

**County of Santa Cruz
Climate Action Strategy Annual Report
Outline Draft**

Executive Summary

- Wide variety of activities by multiple County departments addressing GHG emissions reduction and resilience to impacts of climate change
- GHG inventory updates show emissions reductions in municipal and community sectors
- Update of the Climate Action Strategy will recommit the County to emissions reduction and increasing resilience

Background

- Original CAS adopted in 2013. Implementation and reporting overseen by Planning Department
 - Emission inventories for municipal operations and the community
 - Emissions reductions goals
 - List of emissions reduction strategies and related actions
 - Vulnerability and risk assessment
 - List of adaptation strategies
- Annual reports highlight relevant County activities
 - Brief summaries of accomplishments and initiatives (detailed accounting in Attachment A)
 - Many actions rooted in long-standing County policies regarding energy conservation and past experience responding to natural hazards
- Updated emissions inventories in 2015 and 2016. Municipal facilities emissions reduction from 2005 to 2016 of 18%. Community energy use emissions reduction from 2005 to 2015 of 18%
- AMBAG emissions inventory 2021. Community emissions reduction from 2005 to 2018 of 27% (Attachment B)
- County Operational Plan objective of 20 percent emissions reduction from County operations by June 2020 compared to 2015. This objective is projected to be met and likely surpassed
- Climate emergency resolution adopted by Board in January 2019 endorsing countywide emergency climate action mobilization effort to reverse global warming, to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere as quickly as possible
- Goal to be carbon-neutral by 2030 adopted by Board in October 2019. Work on plan to reach this goal suspended indefinitely due to COVID, budget constraints, fire recovery
- Establishment of OR3 after 2020 CZU fire. Includes a focus on climate change resilience

Analysis

- CAS identifies 84 emissions reduction actions in the energy, transportation, and solid waste sectors, and 56 actions to prepare for the impacts of climate change.
- More detailed analysis of progress on each action (detailed summary of Attachment A)
- Additionally, County has initiated legal action holding fossil fuel companies accountable

Climate Action Strategy Update

- Initiate 2021/2022. Estimate 1 year effort
- Planning timeframes(s): 2030, or longer, for example

- Partnership of Planning (mitigation) and OR3 (resilience)
- Emissions inventory update
 - Energy, transportation, and solid waste sectors
 - Community inventory (update AMBAG in Attachment B with more recent data)
 - Municipal operations inventory update
 - Other sectors: consumption, agriculture
- Goal(s): carbon neutral by 2030, or percent reduction, or net-negative
- Mitigation actions
 - Revised and new actions as appropriate
- Adaptation to climate change (OR3)
 - Update of vulnerability and risk assessment
 - Revised adaptation strategies and actions as appropriate
- Resources: County staff, grants, consultants, community organizations
 - Ecology Action, Climate Action Network, Regeneracion, Tribal groups, Eat for the Earth
- Consistency and cooperation with Cities of Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley
- Outreach (grant opportunities)
 - Strategic plan for outreach
 - Equity considerations (see separate agenda item)
- New emphasis
 - Resilience
 - Identify projects for funding
 - Incorporate other plans by reference
 - Enabling document
 - Equity (grant funding opportunities)
 - Microgrids (COE recommendation to Board in December 2019)
 - Electrification
 - Energy storage
 - Local solar (COE recommendation to Board)
 - Low carbon diet (COE recommendation to Board)
 - Incorporate regional planning efforts
 - AMBAG study of natural and working lands climate implications
 - Regional VMT mitigation efforts
 - Consistency with County Strategic Plan/Operational Plan

Financial Impact

County cost savings from energy efficiency and renewable energy projects as described in the CAS Annual Reports. The costs of future programs and staffing may be offset by energy savings and grant funding in the future.

Strategic Plan Elements

This item supports the Strategic Plan Element of Sustainable Environment. Implementation of the CAS promotes the following goals: Local Conservation and Climate Action