

# DRAWDOWN: MARIN STRATEGIC PLAN

## APPENDIX F: RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE JULY 2020 PUBLIC DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN



December 2020

Prepared by County of Marin Sustainability Team

# APPENDIX F RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE JULY 2020 PUBLIC DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Incorporate wind energy in the DDM plan; refer to changes needed to our County code; large and small scale wind generation options.

*Response:* The Renewable Energy Stakeholder Collaborative discussed and evaluated large and small scale wind energy generation options in Marin County. It ultimately decided not to pursue this idea for multiple reasons including: lack of political will, lack of funding availability for necessary environmental, generation, and community studies and evaluations, and projected cost per megawatt hour of wind generated compared to existing Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) and MCE Clean Energy wind tariffs. MCE Clean Energy and PG&E both purchase wind generation (located outside Marin County) to satisfy its renewable energy content goals. Additionally, on August 10, 2010, the Marin County Board of Supervisors adopted an Ordinance approving amendments to Section 22.32.180 (Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS)) of the Marin County Code. The amendments recognize the rapidly expanding technologies that are making wind turbines increasingly more efficient, quiet, safe, and cost effective. Although the intention of the WECS amendments are to limit obstacles to their construction and use, there are regulatory standards and permit processes that must be adhered to in order for a WECS to be approved for use on residential, agricultural or commercial sites.

2. Surprised to not see mention of trees, urban forestry, reforestation, or redwoods in a document on climate solutions in Marin; I would love to get involved in adding additional bio sequestration language to the plan if it isn't too late, or in any other way moving forward.

*Response:* The Carbon Sequestration Collaborative discussed trees, urban forestry, reforestation, and redwoods at length. The Climate Mobilization Solution discusses the sequestration potential of existing trees. The Biomass Recovery Study proposes to further evaluate the types and quantities of biomass in the County and will consult existing studies that measure the benefits of trees and urban forestry.

3. Christmas Tree collection, and use them as infill along the coast, to create mulch, or recycle them by donating the fill back to the farms from which they came. Collect and donate recyclables and send them to companies that make products from them. Solicit youth assistance including Boy Scouts of Marin and Girl Scouts of Marin to learn about recycling and propose solutions for the future. Award a scholarship at their graduation ceremonies. Tax credits for those to bicycle to work, to school, and can prove they have cut down on auto use. This is off topic, but those over 50 have who have been cut from their jobs due to their age in Marin is a very large number. Corporations should be given tax breaks if they hire those over 50. Develop a cycling plan to connect all of the towns in Marin.

*Response:* Christmas trees are collected by the various waste haulers in Marin County. Recyclables are also collected by waste haulers. Creating a required "take back" program for companies is better managed by regional and or state agencies, not local government. It's possible that the Zero Waste Marin Joint Powers Authority could develop and implement pilot with local retailers, but this would depend on funding and staffing availability. Drawdown: Marin is working on including youth in the effort via the Marin County Office of Education and OneTAM's youth programs. Pre-tax benefits are already available to those that bike, carpool, and take public transit to work. Various local and regional transportation agencies have designed and implemented programs, e.g. Safe Routes to School, that encourage people to choose non-vehicle modes of transit. The Marin County Board of Supervisors adopted a Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan on February 27, 2018. Drawdown: Marin understands that the County's aging population has many challenges but is not currently addressing job loss related to age.

4. Schools could be incorporated into the plan more specifically/intentionally, as a means to increase participation in meeting county-wide goals and standards. School operations that have huge impact including resource consumption (consumable supplies), transportation (including idling), food services, waste

(including food waste), water & energy consumption. I envision a program similar to “Resilient Neighborhoods” geared specifically for schools — “Resilient Schools”!

*Response:* Drawdown: Marin has and is actively working with youth and schools. The Marin Office of Education is a member of our Community Outreach Partnership (COP). Additionally, there was (not currently active) a youth subcommittee of the COP that was working to identify barriers for youth participation and ideas to get youth, schools, etc. More involved. The County’s Sustainability Team works with schools to implement a variety of projects including renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Resilient Neighborhoods has worked with groups of teachers and parents before and a group of students could sign up for one of their programs.

5. **Address the shortage of affordable housing close to transit and employment centers before 2024. Low income workers come from the East Bay and Sonoma and we need dense/affordable housing otherwise transportation-related emissions will continue to rise. Existing housing is spread out = increased transportation emissions. More affordable housing by 2021.**

*Response:* Drawdown: Marin acknowledges this challenge. The Buildings and Infrastructure Collaborative designed a solution to address this challenge. The County is also working to identify potential sites for additional housing near transit and employment centers. This report may be published in late 2020.

6. **Why is Load Shift Pilot Program not an Endorsed Solution? This is low-hanging fruit that can use available enabled and add-on devices.**

*Response:* Load shift programs are already available to Marin County energy users. For example, any MCE Clean Energy or PG&E customer can enroll in OhmConnect. The Load Shift Pilot Program proposed lacked details about program design and cost and therefore, the ESC did not feel comfortable endorsing it.

7. **Marin County’s collaboration with CalTrans toward safeguarding uninterrupted function of the regional transportation system. In this regard, Highway 101s connection between Sausalito and communities to the north and west (Marin City) and road access to the Tiburon Peninsula represent prime concern. County should engage in engineering studies.**

*Response:* The County understands that storm-related flooding and sea level rise are pressing issues that must be addressed. It has conducted sea level rise vulnerability studies for the bay (BayWAVE) and coast (C-SMART) sides of the County. Drawdown: Marin Collaboratives consulted these studies and interviewed community members to understand what solutions might be helpful in raising awareness of these challenges and developing solutions. The Collaboratives designed a Blue Line project that would require consultation with CalTrans. They also developed a Community Resilience Hub concept that would address the multiple needs of communities as they face a changing climate.

8. **"40% of the identified program CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr decrease (and 47% of the goal decrease) comes from Drive Clean Bay Area for only 6% of the total identified cost. It is also the only measurable carbon source. Other programs have an imputed carbon decrease but are not measurable and depend upon community compliance. The largest identified carbon reduction program (Carbon Farming) requires 92% of the total identified program costs and is not directly measurable. You state that Agriculture accounts for only 9% of county emissions. It appears that you have targeted the majority of the program spending on one of the smallest sources with no directly measurable outcome. This does not appear fiscally nor physically responsible. By comparison, residential and commercial emissions are shown to be the second and third largest carbon sources (33% combined), are directly measurable and can be incentivized through equipment subsidies. I suggest that you focus more program resources on these sectors.**

*Response:* Transportation is the largest source of emissions countywide. Drive Clean Bay Area is one of many programs targeted at changing individual behavior, e.g. persuading people to drive and purchase electric vehicles instead of internal combustion engine vehicles. The emissions reductions associated with that program are estimates only and depend largely on the number of people that start driving electric. Although

agricultural emissions are lower than transportation, carbon farming offers a method to mitigate on-farm and – ranch emissions while sequestering additional emissions year-over-year. These emissions reductions and sequestration are achieved by implementing a series of practices that have been developed, implemented, monitored, and measured by academic institutions and the State of California. Drawdown: Marin developed and will continue to develop solutions that target the built environment and acknowledges that there are many existing programs, incentives, etc. offered by local, regional, and state agencies that should be leveraged as programs are designed.

9. **What about the productive vs. consumptive measures? How will progress be monitored and reported? Is a separate nonprofit really needed? We have many organizations already. Consider simplifying the County building code and mandates when individual action, social justice, etc. movements are not enough.**

*Response:* Drawdown: Marin will indicate what measures focus on consumptive measures using an icon developed during the County's 2020 Climate Action Plan Update process. A section on measuring progress will be added to the Strategic Plan. The Drawdown: Marin ESC determined that a County-nonprofit joint endeavor was the best governance framework to raise funding, implement the solutions, and achieve the goals. This structure will be modeled after a similar and successful endeavor between the County and Marin Arts. This new nonprofit and the new Board of Directors will offer new approaches and perspectives needed to meet our goals. The County, and the cities and towns, are required to update their building codes every three years. The County often provides guidance to the cities and towns on how to update its code to include innovative measures and mandates that address climate change.

10. **It is disconcerting to learn that Marin's "consumption-based footprint is roughly 3 times that of its production-based inventory" and yet it is the much lower production-based footprint that is used to set the target for GHG reduction. None of the solutions address consumption-related GHG emissions. Without funding the plan will fail; consider a local Marin sales tax even though it will be unpopular.**

*Response:* Some of the Drawdown: Solutions do consider consumptive emissions, e.g. Drive Bay Clean Area, Resilient Neighborhoods: CPR for the Planet. Drawdown: Marin also knows funding is necessary to achieve our goals. One of the Collaboratives did suggest a local Marin sales tax and it, and other public funding mechanisms, will be considered and possibly pursued by the new County-nonprofit joint endeavor. Additionally, Drawdown: Marin and the County have advocated for an update to a Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)-led consumption-based emissions inventory for the 9 Bay Area counties. Once this data is updated regularly and methods refined, it's possible ICLEI will update its protocols and the State will recommend setting targets based on this data.

11. **Climate change is a hoax. I suggest we do nothing.**

*Response:* The County Board of Supervisors has acknowledged on numerous occasions that it believes climate change is real, that it is and will continue to impact the County, and that it is a Board priority to assess climate change impacts, develop plans to mitigate GHG emissions, and implement solutions that reduce those emissions, address equity, and increase community resilience.

12. **Took too long to develop a plan and is disappointed with the actions. Consider that many vehicles will likely be electric and so, we don't want to eliminate car use. Should not endorse programs that incentivize plug-in hybrid cars, should only focus on all-electric. The Plan should require all natural gas appliances to be swapped out for electric. The Plan does not accomplish the DDM goal of "thinking out of the box".**

*Response:* Drawdown: Marin was intended to be and was a 2-year planning process (September 2018-September 2020). The Strategic Plan does not suggest cars be eliminated entirely. Plug-in hybrid cars may allow certain individuals to transition between internal combustion engine vehicles and "cleaner" cars. Some individuals may not be able to afford all-electric vehicles or one-car households may need a vehicle that can go longer distances than some of the current models. There is no one-size fits all solution. The Plan cannot require natural gas appliances to be swapped out for electric. Individual governments could require this by amending their building codes.

13. DDM goals should align with the Climate Center's recommendations; did NPS Point Reyes Sea Shore and GGRNA participate and should be listed on orgs. list?; mention public health concerns re: 5G expansion needed for EV chargers, etc. Identify more solutions for unincorporated Marin, e.g. Coast Guard Project should be a Community Resilience Hub; should be a greater discussion of SLR in the Plan.

*Response:* The Drawdown: Marin ESC surveyed existing GHG reduction goals in California and the US before adopting the goals. They are more aggressive than the State's. The National Park Service (Point Reyes National Sea Shore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA)) was invited to participate but hasn't done so yet. Drawdown: Marin does work regularly with OneTAM, a partnership that combines the resources of 5 agencies including GGNRA. Expansion of 5G to Marin is a complex issue and one that has yet to be addressed by Drawdown: Marin. Drawdown: Marin is aware of the Coast Guard Project and has identified it as a potential microgrid pilot and/or community resilience hub site. Only the Climate Resilient Communities Collaborative directly focused on sea level rise and did develop solutions to address its impacts. There are other existing plans that do address sea level rise – BayWAVE and C-SMART plans.

14. Has text changes to CPR for the Planet description (refer to comments); need to clarify: What are the 'tactics and techniques' of the Comprehensive Marketing and Behavior Change Campaign that will engage the Marin community? Would this be about promoting DDM and getting people generally motivated to support and take action on climate change and equity issues or would it be a behavior change marketing campaign to get people to take specific actions? Add a blurb that excites people and paints a picture for the reader that we can create a better future!

*Response:* Changes to the CPR for the Planet solution will be made. Right now, Drawdown: Marin anticipates that the focus of the behavior change campaign will be to get people generally motivated to support and take action on climate change and equity issues, promoting existing programs and projects led by Drawdown: Marin partners.

15. Needs to be a preamble that gets the general public excited about the Plan. Focus on what are the strategies moving forward; keep the background/what we've done concise in each section. There is no summary of what was learned from the 150 volunteers convened, but there is an extensive equity section. Identify innovative ways to engage the community via webinars, social media, etc. since in-person gatherings will not be possible in the COVID era. Suggests adding a "Climate Policies" section that describes what policies need to be in place to allow the solutions to be implemented. Coordinate with regional and state agencies for funding and community engagement. Sent suggestions for edits to Community Engagement section of Plan.

*Response:* Preamble will be added to the Plan. Edits were made to the Community Engagement and Empowerment section to reflect comments received. There is a summary of what was learned from the 150 participants – see section "Lessons Learned" and Appendix C. Updated Community Engagement and Empowerment section to reflect COVID-realities. Drawdown: Marin does not plan to conduct a policy analysis at this time. Each Collaborative and small group assessed existing policies and programs as it developed solutions and described those to the ESC when presenting its ideas. Additionally, as the solutions are further developed and implemented, lead implementers can assess the rapidly changing policy landscape and determine what existing policies support implementation, what ones hinder it, and what new policies need to be developed.

16. Push microgrids; offer free batteries; consider developing housing near Civic Center station; consider public health impacts of expanding 5G coverage.

*Response:* Microgrids have multiple benefits including load curtailment, renewable energy storage, and resilience during power outages. MCE Clean Energy established a Resilience Fund to finance storage projects. Additional incentives are available to reduce the overall cost of batteries, e.g. the Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP). See comment above re: County-led study to determine ideal sites for housing near transit. See above for comment regarding expansion of 5G coverage.

17. The plan isn't exciting; the vision/goals are stated factually but are uninspiring; the website will not inspire people to participate or act. How will solutions implementation be handled including the proposed \$15m budget? Needs to be spelled out more clearly. How will success be monitored? The drawback to the draft plan is the lack of presenting a cohesive visionary leadership path forward or defining how to identify a leadership council that would provide this aspect of direction and mobilization forward to keep the community engaged and inspired to join in. The AIM Center for Food & Ag. could be a community resilience hub and also a microgrid demonstration project site.

*Response:* The Plan now contains a Roadmap section that shows people we can meet our goals by implementing specific projects and how much it will cost. Our website may or may not be updated when we secure funding for a comprehensive marketing and behavior-change campaign. We currently do not have resources to update it. The Strategic Plan indicates that a new County-nonprofit joint endeavor would be responsible for implementing projects; specifically, the new Board of Directors, Executive Director, Development Director, and staff. An additional section was added describing how progress will be measured. The AIM Center for Food and Agricultural could be a demonstration site. Drawdown: Marin can work with lead implementers to secure funding, share lessons learned, and quantify GHG emissions reductions and other benefits.

18. The plan does not adequately discuss energy efficiency.

*Response:* The Stakeholder Collaboratives, specifically the Buildings and Infrastructure Collaborative discussed energy efficiency solutions. Ultimately, the Collaboratives felt that agencies and organizations were addressing energy efficiency already. For example, MCE Clean Energy offers a variety of programs for its customers. The County, utilizing PG&E funding, offers a variety of resources countywide including trainings and incentives for local government efficiency upgrades.

19. Edit Biomass Study and Appendix E description; DDM can support this study by identifying a fiscal agent and funding source. Refine and integrate MCAN Roadmap into DDM SP.

*Response:* The Plan was edited to reflect this comment.

20. Considering wind energy - why doesn't the plan address it.

*Response:* See comment above re: wind energy in Marin County.

21. "Focus on developing a large fundraising ask so we can implement the DDM solutions; this is more politically tenable considering COVID. Decide what is Drawdown 2.0 and clearly communicate it in the SP. Help push ideas that are in place to give them more backing and connections across the network you have done a good job developing; Help establish and strengthen connections; Help firm up good concepts that need more detail to really scale. Use learnings to strengthen CAP solutions to include Drawdown ideas and help support and track progress against those goals. Help find funding sources (directly raising money or connecting and supporting organizations to obtain grants). Help push implementation for some specific projects that need help and that the county wants to magnify; use icons or codes to identify projects that are similar."

*Response:* The Plan indicates the need to seek large funding. Added a section describing what is next for Drawdown. Drawdown: Marin Endorsed Solutions are included in the County's 2020 Climate Action Plan update. Plan indicates that the Drawdown: Marin Coordinator will support the implementation of solutions between Fall 2020 and when the new nonprofit is formed.

22. I encourage a broader consideration of the effects of waste with regard to the production and disposal of petroleum-based plastics, most of which are not readily or easily recyclable. Adopt the Town of San Anselmo's ban on non-recyclable take out containers and drinking straws for all food service business in unincorporated Marin County. Encourage our local Marin incorporated communities to require large retailers to take back and be responsible for recycling plastics. Provide plastics recycling centers at County-owned facilitates for the public to bring and safely recycle their plastics, and encourage and facilitate the same within local municipalities. Provide recycling of high-use plastic products, such as used plastic office supplies, at all

County facilities, and encourage private businesses and local municipalities to do the same. Work with the state of California to promote and encourage plastics recycling to help close the loop on plastic waste and the pollution it causes during manufacturing and disposal.

*Response:* Pre-COVID, the County's Environmental Health Services and Sustainability Team were working to develop an ordinance that addressed single-use plastics at food facilities. This effort is currently on hold due to the need to focus on safely re-opening our food facility operations as the COVID response continues. The current plan is to re-launch the effort in early 2021. See comment above about "take back" programs. The County offers recycling receptacles at its facilities and encourages employees to reduce, reuse, and recycle all plastics. Zero Waste Marin works with all Marin County waste haulers to promote and encourage plastics recycling.

23. Drawdown should be focused on existing and upcoming climate, adaptation and resilience programs that are mandated by law, rather than being a parallel or even tangential process due to expected COVID-related budget shortfalls. Work on the SB 379-mandated adaptation and plan strategies could be an effective vehicle for addressing Marin Local Climate Change Solutions, while the SB 1000 environmental justice plan could similarly serve to accomplish Drawdown's Equity Initiatives. Both of these processes will require commitment to a coordinated, coherent community engagement effort that could readily and beneficially incorporate and carry out Drawdown's progressive engagement and empowerment strategies. The objectives, ideas and proposed actions of Drawdown could be funneled into these upcoming required processes in a way that would be much more effective and implementable than establishing a separate, parallel Drawdown process competing for time attention, participation and funding

*Response:* Added language to the Strategic Plan indicating that Drawdown: Marin will leverage legislative requirements when possible to implement solutions.

24. Struck by the lack of attention to wind energy. Our regulations should reflect the latest technological updates.

*Response:* See above comment about wind energy.

25. Wind energy is a valuable idea and it has been overlooked.

*Response:* See above comment about wind energy.

26. See attached PDF with suggested edits to Biomass Recovery study.

*Response:* The Plan was edited to reflect this comment; text describing the study was changed.

27. "Make the critical connection between the targets and the pathways to get there. Wants the plan to focus on DDM's main goal/vision - "community-wide campaign to dramatically reducing GHG emissions". Include the new non-profit document/org. chart in the Strategic Plan. Everyone has a role to play - should be emphasized in the SP. Emphasis should be on building "efficient partnerships with stakeholders." Outreach should be a significant focus of DDM 2.0. Place the highest priority on hiring a development person and raising \$. Plan should suggest a wide range of funding sources available, not just government sources. Take into account COVID - the plan was developed pre-COVID and needs to acknowledge the current circumstances we are in. Finally, we suggest that the Strategic Plan call for including "easy" actions that the general public and businesses can take, as part of the first set of "implementable solutions". Research climate policies that exist that serve as impediments to implementing DDM solutions or support implementation and include those policies in the SP. Group the solutions in an entirely different way - easy, next and more challenging with icons to show what sector each solution is in. \*\*MCAN Roadmap proposes 2 additional solutions - Endorse 'MCE Fossil Free' & 'Electrify Marin' as additional Solutions. Develop & endorse 'Beyond Marin' Solutions, including producer responsibility, carbon pricing, and widespread use of DDM models"

*Response:* Updated Strategic Plan to include a Roadmap section explaining the critical connection between the targets and how we achieve them. Included more information on proposed governance structure including

the proposed organization chart. Funding sources are ever-changing. The new Development Director and Drawdown: Marin staff will need to monitor federal, state, and local funding sources and develop a corporate and individual giving strategy. Added icons to indicate what sector each solution is in. It is too simple to classify solutions as “easy, next, and more challenging”. Circumstances change quickly and there are multiple reasons why a solution could be challenging to implement now and may not be two months from now. Additionally, many of the solutions are to be implemented by non-County entities and organizations; just because Drawdown: Marin considers it to be “easy” doesn’t mean those responsible agree and are ready to move forward. The ESC will not endorse any additional solutions at this time. The new nonprofit Board of Directors may endorse additional solutions.

- 28. Communities should decide whether they want increased density (housing); Governor is infringing on community rights by developing state-owned landed into affordable housing. Solar power should not be pursued because PV panels have harmful chemicals and take a long time to decompose. Does not want the BOS to focus on racial equity. County should instead pressure the Governor to get the County off of the COVID watchlist so there are increased economic opportunities. Study how we can reduce our reliance on Amazon and focus on local jobs instead.**

*Response:* The State would work with each community where state-owned property is located if and when it proposed to develop affordable housing. Solar power has many benefits and must be weighed against harms, e.g. harmful chemicals in panels. Generally, the State has decided that increased solar power overall benefits the environment as it displaces dirtier power sources like natural gas. Environment and economy are linked. Drawdown: Marin is not engaged in efforts related to the County’s COVID-19 “tier” status/risk level. Drawdown: Marin does acknowledge that consumption-based emissions, which include what we buy and where buy it from, need to be addressed. Relying on Amazon does have an impact on local jobs, local GHG emissions, and upstream and downstream GHG emissions. Drawdown: Marin is not in a place to regulate consumption, but does promote programs like Resilient Neighborhoods that educate individuals about the effects of their purchasing habits.

- 29. Pursue all endorsed solutions including the 3 new ones proposed by MCAN. The Community Engagement and Equity section is looking backward. "I was not consulted" when this section was written. Staff was an impediment to the COP getting anything done. Include a "Roadmap" to Drawdown. Suggests it as the introduction to the SP.**

*Response:* Drawdown: Marin will support implementation of endorsed solutions in the near-term by assisting lead implementers to secure funding and by providing technical assistance to further develop the solutions. There is not currently a process to present new solutions to the ESC. Drawdown: Marin understands that additional projects and programs will be pursued in conjunction with the endorsed solutions. Staff attempted to assist the COP between November 2018-March 2020 (the last time the group met). Staff wrote the Strategic Plan at the conclusion of the 2-year planning process. The Plan was not written in conjunction with participants, but their feedback was solicited and incorporated. A new roadmap section was added to the Strategic Plan per comments received.

- 30. New construction should preserve existing trees; consider impervious space added when new homes are built and impacts on flooding/water retention; I remain seriously concerned that the current proposals are very poor on water protection, tree protection, and protection of natural ecosystem**

*Response:* City, Town, and County Building Codes regulate new construction. Existing building codes do require consideration of trees, flooding, and drainage. Each local jurisdiction must update its building code every 3 years to meet State requirements; it can include additional measure that go beyond state requirements. The Drawdown: Marin Stakeholder Collaboratives did not develop a solution specific to building codes.