



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/11/2019

File #: 19-750

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Departmental

SUBJECT:

Climate Action Plan Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Contract for Services, and Designation of a Board Member Liaison for the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Chair to execute, the original MOU between the County of Humboldt and the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad to jointly fund preparation of a multijurisdictional Climate Action Plan for local governments addressing climate change (Attachment 1);
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to route two fully executed originals of the MOU to the Director of the Planning and Building Department for further processing;
3. Approve, and authorize the Director of the Planning and Building Department to execute, the services agreement between Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) and the County of Humboldt (Attachment 2); and
4. Select a Board Member to serve as "Primary Elected Liaison" for the County's ICLEI membership.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

The salary funding for this work is included in the General Fund contribution to the Long Range Planning unit, 1100-282. The contract with RCEA for preparation of the multijurisdictional Climate Action Plan includes \$38,509 that the cities have agreed to pay. The county will invoice the cities for their share of the contract amount as soon as the Board authorizes the MOU and contract with RCEA. RCEA will not perform the work for any city that decides to opt out of the MOU and will not charge the county for those costs.

DISCUSSION:

This item includes several actions that are important to the preparation of the county's Climate Action Plan (CAP). First is authorizing the Planning and Building Director to sign a contract with RCEA to consult on the preparation of the CAP. Second, is authorization of the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the cities within Humboldt County to

participate in the preparation of the CAP, and third is a request that the Board appoint a Board member to serve as a representative to ICLEI.

The climate change issue has attracted significant concern from a variety of sectors and levels of government throughout the world. The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change includes findings that suggest the problem is continuing to worsen. The State of California has adopted statewide greenhouse gas emissions targets, and has emphasized the role of local governments in meeting those targets. The County of Humboldt, in a resolution adopted Sept. 11, 2018, declared its support of the Paris Agreement and established a goal of 100 percent renewable energy for the County of Humboldt's operations. Ratifying a commitment made in the General Plan Update (GPU) and subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the resolution called for the creation of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to meet this renewable energy goal.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines provide guidance for analysis and mitigation of the effects of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in draft CEQA documents. The guidelines require local governments to assess and mitigate potential GHG emissions associated with planning efforts, as well as with discretionary projects. Developing a CAP is the most cost-effective and legally defensible way for a local government to meet this requirement. In addition to meeting state requirements, CAPs allow local governments to better position themselves for grant funding for projects such as trail development, infrastructure upgrades and energy efficiency upgrades. To date over 40 percent of cities and counties in California have adopted CAPs.

The county and all the incorporated cities within the county (Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad) are combining resources and working together to develop a multijurisdictional CAP to reduce GHG emissions throughout Humboldt County. The regional CAP will give each city and the county the opportunity to develop GHG reduction measures that provide local benefits and are feasible for their jurisdiction. Additionally, the CAP provides an opportunity to work collaboratively to gain maximum benefits for reducing both GHG emissions and costs for each jurisdiction.

To supplement the work of county and city staff, the county is contracting Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) as a consultant on the project. RCEA estimates that their services will cost \$113,509. The proposed contribution from the county is \$50,000 (the Planning Department has estimated this would be the cost of completing the required tasks for a county CAP). RCEA is contributing \$25,000 in match funding.

Most of the cities have agreed to contribute a proportional share of the remaining consultant costs (\$38,509). The amounts are outlined in the attached MOU (Attachment 1). As of April 19, 2019, the city councils of Arcata, Blue Lake, Ferndale and Fortuna have approved this MOU committing to fund this joint effort. The item is on upcoming city council agendas in Eureka, Rio Dell and Trinidad, with city staff recommending approval of the MOU to their respective city councils. These contributions will ensure the consultant can complete the tasks required for each of the seven cities participating in the CAP.

Exhibit A in the contract for consultant services between the county and RCEA (Attachment 2) details the services RCEA will provide to assist the jurisdictions in completing the CAP. These tasks represent the key elements of local Climate Action Plans as outlined by ICLEI and California Air Resources Board.

The Board approved a resolution to join ICLEI for a two-year membership on Mar. 5, 2019. In order to secure membership, the applicant must name a “Primary Elected Liaison” to ICLEI. The organization describes the role as “a lead for all elected officials for your community around climate, energy and sustainability work.” The commitment accompanying this designation is minimal. ICLEI states, “It is up to the primary elected official as to how engaged the designee is with ICLEI.”

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

One-time payment by the county to RCEA of \$50,000, with \$25,000 matching grant funding provided by RCEA and a proportional share of costs (\$38,509) provided jointly by the seven cities.

This action supports your Board’s Strategic Framework by strengthening climate change resiliency.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County Counsel, the County’s Purchasing and Disposition Team, the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA), the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose to not authorize the agreement for a multijurisdictional Climate Action Plan. The Board may also chose not to approve the contract between the county and RCEA and to not designate a liaison to ICLEI. These actions are not recommended as they will increase the costs and uncertainty associated with approval of new development, delay adoption of local measures addressing climate change, and limit the county’s ability to implement General Plan policy AQ-P9. “County Climate Action Plan”.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Humboldt and the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad to prepare and adopt a Multijurisdictional Climate Action Plan
2. Draft Agreement for Services between the County and RCEA

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: Resolution 18-95

Meeting of: 9/11/2018