



**Mendocino County  
Climate Action  
Advisory Committee**

January 14, 2021  
Board of Supervisors  
Mendocino County  
501 Low Gap Road  
Ukiah, CA

**Re: County Strategic Plan**

Dear Members of the Board,

The Mendocino County Climate Action and Advisory Committee, the Grassroots Initiative and Climate Action Mendocino applaud your efforts to complete a set of strategic goals for Mendocino County. The draft strategy includes many goals and objectives, and with limited County funding and staff, implementation of the entire list will be a challenge. We recommend that the County Board of Supervisors consider simplifying the list and we recommend that you use policy language that can be used at the department level throughout the organization to foster flexibility and responsiveness at the staff level in implementation. We also recommend that the strategy include *suggested* steps for each goal statement and *potential funding sources*, as this will facilitate implementation. We hope that you consider revising the remainder of the document in a form similar to our recommendation below.

**First, a reiteration of the Strategy's current climate related goals, which are all found under point E:**

- E. Implement practices that support a sustainable environment and responsible stewardship of natural resources
  - 1. Develop a strategy for a sustainable water supply that includes the identification of potential new sources of water and/or expansion of existing surface water delivery systems
  - 2. Reduce the carbon footprint of County facilities and operations by installing solar microgrids, purchasing electric vehicles, and reducing the

- use of fossil fuels.
3. Support sustainable forestry, agriculture, and landscapes as a County policy with a focus on lowering carbon emissions

**We recommend the following changes to the three climate related goals in the Strategic Plan:**

**E. Implement practices that support a sustainable environment and responsible stewardship of natural resources**

**1. Develop and implement a Sustainable Water Supply Plan for the County.**

The plan could include: a) an analysis of potential new water sources; b) the feasibility of expanding existing water storage and delivery systems; c) facilitation of water conservation; (d) simplify the permitting process for private water storage facilities; and e) consider joining the California Water Efficiency Network to facilitate funding for water conservation. Implementation should be accomplished with an active grant writing program. Potential funding sources include:

- State Water Board <https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans>
- Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/services/funding/SRF.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/services/funding/SRF.html)
- Small Communities Drink Water Fund [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans/sustainable\\_water\\_solutions/scfp.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/scfp.html)

**2. Reduce the carbon footprint at County facilities and operations with a goal towards achieving net zero energy use by 2030.** Potential strategies could include the following: a) install solar panels and storage capacity on County buildings; b) install electric charging stations in County parking lots; c) replace fleet vehicles with electric vehicles where feasible; d) reduce work-related travel; e) reduce food and municipal waste; f) implement and facilitate reuse, recycling, green purchasing, and life cycle costing. Potential funding sources include:

- California Energy Commission Low Interest Loan Program (1% interest repayable with energy cost savings) <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/energy-conservation-assistance-act/low-interest-loans>
- CAL-eVIP Through Sonoma Clean Power. <https://calevip.org>
- Clean Transportation Program Rural Electric Vehicle (REV) Charging Grant <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/clean-transportation-program>
- GFO-21-601 Charging Access for Reliable On-Demand Transportation Services (CARTS)(closed)

- GFO-20-602 – Zero-Emission Transit Fleet Infrastructure Deployment (closed)
- Sustainable Transportation Equity Project (STEP) – Implementation Grant (closed)

**3. Assist the private sector to reduce their carbon footprint and increase carbon sequestration on private and public lands with a goal towards achieving net zero energy use and positive carbon sequestration by 2030.** Potential strategies include: a) consider carbon emissions as part of all CEQA reviews and Use Permit approvals; b) support policies and projects that result in carbon storage in our forests and agriculture soils; c) consider regulatory fee relief and/or permitting priority for those installing solar and battery systems; d) join the Rural Regional Energy Network to offer rebates for low carbon appliance replacements by residents and businesses.

Potential funding sources include:

- Ukiah Electric Utility \$3,000 rebate for a Workplace or Public Level 2 Single Hose EV Charger and a \$4,000 rebate for a Workplace or Public Level 2 Dual Hose EV Charger
- Building Forward: Library Infrastructure Grant Program Preliminary Application
- California Lending for Energy and Environmental Needs (CLEEN) Center
- California Capital Access Program (CalCAP) Electric Vehicle Charging Station (EVCS) Financing Program  
<https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/cpcfca/calcap/index.asp>
- GFO-20-502 – Solar Heating, Cooling, and Power for Industrial and Commercial Applications (closed)

**4. Engage in long range planning and encourage more walkable communities and higher density development (residential and commercial) in areas of the County where residents would welcome additional population and services.** Potential strategies include: a) identify and rezone areas within unincorporated towns in Mendocino County to increase housing density and allow more affordable housing development closer to job centers; b) work with water and sewer districts to identify and prioritize expansion of services where needed to facilitate the increased density of housing development; c) work to identify areas within rural towns that are appropriate for rezoning to Mixed Use, to facilitate the development of walkable communities; d) continue to ensure that the County Department of Transportation applies for funding to increase and expand walking and biking infrastructure in areas identified for increased housing density, mixed use zones, and schools, to assure there are safe non-motorized transportation opportunities available.

On behalf of the Mendocino County Climate Action and Advisory Committee, the Grassroots Institute and Climate Action Mendocino, we will continue to help the County develop and implement these strategic goals. We also offer our highly skilled and talented services to help in this effort.

Sincerely,

Marie Jones, Chair, Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee

Eileen Mitro, Climate Action Mendocino

James Schoonover, Member Grassroots Institute