



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0042, **Version:** 1

DATE: February 11, 2021

SUBJECT:

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR A REGIONAL CARBON SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO SCHOOL OF GLOBAL POLICY AND STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On January 27, 2021 the San Diego County Board of Supervisors directed their Chief Administrative Officer to develop a Framework for a Regional Carbon Sustainability Plan in partnership with the University of California, San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy. The Framework will advance a plan to include strategies and initiatives to achieve carbon neutrality in the region by 2035. Supporting a County-led framework to advance carbon neutrality in the region will support the District's Climate Action Plan goals.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution Supporting the County of San Diego Developing a Framework for a Regional Carbon Sustainability Plan in Partnership with the University of California School of Global Policy and Strategy.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This Board action has no fiscal impact on the District.

COMPASS STRATEGIC GOALS:

This agenda item supports the following Strategic Goal(s).

- A Port that the public understands and trusts.
- A thriving and modern maritime seaport.
- A Port with a healthy and sustainable bay and its environment.
- A Port with a comprehensive vision for Port land and water uses integrated to regional plans.
- A Port that is a safe place to visit, work and play.
- A Port with an innovative and motivated workforce.
- A financially sustainable Port that drives job creation and regional economic vitality.

DISCUSSION:

Recognizing the risks of climate change and opportunities to transition to a low-carbon future, California has adopted aggressive greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets. Through a series of Executive Orders and legislation, California's GHG emission reduction requirements include achieving 1990 emission levels by 2020; a 40 percent decrease from 1990 emission levels by 2030; and an 80 percent decrease from 1990 emission levels by 2050. California aims for carbon neutrality by 2045. Carbon neutrality strives to achieve a balance between emitting GHG emissions and absorbing GHG emissions through sequestration or removal technologies.

As a result of these requirements, many municipalities, including those in San Diego County, have developed Climate Action Plans (CAPs) to reduce GHG emissions within their jurisdictions. The District was the first port to adopt a CAP in 2013 containing goals to reduce GHG emissions 10 percent by 2020 relative to a 2006 baseline. The District achieved its 2020 target by 2016 with an 18 percent decrease in emissions from 2006 levels¹. Currently, the District is aligning its post-2020 GHG reduction targets to California's 2030 and 2050 goals.

Meanwhile, climate change is already causing impacts to communities and disrupting regional economies throughout the state. In recent years, wildfires, flooding, and heat waves have impacted the quality of life and economic prosperity for many Californians. Acknowledging that the region may need to move more expeditiously and collective action is necessary to reduce GHG emissions, on January 27, 2021, the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors directed their Chief Administrative Officer to develop a Framework for a Regional Carbon Sustainability Plan (Framework). The Framework will advance a plan to include strategies and initiatives to achieve carbon neutrality in the region by 2035 (Attachment A), ten years before the state of California's carbon neutrality goal.

The County will partner with the University of California, San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (UC San Diego GPS) to develop the Framework. This framework will include the following:

- (1) Show the physical infrastructure changes and investments necessary to connect today's energy system with net zero emissions goals by 2035;
- (2) Create a roadmap of actions that need to be taken in the public and private sectors;
- (3) Provide a model of how the region's various agencies and jurisdictions can collaborate to achieve shared climate action goals;
- (4) Identify places where San Diego (county and other institutions) have the leverage needed for action and where engagement with other institutions at higher (state, federal) and lower (city, community) levels will be needed; and
- (5) Demonstrate how climate mitigation can benefit all of San Diego's residents by improving air quality, creating well-paying employment opportunities, and reducing household costs for communities of color and low-income communities.

The County stated an intent to collaborate with agencies throughout the region including but not limited to the District, cities, the San Diego Regional Airport Authority, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), transit agencies, and other interested stakeholders to support alignment of CAPs and advance interconnected strategies to achieve GHG reduction goals. In addition to rapidly reducing GHG emissions, climate strategies, initiatives, and investments, the County's plan will have

a high potential to provide substantial co-benefits, including improving public health and quality of life in the region, reducing the burden of transportation costs on working families, increasing the dynamism of our regional economy, and providing San Diegans with thousands of well-paying jobs building the infrastructure that will propel the region into the future.

As the District works to advance multiple planning initiatives, including the Port Master Plan Update, the Maritime Clean Air Strategy, and an update to its CAP, regional collaboration is essential. The District has a history of working with member cities, the County, public agencies, the Navy, academia and others throughout the region to support GHG emission reduction and progress climate adaptation. Furthermore, the District's work to conserve and expand coastal and marine habitats complements conservation and management of terrestrial carbon sinks in the region, such as forests, natural and agricultural lands and also creates more climate resilient environments that will help communities and the environment around San Diego Bay adapt to changing climate-related conditions. A Resolution supporting a County-led Framework is in alignment with the District's planning initiatives and climate goals (Attachment B).

General Counsel's Comments:

The Office of the General Counsel reviewed this agenda and the proposed resolution as to form and legality.

Environmental Review:

The proposed Board action does not constitute a "project" under the definition set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 because it will not have a potential to result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment and is, therefore, not subject to CEQA.

In addition, this Board item complies with Section 87 of the Port Act, which allows for the establishment, improvement, and conduct of a harbor, and for the construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance, and operations of wharves, docks, piers, slips, quays, and all other works, buildings, facilities, utilities, structures, and appliances incidental, necessary, or convenient, for the promotion and accommodation of commerce and navigation. The Port Act was enacted by the California Legislature and is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine. Consequently, the proposed project is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine.

Finally, the proposed Board action does not allow for "development," as defined in Section 30106 of the California Coastal Act, or "new development," pursuant to Section 1.a. of the District's Coastal Development Permit Regulations. Therefore, issuance of a Coastal Development Permit or exclusion is not required.

Equal Opportunity Program:

Not applicable.

PREPARED BY:

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Attachment(s):

Attachment A: San Diego County Board of Supervisors Agenda Item: Framework for Our Future: Developing a Regional Sustainability Plan to Guide San Diego County Toward a Zero Carbon Future

Attachment B: Draft Resolution 20XX-XXX: Resolution Supporting the County of San Diego Developing a Framework for a Regional Carbon Sustainability Plan in Partnership with the University of California San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy

1 The District's 2016 GHG Emission Inventory demonstrated a 13 percent decrease of GHG emissions when including emissions from CP Kelco. CP Kelco is subject to Cap and Trade Requirements governed by the California Air Resources Control Board (CARB). Many Climate Action Plans remove Cap and Trade facilities from their inventories as they are directly regulated by CARB. Without CP Kelco's GHG emissions, the District demonstrated an 18 percent decrease in GHG emissions relative to 2006.