


**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA BILL**

NO. 2018-017

CLEARANCES	Initial	Date	Date Received in Council Office	Agenda Date	Assigned to:
Originator:	CE	10/24/18		11/7/18	Nat. Resources
Division Head:					
Dept. Head:	MT	10-25-18			
Prosecutor:					
Purchasing/Budget:					
Executive:	TBS Fog	10/29/18			

**TITLE OF DOCUMENT:**  
*Presentation from the Climate Impact Advisory Committee*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

SEPA review required?    ( ) Yes    ( ) NO SEPA review completed?    ( ) Yes    ( ) NO	Should Clerk schedule a hearing?    ( ) Yes    ( ) NO Requested Date:
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**SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:** *(If this item is an ordinance or requires a public hearing, you must provide the language for use in the required public notice. Be specific and cite RCW or WCC as appropriate. Be clear in explaining the intent of the action.)*

*Presentation from the Climate Impact Advisory Committee providing an update to County Council of the committee's work to date and current future direction.*

<b>COMMITTEE ACTION:</b>	<b>COUNCIL ACTION:</b>
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<b>Related County Contract #:</b>	<b>Related File Numbers:</b>	<b>Ordinance or Resolution Number:</b>
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**Please Note:** *Once adopted and signed, ordinances and resolutions are available for viewing and printing on the County's website at: [www.co.whatcom.wa.us/council](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/council).*

## ADDITIONAL SERVICE REQUEST (ASR)

- Submit during the regular budget process or with budget supplemental requests for all new or enhanced service or capability requests.
- Complete this form only for requests that are thoroughly planned and ready to be implemented, include specific cost information.

**NAME OF REQUEST: Climate Action Plan Update - development and implementation**

**EXPENDITURE TYPE:**  One-Time  Ongoing

**Amount:**

**Year: 2019**

Object Code(s):

Amount: \$75,000

Amount Total:

### Description of Request

- **Quick reference name:** Climate Action Plan Update
- **Name of person or persons responsible for implementing this request:**

Whatcom County staff contact Chris Elder, Planning Department

### 1a. Describe proposed activity or service:

Appropriate funds to commission hiring of consultant to assist County in the Climate Action Plan Update in 2019 to:

- Complete the emissions inventory, work with the Climate Impact Advisory Committee to review the emissions inventory and the 2007 Climate Action Plan to evaluate targets met or not, and develop new goals
- Evaluate the economic, social, and public safety benefits of incorporating climate change impact projections into the Shoreline Master Program Update and ensure that SMP update incorporates climate impact reduction into final adopted program.
- Complete vulnerability assessment of potential climate impacts throughout Whatcom County, including potential natural resource concerns, health

impacts, food security, development, public safety, energy security, and others

- Develop a roadmap for climate resiliency implementation and coordinate with identified department staff to begin implementation of Climate Action Plan requirements

**1b. Who are the primary customers for this service:**

The citizens and governments within Whatcom County.

**2. Describe the problem that this request addresses and why Whatcom County needs to address it.**

The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan of 2016 established the goal of implementing The Climate Action Plan. Whatcom County supports the 2015 United Nations Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The 2018 UN Landmark report from the IPCC, written by 91 scientists from 40 countries who analyzed 6000 scientific studies, reports strong risk of crisis by 2040 and to avert catastrophe requires transforming world economy at a rate and scale that has no documented historic precedent. All governments, international, national and sub-national must do their proportionate share. The Whatcom County Climate Impact Advisory Committee was instated to update the Whatcom County Climate Action Plan of 2007 and provide guidance for achieving its goals in a cost-efficient and fruitful manner. Enormous strides in knowledge and awareness have been realized since the 2007 plan was crafted that are now important to consider for Whatcom County's future resilience . This request will help us update that plan and create a pathway to a comprehensive mitigation of emissions to achieve our goal of 100% renewable energy by 2025 and implement a strategic adaptation and resilience plan necessary to ensure a steadily growing economy, protection of resources and our unique valued way of life.

**3. Options:**

- **What other options have you considered? Why is this the best option?**

The principal options that other Washington counties have taken include salaried county staff support, coordination and consultation with existing Climate Advisory agencies (e.g., Skagit Climate Science Consortium), and/or engagement with local academics. For example, King County employs a team of highly trained climate scientists. Because of the complexity of mitigation and adaptation issues facing Whatcom County, the Climate Impact Advisory Committee unanimously agrees that dedicated resources within the County beyond reliance on other agencies or academic resources is required to update the 2007 Climate Action Plan and achieve county-designated climate targets in both mitigation and adaptation. Creating a pathway to a comprehensive response to the growing and non-linear cascading impacts of climate change based on science must begin with a comprehensive climate action plan that balances long-term benefits with short term costs.

## **What are the specific cost savings? (Quantify)**

Addressing climate change impacts now will result in significant future cost savings, reduced disruption to industry, commerce and ecosystem services (e.g., fisheries, water quality/availability, recreation economy). As recent storms and other natural hazards across the world have demonstrated, costs of no action or responsive action are costing orders of magnitude more than strategic mitigation and adaptation. Important programs in Whatcom county and Washington State like Floodplains by Design that strive to implement salmon habitat restoration project that reduce natural hazard risk and impacts (e.g., floods) are essential opportunities to save costs and successfully protect/restore multiple important sectors of Pacific Northwest society. The recent supercharging of Hurricanes Michael and Florence due to steadily increasing sea surface temperatures associated with climate warming have resulted in catastrophic impacts across all sectors. Identifying critical vulnerabilities and solutions across Whatcom County related to river and coastal flooding, sedimentation that increases food risk and drainage costs, and impacts of drought including lower summer stream flows, reduced water availability and threatening water temperatures for valued and endangered fish species is critical and will save our regional economy. Addressing climate change impacts now will result in significant future savings and the update to the Climate Action Plan intends to help evaluate those monetary benefits.

## **4. Outcomes**

- **What outcomes will be delivered and when?**

Completion of an 11-year update to the 2007 Whatcom County Climate Action Plan by December 2019 specifying strategic and cost-effective steps to achieve the highest level of resilience possible for consideration and adoption by the Whatcom County Council.

- **How will you know whether the outcomes happened? How will success be measured? (Quantify)** Assessments undertaken in the Climate Action Planning process will provide County departments and administration with projected climate planning needs and strategies to support climate resiliency and improve public safety.

## **5. Other Departments/Agencies**

- **Will this impact other departments or agencies? If so, identify the departments and/or agencies impacted and explain what the impact(s) will be.**

Climate change will impact every department and agency, therefore assessment and consideration of these impacts will better prepare staff in being able to effectively address, mitigate, and prepare for impacts of climate change. In addition, refined assessment and guidance regarding climate change impacts are envisioned to aid successful outcomes of projects under consideration within multiple departments including Planning and Development Services, Parks, Public Works, Sheriff's Office, Health, Facilities, and likely others.

- **If another department or agency is responsible for part of the implementation, name their person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for.**

Agency and department staff will be identified as the planning process advances.

## **6. Funding Sources**

- **What is the funding source?**

General fund