

DATE: October 28, 2024

TO: Council Sustainability Committee

FROM: Lauren Anderson, Sustainability Analyst II
Rebecca Lucky, Sustainability Manager

VIA: Danielle Lee, Chief Sustainability and Resiliency Officer
Audrey Seymour Ramberg, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: **Scope of Services for Cascadia Consulting Group to Develop Decarbonization Goal Analysis and Climate Vulnerability Assessment**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend the City Council approve the revised scope of services for a professional services agreement with Cascadia Consulting Group to develop a 2035 and 2040 decarbonization goal analysis and climate vulnerability assessment in a not-to-exceed amount of \$223,005.

BACKGROUND

On [September 4, 2024](#), the Council Sustainability Committee (CSC) reviewed and provided feedback on staff's recommendation to award an agreement to Cascadia Consulting Group (Cascadia) to develop a 2035 Climate Strategy, which included a decarbonization and resiliency strategy. The CSC expressed concerns about the project timeline and an interest to focus primarily on decarbonization. The CSC directed staff to return with a reduced scope of work that includes a 2035 and 2040 decarbonization goal analysis and a climate vulnerability assessment.

In addition, the CSC requested a progress report on the Sustainability Action Plan and further discussion on outreach and engagement strategies to encourage and support public action on decarbonization. A Sustainability Action Plan update will be presented to the CSC in November. Discussion regarding current and planned outreach and engagement strategies will be ongoing and will start with discussion of the "Year of the Water Heater" Campaign with the CSC as a separate agenda item for this meeting.

Staff has worked with the Cascadia team to revise the scope of work in accordance with the CSC's direction. The revised scope is included in Attachment 1 for the CSC to consider for recommendation to the City Council for approval. With this approval, the City Manager will

execute the agreement as it is within the City Manager's authority, and Cascadia Consulting Group could begin the project in January 2025.

ANALYSIS

The prior scope of work included robust community engagement to develop a comprehensive decarbonization and resilience strategy. The revised scope of work in Attachment 1 does not include community engagement at this time and will instead focus on a technical analysis to help the City:

- Evaluate a 2035 or 2040 decarbonization goal and consider major actions that would be needed in the next five years to stay on track to achieve the selected goal.
- Begin to understand the climate impacts that Mountain View will experience through completion of a climate vulnerability assessment.

A report will be developed for each of these two areas of technical analysis. A summary of the scope of work for each report is included below and in more detail in Attachment 1.

2035 and 2040 Decarbonization Goal Analysis Report

On April 21, 2020, the City Council adopted its current 2045 decarbonization goal. In response to the growing threat of climate change, the CSC expressed an interest to explore an accelerated climate goal at its [June 22, 2022 meeting](#) to explore a new 2035 goal and strategies to achieve the goal. As mentioned above, at its September 2024 meeting, the CSC further directed to also explore a 2040 goal.

For each target year, the project team will conduct a wedge analysis to understand how greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions from current national, state, and regional policies and programs will impact emission reductions for Mountain View. The remaining emissions will provide insight on the further reductions Mountain View will need to accomplish in order to achieve its decarbonization targets.

In addition to the wedge analysis, the scope of work includes evaluating Mountain View's current policies and programs to reduce emissions and development of a five-year menu of actions to consider for each decarbonization target year (2035 and 2040). The five-year menu will provide high-level options to demonstrate how the City can stay on track to achieve target-year goals. The rationale for using a five-year timeline is to allow for flexibility and pivot as necessary as a result of new policies and programs at various levels of government (e.g., regional, state, and federal), new technologies, or market changes that could enable faster emission reductions.

Climate Vulnerability Assessment

The City's current Sustainability Action Plan includes the development of a Climate Vulnerability Assessment as one of its actions. The climate vulnerability assessment will identify projected climate hazards, such as extreme heat, wildfire smoke, sea level rise, storms, and riverine flooding, and their potential impacts on Mountain View. This work will include four phases: (1) exposure analysis; (2) sensitivity analysis; (3) adaptive capacity analysis; and (4) vulnerability assessment. The assessment will also include a social vulnerability assessment to help the City understand the distributional burden of climate change impacts across its jurisdiction as well as the social determinants of vulnerability, such as income, age, race, linguistic isolation, renter status, or other factors.

Cascadia Selection Process and Work Examples

Cascadia was chosen through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that occurred in the spring of this year. Additional information on the selection process is contained in the [September 4, 2024 memorandum to the CSC](#).

In response to CSC and community questions regarding Cascadia's technical expertise with decarbonization analysis, staff has included in Attachment 2 a summary of Climate Action Plans that contain examples of Cascadia's work conducting technical analysis of decarbonization goals and strategies. The overall scope of work in other plans vary. While some of the plans Cascadia has prepared for other cities include resiliency strategies, that is not the primary focus of the scope of work in Mountain View. In addition, the decarbonization actions in Mountain View will be focused on a five-year menu of actions to stay on track to meet the City's desired decarbonization goal. Other plans cover different time frames and ranges of strategies.

CSC and Council Engagement

The previous scope of work estimated that the 2035 Climate Strategy would be completed by the second quarter of 2026. Under the new scope of work, the Decarbonization Goal Analysis and Climate Vulnerability Analysis are estimated to be completed before the end of 2025.

Staff will continue to solicit feedback from the CSC and City Council at key points throughout the project, including the review of the draft and final reports. Staff anticipates that the final Decarbonization Goal Analysis Report and Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report will be presented to the City Council for adoption by the end of 2025.

The anticipated outcome of the Decarbonization Goal Analysis is to consider formal adoption of a more progressive climate target and determine which actions to take over the next five years to stay on track in meeting the new adopted target. For the Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Report, the anticipated outcome is to provide education and information to the CSC and the City Council and determine next steps on how to prepare the community to withstand some of the changes occurring due to climate change.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total cost for the Decarbonization Goal Analysis is \$149,328, and the total cost for the Vulnerability Assessment is \$73,677. The total recommended not-to-exceed contract amount is \$223,005. This compares to the prior proposed contract amount of \$433,234 for the previous scope of work. There is sufficient budget in the Sustainability Project Capital Improvement Program (Project 20-99) to cover the services. No additional appropriation is needed. The recommended fees are within the range typically charged for such services based on similar types of projects in the region.

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- Attachments:
1. Scope of Work for the Development of a Decarbonization Goal Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment
 2. Example Plans Developed by Cascadia Consulting Group