

**County of Santa Clara**  
**Facilities And Fleet Department**  
Building Operations



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FAF02 031405

DATE: March 14, 2005

TO: Supervisor Pete McHugh, Chairperson  
Supervisor James T. Beall, Jr., Vice-Chairperson  
Finance & Government Operations Committee

FROM: *Larry Jenkins SD*  
Larry Jenkins  
Director of Facilities and Fleet Department

SUBJECT: Resolution for Participation in the Sustainable Silicon Valley Carbon Dioxide Emissions Reduction Project (Referral from the October 5, 2004 Board Meeting)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Recommend the Finance and Government Operations Committee (FGOC) support the attached Resolution on Participating in the Sustainable Silicon Valley Carbon Dioxide Emissions Reduction Project and forward the Resolution to the Board of Supervisors with a favorable recommendation for approval.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate financial impacts in approving this Resolution. Accomplishing the objectives of the Resolution, however, will require the County to fund future energy conservation projects for existing facilities that will reduce Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions, and continue to fund energy efficient features in the construction of new buildings.

## **CONTRACT HISTORY**

Not applicable.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

This transmittal is in response to a referral made by the Board of Supervisors on October 5, 2004.

Scientific consensus has developed that CO2 and other greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere have a profound effect on the Earth's climate, especially in regards to the global warming that has become noticeable during the 20th Century. The Sustainable Silicon Valley (SSV) group of governmental, educational, business and community organizations has made a commitment for the Silicon Valley region to reduce CO2 emissions by 20% by 2010, using 1990 as a base year. This goal would be achieved primarily through improvements in energy efficiency. This Resolution will commit the County to join this effort of the SSV.

## **BACKGROUND**

The County started an intense effort in 2001 to reduce its energy consumption in County facilities. By FY 2004, the County had reduced its electrical energy consumption by 20% compared to the consumption of the FY 2000 base year. Joining the SSV CO2 Emissions Reduction Program will keep the County focused on achieving future energy consumption savings in its existing facilities, and will provide additional incentive for building new energy efficient buildings.

Achieving additional reductions in CO2 emissions through additional reductions in energy consumption will require funding for future energy conservation measures. Most of this funding would be provided through the Energy Conservation Board Identified Program which is a component of the County's Capital Program. Potential energy conservation projects are provided to the Board annually for approval as part of the County's annual budgeting process. Additionally, new facilities are being designed with a focus on energy efficiency. County policies currently exist requiring purchase of energy efficient equipment.

On April 24, 2003, the SSV announced that it had adopted a goal to reduce CO2 emissions in the Silicon Valley region by 20% by 2010, using 1990 as a base year. The group recognized the challenge of such an ambitious goal. At the same time, the group expressed the desire to aim high, and thus encourage creative, collaborative and motivated participation by as wide a group of organizations as possible, highlighting Silicon Valley's leadership and innovation on this issue.

From an environmental perspective, the amount of energy use is important since the usage correlates to the amount of CO2 released into the atmosphere. CO2, which derives from the burning of fossil fuels, has been implicated as a major contributor to global warming. In 1990, 13.42 million tons of CO2 were emitted into the atmosphere in Silicon Valley. The SSV goal of 20 percent CO2 reduction on a regional basis means that no more than 10.74 million tons of CO2 should be emitted in 2010. This CO2 emission reduction goal for Silicon Valley is measured in absolute values and is not normalized by economic factors. However, goals for participants in this SSV initiative can be normalized for economic activity such as current building square footage.

The SSV CO2 Emissions Reduction Target and Reporting Protocol has six (6) steps. A participating agency will:

1. Choose one or more of its facilities in Silicon Valley;
2. Select a baseline reporting year for each facility;
3. Track each facility's annual electricity and natural gas use;
4. Adopt a goal for CO2 emissions reduction (percentage and year);
5. Report annually to SSV either annual energy use or convert total energy use into CO2. If the participant chooses to use a normalizing factor, that factor should also be reported annually; and,
6. Include a brief description (one–two paragraphs) of some (two–five) of the key actions it has taken that led to decreasing emissions of CO2.

This is a voluntary project. There are no sanctions for a participant failing to meet its goal.

FAF has contacted the utility companies that provide electricity and natural gas to the County. The year 1995 appears to be the earliest year that these companies can provide comprehensive utilities data. For this reason, FAF is recommending that the base year of 1995 be used for this project. Under the established Sustainable Silicon Valley CO2 Emissions in Silicon Valley and Goal for Each Base Year guidelines, the County would need to reduce its CO2 emissions by twelve percent from 1995 to 2010.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

The County will not participate in the SSV CO2 Emissions Reduction Program, but will continue to pursue energy conservation efforts.

### **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

Forward to the full Board for approval.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

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- Resolution on Sustainable Silicon Valley