any definitive course of action and there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Subsequent actions would be reviewed pursuant to CEQA and presented to the Board for consideration prior to implementation.

2. Received an update on the County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan.

3. Provided direction on the following items below:
   a. Equity Driven Tree Planting Program for the unincorporated area: directed the Chief Administrative Officer to solicit a consultant to develop the program once funding of $50,000 has been identified for consultant support.

   b. Pilot Carbon Farming Program: directed the Chief Administrative Officer to develop the program and return to the Board with options for program implementation, including a list of identified pilot projects.

   c. Energy Resiliency and Equity Report: directed the Chief Administrative Officer to solicit a consultant to prepare the report and initiate development of options for pilot programs/incentives, which will result in recommendations that can inform the CAP Update measure development or other future planning efforts, including alignment with the RDF Jobs Report.

   d. Existing Building Electrification Options Report: directed the Chief Administrative Officer to solicit a consultant to prepare the report and initiate development of options for pilot programs/incentives that can inform the CAP Update measure development and all-electric new construction or other future planning efforts, including alignment with the RDF Jobs Report.

   e. Hydrogen Fueling Report: directed the Chief Administrative Officer to leverage the SDG&E EV Gap Analysis to understand potential needs for hydrogen fueling in the unincorporated area and solicit a consultant to prepare the report, which will result in recommendations that can inform the CAP Update measure development or other future planning efforts.
4. Directed the Chief Administrative Officer to work with the Department of Human Resources to bring back a report to the Board on what it would take to build the internal capacity and establish new job classifications within the County of San Diego to be competitive with the private sector.

AYES: Vargas, Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Fletcher, Desmond

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Signed
by Andrew Potter