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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: January 29, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Trisha Tillotson, Community Development Agency (CDA) Director

SUBJECT: Climate Resilience Objective for 2026

RECOMMENDATION: Information only.

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND:

Climate Resilience continues to be a high priority for Nevada County, as identified in the Board of Supervisors' 2025 objectives. On January 23, 2025, at the Board of Supervisors Annual Workshop, the Board provided direction that staff continue projects and initiatives already underway, including implementation of the grant funded initiatives.

As the objective has developed over the years, additional policy guidance is provided on an ongoing basis by ad hoc members, Supervisor Sue Hoek and Supervisor Hardy Bullock.

In 2025 (Year 3 of the Climate Resilience Objective), staff focused on the development of two sizable initiatives funded with a \$650,000 grant award from the Governor's Office of Climate and Land Use Innovation (RRGP Grant): (i) the development of the County's first Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (named the Resource Resiliency Roadmap) and (ii) the development of a climate collaborative on the western side of Nevada County (named The Resilience Project). The County continues to meet all the requirements and objectives outlined in the RRGP grant agreement.

Resource Resiliency Roadmap:

In February 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved a contract with Rincon Consultants to develop a Nevada County Climate Action Plan. Renamed as the Resource Resiliency Roadmap (Roadmap), the plan will provide a coordinated, community-driven framework for resilience, greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction, and long-term sustainability. Building on existing County efforts, it integrates updated climate data, new analyses, and broad community engagement. The Roadmap is non-regulatory and identifies voluntary measures and partnerships that advance countywide resilience and better position the County for state and federal funding.

Status of the Plan

The countywide community GHG emissions inventory has been completed, establishing the GHG emissions baseline used for target-setting and GHG reduction planning. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) is underway and identifies key social and physical vulnerabilities across the county related to changing climate.

Two public workshops (one in Grass Valley and one in Truckee) were conducted to share the results of the GHG inventory and gather community input on experienced climate impacts such as wildfire smoke, extreme heat, power outages, and reduced snowpack. Three Steering Committee meetings (comprised of 20 community leaders from local energy, natural resources, building and contractors, health, and social organizations) have been held to date, covering topics such as the GHG inventory, priority climate hazards and impacts, and community equity concerns. The first community survey received 170 responses, identifying wildfire, heat, and reduced snowpack as top concerns, and cost as a major barrier to action.

Draft measures and actions have been developed based on collected data and community input, and these will serve as the primary recommendations in the Roadmap. In the coming months, additional meetings with the Steering Committee, County departments and partner agencies, and focus groups comprised of underrepresented communities will help refine and align these measures with community and partner priorities. Two additional workshops and a second community survey are planned to gather broader community input, culminating in a public comment period on the Draft Roadmap.

Schedule and Upcoming Milestones

- **CCVA Completion:** February 2026
- **2nd Community Survey:** February 2026
- **Focus Group Meetings:** February–March 2026
- **Steering Committee Meetings 4 – 6:** February–May 2026
- **Public Workshops 3 and 4:** March 2026
- **Public Draft Roadmap released:** May 2026
- **Board of Supervisors final presentation and adoption:** July 2026

Anticipated Structure and Content of the Roadmap

The Roadmap will be written in clear, accessible language so County staff and community members can easily understand local climate risks and the actions needed to address them. The main document will focus on readable narrative and graphics, with technical detail placed in appendices. Planned components will include GHG emissions profile and trends, climate risks and vulnerabilities, system-based measures and actions and implementation strategies.

Use and Benefits of the Plan After Completion

The Roadmap is designed with implementation in mind. It will identify and prioritize projects, provide clear direction on roles, recommended actions, and potential funding pathways to support effective, coordinated action by the County and its partners.

The Resilience Project:

Included in the RRGP grant award was \$60,000 to be used to finance the development of a new climate collaborative on the western side of the County. As a partner in the grant award, Sierra Business Council (SBC) was charged with facilitating the development of the collaborative in partnership with Nevada County staff. Under the guidance of the Climate ad hoc, a governing body was formed during the summer of 2025 which includes a senior staff member and an elected official from each of the following organizations: Nevada County, City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital, Nevada Irrigation District, and the Nevada County Resource Conservation District.

The governing partners worked collaboratively to establish the mission of the organization which is “to cultivate a resilient rural future through education, conservation, land stewardship, and storytelling that connects people, nature, and working lands amid changing climate and economic conditions”. The collaborative hosted its Community Launch Event in October 2025 and nearly 100 community members, agencies, organizations, and local leaders came together to share the work they’re doing—and the ideas they hope to bring to life—to build a more resilient future for our region. Going forward, the collaborative will prioritize projects and utilize the inherent partnership and resource opportunities born out of the collaborative.

Other highlights include:

- Implemented Phase 2 of the Nevada County ZEV Transition Project: Development of the Electric Bus Charging at Tinloy Street Transit Center. Phase 2 was funded via State of California SB 125 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) funds.
- The Board of Supervisors accepted a grant award from the California Strategic Growth for \$10,000,000 to be used for the revitalization of the Western Nevada County Veterans Hall to transform the space into a functional community resilience center that offers shelter, services, and coordinated response efforts during emergencies
- Hosted the 4th Annual Sustainability Summit to bring together regional stakeholders to share out and collaborate on what resiliency means for our rural communities. Over 200 regional partners attended the event.
- Established a partnership between Sierra Energy Reimagined and Nevada County Health and Human Services to connect low-income residents with opportunities for free or low-cost home weatherization, improving indoor air quality during smoke events and safety during extreme temperatures.
- Awarded another year of staff support in the form of a CivicSpark Fellow, funded by AmeriCorps to add staff capacity
- The Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance authorizing the implementation of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Program in Nevada County in February 2025. Pioneer Community Energy was identified as the CCA provider of choice for Nevada County and in June, the CPUC approved the expansion of Pioneer Community Energy into Nevada County.
- Continued the development of the Agricultural and Working Landscape Conservation Plan in partnership with the Nevada County Resource Conservation District, Bear Yuba Land Trust, Sierra Harvest, and Nevada County Farm Bureau, funded by a \$500,000 Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program grant (SALC).

PROPOSED 2026 ACTIONS:

To maintain and build upon these successes, staff proposes the following key actions for 2026:

- **Complete the Resource Resiliency Roadmap:** Staff will continue to work in partnership with Rincon to complete the plan by summer 2026 at which time the plan will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for approval and adoption. Over the balance of the year, staff will work to implement the recommendations included in the plan.
- **Transition The Resilience Project to a Stand-Alone Organization:** At the conclusion of the RRGP grant funding period in June 2026, facilitation of The Resilience Project will transfer to Nevada County Staff. Under staff guidance, the collaborative will use its three sub working groups to focus on specific project opportunities and leverage resource and funding opportunities to meet the mission of the collaborative.

- **Leverage Funding Sources to further County priorities:** Pursue funding opportunities, including California's Proposition 4 and monies available through the recently extended Cap-and-Invest program.
- **Community Outreach and Engagement:** Continue efforts to involve community members in key initiatives including an outreach and education campaign for the transition to Pioneer Community Energy in October 2027 and hosting of the 5th Annual Nevada County Sustainability Summit in fall 2026.

Funding:

Since the inception of the Climate Resilience Objective in January 2023, staff has pursued numerous funding opportunities which have served to finance many of the initiatives under the Climate Resilience Objective. With continued success in securing grant awards, staff can continue to implement priority projects and initiatives. Should additional funding be available, staff is requesting matching funds to leverage into larger funding opportunities.

Item Initiated by: Mandy Stewart, Senior Management Analyst, County Executive Office and Board of Supervisors

Approved by: Trisha Tillotson, Agency Director, Community Development Agency