



DATE: March 6, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

FROM: Rhianna Frank, Climate Action Manager
Diane Ramirez, Project Manager, Public Works & Utilities Department

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Professional Services Agreement with Sage Energy Consulting for the EV Charging Infrastructure Master Plan and Finding This Item is Not a “Project” Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) and if This Item Was a Project it is Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the attached Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with NV5 Energy Consulting for the EV Charging Infrastructure Master Plan and finding this item is not a “Project” pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) and if this item was a project it is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306.

BACKGROUND

The City is committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 (Resolution 2021-007 N.C.S) and has developed a series of plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to its operations to support this goal. On May 6, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution 2019-055 N.C.S. declaring a climate emergency. On January 11, 2021, at a joint meeting of the City Council and Climate Action Commission, the Council adopted Resolution 2021-007 N.C.S. adopting a Climate Emergency Framework, which acts as a reference for developing annual Council goals and priorities and guiding the ongoing General Plan update. ConThe goal of reducing vehicle greenhouse gas emissions is contained within the Climate Emergency Frameworks transportation emissions are the city’s largest source of operational greenhouse gas emissions.

An initial step towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction related to operations, the City of Petaluma began its subscription to Sonoma Clean Power’s EverGreen 100% renewable electricity generation program effective July 2021. The electricity from the EverGreen program is sourced from local geothermal and photovoltaic solar power and has a very low greenhouse gas emissions

profile at all times. Electric vehicles charged at City facilities will be recharged with EverGreen electricity resulting in negligible greenhouse gas emissions.

Acting on the Climate Emergency Framework, the City has committed to purchasing electric vehicles when a fleet vehicle has reached the end of its useful service life—within the last fiscal year, the City has already replaced over ten gas-powered vehicles with electric vehicles.

The City is actively working on several projects to help meet goals of carbon neutrality such as solar, energy efficiency, fuel replacement, and transitioning the fleet to clean energy. The following projects will benefit from the analysis that will be provided by the EV Charging Infrastructure Master Plan scope:

Solar Initiatives: As we work to achieve the City of Petaluma’s Climate Action goals, we are constructing parking lot canopy photovoltaic solar arrays at various locations around town. Solar arrays like these derive clean, pure energy from the sun, help combat greenhouse gas emissions, and work to reduce our collective dependence on fossil fuels.

This project will construct solar canopies at the Community Center, Petaluma Police Department, Swim Center, and Petaluma Community Sports Fields. These solar arrays are projected to save the City \$20 million in electricity costs over 20 years.

Floating Solar: In December 2022, Council authorized a Power Purchase Agreement to construct a floating solar array at the retention ponds for Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility (ECWRF). The solar project would begin operation by the end of 2024 and is expected to save the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility \$13.1 million in electricity bills over 20 years.

Facility Energy Efficiency: The City has contracted with Syserco Energy Solutions to audit city facilities for energy reduction measures. Investment Grade Audits will be scheduled for Spring 2023, resulting in projected energy reductions.

Generator Feasibility Study: The City has been awarded Department of Housing and Community Development grant funds to identify backup power needs at critical City facilities. Renewable energy systems will be considered as part of facility backup power.

Citywide Electrification Plan: A Citywide electrification plan is essential for the City to reach its 2030 carbon neutrality goal and is one of the Council’s current top ten priorities. Major sources of carbon emissions in the City of Petaluma are transportation and existing buildings. Electrification and fuel switch to renewable sources for the transportation and housing sectors would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A citywide electrification plan will identify barriers and propose solutions for the electrification of existing Petaluma buildings and infrastructure, including infrastructure upgrades needed to support the electrification of buildings and vehicles.

DISCUSSION

The scope of this master plan includes a facility and energy grid capacity analysis for twenty-one (21) City facilities. Initially, staff and the consultant will focus on nine facilities that currently have

EVs or will receive EVs in the next year. Segmenting the contract will also help spread the project cost over a few fiscal years.

These nine facilities historically house fleet vehicles and are identified in the master plan:

- Police Department
- City Hall
- Corporation Yard
- Fire Stations 1, 2, and 3
- Water Field Office
- Ellis Creek
- Community Center

The consultant work will include interfacing with PG&E to make sure that the needed upgrades are identified and initiated. Completing this analysis is imperative for installing EV chargers at City facilities. NV5 will consider the energy reductions and additions at each facility in conjunction with the consultants of the projects listed above.

This master plan will deliver both the conceptual and engineered designs needed to proceed with construction and installation after the master plan is complete. Consultants will also provide support in identifying inventive and grant opportunities to help fund the forthcoming construction and installation project.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This agenda item was noticed in accordance with Brown Act requirements.

COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

The City Council has identified “Our Environmental Legacy” as one of its key strategic initiatives for 2019-2023. This recommended action supports:

- Workplan Item #42 — “Find ways for the City operations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve water, decrease waste, and minimize the use of fossil fuels and investigate and pursue options for carbon sequestration.”
- Workplan Item #203— “Impose a moratorium on City purchases of fossil fuel-powered vehicles, power equipment, and appliances, with limited exceptions for emergency vehicles and equipment where no low climate pollution causing alternatives are reasonably available.

CLIMATE ACTION/SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

Access to charging stations is a limiting factor in the fleet transition process required to meet Petaluma’s climate goals. This project will help the City of Petaluma achieve carbon neutrality goals by providing the design work needed to install EV charging infrastructure at City facilities. In addition to providing this design work, the energy grid analysis will help inform multiple other energy projects the City is currently working on. The cumulative greenhouse gas emissions

reductions from the completion of these projects will greatly reduce Petaluma's overall carbon footprint.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, in that executing a personal service agreement to conduct an assessment of City facilities for the potential installation of electric vehicle charging stations does not meet CEQA's definition of a "project," because the action does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and because the action constitutes organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. Relatedly, if the proposed action did constitute a "project" under CEQA the action is exempt under the information gathering exemption CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 and common-sense exemption, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) as the masterplan will help determine locations for electric vehicle charging stations which will reduce emissions from an equivalent internal combustion vehicle. Further CEQA analysis will be conducted once EV stations are installed, but the installation will likely be exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing facilities) and 15303 (Minor construction).

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Funding from project C11502015 Electric Vehicle Chargers funded by General Fund Measure U would fund the majority of the **four hundred and sixty thousand (\$460,000) dollar** contract, augmented with funding from Water Capital, Waste Water Capital, Street Maintenance, and City Facilities Impact Fees. The consultant work will start in FY 22/23 and extend through FY 23/24.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives considered but not recommended include, not approving this contract and purchasing individual chargers without consideration of potential energy grid capacity issues.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution