



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

DATE: September 26, 2007
BOARD MEETING DATE: October 16, 2007
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Supervisor Richard Gordon, Chairman
Supervisor Jerry Hill, Vice Chairman
Environmental Quality Committee

SUBJECT: U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution supporting the U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration and making related commitments

VISION ALIGNMENT:

The recommended action furthers the following commitment and goal:

Commitment: Leaders work across boundaries to preserve and enhance our quality of life.

Goal 23: Leaders throughout the County provide the impetus for broader regional solution in land use, housing, childcare, education, health and transportation.

BACKGROUND:

In response to a recommendation by Supervisor Gordon made at the August 14, 2007 meeting of the Environmental Quality Committee, staff reviewed the U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration and determined the impact on county resources and programs. The Cool Counties declaration is sponsored by the Sierra Club and endorsed by the National Association of Counties (NACO). It was unveiled at this year's NACO Annual Conference, and is an effort to prompt government agencies to reduce the impact of their operations on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Many counties throughout the country have adopted the declaration including King County (Washington), Fairfax County (Virginia), Nassau County (New York) and Alameda County (California). Representatives from the Loma Prieta chapter of the Sierra Club attended the August 14th Committee meeting to encourage San Mateo County to sign

the declaration.

Staff reviewed requirements of the declaration and concluded that the County is currently or is planning to work on all the required climate protection actions including:

- Developing a baseline emission inventory for county operations which will be done through the Joint Venture Silicon Valley Climate Change task force multi-city/county contract with Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI),
- Creating and maintaining a master list of all county actions that reduce GHG emissions,
- Assessing the impact of emissions reduction actions,
- Participating in regional GHG initiatives, and
- Advocating for federal action to reduce GHG emissions.

At the September 25, 2007 Environmental Quality Committee meeting, staff recommended adoption of the declaration and the Committee requested that the Board of Supervisors consider adoption of the Declaration as soon as possible.

County Counsel has reviewed the declaration and approved the attached resolution, which adds a list of the specific climate protection steps San Mateo County is taking to the language proposed by the Sierra Club.

DISCUSSION:

The Cool Counties declaration includes three components: (1) County action – inventory, reduction activities and impact measurement, (2) Regional targets - An 80% regional GHG emission reduction target by 2050 to be attained with flat emissions by 2010 and 10% reductions every five years between 2010 and 2050, and (3) Federal advocacy. For the County action component, staff is developing a work plan and timeline that will be presented to the Environmental Quality Committee at their October 2007 meeting. The plan will include bi-monthly progress reports to the Committee. For the regional targets, both Board members and county staff are participating on regional workgroups and committees sponsored by a variety of agencies including the City/County Association of Governments, California State Association of Counties, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments, which are all discussing regional emissions targets and plans for reducing GHG emissions. For the third requirement, your Board and your Legislative Committee will decide how to advocate for climate protection initiatives on the federal level.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The San Mateo County share for the Joint Venture ICLEI contract is \$13,000, which will come from the General Fund. Staff and program support for all other Cool Counties activities this fiscal year will come from the Recycle Works program, which is supported by the Solid Waste Fund.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING U.S. COOL COUNTIES CLIMATE STABILIZATION
DECLARATION, AND MAKING RELATED COMMITMENTS**

RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo, State of California, that

WHEREAS, there is a consensus among the world's leading scientists that global warming caused by human emission of greenhouse gases is among the most significant problem facing the world today and they have projected that stabilization of climate change in time to minimize documented impacts will require a reduction of global warming emissions to 80 percent below current levels by the year 2050; and

WHEREAS, currently the United States is responsible for producing approximately 25 percent of the world's global warming pollutants; and as a result, the State of California has mandated statewide reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, documented impacts of global warming include but are not limited to increased occurrences of extreme weather events (i.e., droughts and floods), adverse impacts on plants and wildlife habitats, threats to global food and water supplies, rising sea and bay levels – all of which have an economic impact on communities and their local governments; and

WHEREAS, counties have a unique role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change through their regional jurisdiction over policy areas such as air quality, land use planning, transportation, zoning, forest preservation, water conservation, and wastewater and solid waste management; and, through programs that provide economic and quality of life benefits such as reducing energy bills, preserving green space, promoting waste-to-energy programs, expanding transportation and work choices to reduce traffic congestion, and fostering more economic development and job creation through energy conservation and new technologies; and

WHEREAS, this Board of Supervisors has reviewed and determined that the County of San Mateo is currently working on or is planning to work on all the climate protection actions required in the U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration, which include developing a baseline emission inventory for county operations, creating and maintaining a master list of all county actions that reduce GHG emissions, assessing the impact of emissions reduction actions, participating in regional GHG initiatives, and advocating for federal action to reduce GHG emissions.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED AND ORDERED that the County of San Mateo, as a Cool County, supports the U.S. Cool Counties climate stabilization declaration, and will take immediate steps to help the federal, state, and the governments within our county to achieve the 2050 climate stabilization goal by making the following commitments:

- i. Create an inventory of our county government (operational) greenhouse

gas (“GHG”) emissions and implement policies, programs and operations to achieve significant, measurable and sustainable reduction of those operational GHG emissions to help contribute to the regional reduction of targets as identified in paragraph ii;

ii. Work closely with local, state, and federal governments and other leaders to reduce county geographical GHG emissions to 80 percent below current levels by 2050, by developing a GHG emissions inventory and regional plan that establishes short-, mid-, and long-term GHG reduction targets, with recommended goals to stop increasing emissions by 2010, and to achieve a 10 percent reduction every five years thereafter through to 2050.

iii. Urge Congress and the Administration to enact a multi-sector national program of requirements, market-based limits, and incentives for reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below current levels by 2050. Urge Congress and the Administration to strengthen standards by enacting legislation such as a Corporate Average Fuel Economy (“CAFÉ”) standard that achieves at least 35 miles per gallon (mpg) within 10 years for cars and light trucks.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY FURTHER DETERMINED AND

ORDERED that the County of San Mateo will take immediate steps to identify regional climate change impacts and we will draft and implement a county plan to prepare for and build resilience to those impacts.

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