



Board Report

File #: 21-434, Version: 1

- a. Approve and authorize the County Administrative Officer, or his designee, to sign an Agreement with Ascent Environmental to provide technical and facilitative consultation services for the County Climate Action Plan, at a cost of \$166,885 for the period May 18, 2021 through May 30, 2023;
- b. Authorize the County Administrative Officer, or his designee, to sign up to 3 amendments to this Agreement where the total amendments do not exceed 10% (\$16,688) of the contract amount and do not significantly change the scope of work; and
- c. Provide other direction to staff as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors

- a) Approve and authorize the County Administrative Officer, or his designee, to sign an Agreement with Ascent Environmental to provide technical and facilitative consultation services for the County Climate Action Plan, at a cost of \$166,885 for the period May 18, 2021 through May 30, 2023;
- b) Authorize the County Administrative Officer, or his designee, to sign up to 3 amendments to this Agreement where the total amendments do not exceed 10% (\$16,688) of the contract amount and do not significantly change the scope of work; and
- c) Provide other direction to staff as appropriate.

SUMMARY:

General Plan Policy OS-10.11 of the 2010 General Plan requires the County to prepare a County-wide Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2030. On October 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to seek funding to complete the CAP by 2022. The Alternative Energy and Environment Committee received a presentation on the scope, budget, and details of the CAP's stakeholder engagement strategy on December 3 and was supportive of staff's recommendation. Subsequently, on January 4, 2021, the County was awarded funding from the Department of Conservation to write a CAP and on January 18, 2021, the County released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the CAP. Ascent Environmental was chosen to work on the Climate Action Plan with the County Sustainability Manager through the RFP process.

DISCUSSION:

Climate Action Planning has evolved into a highly technical and statutory field. As the County's Climate Action Plan is a mitigation measure resulting from the 2010 General Plan's Environmental Impact Report, the County's Climate Action Plan has additional CEQA-related requirements that require deep technical expertise. The County's CAP will be CEQA certified, and as such, will be a legal document that will have implications for development in the County. As a CEQA-certified CAP, the plan will allow for "tiering," a method whereby certain developments may use the CAP to streamline their development and avoid certain project-level CEQA requirements. The County currently does not have Greenhouse Gas emissions thresholds of significance. The CAP will create such thresholds, allowing for a consistent and programmatic approach to the County's CEQA-required project-level Greenhouse Gas emissions review. The CAP will develop a simple checklist that will allow for further development streamlining projects that meet certain criteria related to emissions. To ensure that this process is done correctly and efficaciously, a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a technical contractor and facilitator was released on January 18, 2021.

The following Tasks were included in the RFP:

1. Inventory & Forecasting for MCAP and CCAAP
2. Technical Analyses Evaluation of Measures
3. CEQA Analysis
4. Drafting and Branding/Design of Action and Adaptation Plan
5. Facilitation and Community Action Toolkit

The proposed contract and scope of work for this agreement include Tasks 1, 2, and 5. As the CEQA analysis is dependent upon the outcome of the technical analyses and strategy selection, staff recommends holding off on hiring for Task 3 at this time. Parts of Task 4 may be possible to complete in-house. Staff will return to the Board for approval of Tasks 3 and 4 later depending on the outcome of the technical work and stakeholder engagement.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

HCD, PWF

FINANCING:

The Department of Conservation awarded the County \$175,000 to complete the Climate Action Plan. The entire scope of the Climate Action Plan would cost approximately \$275,000 to execute but could costs could be as high as \$350,000 if a full EIR is needed. Staff has requested funding for the Climate Action Plan as part of a budget augmentation request for FY21/22 and this augmentation was included in the recommended budget. Staff seeks to execute this partial contract immediately so that the technical work can begin and be completed by the Board-imposed deadline of 2022. If funding is awarded staff will return to the Board with amendments to this contract to complete a full scope of work.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The Sustainability Program is designed to support the environmental, social, and economic well-being of the County. The Climate Action Plan will lay out the locally appropriate strategies to achieve this goal.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

Prepared by: Ashley Paulsworth, Sustainability Program Manager, x 5344

Approved by: Nicholas E. Chiulos, Assistant County Administrative Officer, Ext. 5145

Attachments:

Staff Report

County of Monterey Standard Agreement with Ascent Environmental