



**Contra  
Costa  
County**

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Brian M. Balbas, Public Works Director/Chief Engineer

Date: October 19, 2021

Subject: Accept Report and Staff Recommendations for a Sustainability Fund

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**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

CONSIDER accepting report and staff recommendations for a Sustainability Fund for Contra Costa County to support investments in County facilities and operations that further the County's environmental sustainability and climate change goals; ALLOCATE \$3 million for the current fiscal year 2021/2022 to the Sustainability Fund; and, DIRECT staff to begin project delivery activities to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure at County facilities as identified in the report.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Sustainability Fund report recommends a "general use" funding source, but currently staff has not identified a specific fund source. Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors consider Measure X funds or General Funds as a possible funding source for the Sustainability Fund. The Public Works Department and Department of Conservation and Development presented to the Measure X Committee to request Measure X funds to support the County's sustainability efforts including establishing a Sustainability Fund; however, the current draft Measure X list does not include a recommended allocation of Measure X funds towards the Sustainability Fund.

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☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY  
ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD  
COMMITTEE

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Action of Board On: **10/19/2021** ☐ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

**VOTE OF SUPERVISORS**

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: October 19, 2021

Contact: Brian Balbas,  
925-313-2201

Monica Nino, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of  
Supervisors

By: , Deputy

cc:

## BACKGROUND:

In September 2020, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring a climate emergency in Contra Costa County. Included in the resolution was the requirement to implement action items to address the climate crisis and calls on local and regional partners to join together to address climate change. The resolution also called for the establishment of an interdepartmental Climate Action Task Force (“Task Force”) to focus on “urgently implementing the County’s Climate Action Plan.” The Task Force’s first two meetings included discussion around sustainability opportunities within County operations, facilities, as well as barriers to implementation. Several Task Force members suggested establishing a Sustainability Fund to support these opportunities. This suggestion was included in the Task Force’s first report to the Board of Supervisors on March 30, 2021 to “Establish a Sustainability Fund that is supported by an annual investment and/or is structured as a revolving fund.” The Board directed staff to provide more information about Sustainability Fund mechanisms other jurisdictions have implemented.

In July 2021, staff presented a Report on Sustainability Fund mechanisms to the Sustainability Committee that focused on the research conducted by staff on how other jurisdictions structured their funds, the pros and cons of various fund options, and staff recommended a fund structure that could work within the structure of Contra Costa County. Although the Sustainability Committee supported the idea of a Sustainability Fund, the Committee directed staff to include additional information on the purpose and need for sustainability improvements and to strengthen the link to public health. The Committee then directed staff to make the revisions and refer the revised report to the Board of Supervisors for further consideration.

The revised report (attached), recommends the Board of Supervisors establish a Sustainability Fund to overcome implementation barriers to accelerate sustainability projects that will reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) and reduce our impact on natural resources as a result of County operations.

Human activity, including activities associated with County operations, is a contributor to GHG emissions that leads to climate change. Impacts of climate change—such as increased death, disease and injury from heat waves, floods, storms, and fires; decreased food quality and security; and increased morbidity and mortality—associated with air pollution are predicted to impact public health and disproportionately affect those who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

The Contra Costa County Climate Action Plan identifies how the County will achieve the AB32 GHG emissions reduction target in addition to supporting other public health, energy efficiency, water conservation, and air quality goals identified in the County’s General Plan and other policy documents.

Although the County has implemented numerous sustainability projects to reduce our

GHG emissions and reliance on fossil fuel, such as solar installations, electric vehicle charger installations, and replacing internal combustion engine fleet vehicles with electric vehicles, several barriers remain that have prevented the County from accelerating and implementing additional sustainability projects. The barriers include funding, time, authority, staffing resources, and competing priorities. In order to overcome these barriers and reduce lost opportunities, staff recommends the Board of Supervisors establish a Sustainability Fund. The Sustainability Fund will provide staff a valuable resource to leverage the funds to accelerate and implement sustainability projects.

Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors provide a 2021/2022 fiscal year allocation of \$3 million in general use funds to the Sustainability Fund. The Public Works Department, in close coordination with the County Administrator's Office, would administer the fund. Public Works would provide an annual update to the Board of Supervisors, specifically on the status of the fund and project implementation, in addition to providing updates to the interdepartmental Climate Action Task Force's semi-annual report to the Board of Supervisors.

Staff recommends that the initial focus of the Sustainability Fund would be to implement projects identified in the Distributed Energy Resource Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Projects would focus on County buildings and operations that would include renewable energy (solar), energy storage systems, energy reduction projects, electric vehicle chargers, and converting the County's fleet vehicles and equipment to electric. At their August 2021 meeting, the Sustainability Committee identified construction of additional electric vehicle charger infrastructure needed to support the conversion of the County's fleet to electric vehicles and providing public facing chargers at County facilities as the highest priority for the initial use of the Sustainability Fund.

#### CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If a Sustainability Fund is not established, accelerated action on implementing sustainability improvements on County facilities and operations, as directed by the Climate Action Emergency declaration by the Board of Supervisors, will be delayed.

#### CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

Climate change has an impact on the entire world's population including children. Impacts of climate change—such as increased death, disease and injury from heat waves, floods, storms, and fires; decreased food quality and security; and increased morbidity and mortality—associated with air pollution are predicted to impact public health and disproportionately affect those who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

#### CLERK'S ADDENDUM

**Speakers: Helen, resident of Contra Costa.**

#### ATTACHMENTS

Sustainability Fund proposal