



DATE: January 27, 2016

TO: Waste Management Authority Board and Energy Council

FROM: Wendy Sommer, Executive Director

BY: Karen Kho, Senior Program Manager

SUBJECT: Climate Mitigation/Adaptation Support for Member Agencies

SUMMARY

On January 27, 2016, staff will provide an update to the Board on activities requested by member agencies (through the Energy Council Technical Advisory Group – EC TAG) in climate mitigation and adaptation. Agency technical assistance can help jurisdictions meet state and federal mandates, while also supporting participation in the Compact of Mayors that was launched at the 2014 United Nations Climate Summit. Staff has identified synergies between EC and WMA activities as well as new opportunities for external funding to support them. Staff is seeking input from the Board on whether to align Energy Council priorities for grant seeking with other Agency priorities under a climate mitigation/adaptation framework.

DISCUSSION

Since 2007 the Agency has supported Alameda County jurisdictions with climate action planning and implementation activities. The Agency coordinated the original baseline Green House Gas (GHG) emissions inventories and Climate Action Plan (CAP) templates for member agencies. In 2012 the Waste Management Authority received external funding to help member agencies update their GHG inventories. From 2013-2015 the Energy Council received additional funding to complete the inventory updates and coordinate a countywide project to target reductions in the small commercial business sector. Supporting local CAP implementation is one of the Energy Council's criteria for grant seeking.

Alameda County is one of only two counties in the Bay Area where every jurisdiction in the county has conducted a GHG inventory, set a reduction target, and adopted a CAP – typically for the target year 2020, partially due to financial and technical assistance provided by our Agency. The Agency's CAP templates for member agencies facilitated the inclusion of Agency priorities, such as recycling of all materials, food waste composting, residential energy efficiency and Bay-Friendly Landscaping, in local CAPs.

Member agencies have requested support to conduct regular GHG inventory updates to track progress toward their reduction targets. Through external funding Energy Council staff assisted jurisdictions upon request with setting up ongoing inventory tracking in ICLEI's ClearPath tool. Staff is available to further support jurisdictions with ClearPath, leveraging the CivicSpark intern resources currently available at several jurisdictions. Staff has also been tracking GHG inventory activities at the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and is providing guidance on how to incorporate the Air District's findings into existing jurisdiction activities.

As the 2020 target year nears, jurisdictions are also looking at updating their reduction targets and CAPs for 2035 or 2050. This activity would support compliance with state Senate Bill 397 which requires general plans to demonstrate consistency with the State's GHG reduction targets, as well as the Compact of Mayors requirements on mitigation. Staff is prepared to support the CAP update process by gathering existing guidance and resources, and serving as a convener among the jurisdiction for sharing best practices and lessons learned from the first round of CAPs.

The EC TAG has discussed participation in the Compact of Mayors and requested support in meeting its requirements. The cities of Berkeley, Emeryville, Fremont, Oakland, and Piedmont have already joined the Compact and other jurisdictions are considering it. Cities can meet Compact of Mayors, state (SB 379) and federal (FEMA) requirements simultaneously by incorporating new potential hazards due to climate change into an update of their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) or as an annex to their Safety Plan. Ten jurisdictions in Alameda County have LHMPs that will expire in March 2016, and they must update their LHMP in order to remain eligible for FEMA funding in the case of a natural disaster. Staff has met with regional and statewide partners, including ABAG, ICLEI and the Local Government Commission to leverage their resources and identify where gaps exist.

As additional funding becomes available to support community resiliency, there is an opportunity to position the Agency and Alameda County jurisdictions to receive these types of grants. Current Agency programs already include climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, but we have not leveraged them in seeking external funding. For example, funding is available to protect and restore natural systems with the use of compost/mulch, which aligns perfectly with our target of increasing the use of local and recycled content compost and mulch. There is also a focus on energy resiliency, which builds upon the Energy Council's existing energy efficiency programs.

A climate mitigation/adaptation framework could help align and prioritize Energy Council and WMA activities related to external grant seeking. If the Board is interested in pursuing this direction, staff will coordinate internally and work with the EC TAG on next steps.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide staff direction on whether to align the WMA Board and Energy Council's projects and priorities under a climate mitigation/adaptation framework in order to leverage current projects and future funding opportunities.