



## Memorandum

TO: Vail Town Council

FROM: Community Development Department

DATE: January 17, 2017

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 2, Series of 2017, a resolution supporting the goals of the Climate Action Plan for the Eagle County Community

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum and presentation is to present for adoption Resolution No. 2, Series of 2017, supporting the goals of the Climate Action Plan for the Eagle County Community (CAP).

### II. BACKGROUND

Over thirty (30) diverse stakeholders from the Eagle County community participated in a nine (9) month-long process to develop the CAP with the intention of meeting the following goals:

- 1. Set meaningful, achievable greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for Eagle County.*
- 2. Educate and engage our community about climate change.*
- 3. Build on the knowledge and commitment of fellow community members.*
- 4. Collaborate across towns, agencies, and organizations.*
- 5. Support and reflect state goals and regional efforts.*

#### Colorado Climate Trends

Given the trends in the Colorado climate of an increasing average annual temperature, (up 2.5° F) in the last fifty (50) years, daily minimum temperatures increasing more than daily maximums, timing of peak runoff and snowmelt shifting 1-4 weeks earlier in the season, and about 23 more frost-free days per year<sup>1</sup>, along with an increase in wildfire season by nearly a month (according to District US Forest Service officials), local action and international leadership to slow the impacts of climate change is critical to Vail's sustainability as the premier resort community. The impacts on Colorado flora and fauna are also well documented. For example, marmots now come out of hibernation 38 days earlier than in the 1900s, robins arrive 2 weeks earlier while some never leave, and larkspur and helianthus bud too early and then freeze, impacting butterflies and other insects.

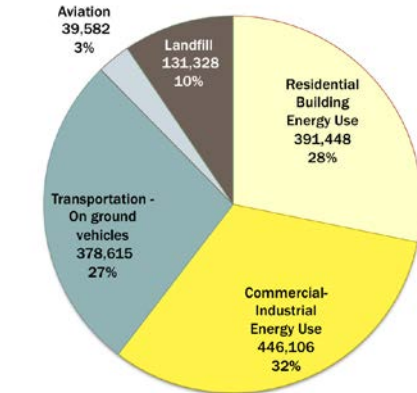
#### Future projections

Models indicate earlier spring snowpack decline and continued shift in peak snowmelt, as much as a 6.5° F statewide average temperature increase by 2050, with summer temperatures increasing more than winter and more extreme wildfire, drought, and flood events.

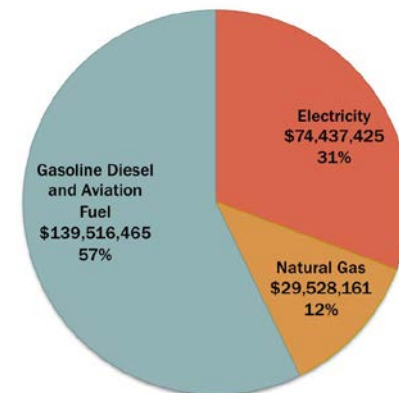
<sup>1</sup> *Climate Change in Colorado: A Synthesis to Support Water Resources Management and Adaptation. A report for the CWCB. 2014. Jeff Lukas, CU CIRES WWA. <http://cwcb.state.co.us/environment/climate-change>*

## Eagle County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Supported by Eagle County government, Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER), a Garfield County non-profit organization, performed a greenhouse gas emissions inventory for Eagle County. Results indicate that Eagle County has a higher per capita emissions rate than the US and Colorado averages (24 metric tons [mT] of carbon dioxide equivalent [CO<sub>2</sub>e] vs. 16 mT CO<sub>2</sub>e and 17 mT CO<sub>2</sub>e respectively).



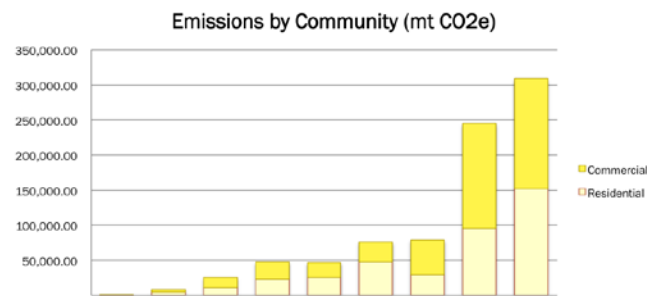
Total emissions in Eagle County by sector - 2014



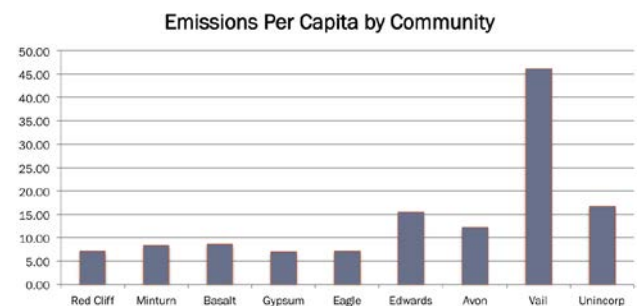
Energy cost by fuel source in Eagle County - 2014

## Vail Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

CLEER further broke down the County inventory by community. Vail's greenhouse gas emissions are comparably higher than other communities, due to high impact from ski industry, guests, snowmelt and transportation. With a low population but high guest attendance, per capita emissions are skewed.



Emissions by community - Buildings, Facilities, and Industry



GHG emissions per capita

## Vail's Current Climate and Waste Diversion Goals

The 2009 Environmental Sustainability Strategic Plan (ESSP) holds the town to a 20% reduction in town-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (below 2006 levels), a 25% increase in waste diversion by 2019 (below 2009 levels), and a reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by commuters and guests 20% by 2020 (below 2009 levels).

## III. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IN PRACTICE

By adopting Resolution No. 2, Series of 2017, the Town of Vail will add to its climate action goals by adopting the 25% emissions reduction target by 2025 and 80% by 2050 included in the CAP (note: the CAP uses a baseline year of 2014, making the town's goals slightly more aggressive). The stakeholder committee put forth this target based upon the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which states:

*In order to stabilize CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at about 450 ppm by 2050, global emissions would have to decline by about 60% by 2050. Industrialized countries greenhouse gas emissions would have to decline by about 80% by 2050. [This] will require keeping the total global average warming to no more than 1.1C°/2°F above present levels.<sup>2</sup>*

As the CAP was a collaborative and aspirational plan, specific pathways to reaching 80% emissions reductions by 2050 have not been fully vetted, however the ideas and concepts of the CAP will inform the next phase of the ESSP, which serves as a roadmap for the Town of Vail to achieve the goals with more specific actions.

The CAP contains six categories of recommended strategy areas: 1) *Education and Outreach*, 2) *Commercial Buildings*, 3) *Waste and Landfill*, 4) *Residential Buildings*, 5) *Transportation and Mobility*, 6) *Energy Supply*. Each category includes corresponding action items that the County communities may take to achieve their climate goals. Adoption of Resolution No 2. does not obligate the Town of Vail to action, but rather to support the overarching goals of the CAP and utilize the framework in future sustainability planning.

#### **IV. NEXT STEPS FOR THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

To date, the Eagle County Board of County Commissioners, the Avon Town Council, and the Western Eagle County Metro Recreation District have adopted resolutions in support of the CAP. The towns of Minturn, Eagle, Basalt, and the Eagle County School District are scheduled to adopt the CAP by the end of February. The next phase of the CAP will include a series of task force meetings to fully vet the recommended action items, more detailed modeling and technical expertise, and community outreach and education.

#### **V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Vail Town Council adopt Resolution No. 2, Series of 2017 supporting the goals and utilizing the recommendations of the CAP where appropriate in developing the next phase of the ESSP.

#### **VI. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Resolution No. 2, Series of 2017
- B. Climate Action Plan for the Eagle County Community

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<sup>2</sup> Hasol, S. (2007). *Presidential Climate Action Report. Emissions reductions needed to stabilize climate.* <https://www.climatecommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/presidentialaction.pdf>