



ASCENT

PROPOSAL FOR

Lake Elsinore Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

PREPARED FOR:

City of Lake Elsinore
Community Development Department
130 South Main Street
Lake Elsinore, CA 92530

3.5.2024

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01 / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Lake Elsinore (City) is embarking on the creation of its Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), which aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from community activities and municipal operations and prepare the city for the impacts of climate change. The City has laid a foundation for climate action and adaptation through recent activities such as being awarded a California Adaptation Planning Grant and participation in regional climate initiatives such as Resilient IE.

There is an exciting opportunity to plan for growth and evolution in Lake Elsinore in a sustainable, resilient, and equitable manner. The City recently updated its sixth cycle Housing Element, with the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation requirements to construct almost 6,700 units by 2029. Lake Elsinore saw a 24 percent growth in population between 2010 and 2020 and is expecting a 74 percent growth in population between 2020 and 2045, greater than growth expected in the county as a whole, demonstrating that Lake Elsinore is a desirable community in which to live. To accommodate this projected growth, a significant number of buildings and amount of infrastructure will need to be constructed. The opportunities to reduce GHG emissions from the building sector lie both in requiring new construction to be low-carbon and in retrofitting existing buildings to remove natural gas appliances and infrastructure as well as improving building energy efficiency in existing development. About 29 percent of Lake Elsinore's single-family homes were constructed prior to 1978, when the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards went into effect, and could be a focus of the decarbonization and resilience strategies in the CAAP.

The momentum at the local level is matched by advances at the state level. The state adopted a 2030 GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels through Senate Bill (SB) 32 and the Assembly Bill (AB) 1279 targets to achieve net zero GHG emissions as soon as possible but no later than 2045 and to reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. The state's *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* lays out a pathway to achieving the AB 1279 targets. In addition, the state has climate adaptation objectives codified in state law. For example, AB 1482 requires California to release a State Climate Adaptation Strategy every three years and SB 1320 calls for the development of California Climate Change Assessments every five years. These requirements help to elevate the importance of climate adaptation planning at both the state and local levels. There is also a regional push to coordinate and collaborate in the Inland Empire on climate issues through the Inland Southern California Climate Collaborative and the Inland Regional Energy Network.

Climate action and adaptation planning as a practice has also evolved in recent years with an emergent focus on funding sources and implementation. A CAAP based on current science and best practices will serve as a resource for the City to map out funding for GHG reduction and adaptation strategies and prioritize implementation actions. An important aspect of the prioritization exercise will be identifying emissions sources and activities that the City can meaningfully control and focusing the GHG reduction strategies on these sources. Equally important are considerations of cost, i.e., the costs the City government and the community would bear to implement the CAAP, as well as the costs of inaction, to inform and engage the community on the need for action. Lake Elsinore has a large population of young families and majority owner-occupied households. These demographics should be considered to equitably distribute the costs and benefits of climate action and adaptation and to direct CAAP implementation in ways that prioritize the most vulnerable populations in the city.

Achievement of the state's GHG reduction targets requires deep decarbonization that involves transformative change in seemingly every aspect of society—energy systems, transportation networks, neighborhood design, and even governance practices, economic systems, and personal and social behavior. At the same time, incremental change needs to occur in the short term so the City can judiciously approach the bold reductions required in the future while maximizing co-benefits and cost-effectiveness for the City government and the community. The City intends to establish an aspirational yet achievable path to realize aggressive reduction targets by 2030 and 2045. This approach will help the City achieve reductions in line with state targets.

While deep GHG reductions are critical to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change, it is equally important for agencies to build climate resilience through their planning efforts to combat current and forecasted impacts. The 2023 County of Riverside Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023 MJLHMP) and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) Resilient IE plan address climate vulnerabilities and will inform climate adaptation strategies for inclusion in the Lake Elsinore CAAP. It will also be important for GHG reduction strategies to be developed with corresponding resilience benefits in mind.

Preparing a CAAP is an ambitious and vital undertaking by the City that will come with unique challenges. Achieving the state targets adopted under SB 32 and AB 1279 requires steep reductions in GHG emissions over the next few years by 2030, and even deeper reductions over the next two decades. The projected risks of the city and its residents to wildfire, extreme heat, and drought adds to the complexity of addressing climate change holistically through the CAAP.

To reduce GHG emissions, many strategies will need to come from the transportation and building energy sectors, with a combination of strategies focused on switching to zero-emission vehicles, reducing the amount of vehicle miles traveled, moving building systems and appliances away from natural gas to electricity, and increasing the amount of electricity generated from renewable and zero-carbon sources. Important GHG reduction opportunities also include avoiding landfill disposal of food, yard, and other organic waste, switching landscaping and construction equipment to cleaner technologies, using water more efficiently, and planting and maintaining trees.

To enhance resilience, strategies will need to focus on reducing health impacts of wildfire smoke, ensuring safe evacuation routes are in place, enhancing energy resilience through backup power supplies and the use of microgrids, making hazard and emergency information multilingual and accessible, and considering infrastructure upgrades that are needed to accommodate increased stresses associated with climate impacts.

Actions to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate impacts need to be developed with Lake Elsinore's specific demographics and existing built environment in mind to maximize benefits and improve the quality of life for city residents as well as its thriving downtown. Therefore, the City's CAAP requires creative and ambitious solutions to meet the City's objectives while also balancing the potentially conflicting expectation of different stakeholders, such as residents, environmental and community advocates, real estate interests, and the business community. The CAAP will also need to be developed with equity as a cornerstone, working to ensure participation from community members who are not typically engaged in the planning process.

The firm chosen to assist with this effort must have the foresight and experience to anticipate challenges and formulate proactive solutions to help the City successfully complete its CAAP. The firm needs to have specialized experience helping cities of a similar size and scale prepare CAAPs, specifically in Southern California, and a deep understanding of atmospheric and climate change science and contemporary practices in climate action and adaptation planning along with the current and evolving requirements and methods coming from state agencies. The chosen firm also needs to be poised to assist with the City's

community outreach efforts, offering expertise in innovative and authentic engagement techniques while also having expert knowledge of climate action and adaptation planning. The firm also requires demonstrated experience and expertise in integrating various planning efforts to ensure the seamless transition and longevity of City activities.

Ascent is that firm. Founded 14 years ago, the firm is headquartered in Sacramento with offices in Irvine, San Diego, Berkeley, and Lake Tahoe. With experienced staff in all locations, we have a thorough knowledge of the California Air Resources Board's (CARB's) regulatory programs, having served as their consultant since 2010, other state agency activities, and the regulatory and political environment in Southern California. Climate action and adaptation planning is one of our core services. Ascent will serve as the prime contractor. We have strategically selected staff whose experience and expertise match well with the City's needs.

One key differentiator for Ascent is our specialized experience developing CAAPs for cities of a size and scale similar to Lake Elsinore. Complementary to that is our deep and long-standing experience developing CAAPs in Southern California. As noted above, preparing a CAAP at this time presents both unique challenges and opportunities for the City. The CAAP will need to be prepared in light of the state's aggressive GHG reduction targets. At the same time, the CAAP offers opportunities to align with other planning efforts (e.g., the General Plan update, Resilient IE) and position the City for funding opportunities from federal, state, and regional governments and private sector sources. Ascent has successfully assisted many cities in navigating this process in preparation of their CAAPs and delivered comprehensive, implementable plans that reflect local goals, values, and unique attributes.

We have supplemented our team with Fehr & Peers to assist with travel modeling and address mitigation opportunities for vehicle miles traveled through their expertise working on the ongoing update to the City's General Plan and deep experience working in the Inland Empire.

02 / DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

Ascent's proposal outlines our approach to help the City of Lake Elsinore prepare its Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, integrate equity throughout the plan and process, and devise and implement a robust community engagement plan that is equitable, inclusive, authentic, and meaningful. To balance the costs and benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change impacts, the CAAP should be developed by engaging a wide cross-section of the public with a focus on outreach that successfully involves traditionally underrepresented groups and communities and leverages resources from local institutions. The CAAP needs to transcend the traditional singular regulatory approach to climate planning and be focused on implementation and monitoring while being grounded in solid technical analysis.

The following section describes our proposed approach to complete the City's scope of work and successfully deliver its CAAP. Ascent is available to begin assisting the City with this project now and anticipates completion of work in 18 months. A project schedule can be found on pages 28 and 29.

SCOPE OF WORK

The section describes Ascent's approach and methodology for conducting the activities and tasks outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP). We understand that the City is open to proposals with refinements to the scope of work presented in the RFP and innovative methods to ultimately deliver a CAAP that is relevant and implementable. Drawing from our vast experience working with cities of a similar size and scale in Southern California to prepare their CAAPs, we have made recommendations for scope refinements to clarify and align tasks. We have also included Fehr & Peers as part of our team to ensure that the CAAP's transportation strategies are informed by local knowledge, tailored to the city's context, and aligned with the City's ongoing General Plan update. Within each task, we have also indicated City responsibilities, as appropriate.

We understand that the City may need to modify this scope to ensure that the project aligns with the City's expectations and budget and would gladly work with the City to revise the scope to meet the City's needs. Ascent's understanding of this project is to develop a comprehensive CAAP that addresses both GHG reduction and climate adaptation, while centering community input and equity. Therefore, we have structured our scope of work as follows:

- ▶ Task 1. Project initiation, data gathering, and management
- ▶ Task 2. Equitable community outreach to inform both the climate adaptation and GHG reduction components of the CAAP and to inform the technical tasks included in the scope of work
- ▶ Tasks 3 and 4. Climate adaptation technical tasks
- ▶ Tasks 5 through 8. Essential tasks needed for the GHG reduction components of the CAAP and to evaluate the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approach
- ▶ Tasks 9 and 10. Optional tasks to enhance the usability of the CAAP and provide City staff with implementation support on near-term actions, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and reporting progress

TASK 1. Initiate Project

Task 1.1. Project Kickoff

A kickoff meeting is key to setting a strong foundation for project success. Ascent's project management team (principal-in-charge, project manager) will hold a kickoff meeting with City staff to refine project goals and objectives, develop a project timeline and milestone schedule, and identify existing documents, data, policies, and initiatives relevant to the CAAP. We also recommend using this meeting to confirm key stakeholder groups, identify specific dates for near-term community outreach meetings, and establish the timing of other future activities. Prior to the kickoff meeting, Ascent will conduct a preliminary review of relevant documents to establish a solid understanding of the project background and progress. This review would include the programs, plans, and policies identified under Task 1.2.

This meeting will also serve to establish the project management procedures, including invoicing terms and communication protocols that are intended to keep all parties appropriately involved and informed. Ascent will prepare a meeting agenda and summary meeting notes to document the main takeaways and action items.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final milestone schedule (electronic)
- ✓ Kickoff meeting agenda and meeting summary (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Participation in kickoff meeting (virtual)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft milestone schedule in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ List of internal and external stakeholders (electronic)

Task 1.2. Data and Information Gathering

To create an effective and implementable CAAP, it is crucial to understand and leverage the existing policies and programs already in place. As part of the preliminary research to develop the City's CAAP, Ascent will review existing initiatives the City has taken to address climate change and reduce GHG emissions. Existing regional and local climate adaptation plans and other relevant plans and guides will also be reviewed to give us insights on baseline data. The following is a list of several existing planning mechanisms, guides, and tools that Ascent proposes to review to inform the CAAP's development. We will review these initiatives and compile a policy audit to support the development of climate adaptation and GHG reduction strategies. Given our previous experience in developing climate action and adaptation plans, as well as team members' expertise in developing hazard mitigation plans and climate adaptation-compliant general plan safety elements, Ascent would be efficient in reviewing many documents in this list. Our team is confident that we can extract the most relevant and crucial information from these documents that would inform the CAAP's development. The policy audit will be an appendix to the CAAP document to provide transparency to the public on what was considered in preparing strategies. The audit will be focused on identifying existing goals, policies, and actions in City and partner agency documents that have relevance to adaptation, resilience, and GHG reduction. The audit is not meant to generate an exhaustive list of actions, only to identify those that are relevant to the City's CAAP. It is anticipated that the strategy development process will build upon this list.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▶ 2011 Lake Elsinore Climate Action Plan | ▶ WRCOG Resilient IE |
| ▶ Lake Elsinore General Plan | ▶ WRCOG Energy Resilience Plan |
| ▶ Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District Urban Water Management Plan | ▶ WRCOG/SBCTA's Climate Resilient Transportation Infrastructure Guidebook |

- ▶ Downtown Elsinore Specific Plan
- ▶ 2023 and 2017 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ▶ WRCOG Climate Action Plan
- ▶ SCAG Regional Climate Adaptation Framework
- ▶ Regional Adaptation Collaborative Toolkit
- ▶ U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit

Ascent carried out initial preliminary research, reviewing the documents listed above while preparing this scope of work. For example, as discussed in the County's 2023 MJLHMP, the City listed fire, flood, power failure, extreme weather, and drought as the priority hazards. In addition, as discussed in the Western Riverside Adaptation and Resiliency Strategy: Part 1, Vulnerability Assessment, WRCOG identified extreme agricultural pests and diseases, air quality, drought, extreme heat, human health hazards, landslides, severe weather, and wildfire as the most likely and impactful climate change-related hazards in western Riverside County. These hazards generally align with the risks mentioned under Task 2, Subtask B, of the RFP, which is discussed in more detail under Task 3 of our proposed scope of work.

As part of this task, Ascent will work to identify omissions and hidden biases that affect vulnerable communities, while more in-depth assessment regarding climate change's disproportional impacts on the city's vulnerable communities will be carried out under Task 3. To address omissions and hidden biases, various data inequities, biases, and omissions will be discussed. Examples include:

- ▶ Inadequate data in disadvantaged areas. GHG inventories may not capture comprehensive data from low-income or marginalized areas. This data gap can lead to an underestimation in emissions, especially in areas that may be more prone to pollution or lack green infrastructure.
- ▶ Biases in transportation emissions data. In areas with limited public transportation options, residents may rely on older, less-efficient vehicles. This can result in an underestimation of transportation-related emissions in some areas.
- ▶ Challenges in measuring walkability and commuting practices. Accurately measuring walkability to transit sites can be challenging in areas without sidewalks. Similarly, assessing the extent of carpooling and walking to work without considering walkability factors may skew data.
- ▶ Housing quality and infrastructure disparities. Inequities in housing quality, such as poor insulation and inefficient heating and cooling systems, often result in higher energy consumption in low-income households. Average energy consumption by household data may be skewed because of this.
- ▶ Reduced public spaces in marginalized communities. Marginalized communities often have less public space or resources allocated to public spaces, which can limit opportunities for public investment and affect the community's overall environmental impact.
- ▶ Overlooked health impacts of emissions. The health consequences of air pollution, which can be exacerbated in marginalized communities due to the location of emissions sources, are not directly factored into GHG emissions inventories.

Ascent will identify relevant data and tools such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) National Risk Index and CalEnviroScreen to address these types of data inequities, biases, and omissions and will discuss qualitatively these considerations as part of the CAAP. In addition, ground-truthing of data can be accomplished through the community outreach process. Ascent will work with the City to identify other local resources to fill data gaps and biases as feasible.

Deliverables

- ✓ Policy audit at CAAP appendix (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Provide copies of data and resources requested (electronic)

Task 1.3. Ongoing Project Management

We understand that communication is fundamental to successfully accomplishing this work effort. We envision our working relationship with the City as highly collaborative, with Ascent providing support throughout the CAAP development process. The Ascent project management team will set up and facilitate regular virtual meetings to discuss project status and ensure coordination with City staff. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss items such as deliverables, upcoming tasks or milestones, project schedule, and next steps and to identify and discuss any critical path items such as outstanding data needs or schedule constraints. Ascent will set up a SharePoint folder for sharing documents and deliverables between Ascent and City staff. Also under this task, we will submit brief monthly written status reports summarizing project activities, along with our invoices, to the City's designated point of contact.

Deliverables

- ✓ Schedule and facilitate up to 30 project status meetings, 30 minutes each (virtual)
- ✓ Prepare agendas and action item summaries (electronic)
- ✓ Submit monthly invoices and progress reports (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Participation in project status meetings (virtual)

TASK 2. Conduct Community Outreach for Public Involvement

Ascent approaches CAAP development in a way that is highly collaborative, allowing us to blend our expertise in climate mitigation and adaptation planning with the community's goals, needs, and knowledge. We can provide the City with community outreach support to solicit and obtain public input on long-term goals and near-term actions to be included in the CAAP.

We intend to build on the City's communication and outreach efforts and to strategically enhance outreach in certain geographic and topical areas to address the needs associated with the CAAP.

Task 2.1. Community Visioning

Under this task will provide technical support to the City for a community workshop that focuses on a vision for the CAAP. The purpose of the workshop will be to share information about the CAAP and engage the community in feedback exercises. This workshop will focus feedback activities on understanding community needs and crafting a shared vision for a sustainable and resilient Lake Elsinore. This may include:

- ▶ Interactive activities to gather input on community needs and a future vision, such as writing a postcard to your future self, writing future state headlines that describe an ideal climate future, or creating a vision collage in small groups.
- ▶ Invitations to community members to contribute to the event, such as asking a community member to recite a climate-related poem or inviting a local social enterprise to give a demonstration of its newest green technology.

The community workshop will be advertised, hosted, and facilitated by the City or SWAG. Ascent will advise the City on potential feedback exercises to conduct during the workshop and up to two Ascent staff members will attend the workshop. This scope of work assumes that City staff and/or SWAG will plan and design the workshop activities and will have primary responsibility for preparing workshop content based on input from Ascent. During the workshop Ascent will support the City by providing technical assistance related to the components of the CAAP.

Deliverables

- ✓ Community visioning workshop attendance, input on community feedback exercises and workshop content, and a written summary of verbal feedback related to the CAAP
- ✓ Spanish translation for workshop announcements and any materials for engagement activities, and live interpretation for workshop

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Advertising, hosting, and scheduling of community visioning workshop
- ✓ Preparation and distribution of workshop announcements
- ✓ Leading and facilitating the community visioning workshop
- ✓ Design workshop activities and primary responsibility for preparing workshop content based on input from Ascent
- ✓ Any hard-copy printing or reproduction of workshop materials
- ✓ Procurement of meeting location (if in person)

Task 2.2. Community Outreach Plan

Working with the City, the Social Work Action Group (SWAG), and the Community Climate Adaptation Team (CCAT), Ascent will create a comprehensive and innovative community outreach plan that leverages our experience and is customized to the unique needs of Lake Elsinore. The strategy will include:

- ▶ a summary of the City's community outreach goals and objectives, including metrics for measuring engagement success;
- ▶ a list of specific activities to reach, educate, and engage the community throughout the CAAP process;
- ▶ a detailed schedule, format, and resources for all outreach activities through shared live resources;
- ▶ a list of stakeholders and their roles in CAAP development;
- ▶ a list of social media outlets to reach specific audiences (e.g., Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram) and virtual platforms for outreach (e.g., Zoom, Mural, Slido) in addition to traditional survey tools;
- ▶ a confirmation of coordination, facilitation, and communication preferences; and
- ▶ a clear breakdown of the City's, SWAG's, CCAT's, and Ascent's roles and responsibilities for implementing and executing all outreach activities.

Engagement Metrics for Success

- **Accessibility (opportunities, interest, satisfaction)**
- **Reach (awareness, attendance, quantity)**
- **Diversity (empowerment, equity, ownership)**
- **Impact (influence, responsiveness, popularity)**

This process will be built on the City's past and current outreach efforts and communication methods (including coordination with outreach for the ongoing General Plan update). This task assumes the City and/or SWAG will provide Ascent with the following: a list of the City's and/or SWAG's existing communication tools to identify the most effective methods for both informing and engaging target communities, and a list of existing forums for seeking public input. We will revise the community outreach plan based on feedback from the City, the SWAG, and the CCAT.

To ensure engagement is effective, it is important to establish metrics for evaluating individual community outreach events and the overall CAAP engagement processes. Working with City staff and relying on the local expertise of the SWAG and the CCAT, we will prepare a set of metrics to measure success. To ensure inclusive and fair decision-making during the CAAP development process, it is important to measure equity and diversity and consider the unique needs of community groups, especially those that are hard to reach.

Intentional efforts should be made to engage individuals who face participation barriers by creating equitable, inclusive, culturally sensitive, and multilingual spaces. We will ask the question: Do participants reflect the diversity of age groups, ethnicities, incomes, geographies, and unique needs of Lake Elsinore?

The following are examples of indicators that could be used for the community outreach plan. We will work with the City, the SWAG, and the CCAT to prepare a complete set of indicators that meet the City's project objectives.

- ▶ Community Diversity: What are participant demographics as they relate to the population's demographics where activities took place?
- ▶ Empowerment: Has the CAAP engagement process involved underrepresented stakeholders?
- ▶ Diversity of Input: Are opinions and perspectives reflective of the diverse community, or are they more monolithic?
- ▶ Equity: Was additional effort made to include underrepresented populations throughout the entire CAAP engagement and for individual events?
- ▶ Ownership: Do underrepresented communities and advocates feel a sense of ownership in the CAAP?

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final community outreach plan (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft community outreach plan in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 2.3. Community Forums and Workshops

Ascent will attend and provide technical support during up to four community forums and workshops (four events total). The purpose of the forums and workshops is to inform the community about the project and to actively engage residents in the identification of climate action and adaptation strategies, as well as other community priorities to consider as part of the CAAP. These events will be advertised, hosted, and facilitated by the City or SWAG.

Options for gathering input include discussing in plenary (i.e., one large group), organizing into breakout groups, and creating information/input stations on specific topics. The forums and workshops can include both written and oral opportunities for feedback, including discussion or question-and-answer sessions. Strategies to engage attendees during the community forums and workshops will be identified in the Community Outreach Plan prepared in Task 2.2. Ascent will advise the City on the identification of appropriate format (e.g., online, in-person, hybrid), location, time, engagement strategies, and other details based on factors like the target audiences and meeting objectives. This task assumes the community forums and workshops may occur virtually via a platform like Zoom with a call-in option or in person and that the timing and scheduling of events will coincide with important milestones of the CAAP development process so that community members have meaningful opportunities to participate in and shape the development of the CAAP throughout the entire process. In collaboration with City staff, the SWAG, and the CCAT, Ascent will provide recommendations on the range of local stakeholders who represent Lake Elsinore's communities to be involved in the four CAAP-related community outreach events. These targeted stakeholders may include renters, small businesses, schools, faith-based organizations, and non-English-speaking residents. This scope of work assumes that City staff and/or SWAG will plan and design the event activities and will have primary responsibility for preparing event content based on input from Ascent.

Deliverables

- ✓ Attend and provide technical support during community forums and workshops (up to four events total)
- ✓ Input on event format, activities, content
- ✓ Integrate community feedback into applicable CAAP work products
- ✓ Spanish translation for workshop announcements/invitations and materials needed for engagement activities, and live interpretation for up to four community forums and workshops

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Advertise, schedule, and host each community forum and workshop
- ✓ Procurement of meeting locations (if in person)
- ✓ Preparation and distribution of forum and workshop announcements and invitations
- ✓ Leading and facilitating the community forums and workshops
- ✓ Design forum and workshop activities and primary responsibility for preparing forum and workshop content based on input from Ascent
- ✓ Any hard-copy printing or reproduction of community forums and workshops materials

Task 2.4. Public Survey

Ascent will collaborate with the City in developing a survey to collect information about relevant topics that will inform the CAAP. We will work with City staff to create the content for the feedback form, which will be concise and accessible on a computer or mobile device. We will translate the survey into Spanish. The survey can be released via SurveyMonkey or similar. In addition, the survey can be printed and made available at City facilities (e.g., libraries, community centers) for community members who are not able to provide feedback online.

After the survey is closed, Ascent will summarize the findings, incorporating feedback into the CAAP where applicable.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final public survey (electronic)
- ✓ Summary of survey feedback (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Printing/reproduction of the survey
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft public survey in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 2.5. Community Summary

Ascent will synthesize key themes from the community forums and workshop and survey, and prepare a written summary of community input for the City's review and for incorporation into the CAAP. Community input will be integrated into applicable elements of Ascent work products and the CAAP document.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final community input summary (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft community summary in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 2.6. Review and Summarize Vulnerability and Risk Findings

Ascent will present the findings of the climate vulnerability assessment to the CCAT, including vulnerable communities' hazard exposures and the priorities for climate resilience improvement.

Deliverables

- ✓ Presentation materials for one CCAT meeting (virtual)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Scheduling of CCAT meeting

TASK 3. Assess Community Risks and Vulnerabilities

Global climate change is expected to intensify the impacts of existing environmental hazards, including extreme heat conditions, flooding from large rain events, and more frequent and severe wildfire events. To address the potential impacts of these hazardous events on the community, the City is expanding upon its hazard mitigation planning efforts to focus on climate change.



Emergency planners and responders can take steps during the response, recovery, hazard mitigation, and preparedness phases of the cycle (shown on the left) to minimize the harm caused by a disaster and improve resiliency against hazards and climate stressors. Note that the mitigation here refers to hazard mitigation (i.e., adaptation to climate change hazards), which is different from climate mitigation (i.e., reduction of GHG emissions contributing to climate change). The 2023 MJLHMP focuses on optimizing the hazard mitigation phase of the cycle, which involves making a community more resilient to disasters so that when hazard events do ultimately occur, the community suffers less damage and can recover more effectively. The intent of climate adaptation planning falls within the hazard

mitigation stage as well. The process identifies vulnerabilities to climate events and provides pathways or strategies to proactively reduce potential impacts and increase the adaptive capacity of the community.

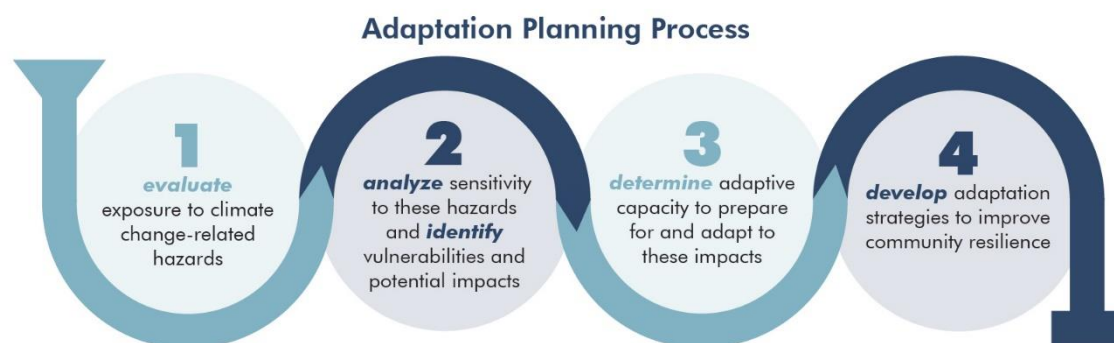
Ascent recommends that the vulnerability assessment (Task 3) and development of adaptation strategies (Task 4) follow a two-step approach consistent with climate adaptation frameworks recommended by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) 2020 California Adaptation Planning Guide (APG). Step one (Task 3) is the development of a climate vulnerability assessment to identify the City's and the community's assets and populations that may be affected by climate hazards. The second step (Task 4) is the identification and prioritization of corresponding climate adaptation strategies intended to reduce the impact on vulnerable communities or assets as identified in step one.

Both steps are informed by a regulatory framework and guided by statewide climate assessments, plans, and relevant efforts. The regulatory framework and current guidance will be documented in this effort. Both the vulnerability assessment and the adaptation strategies will also make use of the existing information available in the 2023 MJLHMP, WRCOG's Resilient IE, and city-specific data and information to create an assessment that focuses on resiliency in Lake Elsinore, with an emphasis on any disproportional impacts that climate change may have on vulnerable populations across the city. The 2023 MJLHMP offers insights on historical hazard events and the City's most recent prioritization of hazards of concern, carried out by the 2023 MJLHMP Steering Committee, while WRCOG's Resilient IE will support the assessments of climate change's impacts on these hazards and climate stressors.

Vulnerability Assessment

Subtasks A, B, and C in the RFP would all fall under Phase 2: Assess Vulnerability of the 2020 APG. The purpose of the vulnerability assessment is to identify the city's exposure to the effects and impacts of climate change. More specifically, these effects and impacts include the primary effects caused by the initial impacts of increased GHG emissions (e.g., average temperature and annual precipitation amounts) and the secondary effects (e.g., drought, heat waves, flooding) that result from the primary effects. To perform the vulnerability assessment, Ascent will characterize the climate hazards and other climate effects that are anticipated to impact Lake Elsinore.

The vulnerability assessment methodology is consistent with the 2020 APG framework's Phase 2: Assess Vulnerability and takes into larger consideration the 2023 MJLHMP processes and outputs. The four steps are shown in the graphic below.



- **Exposure (in response to RFP Subtask A):** The purpose of this phase is to understand existing hazards in the community and how they may change over multiple time periods. Ascent proposes an assessment of climate exposure during the following time periods: near-term (2024–2050), mid-century (2040–2070), and late-century (2070–2100), per APG's guidance. We can work with City staff to identify whether other time scales are preferred.

To perform this phase of the vulnerability assessment, Ascent will extract the hazard profile and risk assessment information from the 2023 MJLHMP and Resilient IE to understand historical conditions and identify data gaps. Then, we will expand upon the 2023 MJLHMP and Resilient IE efforts using Cal-Adapt and other related, readily available tools to describe how climate hazards and other climate change-related effects are projected to change. Consistent with the 2023 MJLHMP approach, Ascent will describe historical events and map climate change-related effects in GIS, where possible. This subtask will also include the identification of critical community assets, which would involve reviewing the critical facility database developed during preparation of the 2023 MJLHMP. Additional GIS spatial analysis will be carried out if needed, particularly for flood hazards, given that the FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer has a Letter of Map Revision for Riverside County effective December 28, 2023, which is after Riverside County updated the 2023 MJLHMP.

- **Sensitivity and Potential Impacts (in response to RFP Subtask B):** This phase compiles a list of population groups and community assets that are sensitive to localized climate change effects. The risk assessment will ensure the discussion on drought, extreme heat, precipitation, air quality, winds, wildfires, and any indirect effects of sea level rise in nearby coastal communities (e.g., population migration), especially given that precipitation, air quality, and sea level rise were not extensively discussed in the 2023 MJLHMP. Meanwhile, the analysis will address any disproportional impacts that climate change may have on vulnerable populations across the city (e.g., seniors, children, low-income, persons with disabilities). Regarding vulnerable populations data, Ascent will extract existing information from the 2023 MJLHMP, use methodologies and define vulnerability communities consistent with the City's forthcoming Environmental

Justice Element, and leverage other well-recognized (spatial) tools, including FEMA's National Risk Index (NRI) Tool (including risk mapping data), the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, CalEnviroScreen, the California Department of Water Resources' Disadvantaged Communities mapping tool, the California Healthy Places Index, and American Community Surveys, as well as Ascent's in-house GIS capacity. We will fill in data gaps with research from regional and state reports on climate impacts such as California's fourth Climate Change Assessment Inland Deserts Regional Report and with input from community members. We will make sure to identify local and regional climate challenges, opportunities, and direct impacts on the city.

With regard to wildfire hazard, one of the most pressing climate hazards facing the city, Ascent has well-established and extensive experience in wildfire adaptation and resiliency improvement. We are currently working on a Fire-Adapted Communities Roadmap and Dashboard Project that aims to develop a holistic, shared vision for statewide community wildfire resiliency that creates the conditions necessary for permanently fire-adapted communities and healthy ecosystems. Ascent has a deep understanding of how fire-adapted and resilient communities can be achieved and will apply this knowledge to Lake Elsinore's CAAP.

- ▶ **Adaptive Capacity:** This phase intends to evaluate Lake Elsinore's current ability to cope with climate impacts. The ability to adapt is determined through two methods: First, we will conduct a review of existing plans, policies, and programs relevant to climate, hazards, emergency operations, or public safety (completed as part of Task 1.2). Second, Ascent will engage with City staff, the City Council, the SWAG, the CCAT, and the public about current actions to support adaptive capacity.
- ▶ **Vulnerability Scoring and Climate Resilience Priorities (in response to RFP Subtask C):** A scoring method will be used to rank vulnerabilities by various factors to assist in the prioritization of climate stressors/hazards. Vulnerability scores are based on several factors, including how severe projected climate exposures will be, how sensitive population groups and assets are to the anticipated climate effects, and whether sufficient adaptive capacity exists to manage the potential impact, which are all covered by the subtasks described above. Meanwhile, accounting for climate hazards' disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations will be a critical component of this vulnerability scoring and prioritization subtask, by using tools including FEMA's NRI, US census data, and American Community Survey data. As part of this step, Ascent will establish an equity weighting factor to account for climate change's disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities when prioritizing climate stressors, which will be data-driven and informed by feedback from the affected vulnerable communities.

The output of the vulnerability assessment is intended to inform the City and the community about which climate vulnerabilities are of the greatest concern and inform the subsequent prioritization of adaptation strategy development (Task 4).

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final climate vulnerability assessment technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft climate vulnerability assessment technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 4. Develop Climate Adaptation Strategies

Work under this task will be undertaken through a distributional equity lens, which is about the fair distribution of resources, benefits, and burdens that result from climate planning decisions. Distributional equity means prioritizing the allocation of finite resources and designing planning strategies to benefit communities that experience the greatest climate and environmental inequities and have the most unmet environmental health needs, while also ensuring that these communities do not disproportionately experience economic, social, or environmental burdens because of such planning decisions.

The adaptation planning process aims to identify climate adaptation strategies that prepare Lake Elsinore for the potential impacts of climate change consistent with the identified goals. Using the distributional equity lens mentioned above, the strategies will focus heavily on protecting vulnerable communities. Ascent will leverage the extensive community input that will be collected during Task 2 while developing adaptation strategies. Furthermore, we will develop and prioritize adaptation strategies for each identified risk based on the level of severity (low risk, medium risk, and high risk), as well as other criteria such as FEMA's STAPLEE method, which is recommended in the US Climate Resilience Toolkit and widely used for hazard mitigation and climate adaptation strategies prioritization. In addition, Ascent will identify climate adaptation strategies for the community as well as those for municipal government operations.

Task 4.1. Refine and Revise Climate Adaptation and Resilience Goals

In collaboration with the City staff, the SWAG, the CCAT, and community members, climate adaptation goals will be developed that provide direction for achieving resiliency and act as guideposts throughout the planning process and implementation. Establishing resilience goals builds transparency into the process, clarifies shared outcomes, sets the foundation for future project decisions, and informs the development of adaptation strategies as well as tracking and evaluation metrics. Ascent recommends that the City use the existing goals of the 2023 MJLHMP and Resilient IE as a starting point and build on them to set forth locally appropriate goals tailored to the needs and circumstances unique to Lake Elsinore.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final climate adaptation and resilience goals (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft climate adaptation and resilience goals in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 4.2. Develop, Evaluate, and Prioritize Climate Adaptation Strategies

Ascent will collaborate with City staff, the SWAG, the CCAT, and community members to prepare adaptation strategies after the review of vulnerabilities and confirmation of the City's vision and goals for adaptation and resilience. We will develop the adaptation strategies consistent with the City's existing or proposed policy framework so the adaptation strategies are aligned with the expected outcomes and the terminology is consistent. Each goal drafted in the previous step will have a set of strategies to support its achievement. As outlined in the RFP, we will also incorporate innovative strategies and solutions for climate adaptation by collaborating with the CCAT and stakeholders, as well as leveraging our extensive expertise in climate adaptation planning. For example, when evaluating adaptation strategies, it is beneficial to consider the additional purposes they could serve, which are also called co-benefits—additional beneficial results of an action to increase resiliency, such as GHG reduction, cleaner air, improved public health, and/or increased open green space. Ideally, all adaptation strategies will have one or more co-benefits. For instance, to adapt to more frequent extreme heat events, we could propose an action to encourage or require the installation or use of cool-roof technologies, passive solar home design, green roofs, and rooftop gardens.

While supporting the mitigation of extreme heat events, this strategy will also have co-benefits related to water conservation and addressing air quality impacts from reduced ozone formation. Other co-benefits include benefits to public health and increased electrical grid resilience related to peak load reductions.

Some adaptation strategies may be general statements of policy preference or desired direction, while others may be highly detailed and contain specific implementation directions. We recommend categorizing strategies to provide the City with direction for implementation. Examples include the following:

- ▶ Programmatic. Strategies to expand or create new programs, activities, and initiatives
- ▶ Plans, regulations, and policy development. Strategies to develop or revise policies, plans, regulations, and guidelines
- ▶ Capital improvement/infrastructure projects. Strategies designed to address physical and functional deficiencies and needs in the built and natural environments
- ▶ Education/outreach/coordination. Strategies related to initiating or expanding partnerships and relationships, communicating and sharing information, and expanding awareness

Ascent will coordinate with City staff to identify adaptation strategies to be further evaluated in the next step.

The next step is the prioritization of adaptation strategies. To avoid disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities and protect communities already overburdened with pollution, equity will be centered in the prioritization process. For example, according to APG's recommendation, adaptation strategies should prioritize resources for communities that experience the greatest inequities and most disproportionate impacts and have the greatest unmet needs. Adaptation strategies should also address the underlying structural and institutional systems that are the root causes of social and racial inequities. Ascent will work with City staff to make sure that such adaptation strategies are devised and offered high priority. The US Environmental Protection Agency's Regional Resilience Toolkit also lists "Society and Equity" as one of its four "frames" when prioritizing adaptation strategies. The toolkit recommends the consideration of effects on communities and the services on which they rely, with specific attention paid to disproportionate impacts due to social, political, or economic inequality. Moreover, the prioritization of adaptation strategies also supports making decisions about their implementation in the face of uncertainty. Prioritization eases communication and transparency with community members. Ascent, in coordination with City staff, will recommend a prioritization of the adaptation strategies prepared in the previous step using FEMA's STAPLEE method, including social, technical, administrative, political, legal, economic, and environmental criteria. We will work with the City to decide whether other factors should also be included in the prioritization criteria, such as the following ones that are recommended by the 2020 APG:

- a. Vulnerability. Which strategies will be effective at addressing assets or systems with the highest vulnerability?
- b. Co-benefits. What are the co-benefits of the strategy? [briefly discussed above]
- c. Monitoring. How will the strategy be evaluated for success?

Once adaptation strategies are prioritized, Ascent will identify the agencies and departments responsible, indicators of success, potential partnerships and funding sources, equity considerations, and appropriate methods to assess progress.

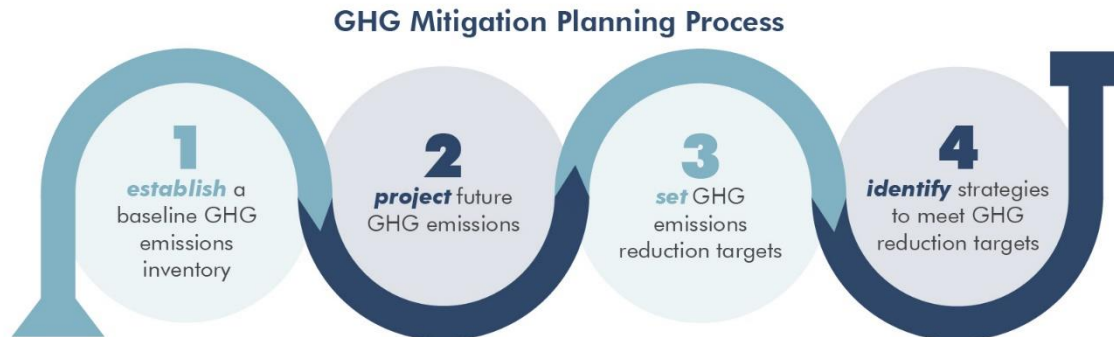
Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final climate adaptation strategies (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft climate adaptation strategies in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 5. Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Forecasts, Targets, and Reductions



Task 5.1. New GHG Emissions Inventory

Ascent will prepare an inventory of communitywide emissions. The inventory will set a robust, current baseline to establish the City's emissions forecasts and reduction targets. We recommend that the City use the most recent calendar year for which complete data are available (anticipated to be 2022, but may vary depending on the project start date) to prepare the GHG emissions inventory. Emissions will be aggregated and reported as carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) to show trends in GHG emissions from various activities. We recommend using the global warming potential values from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 6th Assessment Report to align with current science and climate action planning best practices.

We will develop a list of data needs to collect the most relevant and accurate data for the baseline inventory. Ascent will work with the City to gather necessary permissions and access activities data from utilities and agencies, including waste, water, electricity, and natural gas.

We will ensure the GHG inventory that will serve as the baseline for the CAAP includes the following emissions sectors: transportation, residential and nonresidential building energy, off-road vehicles and equipment, water, wastewater, and solid waste. The inventory will align with the U.S. Community Protocol for Accounting and Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions developed by ICLEI–Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) and recommended for use by local agencies in California by both CARB and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

Team member Fehr & Peers will leverage the work currently being done as part of the Lake Elsinore General Plan update to provide vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimates for the inventory and forecasts (see Task 5.2). Doing so will align the City's CAAP with the data inputs and growth projections of its General Plan, which will be critical if the City desires a CEQA-qualified CAAP that can streamline the environmental review process of development projects implementing its updated General Plan, once adopted.

VMT inputs will be extracted from the Riverside County Transportation Model (RIVCOM), which is consistent with Connect SoCal 2020, the 2020 Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCAG RTP/SCS) and has a base year of 2018 and a future year of 2045. Fehr & Peers will use this model to obtain VMT data for the inventory and forecasts because it is the best available data source. Fehr & Peers will efficiently complete this task because VMT model runs performed as part of the City's General Plan update will be utilized, so no new modeling will be required.

VMT will be calculated using the RTAC origin/destination methodology, which is the industry best practice that tracks all trips to/from the city and assigns 100 percent of internal-internal, 50 percent of internal-external and external-internal, and 0 percent of external-external trips to the city. (External-external or “pass-through” trips are excluded because the City has no authority to influence the movement of vehicles through its boundaries; for example, vehicles traveling through the city along Interstate 15). The VMT data will be provided for both passenger vehicles and trucks and by speed bin to assist with conversion into GHG emissions. Fehr & Peers will summarize the VMT data in tables and will briefly describe the methodology used to calculate the VMT.

The inventory will use the following tools and emissions factors to quantify GHG emissions by sector:

- ▶ Mobile source emissions factors for Riverside County from CARB’s EMFAC2021 database for passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium- and heavy-duty trucks
- ▶ Electricity-related emissions factors from Southern California Edison
- ▶ Energy intensity factors from the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District for water supply
- ▶ Off-road emissions from CARB’s OFFROAD model
- ▶ Solid waste emissions from disposal data and waste generation rates from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

In addition, Ascent will include emissions from municipal operations in the communitywide inventory, by accounting for GHG emissions resulting from the City government’s building and facility energy usage, streetlight and traffic signal energy usage, employee commutes, City fleet (both on-road and off-road), water usage, wastewater, and solid waste. Emissions from municipal operations will be accounted for using the Local Government Operations Protocol (LGOP) developed by CARB, the California Climate Action Registry, ICLEI, and The Climate Registry.

Ascent will present the inventory results in a GHG inventory technical memorandum for the City’s review and prepare a final version that incorporates City comments. The memorandum contents will rely on Excel worksheets that allow for easy transferability to a monitoring and tracking tool, if desired by the City (see optional Task 10).

Deliverables

- ✓ Data request (electronic)
- ✓ Draft and final GHG inventory technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft GHG inventory technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 5.2. Prepare GHG Emissions Forecasts and Reduction Targets

This task describes the preparation of GHG emissions forecasts and GHG reduction targets for the CAAP. Ascent will prepare business-as-usual (BAU) forecasts of emission by sector for 2030 and 2045 to tie in with SB 32 and AB 1279. An interim year of 2035 or 2040 can be evaluated if desired by the City. The BAU forecast will be conservative, in that it will not account for regulatory changes enacted in the future but will account for anticipated population and employment growth citywide to illustrate how emissions would grow if no action were taken. The transportation sector of the BAU forecast will be based on RIVCOM growth projections for Lake Elsinore provided by Fehr & Peers using available “off-the-shelf” data that does not require the time or expense of new model runs.

Following the calculation of BAU forecasts, we will calculate adjusted forecasts, which will consider adopted and other reasonably foreseeable legislative and regulatory changes at the federal and state levels, including SB 1020 (carbon-free electricity), the Advanced Clean Cars Program, and California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6 (the California Building Energy Code). Ascent will calculate the impact that these regulations will have on 2030 and 2045 emissions levels (and an interim year if desired by the City) and will produce a forecast that will provide a well-supported estimation of future emissions growth to support the development of a qualified CAAP under CEQA, should the City intend to pursue that path. Both the BAU and adjusted BAU forecasts will be included in the monitoring and tracking tool, if desired by the City (see optional Task 10).

Under SB 32 and AB 1279, the state aims to reduce statewide emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045 and to achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045. The state's *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* lays out a path to achieving the targets for AB 1279, which includes achieving deeper GHG reductions by 2030 than contemplated by SB 32. Ascent will identify and recommend GHG emissions reduction targets consistent with guidance issued by CARB for local plan-level analysis. Ascent works closely with CARB on environmental documentation for its regulations. In this capacity, we are intimately familiar with the data underlying CARB's inventory and targets. Ascent can work with the City to determine and confirm the most robust, applicable approach to a GHG reduction target that aligns with the state's targets. We are particularly familiar with the California Supreme Court's decision regarding GHG target setting pursuant to the Newhall Ranch case (*Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife [The Newhall Land and Farming Company, Real Part in Interest]* [2015] 62 Cal.4th 204) and will develop GHG reduction targets that are mindful of the court's guidance, ensuring that targets will be set using substantial evidence and providing the City with legal defensibility for its CAAP, especially if the City pursues a CEQA-qualified CAAP.

Ascent will establish 2030 and 2045 targets for the City that align with Lake Elsinore's fair share of the state's targets. We will present the information in the GHG forecasts and targets technical memorandum for the City's review and prepare a final version that incorporates City comments.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final GHG forecasts and targets technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft GHG forecasts and targets technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 5.3. Identification of GHG Reduction Strategies

Ascent will identify and evaluate GHG emission reduction strategies (referred to as climate action strategies) for inclusion in the CAAP. It will be important to craft strategies that demonstrate how their collective implementation will achieve the GHG emission reduction targets specified under Task 5.2. Ascent will incorporate feedback collected from City staff and the community outreach process into climate action strategies. We will develop a preliminary list of climate action strategies in Microsoft Excel. The climate action strategies will be based on existing local and regional efforts (identified in Task 1.2), current and anticipated future technology, regulatory frameworks, and other actions necessary to meet the City's targets. The strategies will focus on actions within the authority and influence of City government and will address all sources of emissions in the community and municipal government operations inventories. The strategies will include efforts to advance energy efficiency, facilitate fuel switching and increased use of renewable electricity in the building and transportation sectors, transportation alternatives, a robust move toward zero waste, and other efforts toward decarbonization.

The transportation sector is anticipated to be the largest source of GHG emissions in the city, so it will be critical to develop strategies that achieve significant GHG reductions from this sector. Based on our experience, strategies to support vehicle electrification and use of other zero-emissions vehicles will be the most appropriate means of reducing transportation-related emissions in Lake Elsinore. However, we also anticipate that some level of VMT reductions will be needed to achieve GHG targets. Therefore, Ascent is partnering with Fehr & Peers on this task to develop VMT reduction strategies that are potentially feasible for the land use context and local conditions of Lake Elsinore and aligned with the ongoing update of the City's General Plan. We understand that many VMT reduction strategies (for example, those with a heavy focus on public transit or based on dense, urban environments) are not feasible for Lake Elsinore.

We will ensure the climate action strategies are tailored and appropriate for Lake Elsinore, reflecting the diversity of land uses and building types, economic characteristics, community values, and other factors. The purpose of the preliminary draft will be to review and discuss needed modifications to strategies, as well as obtain input and confirm the nature and scope of strategies to be included in the CAAP. We will also work with the City during review of the preliminary draft strategies to gather necessary activity data and develop participation rates or performance targets and other parameters that will be required for further analysis.

Deliverables

- ✓ Data request of participation rates and performance targets (electronic)
- ✓ List of climate action strategies (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Responses to data request of participation rates and performance targets (electronic)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on list of climate action strategies in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 5.4. Analysis of GHG Reduction Measures and Implementation Actions

Following City review of the preliminary draft climate action strategies list, Ascent will revise the list into a set of climate action strategies that will be more fully developed and analyzed and will be submitted to the City for review and confirmation. As part of this task, we will quantify the GHG reductions expected to be achieved by the strategies and will perform a gap analysis for the GHG reduction strategies to determine whether they will achieve the GHG reduction targets. We will use case studies, peer-reviewed scientific applications, state guidance documents, and other verified sources to inform these calculations and provide substantial evidence behind the work. We will document all information, assumptions, and target indicators used to quantify potential emissions reductions in a single master dataset for the GHG gap analysis. We will use the expertise of Fehr & Peers to support the quantification of VMT reduction strategies that are feasible for Lake Elsinore and aligned with the ongoing General Plan update.

Our underlying goal as we complete this technical analysis is to maximize the usability and longevity of the work completed. We develop strategies to facilitate future implementation by City staff, and our worksheets are intended to provide City staff with the tools to track progress after completion of the plan. The worksheets include data that can be entered into the implementation monitoring tool included as optional Task 10 in this proposal.

The full list of climate action strategies will be presented as a roadmap for the City to plan its GHG emissions reduction activities. Ascent has experience developing roadmap frameworks. We typically organize climate action policies first by high-level strategy, followed by measures (which include policies) and implementation actions (which include programs and infrastructure). Ascent will present these findings in the GHG gap analysis technical memorandum.



Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final GHG gap analysis technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft GHG gap analysis technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 6. Draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Task 6.1. Administrative Draft CAAP

Ascent will prepare a comprehensive administrative draft of the CAAP for review by City staff. This effort will include assembly and integration of the work and products of prior tasks into the CAAP document. The organization and format of the administrative draft will follow the example CAAP outline shown below. This administrative draft CAP will not include final graphic design; the goal of the administrative draft will be to receive the City's feedback and approval of content before including graphic design details in the screencheck draft prepared under Task 6.3.

The Administrative Draft CAAP will be prepared using the following outline as a guide.

Executive Summary. Overview of the CAAP and strategies via a plan-at-a-glance table for quick access and a call to action for community members to take individual action.

Chapter 1. Introduction to CAAP, including an overview of climate change issues and the purpose/goals of the CAAP and a summary of the CAAP process. This chapter will also include a discussion of the CAAP development and community engagement processes.

Chapter 2. Background information section, describing the science underlying climate change and the impacts anticipated for Lake Elsinore. This chapter will also describe existing federal and state regulations related to climate adaptation and GHG emissions, as well as regional coordination and planning efforts related to the CAAP.

Chapter 3. The GHG inventory, forecasts, and targets section, reporting the updated GHG emissions inventory and projected emissions by category. This chapter will include the BAU and adjusted BAU forecasts, accounting for federal and state measures that result in lower GHG emissions in the city, inclusive of municipal government operations. The inventory, forecasts, and targets will be graphically depicted to allow visualization of the local context.

Chapter 4. Adaptation chapter, which identifies the climate change vulnerabilities in Lake Elsinore, as well as an approach to address the city's adaptive capacity.

Chapter 5. Climate action and adaptation strategies, which will include the level of GHG reduction anticipated, demonstrating how the City will meet its GHG reduction targets, as well as build resilience to climate impacts. This will be inclusive of municipal government operations strategies.

Chapter 6. Implementation and monitoring, which identifies and prioritizes how actions will be implemented using the results of the prioritization scoring analysis and CEQA considerations for streamlining benefits (if the City pursues a qualified CAAP).

Chapter 7. Works cited, which will cite all work, protocols, agencies, or persons contacted in the development of the CAAP.

Appendices. A detailed methodology and assumptions section to document and provide transparency in how the inventory, forecasts, and GHG reduction strategies were calculated, as well as the vulnerability assessment.

Deliverables

- ✓ Administrative draft CAAP in Microsoft Word (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on administrative draft CAAP in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 6.2. Screencheck Draft and Public Draft CAAP

Following receipt of City comments on the administrative draft CAAP, Ascent will prepare a screencheck draft version. The screencheck draft CAAP will present information using narrative and visually using maps, graphics, tables, photos, and matrices. Explanatory text will read clearly and concisely. Information incorporated into the CAAP will include content for public meetings, such as presentation slide decks and information for staff reports (Task 7.2). The screencheck draft version will include the final graphic design. After receipt of City comments, Ascent will prepare a publication-ready draft CAAP.

Deliverables

- ✓ Screencheck draft CAAP (electronic)
- ✓ Public draft CAAP (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on screencheck draft CAAP in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ Access to City photographs for use in the CAAP document
- ✓ Publication of and noticing for public draft CAAP
- ✓ Hard-copy reproduction of the public draft CAAP

Task 6.3. Review and Incorporate Comments into CAAP and Prepare Administrative Final CAAP

Following public review, Ascent will work with City staff to review comments received and identify any potential changes needed to the public draft CAAP. This task includes up to 12 hours for Ascent to support City staff by tracking and organizing public comments received on the plan and/or preparing written responses to public comments. As part of this task, we will provide an administrative final CAAP to the City for review and comment.

This task assumes that revisions to the CAAP document will be needed to clarify or briefly expand on content presented in the draft CAAP in order to respond to issues raised in public comments on the draft CAAP. This task does not include revisions that involve re-doing or revising modeling or technical calculations or other analysis presented in the draft CAAP. This task also does not include responses to comments on environmental topics related to CEQA compliance for the CAAP.

Deliverables

- ✓ Administrative final CAAP (electronic)
- ✓ Technical responses to public comments as needed (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Printing or hard-copy reproduction of the Administrative final CAAP
- ✓ Tracking and organizing public comments; written responses to public comments
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on administrative final CAAP in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 7. Finalize Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Task 7.1. Prepare Final CAAP Document

Based on comments and requested changes on the administrative final CAAP by City staff, Ascent will prepare the final CAAP for consideration by the SWAG, Planning Commission, and City Council. This task assumes that revisions to the CAAP document will be needed to clarify or briefly expand on content presented in the draft CAAP in order to respond to issues raised in public comments on the draft CAAP. This task does not include revisions that involve re-doing or revising modeling or technical calculations or other analysis presented in the draft CAAP.

Deliverables

- ✓ Final CAAP document (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Printing or hard-copy reproduction of the Final CAAP

Task 7.2. Present Final CAAP at Public Hearings

Ascent will attend SWAG and Planning Commission meetings and City Council hearings related to the CAAP. We will support City staff during the CAAP adoption process at each meeting/hearing. Up to three Ascent team members will attend each meeting/hearing. We will also take notes at a summary level of comments received, outcomes of the meeting/hearing, and input from the Planning Commission and City Council. If changes are requested at the public meetings and hearings, Ascent will revise the final CAAP to reflect these revisions.

Deliverables

- ✓ Attendance at up to three meetings/hearings with appointed and elected officials (up to three Ascent team members will attend each meeting/hearing)
- ✓ Meeting summaries for each meeting (electronic)

- ✓ Preparation of PowerPoint presentation and delivery of presentation at each meeting/hearing (electronic)
- ✓ Revisions to final CAAP if requested during public hearings (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Confirmation of meeting schedule and location for each meeting
- ✓ Preparation of staff reports for each meeting/hearing (electronic)
- ✓ Posting of final CAAP to City website (electronic)

Task 7.3. Replicable Case Study for State Adaptation Clearinghouse

After the CAAP has been adopted, Ascent will prepare a case study and associated documents for submission to the State Adaptation Clearinghouse. The case study will follow the template provided by OPR, which may include but is not limited to a summary of the CAAP, partnerships, outreach process, climate impacts addressed, challenges, outcomes, and replicability. We will prepare one draft version for City review and will prepare a final version that incorporates City comments.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final case study for the State Adaptation Clearinghouse (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft case study for the State Adaptation Clearinghouse in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ Submittal of case study to State Adaptation Clearinghouse (electronic)

TASK 8. CEQA Compliance Technical Memorandum

Ascent will prepare a technical memorandum advising the City on defensible CEQA compliance strategies for the CAAP. The compliance strategies put forth in the memo will consider the following factors:

- ▶ The feasibility of providing CEQA coverage for the CAAP within the scope of the environmental impact report (EIR) being prepared for the ongoing update to the City's General Plan
- ▶ Opportunities to streamline the CAAP's CEQA review, such as tiering from an existing certified EIR
- ▶ Opportunities to exempt the CAAP from CEQA review
- ▶ The reasonably foreseeable environmental effects resulting from the climate adaptation and GHG reduction strategies of the CAAP
- ▶ Perceived or actual controversy surrounding, or opposition to, the CAAP
- ▶ Whether the City intends for its CAAP to meet the requirements of a CEQA-qualified plan for the reduction of GHG emissions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5

The memorandum will also address how the CEQA compliance approach for the CAAP can streamline potential CEQA compliance for implementation actions identified within the CAAP. In addition, the memorandum will provide relative, high-level estimates of the costs and timelines of the different CEQA compliance strategies. Because of the potentially sensitive nature of the memorandum's contents, Ascent will coordinate with the City prior to submission to determine the most appropriate method for delivery.

The memo will focus on compliance with the law, the State CEQA Guidelines, and relevant developments in the California courts' interpretation and application of CEQA, as well as the City's local procedures.

Ascent will submit a draft technical memorandum for City staff review and will submit a final technical memorandum based on comments received from the City. The memorandum will be prepared as soon as the draft adaptation and climate action strategies start taking shape so that there is ample time for the City to make decisions about the CEQA compliance strategy and have the CEQA document prepared without impacting the overall project schedule. Should the City seek Ascent's support in preparing a CEQA document, a budget and scope augmentation would be needed.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final CEQA compliance technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 9. Implementation Support (optional)

Task 9.1. Participant Perspective Cost-Benefit Analysis for Near-Term Actions (optional)

If desired by the City, we will use a variety of tools to evaluate the costs and benefits of up to 10 near-term (i.e., 3 to 5 years from CAAP adoption) climate action and adaptation actions as they relate to participants (i.e., the financial benefits and costs to residents, businesses, and the City to comply with the specified CAAP actions). This evaluation will take the form of a participant perspective cost-benefit analysis (CBA).

The participant perspective CBA will evaluate the anticipated costs of each action, which may include installation, maintenance, and equipment replacement; the opportunities to reduce costs through rebates, tax credits, and other funding mechanisms; and the benefits realized from each action, which may include energy cost savings, fuel consumption savings, and water savings. We will provide results in terms of dollars per metric tons of CO₂e (\$/MTCO₂e) reduced, which represents the total cost or benefit associated with reducing 1 MTCO₂e. This approach will allow for the standardization of all actions to compare relative costs of implementation. The participant perspective CBA will also include the cost of inaction, which will be based on the social cost of carbon, consistent with CARB's *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*.

Deliverables

- ✓ Data request of cost estimation parameters (electronic)
- ✓ List of cost estimation parameters and assumptions (electronic)
- ✓ Draft and final participant perspective CBA technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Responses to data collection and cost estimation parameters confirmation requests (electronic)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft participant perspective CBA technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 9.2. Administrator Perspective Cost-Benefit Analysis for Near-Term Actions (optional)

If desired by the City, we will evaluate the costs and benefits of up to 10 near-term (i.e., 3 to 5 years from CAAP adoption) climate action and adaptation actions as they relate to the City (i.e., the financial benefits and costs borne by the City to implement the specified CAAP actions). This evaluation will take the form of an administrator perspective CBA.

The analysis will inform City staff and decision-makers regarding estimated City costs associated with staffing, other program operational costs, and general order-of-magnitude capital costs, where applicable, for the

near-term actions. The administrator perspective CBA will be prepared based on available data, as well as cost estimation parameters and other assumptions that will be discussed and verified with City staff.

Ascent will review all near-term actions and associated data used to quantify or characterize implementation outcomes and identify any additional data needed to support calculation of estimated costs. We will develop a list of cost estimation parameters (e.g., staffing costs per full-time equivalent [FTE] staff position, unit infrastructure costs, or other parameters based on existing research or cost studies) that should be used to guide cost estimation and submit the list to the City for review and confirmation prior to calculating cost estimates. The administrator perspective CBA will also include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness for GHG reduction actions, expressed as \$/MTCO_{2e} reduced.

Deliverables

- ✓ Data request of cost estimation parameters (electronic)
- ✓ List of cost estimation parameters and assumptions (electronic)
- ✓ Draft and final administrator perspective CBA technical memorandum (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ Responses to data collection and cost estimation parameters confirmation requests (electronic)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft administrator perspective CBA technical memorandum in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 9.3. Funding and Financing Roadmap (optional)

If desired by the City, we can develop a funding and financing roadmap to accompany the CBA(s). Working with City staff, we will develop a roadmap that documents a variety of funding types and resources for implementation of CAAP measures. The roadmap will take the form of a stand-alone document that could be appended to the CAAP. For each climate action and adaptation measure, the roadmap will evaluate the types of capital that could be used to fund the activity, the pathways to receive that capital, and resources and/or partners to secure the capital. We will consider state grants such as those available through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, California Natural Resources Agency, and California Energy Commission and those available through SCAG (which directs state and federal grants to local agencies).

We will also consider the types of funding or financing that may be available depending upon the measure. These could include local revenue sources such as property taxes, sales tax, user fees, and impact fees, and other types of government and private financing such as rebates and incentives, bonds, revolving loan funds, credit enhancements, off-site retrofit programs, public-private partnerships, property-assessed clean energy, and power purchase agreements, among others.

Using existing resources such as CARB's Funding Wizard database, CivicWell's Funding Navigation for California Communities, and the US Climate Resilience Toolkit, and our knowledge of funding opportunities, we will provide the City with a comprehensive assessment of funding opportunities available to implement the CAAP.

Ascent will prepare an outline of the funding and financing roadmap for City approval. We will then prepare a draft of the roadmap for City review and comment. Following receipt of City comments, we will prepare a final funding and financing roadmap.

Deliverables

- ✓ Outline of funding and financing roadmap (electronic)
- ✓ Draft and final funding and financing roadmap (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on funding and financing roadmap outline in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft funding and financing roadmap in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

Task 9.4. Develop Implementation Plan (optional)

If desired by the City, Ascent can prepare an implementation plan for the CAAP that details the specific steps required to implement the near-term actions; it will also serve as a guidance and reference document for City staff. Each near-term action will include the critical information needed for prioritization and effective implementation. This information may include but is not limited to the following:

- ▶ A rough order of magnitude cost to implement each action (unless optional Tasks 9.1 and 9.2 are included in the contract)
- ▶ Potential funding sources, funding mechanisms, and other resources available to implement the action and build City staff and SWAG capacity (if optional Task 9.3 is included in the contract)
- ▶ Estimated timeline for full implementation of the action
- ▶ Identified City department(s) responsible for implementation, as well as potential partners to increase capacity for ongoing implementation (e.g., the SWAG, regional agencies, community organizations)
- ▶ Implementation mechanism(s) (e.g., ordinance, new program), including parts of existing City practices to effectively and efficiently implement the action
- ▶ Specific implementation metrics for each action to allow for monitoring and progress reporting

Ascent will submit an outline of the implementation plan for City approval. Following review of the outline, we will prepare a draft implementation plan. Following receipt of City feedback on the draft, we will prepare a final version of the implementation plan.

Deliverables

- ✓ Outline of implementation plan (electronic)
- ✓ Draft and final implementation plan (electronic)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on implementation plan outline in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft implementation plan in strikethrough/underline (electronic)

TASK 10. Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting (optional)

Monitoring and reporting are critical components of the climate action planning process. Performing monitoring on a regular basis and reporting the results in a clear manner will allow the City to evaluate progress toward achieving its reduction targets, revise and update strategies based on past performance, and regularly reassess emissions projections.

From the beginning of CAAP development, we will focus on a data-driven process with a product that facilitates implementation tracking. If desired by the City, we will work with City staff to develop an implementation tracking tool that can be used by City staff to generate charts and graphs for use in presentations, reports, and other documents. It can also be linked to the City's website, allowing transparency of progress with the public. We will work closely with City staff to clearly understand the needs

for the tool and how it can best support the City's work, recognizing that the tool must impart useful and relevant information without substantially adding to staff workloads. Ascent proposes using Microsoft Power BI for developing the tracking tool because it can be integrated with the City's GHG inventory and forecast tools, providing seamless interoperability. The tool can also be integrated with Microsoft Excel through macros to allow for easy updating that automatically refreshes the progress made on CAAP implementation.

After preparing the implementation monitoring tool, we will conduct training for City staff on how to use the tool. The training will be conducted as an online webinar that is recorded so it can be used as a training tool for new City staff.

Deliverables

- ✓ Draft and final implementation monitoring tool (electronic)
- ✓ Training for City staff (virtual)

City Responsibilities

- ✓ One set of consolidated, nonconflicting comments on draft implementation monitoring tool in strikethrough/underline (electronic)
- ✓ Participation in training on implementation monitoring tool (virtual)

SCHEDULE

Ascent can begin work immediately. We will strive to exceed the City's expectations by serving as a true extension of staff. Our management style is proactive, and we look for opportunities to streamline the planning process, where feasible.

Ascent will manage the project so that the schedule established at the beginning is maintained to the degree it is under our control. The following is our proposed schedule for the City of Lake Elsinore Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. Based on our experience, we are fully capable of meeting this schedule. If any element of the schedule below does not meet the City's expectations, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you how we can modify it to meet the City's needs.

A high-level schedule is shown in the table below with the duration and estimated due date by task. The schedule for the requested scope of work is up to 18 months, which aligns with the City's obligation to expend funds from its grant by January 31, 2026. The timeline reflects that some tasks and deliverables should begin prior to the completion of previous tasks. Optional tasks are not included in the schedule below but if such tasks are selected, we can revise the schedule to include them. The overall timeline for the project is not anticipated to be extended should optional tasks be added.

Work Product/Milestone	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jun-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
Receive Notice to Proceed																		
Task 1.1: Project Kickoff																		
Task 1.2: Data and Information Gathering																		
Task 1.3: Ongoing Project Management																		

Work Product/Milestone	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jun-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
Task 2.1: Community Visioning																		
Task 2.2: Community Outreach Plan																		
Task 2.3: Community Forums and Workshops																		
Task 2.4: Public Survey																		
Task 2.5: Community Summary																		
Task 2.6: Review and Summarize Vulnerability and Risk Findings																		
Task 3: Assess Community Risks and Vulnerabilities																		
Task 4.1: Refine and Revise Climate Adaptation and Resilience Goals																		
Task 4.2: Develop, Evaluate, and Prioritize Climate Adaptation Strategies																		
Task 5.1: New GHG Emissions Inventory																		
Task 5.2: Prepare GHG Emissions Forecasts and Reduction Targets																		
Task 5.3: Identification of GHG Reduction Measures																		
Task 5.4: Analysis of GHG Reduction Strategies																		
Task 6.1: Administrative Draft CAAP																		
Task 6.2: Screencheck Draft and Public Draft CAAP																		
Task 6.3: Review and Incorporate Comments into CAAP																		
Task 7.1: Prepare Final CAAP Document																		

Work Product/Milestone	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jun-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
Task 7.2: Present Final Draft of CAAP at Public Hearings																		
Task 7.3: Replicable Case Study for State Adaptation Clearinghouse																		
Task 8: CEQA Compliance Technical Memorandum																		

03 / COST OF SERVICES

The proposed price for the Lake Elsinore Climate Action and Adaptation Plan is presented in the Cost Proposal, submitted separately. For clarity, the following assumptions explain the basis of the proposed price. The price is estimated based on a good-faith, current understanding of the project's needs. If selected, Ascent is interested in discussing the City's needs and revising the scope of work and price, as warranted, to meet expectations.

1. **Proposed Price Validity.** The price proposed to carry out the scope of work is valid for 90 days from the date of submittal, after which it may be subject to revision.
2. **Schedule.** The price is based on the proposed schedule. If the schedule is protracted significantly (more than 60 days) for reasons beyond Ascent's control, a budget amendment may apply to the remaining work. Ascent will consult with the City about a course of action.
3. **Completion of Work.** The scope of work is complete upon the acceptance by City staff of the final deliverable.
4. **Price and Staff Allocation to Tasks.** The proposed price has been allocated to tasks. Work has been assigned to the identified staff or labor category. Ascent may reallocate budget or staff among tasks, as needed, as long as the total contract price is not exceeded.
5. **Meetings and Conference Calls.** The number and duration of proposed meetings and conference calls are specified. If they are exceeded, a budget augmentation would be warranted.
6. **Billing Rates.** The proposed billing rates apply to the current calendar year. For work performed after this year has concluded, budget augmentations and contract amendments will be calculated using updated billing rates, unless precluded by contract terms.
7. **Changes to the Project or Measures.** If the descriptions of the project or measures are changed after they have been approved for use by the City, a budget amendment will be warranted to the extent completed work needs to be revised or redone.
8. **Scope of Analysis.** The price is based on the proposed scope of analysis. If new technical issues, alternatives, field surveys, modeling, or analysis is identified after contract execution, a budget amendment would be warranted.
9. **Adequacy of Provided Materials.** Materials provided by others are assumed to be complete and adequate for use in the analysis. If supplemental or revised analysis, studies, data, or fieldwork is needed to render such materials adequate, a budget amendment would be warranted.
10. **Preliminary Draft Review Cycles and Reviewers.** Review cycles and reviewers of preliminary drafts are specified in the scope of work. Responses to additional reviewers, review cycles, or versions of preliminary drafts can be provided with a budget augmentation.
11. **Consolidated Comments.** The City will provide Ascent with one consolidated set of reconciled, nonconflicting comments on all draft deliverables.
12. **Responses to Public Comments.** After public review of the draft documents, Ascent will coordinate with the City to develop response strategies. Budgeted labor hours (30 staff hours) for preparing responses to comments are contained in Task 6.4. If the number or complexity of comments requires a greater level of effort, Ascent and the City will coordinate on a course of action and budget augmentation, if needed.

04 / CLIENTS AND EXPERIENCE

Ascent has invested in climate action and adaptation planning as a practice since the firm's inception, as it aligns with our core values and depth of expertise. Our key team members have been involved in climate action planning efforts throughout California for several decades, which is demonstrated through our project experience. We have prepared CAPs and CAAPs for many agencies in the Inland Empire, San Diego region, and throughout the state and are actively working on several plans with carbon neutrality and equity goals.

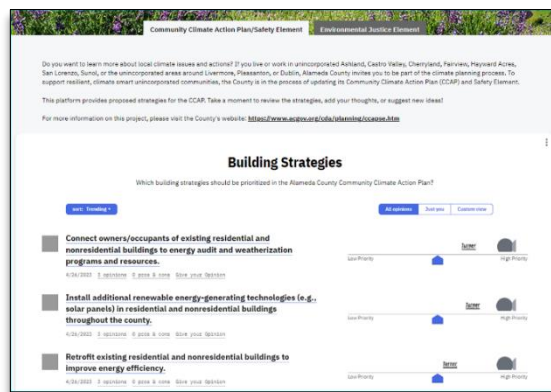
Ascent's specific areas of experience and expertise in climate action planning include data collection, preparation of emissions inventories and inventory updates, preparation of GHG emissions forecasts, GHG reduction target setting, GHG reduction measures analysis, CAP implementation and monitoring, public outreach, identification of co-benefits, and preparation of climate vulnerability assessments and climate adaptation strategies. Ascent staff have been instrumental in preparing CAPs and sustainability plans for California cities and counties, including award-winning plans for the Cities of Encinitas, San Diego, Milpitas, and Rancho Cucamonga and the County of Tuolumne.

In addition to preparing climate action and adaptation plans, Ascent prepares related documents with similar components, such as sustainability and resiliency plans. We work with regional agencies such as the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Imperial County Transportation Commission, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, San Mateo County Transit District, and Caltrain on climate action planning. We also work with metropolitan planning organizations such as the Southern California Association of Governments, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments (MTC/ABAG), Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) on climate change, air quality, and GHG analyses in development of updates to local Regional Transportation Plans/Sustainable Communities Strategies under SB 375.

Drawing from our substantial portfolio of experience, Ascent will be an effective partner with the City of Lake Elsinore in preparing the City's CAAP.

Equitable Public Outreach

Public engagement is a core component of our work, and we can be responsive and innovative for any need—large or small, in person or online. Regardless of the circumstances, Ascent designs meaningful public engagement programs to share information and gather input from the public, stakeholders, community groups, commissions, and decision-makers. Our staff are experienced in designing and implementing inclusive community engagement programs structured to quickly obtain meaningful input from a broad segment of the community. Ascent staff have designed and facilitated hundreds of community workshops, design charrettes, focus group meetings, and online engagement activities, working in diverse communities and adapting to different cultures, languages, and political environments.



Examples of Engagement Tools Used by Ascent

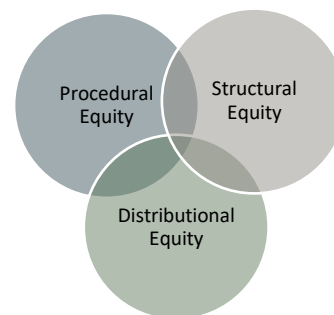
- Zoom (meetings, workshops)
- Mural
- Mentimeter (survey during meetings)
- Poll Everywhere (survey during meetings)
- Vimeo (recorded presentations)
- Konveio (online feedback on documents)
- Bang the Table
- EngagementHQ (mapping engagement tool)
- ESRI Storymaps
- Consider.it

Ascent has successfully worked with communities where climate change is a tough issue by reframing the conversation to focus on the co-benefits of GHG reduction measures. For the Ventura County General Plan, we balanced the concerns of the oil and gas industry and the preservation of agricultural land with those of environmental groups. For the Elk Grove Community Mobility Resilience Plan, we developed a transparent stakeholder-informed community process with public workshops, online outreach and education, and formation of working groups comprising city staff, representatives from state and regional agencies, community organizations, and residents. Other similar projects where we developed and implemented outreach plans include the Escondido CAP, Monterey County CAAP, Tuolumne County CAP, and Alameda County CAP.

Our team is poised to assist with the City's community engagement effort, offering expertise in innovative and authentic engagement techniques, while also having expert knowledge of climate action planning.

Equity

Although climate change affects everyone to some degree, not everyone is affected equally. Frontline and vulnerable communities generally have greater exposure to climate impacts and less capacity to adapt because of long-standing structural and institutional inequities. Ascent understands that true climate resilience will only be achieved through holistic integration of equity into all stages of planning and implementation. Equitable outcomes are not a given, but rather must be explicitly defined, planned for, and prioritized throughout the climate action planning process. When equity is put front and center, climate adaptation and resilience strategies can address and lessen existing social, racial, and health disparities. When equity is left out or minimized, planning processes can unintentionally widen the gap and worsen these disparities.



To operationalize equity, Ascent uses a framework recommended by the California Adaptation Planning Guide that identifies three types of equity: procedural, distributional, and structural.

- ▶ Procedural equity is about creating outreach, engagement, and involvement processes that are transparent, fair, and inclusive. It focuses on increasing opportunities for engagement and ownership in decision-making, in all aspects of climate resilience planning, by the communities that are disproportionately impacted by and most vulnerable to climate change.
- ▶ Distributional equity is about the fair distribution of resources, benefits, and burdens that result from climate resilience planning decisions. Distributional equity means prioritizing the allocation of finite resources and designing planning strategies to benefit communities that experience the greatest climate and environmental inequities and have the most unmet environmental health needs, while also ensuring that these communities do not disproportionately experience economic, social, or environmental burdens as a result of such planning decisions.

- ▶ Structural equity involves making planning decisions that recognize and address the underlying structural and institutional systems that are at the root of economic, social, and racial inequities. It is an approach to decision-making that overtly seeks to correct past harms and to anticipate and prevent future unintended consequences for disadvantaged social and racial groups. An approach based on structural equity examines whether planning decisions to achieve climate resilience also eliminate poverty, create workforce development opportunities, address racism, increase civic participation and social cohesion, protect housing availability and affordability, increase educational outcomes, and improve public health outcomes.

Ascent staff have experience in integrating equity into all types of climate-related plans, programs, and projects. For example, we have developed equity implementation tools and environmental justice analyses in CEQA documents to support clients with integrating equity into their internal decision-making. Moreover, Ascent staff have implemented robust community engagement processes by partnering with local organizations and residents in communities throughout the state, including San Diego, San Marcos, El Cajon, Sacramento, Elk Grove, Fresno, and Truckee. Ascent's knowledge of the unique issues facing vulnerable and frontline communities means that the City can expect authentic and inclusive outreach as part of the climate planning process.

Experience in Southern California

While the broad principles of climate planning are generally consistent across the state, a successful CAAP is tethered to local conditions. It is important that the plan be prepared with recognition of residents and their priorities, key stakeholders, political climate, governmental structure, and regulatory framework. We have worked on several important climate planning projects in Southern California. This success is a result of our continued dedication to recognizing that each agency has different needs, different work processes, and different expectations. Our proposed principal-in-charge and project manager for this effort are longtime residents of Southern California and understand the region's regulatory environment and salient issues. Other key members of the Ascent team and our subconsultant are also located in the greater Southern California region and are ready to assist the City under this contract.



DECARBONIZE



GENERATE



SEQUESTER

Ascent has assisted the Cities of Murrieta, Rancho Cucamonga, Irvine, Carlsbad, San Diego, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar, San Marcos, Escondido, Vista, Oceanside, Lemon Grove, La Mesa, and El Cajon on CAAPs, CAAP implementation plans, and CAAP consistency checklists. Our work

with many of the listed cities included both GHG reduction planning and vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning. In addition, we have worked as an extension of staff at the County of San Diego for over 10 years, serving as resident climate change and air quality experts for current and advance planning efforts.

Ascent has been assisting SANDAG in standardizing and streamlining climate action planning in the San Diego region through development of ReCAP and infographic CAP monitoring reports for member agencies (ReCAP Snapshots). We developed the first-of-its-kind guide on climate action plans and CEQA as an appendix to the ReCAP. The technical appendix includes detailed information and guidance regarding the climate action planning process as it relates to CEQA, including CEQA compliance for preparation of a CAP, considerations for development and use of qualified CAPs for subsequent project-level streamlining, roles of

other types of CAPs or sustainability plans and their relationship to CEQA, and mechanisms for streamlining during environmental review. The appendix provides reference materials for local public agencies to help them make informed decisions as part of local climate action planning processes.

We are currently working with the City of Irvine to develop an ambitious, visionary CAAP that strives to meet a 2030 target to allow for CEQA streamlining benefits and a 2045 net-zero carbon goal. Development of the CAAP includes inclusive outreach that captures city residents who have not typically been represented in planning and political processes.

Project Experience

The table below is a snapshot of our expertise and specific experience in preparing climate action and adaptation plans, with bolded projects that are most similar in size and scope to that desired by the City of Lake Elsinore.

Jurisdiction and Project Name	Jurisdiction's Population	Completion Year
Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan	143,876	Ongoing
Newark Climate Action Plan Update	47,312	Ongoing
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Climate Action and Adaptation Plan	N/A	Ongoing
Santa Clara Valley Water District Climate Action Plan	N/A	Ongoing
Bakersfield Climate Action Plan	410,654	Ongoing
Carlsbad Climate Action Plan Update	114,161	Ongoing
Elk Grove Climate Action Plan	177,558	Ongoing
Irvine Climate Action and Adaptation Plan	313,705	Ongoing
La Mesa Climate Action Plan Update	61,040	Ongoing
Monterey County Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and Municipal Climate Action Plan 2030	105,787	Ongoing
Oceanside Climate Action Plan	172,190	Ongoing
Sacramento County Climate Action Plan	610,442	Ongoing
San Diego County Climate Action Plan	627,142	Ongoing
Fremont Climate Action Plan Update	223,859	2023
Rancho Cordova Climate Action and Adaptation Plan	80,594	2023
Truckee Climate Action Plan	16,850	2023
Milpitas Climate Action Plan Update	77,744	2022
Rancho Cucamonga Climate Action Plan	176,359	2022
Tuolumne County Climate Action Plan	49,458	2022
Ventura County General Plan	94,003	2022
Encinitas Climate Action Plan	62,140	2021
Imperial Valley Regional Climate Action Plan	179,851	2021
Murrieta Climate Action Plan	111,351	2020
Escondido Climate Action Plan	150,258	2020
Lemon Grove Climate Action Plan	27,513	2020

Jurisdiction and Project Name	Jurisdiction's Population	Completion Year
San Marcos Climate Action Plan	94,855	2020
South Lake Tahoe Climate Action Plan	21,355	2020
El Cajon Climate Action Plan	104,417	2019
Napa County Climate Action Plan	24,924	2019
Vista Climate Action Plan	97,766	2019
Solana Beach Climate Action Plan	13,025	2017
Tahoe Sustainability Action Plan	N/A	2013
Sacramento Climate Action Plan	528,026	2011
Yolo County Climate Action Plan	35,900	2010

The leaders at Ascent have successfully managed and directed numerous climate action and adaptation plans throughout California. Summaries of recent projects on which Ascent's key staff have worked are provided below. Each project description specifies the client and a reference, including contact information. These project examples are anticipated to be similar to the types of activities for which the City may require technical experts under this project.

Climate Action Plan and EIR

Client: City of Murrieta

Ascent worked with the City of Murrieta on a Focused General Plan Amendment, Climate Action Plan update, CAP Consistency Checklist, and Supplemental EIR. The CAP update was undertaken to address state legislation enacted since the prior CAP was adopted. Ascent prepared an updated baseline inventory for the City, developed GHG projections that align with state legislation policy and goals, and recommended GHG reduction measures to achieve GHG reduction targets consistent with state guidance. Ascent also prepared the City's CAP Consistency Checklist, which the City uses as a tool to streamline the CEQA process for new development. In addition, we prepared a vulnerability assessment to address current and projected climate change impacts in the city and recommended adaptation and resiliency strategies to make the General Plan Safety Element consistent with SB 379. Ascent also prepared the air quality and GHG analysis for the Supplemental EIR for the Focused General Plan Amendment.

REFERENCE

Carl Stiehl, City Planner
City of Murrieta
1 Town Square
Murrieta, CA 92562
p: 951.461.6063
e: cstiehl@murrietaca.gov

Climate Action Plan and Supplemental EIR

Client: County of San Diego

The County of San Diego undertook preparation of a new CAP and Supplemental Program EIR to the 2011 General Plan Update EIR in response to litigation that led to rescission of the previous CAP. Ascent prepared the baseline GHG inventory and emissions forecasts for communitywide sources and for County internal operations. We worked with the County to develop GHG reduction targets for specific benchmark years (2030 and 2050), consistent with the state's GHG reduction goals. Ascent evaluated and quantified the GHG reduction potential of identified reduction measures and prepared a gap analysis to determine whether the proposed list of strategies would achieve the County's target. We worked with the County to define an evaluation and monitoring framework for the CAP. The Supplemental Program EIR, currently under preparation, is a comprehensive evaluation of the CAP and evaluates the impacts of the GHG-reducing measures. We also assisted the County with an extensive public outreach program that has included the preparation of reports, presentations, and supporting materials to disseminate information to stakeholders and the public.

REFERENCE

Meghan Kelly, Sustainability
Project Manager

County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
p: 619.323.6462
e: meghan.kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

Climate Action Implementation Plan

Client: City of San Diego

In 2022, the City of San Diego adopted an updated CAP that sets a new goal of net-zero GHG emissions by 2035 and integrates and prioritizes the concepts of social equity. The 2022 CAP included detailed information on GHG reduction measures and 190 actions and supporting actions at a program level. There was a need to organize this information in an implementable manner, which was accomplished through the Climate Action Implementation Plan. This document, completed in April 2023, charts how the City can accomplish the 190+ actions in the CAP and calculates the expected costs of climate action in San Diego. The Implementation Plan organizes the City's processes and government structure around those actions—centering equity, accountability, and transparency. To establish implementation responsibility and authority, the Implementation Plan identifies lead and supporting departments for all CAP actions and supporting actions. It includes cost estimates to align the City's future budgeting decisions with the CAP and lays out the tasks and responsibilities to be carried forward by departments and reported on through annual workplans. The Implementation Plan clearly defines each City department's CAP implementation work every fiscal year and further integrates equity into climate action-related projects and initiatives. It also sets forth the "measures of success" that will be used to evaluate progress toward the CAP's quantified performance targets.

The Implementation Plan won an award from the AEP San Diego Chapter in 2023 in the category of Outstanding Innovation in Resilient or Sustainable Planning and Design.

REFERENCE

Shelby Busó, Chief Sustainability
Officer

City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101
p: 858.492.6005
e: sbuso@sandiego.gov

Climate Action Plan Update and Consistency Checklist

Client: City of Carlsbad

Ascent has assisted the City of Carlsbad with CAP-related items for several years. The City previously adopted a CAP in September 2015 and updated the CAP to incorporate best practices and the state's long-term 2045 target. Ascent prepared a CAP Compliance Checklist (including thresholds and screening levels) to assist the City in determining whether a project is consistent with the CAP. The purpose of the checklist is to provide a streamlined review process for proposed new development projects that are subject to discretionary review and trigger environmental review pursuant to CEQA. We also prepared accompanying guidance on application of the checklist and alternate compliance mechanisms for projects to numerically demonstrate consistency with the CAP. We are currently assisting the City with a far-reaching public outreach process and with preparation of a user-friendly CAP and accompanying CEQA document. The CAP serves as a qualified GHG reduction plan, serving as a resource for GHG analysis and mitigation pursuant to CEQA.

REFERENCE

Katie Hentrich, Senior Program Manager/CAP Administrator
City of Carlsbad
1635 Faraday Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92008
p: 760.602.4623
e: katie.hentrich@carlsbad.ca.gov

Imperial Valley Regional Climate Action Plan

Client: Southern California Association of Governments

Ascent worked with SCAG and the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) to develop a regional framework for addressing GHG emissions and applying framework components consistently at the local level to develop jurisdiction-specific CAPs. The Sustainability Planning Grant (SPG) is intended to provide SCAG member jurisdictions the resources to implement regional policies at the local level, focusing on voluntary efforts that will meet local needs and contribute to implementing the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), reducing GHG emissions, and providing a range of local and regional benefits as outlined in the RTP/SCS.

The project included development of GHG inventories and projections for the unincorporated county and the cities of Brawley, Calexico, Calipatria, Holtville, El Centro, Imperial, and Westmorland. The Ascent team led a robust public outreach effort to reach all sections of the community and develop CAPs that are sensitive to the economic conditions in the region. The Regional CAP was tailored to each ICTC member agency depending on whether it wanted a qualified CAP or a policy-based document. The effort also included an economic analysis of proposed GHG reduction strategies to determine feasibility and cost-effectiveness.

REFERENCE

Lori Tapp, Contract Administrator
SCAG
900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1700
Los Angeles, CA 90017
p: 213.236.1957
e: tapp@scag.ca.gov

WRCOG Climate Action Plan

Client: Western Riverside Council of Governments

Fehr & Peers provided support on the ongoing update to the Western Riverside County Climate Action Plan. They participated in workshops with WRCOG member jurisdictions to discuss current and future travel conditions and mobility. Fehr & Peers prepared baseline and future year VMT inventories for all WRCOG member jurisdictions to support GHG quantification and identified and quantified regional and local strategies that would reduce GHG associated with transportation as part of the Climate Action Plan. They also contributed to the development of an updated monitoring tool to enable member jurisdictions to track their level of participation in the CAP.

REFERENCE

Christopher Tzeng, Program Manager
WRCOG
3390 University Ave., Suite 200
Riverside, CA 92501
p: 951.405.6711
e: ctzeng@wrcog.us

05 / AGREEMENT

Ascent has reviewed the City of Lake Elsinore's Agreement for Professional Services. If selected, we respectfully request an opportunity to discuss Section 2a, Section 4, Section 5, Section 12, and Section 15 contained in the agreement.

06 / INSURANCE AND LICENSES

Ascent maintains insurance coverage sufficient to meet the City's requirements. A copy of the firm's Certificate of Liability Insurance can be found on the next page.

We also have a current City of Lake Elsinore business license (No. 026125), which, if Ascent is selected for this project, will be renewed prior to the license's expiration date of July 31, 2024.

Ascent's California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) number is 1000042269, with an expiration date of June 30, 2025. We maintain that registration as required.



CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)

4/5/2023

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.

IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must have ADDITIONAL INSURED provisions or be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).

PRODUCER AssuredPartners Design Professionals Insurance Services, LLC 3697 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 230 Lafayette CA 94549		CONTACT NAME: Nancy Ferrick PHONE (A/C, No, Ext): 510-272-1400 FAX (A/C, No): E-MAIL ADDRESS: nancy.ferrick@assuredpartners.com	
INSURED Ascent Environmental, Inc. 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 300 Sacramento CA 95814-4405		INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE INSURER A: Travelers Property Casualty Company of America INSURER B: The Travelers Indemnity Company of Connecticut INSURER C: Beazley Insurance Company Inc INSURER D: INSURER E: INSURER F:	
License# 6003745 ASCENENV		NAIC # 25674 25682 37540	

COVERAGES

CERTIFICATE NUMBER: 1175447627

REVISION NUMBER:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.

INSR LTR	TYPE OF INSURANCE	ADDL INSD	SUBR WVD	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/YYYY)	LIMITS
A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUR GEN'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER: <input type="checkbox"/> POLICY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRO-JECT <input type="checkbox"/> LOC OTHER:	Y	Y	6806H400124	3/15/2023	3/15/2024	EACH OCCURRENCE \$ 2,000,000 DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Ea occurrence) \$ 1,000,000 MED EXP (Any one person) \$ 10,000 PERSONAL & ADV INJURY \$ 2,000,000 GENERAL AGGREGATE \$ 4,000,000 PRODUCTS - COMP/OP AGG \$ 4,000,000 \$
B	AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> ANY AUTO <input type="checkbox"/> OWNED AUTOS ONLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HIRED AUTOS ONLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NoOwned Auto <input type="checkbox"/> SCHEDULED AUTOS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT-OWNED AUTOS ONLY	Y	Y	BA4R770955	3/15/2023	3/15/2024	COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Ea accident) \$ 1,000,000 BODILY INJURY (Per person) \$ BODILY INJURY (Per accident) \$ PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident) \$ \$
A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UMBRELLA LIAB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCESS LIAB <input type="checkbox"/> DED <input type="checkbox"/> RETENTION \$	Y	Y	CUP3384T427	3/15/2023	3/15/2024	EACH OCCURRENCE \$ 1,000,000 AGGREGATE \$ 1,000,000 \$
A	WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? (Mandatory in NH) If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below	Y	N/A	UB7K512607	3/15/2023	3/15/2024	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PER STATUTE <input type="checkbox"/> OTH-ER E.L. EACH ACCIDENT \$ 1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - EA EMPLOYEE \$ 1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - POLICY LIMIT \$ 1,000,000
C	Professional Liability including Pollution Liability			ENP000709002	3/15/2023	3/15/2024	\$2,000,000 \$4,000,000 per Claim Annual Aggregate

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES (ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, may be attached if more space is required)
 Umbrella Liability is follow-form to underlying: General Liability/Non-Owned and Hired Auto Liability/Employer's Liability.
 The Named Insured has no company owned autos.
 FOR USE WITH PROPOSALS. An actual certificate will be issued at the request of the named insured.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER

CANCELLATION 30 Day Notice of Cancellation

** SAMPLE CERTIFICATE **	SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS.
	AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

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ACORD 25 (2016/03)

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07 / FIRM DESCRIPTION



Ascent, a California S corporation, is a full-service climate change, environmental, planning, urban design, and natural resources consulting firm headquartered in Sacramento with staff resources and offices in San Diego, Irvine, Berkeley, and Lake Tahoe. Comprehensive climate action and adaptation planning is one of Ascent’s core services.

The firm is renowned for its expertise in developing locally specific plans aimed at addressing climate change mitigation and resilience. We offer the nimble responsiveness of a small business along with a depth of expertise and resources well beyond the size of the firm. In its 14 years of existence, Ascent has grown from its initial five employees to approximately 130 professionals, providing climate action and adaptation planning, urban design, urban planning, CEQA and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, air quality and noise analysis, natural resources, strategic regulatory guidance and permitting, and GIS services in California and the western United States. Our staff members have a long and successful history of working on environmental, climate change, and natural resources projects that are controversial and complex.

Ascent has specialized experience helping counties and cities prepare and update their climate action and adaptation plans to achieve carbon neutrality and align with equity goals. We also have a deep understanding of atmospheric and climate change science, and of contemporary practices in climate action and adaptation planning, along with the current and evolving requirements and methods coming from state agencies. We have thorough knowledge of the California Air Resources Board, other state agency activities, and the regulatory and political environment in California, with expert staff located throughout the state. We have worked intimately with CARB, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), OPR, and other agencies since the firm’s founding. Furthermore, we have a longstanding history with cities and counties in the Inland Empire, the San Diego region, and other areas of Southern California for providing climate action planning support.

Ascent’s concern for the environment is reflected in the statement of our corporate vision: “We are inclusive, diverse collaborators who advance community and environmental stewardship.” One of Ascent’s core values embodies this philosophy—Be a Steward: We act to sustain and improve our firm, our communities, and our environment.

Subconsultant



Fehr & Peers is passionate about transforming transportation consulting through innovation and creativity. The firm derives inspiration by partnering with communities to understand and shape local transportation futures objectively tailored to diverse needs. Clients trust Fehr & Peers to help them overcome barriers and uncertainty by combining advanced expertise with curiosity, humility, and initiative to deliver implementable, data-driven solutions that reinforce community values. From the most straightforward to the most complex, team members actively listen to client and community needs and handle every project with diligence and focus.

With a focus on innovation, Fehr & Peers differentiates itself by investing in research and development to anticipate needs, explore the unknown, and collaboratively imagine a better future. The company’s culture of applied innovation generates an appetite for new and better ways of approaching problems, motivates team

members to explore emerging transportation concepts and mobility trends, and inspires the development of new analytical tools and techniques.

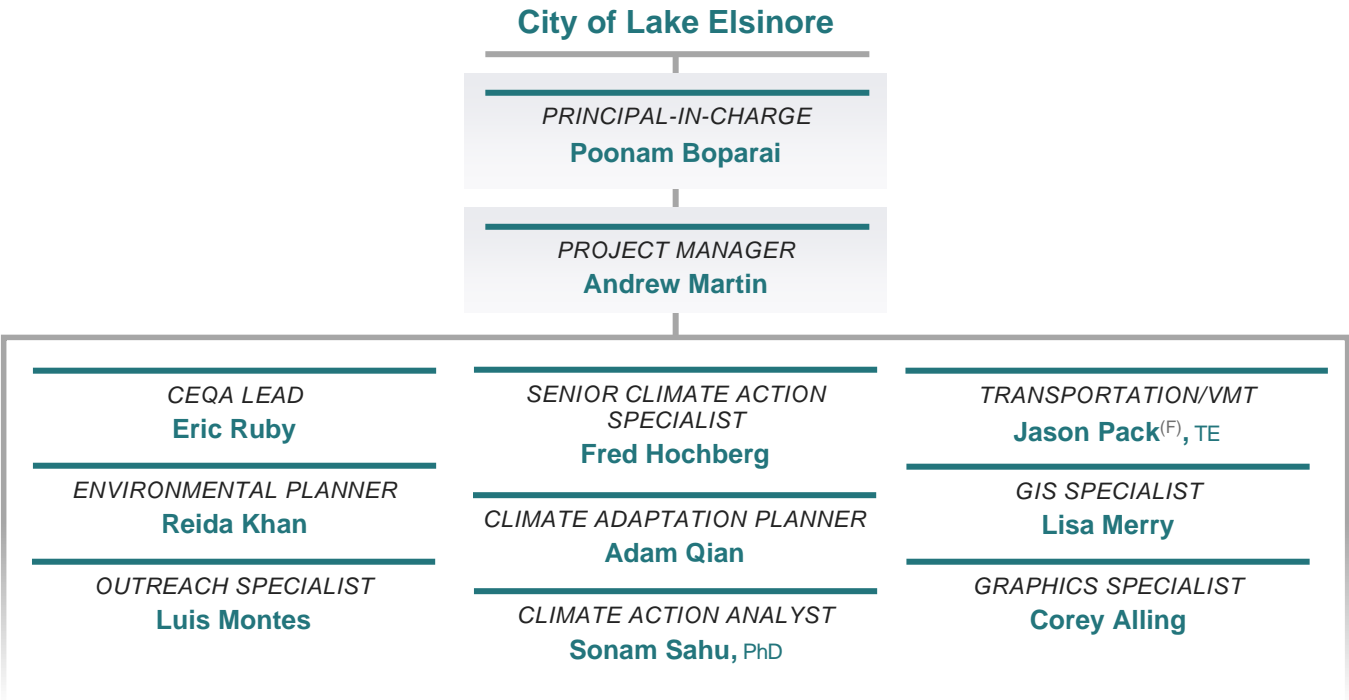
Fehr & Peers has been performing climate-related modeling and mitigation services for over 20 years and has worked on over 50 climate action plans. Their climate mitigation work balances the need to travel with GHG emission reduction goals for communities. The firm’s adaptation work assists clients in imagining future alternatives that respond to a changing climate and long-term, community-identified mobility needs. Their resilience work supports clients in planning for and responding to transportation system disruptions caused by climate change and other natural disasters, in order to keep people connected to the places they need to go. Fehr & Peers has worked on multiple climate action plans in the Southern California region, including with the Cities of Irvine, San Clemente, Santa Ana, and more recently, Oxnard. Other notable projects include the OCTA Rail Defense Against Climate Change, CAPCOA GHG Handbook Update, WRCOG Climate Action Plan, and CVAG Inventories and Action Plan.

Company Organizational Chart

We have included a chart illustrating Ascent’s organizational structure at the end of this section.

Project Organizational Chart

The organizational chart below identifies the areas of expertise and responsibilities of our project team. As demonstrated in the chart, we have established a management team and a group of accomplished technical specialists who offer the City the experience, expertise, professional commitment, and availability to deliver quality work products anticipated under this contract.



(F) - Fehr & Peers



EDUCATION

MS, Environmental Engineering (focus: Air Quality Engineering and Science), University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
BE, Chemical Engineering, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, India

Poonam Boparai

PRINCIPAL-IN-CHARGE

Poonam is an Ascent principal and the firm's San Diego office director. She has over 15 years of experience in the public and private sectors conducting climate action planning and air quality and GHG analyses. She possesses a unique skill set that combines technical expertise with a keen understanding of planning and environmental policy. Poonam leads climate action planning processes that are informed by robust technical analysis and by inclusive, meaningful engagement of agency and community stakeholders to develop effective and locally appropriate and effective climate mitigation and adaptation policies and plans. She has successfully applied her expertise in assisting agencies such as the City of Murrieta, City of Rancho Cucamonga, City of Carlsbad, City of Encinitas, County of San Diego, County of Santa Barbara, Imperial County Transportation Commission, SANDAG, San Diego Unified Port District, BAAQMD, and Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District with air quality and climate change policy development, analysis methodologies, GHG reduction strategies, and development of GHG thresholds of significance.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Murrieta Climate Action Plan and EIR (Principal-in-Charge [PIC])
- ▶ San Diego County Climate Action Plan and Supplemental EIR (PIC)
- ▶ Rancho Cucamonga General Plan Update and Climate Action Plan (PIC)
- ▶ San Diego Climate Action Implementation Plan (PIC)
- ▶ Carlsbad Climate Action Plan Update and Consistency Checklist (PIC)
- ▶ Imperial Valley Regional Climate Action Plan (PIC)



EDUCATION

MCP (Master of City Planning), San Diego State University
BA, Sociology, California State University, Long Beach

Andrew Martin

PROJECT MANAGER

Andrew has 18 years of diverse public and private sector experience in local and regional planning throughout California, with emphasis on managing climate planning projects for public sector clients. His climate planning experience includes managing climate action plans for local jurisdictions and overseeing the delivery of customized climate action planning services for several SANDAG member cities. His experience includes CAPs that meet or exceed California's statewide 2030 reduction target and CAPs with goals to achieve net zero emissions. Andrew also focuses on the intersection of CEQA and climate change issues. He is well versed in CEQA requirements for the tiering and streamlining of GHG emissions and has overseen the preparation of several CAPs that serve as CEQA-qualified plans for the reduction of GHG emissions. Andrew also helps public agencies streamline project-level CEQA analysis of GHG emissions through the preparation of CAP Consistency Checklists. He has prepared CEQA compliance documents for CAPs and specializes in GHG emissions analysis for projects subject to CEQA.

He has served clients throughout Southern California, including public agencies in San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Los Angeles Counties.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Murrieta Climate Action Plan and EIR (Project Manager [PM])
- ▶ San Diego County Climate Action Plan and Supplemental EIR (PM)
- ▶ Rancho Cucamonga General Plan Update and Climate Action Plan (PM)
- ▶ Irvine Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (PM)
- ▶ San Diego Climate Action Implementation Plan (PM)
- ▶ Rancho Cordova Climate Action Plan (PM)



EDUCATION

BA, Social Ecology/Environmental Science, University of California, Irvine

Eric Ruby

CEQA LEAD

Eric has more than 43 years of experience in policy and land planning, entitlement, environmental compliance pursuant to NEPA and CEQA, and regulatory permitting for a wide variety of projects, including general plan updates, mixed-use master plans, specific plans, and large-scale infrastructure projects, particularly for projects that include complex technical analyses and controversial public policy and planning issues. He has prepared legally defensible planning and environmental documentation for some of the most controversial projects in Southern California and has prepared several specific plans for projects in unincorporated Los Angeles County. In addition, he has managed several community plan update CEQA documentation projects for the City of Los Angeles and other Southern California jurisdictions in the past. His responsibilities include overall program management and strategy development, specific project direction and management, and client relations. Eric is thoroughly conversant with local, state, and federal planning and environmental regulations.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Temecula Valley Hospital Master Plan Update SEIR (PIC)
- ▶ Coachella General Plan Update EIR (Project Director [PD])
- ▶ Canyon Hills Specific Plan Amendment 3 and EIR (PD)
- ▶ Fresh & Easy Riverside Distribution Center EIR (PD)



EDUCATION

MS, Environmental Science and Management, University of California, Santa Barbara

BA, Management of Public Administration, Renmin University of China

Adam Qian

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLANNER

Adam is an environmental professional with 10 years of combined experience in various environmental sciences, climate adaptation and hazard mitigation planning, environmental planning management, GIS and spatial analysis, and related fields, including 5 years of project management experience. He has technical proficiency in data organization and analysis, GIS management, and spatial mapping and analysis.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan and Safety Element Update (Climate Adaptation Planner)
- ▶ Monterey County Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (Assistant Project Manager)
- ▶ Sacramento County Climate Action Plan (Climate Adaptation Planner)
- ▶ El Dorado County General Plan Safety Element Update and Climate Vulnerability Assessment (Planner/GIS Specialist)



EDUCATION

Master of Public Policy (MPP), University of California, Berkeley
BA, Political Economy, University of California, Berkeley

Fred Hochberg

SENIOR CLIMATE ACTION SPECIALIST

Fred is a senior climate action specialist with experience in greenhouse gas inventories, climate action planning, electric utilities, and analysis of large and complex datasets. He has prepared CEQA-compliant greenhouse gas inventories and forecasts, analyses of carbon stock in natural and working lands, and siting studies for utility-scale solar, wind, and battery storage projects. His expertise includes California electric grid planning, emissions quantification, and the development of GHG reduction measures.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Irvine Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (Senior Climate Action Specialist)
- ▶ Ventura County General Plan Phase II Energy Support (Senior Climate Action Specialist)
- ▶ San Diego County Climate Action Plan (Senior Climate Action Specialist)
- ▶ Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (Senior Climate Action Specialist)



EDUCATION

PhD, Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University, School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto, Japan
Post Graduate Diploma, Urban Planning and Development, Indira Gandhi National Open University, Delhi, India
M.Tech, Disaster Mitigation and Management, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, India
B.Arch, Government College of Architecture, Gautam Buddha Technical University, Lucknow, India

Sonam Sahu, PhD

CLIMATE ACTION ANALYST

Sonam has over 6 years of research experience working on climate change action plans and GHG analysis, and approximately 2 years of experience in public outreach and engagement. She has worked on multiple climate change-related projects with academic institutes and private organizations. She is currently providing consulting support on developing and implementing climate action plans for various cities in California. Sonam prepares GHG emissions inventories and future emissions projections and sets GHG targets for cities and counties. She also works with state agencies across cross-cutting topics like air, water, transportation, housing, and disadvantaged communities.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Oceanside Climate Action Plan (Climate Action Analyst)
- ▶ Rancho Cordova Climate Action Plan (Climate Action Analyst)
- ▶ Sacramento County Climate Action Plan (Climate Action Analyst)
- ▶ San Diego County Climate Action Plan (Climate Action Analyst)



EDUCATION

MS, Environmental Management,
University of San Francisco

BS, Environmental Policy Analysis and
Planning, University of California, Davis

Luis Montes

OUTREACH SPECIALIST

Luis specializes in public engagement. He brings a strong academic foundation in environmental studies and a deep passion for community outreach and education. Luis is skilled in public speaking and delivering oral presentations and effective at drafting blog posts, talking points, presentations, letters of recommendation, briefings, and white papers. He recognizes the crucial role that community involvement plays in creating sustainable and resilient landscapes, and he strives to empower individuals to take an active role in mitigating climate risks.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Elk Grove Climate Action Plan Update (Assistant PM/Public Engagement)
- ▶ Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan and Safety Element Update (Climate Action Planner)
- ▶ AMBAG Natural and Working Lands Climate Mitigation and Resiliency Study (Climate Action Planner/Stakeholder Engagement)



EDUCATION

BA, Environmental Studies, University of
California, Santa Barbara

Reida Khan

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER

Reida is an environmental planner with over 8 years of industry experience. She is well versed in preparing a variety of environmental documents, including various IS/MNDs, EIRs, and categorical exemptions in compliance with CEQA. Reida has experience in providing project management assistance and conducting thorough QA/QC reviews. She has successfully guided clients through the CEQA process for large and small projects throughout the state, with a concentration in Northern California and the Bay Area. Reida's diverse project experience includes vegetation treatment projects, industrial development, restoration, recreation, and open space projects. Some of these projects involved intense public controversy.

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Bakersfield Climate Action Plan IS/ND (Assistant Project Manager/Environmental Planner)
- ▶ North Coast Land Holdings Community Plan Amendment EIR (Environmental Planner)
- ▶ Riverbank Regional Recycled Water Project IS/MND (Environmental Planner)



Lisa Merry

GIS SPECIALIST

Lisa is a GIS specialist and natural resources analyst. She possesses a strong educational background in GIS and database management. Her experience includes resource mapping and evaluation of wildlife habitats, botanical surveys, and watersheds for purposes of resources management planning and environmental impact analysis. Lisa manages the firm's GIS practice. She coordinates all GIS projects and the installation and configuration of all software that is GIS-related and is building and maintaining the GIS system. Her skills include GPS field data recording, GIS resources analysis and mapping, natural resources assessments and management planning, and environmental impact assessment.

EDUCATION

MS, Environmental Science and Management, Conservation Planning Specialization, University of California, Santa Barbara

BS, Environmental Biology and Management, Minors in GIS and Psychology, University of California, Davis

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan and Safety Element Update (GIS Manager)
- ▶ Rancho Cordova Climate Action Plan (GIS Manager)
- ▶ Monterey County Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (GIS Manager)
- ▶ AMBAG Natural and Working Lands Climate Mitigation and Resiliency Study (GIS Manager)



Corey Alling

GRAPHICS SPECIALIST

Corey is a graphic designer and communications specialist with extensive experience in the environmental and urban design fields. He conducts data and information investigations related to renewable energy and transmission projects, environmental impact assessment, habitat conservation planning, outdoor recreation, and related topics. He also assists with internet applications for public outreach, such as creating and designing email newsletters and preparing public meeting materials.

EDUCATION

BA, Communication, Saint Mary's College of California

Relevant Experience

- ▶ Milpitas Climate Action Plan Update (Graphics Specialist)
- ▶ Elk Grove Climate Action Plan Update (Graphics Specialist)
- ▶ Fremont Climate Action Plan Update (Graphics Specialist)
- ▶ Alameda County Community Climate Action Plan and Safety Element Update (Graphics Specialist)



Jason Pack, TE

PRINCIPAL

Jason will serve as Fehr & Peers’ principal-in-charge on this project. He is actively involved in a wide variety of project work but also finds time to lead the firm’s research and development efforts in emergency evacuation assessment. Jason has an extensive background in travel demand forecasting, traffic operations assessment (including micro-simulation assessment), VMT analysis, big data analysis, transit ridership forecasting, and transportation impact studies involving NEPA and CEQA. His focus is to utilize his experience and the technical resources of the company to help clients answer their toughest questions related to mobility.

EDUCATION

BA, Civil Engineering, University of California, Davis

REGISTRATION

Licensed Traffic Engineer, State of California (TR2402)

Relevant Experience

- ▶ CEQA/NEPA Assessment, including SB 743 implementation
- ▶ General Plan updates: Lake Elsinore, Rancho Cucamonga, Palm Springs, Moreno Valley, Redlands, Corona
- ▶ Impact Fee Programs, Banks, and Exchanges, including VMT programs
- ▶ Emergency Evacuation Studies: Rancho Cucamonga, Moreno Valley, Montecito, Portola Valley, Lafayette