



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
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AGENDA ITEM 5a
HCAOG Board Meeting
September 19, 2024

DATE: September 13, 2024
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Beth Burks, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Draft Regional Climate Action Plan**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Table of RCAP implementation Measures HCAOG is currently working on
- Comment Letter for Draft RCAP

Staff's Recommended Action:

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. Discuss item and consider making the motion:
"The PAC directs staff to send the comment letter regarding the Draft RCAP."

Staff Summary:

The Draft Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) is now published and available for comment. The County has been leading the collaborative process that has led to this plan and is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency.

REAP funding, administered by HCAOG has partially supported the development of the RCAP. The primary purpose of the REAP funding was to expedite housing production. The RCAP has the potential to reduce barriers to housing production by eliminating the need to do an individual greenhouse gas emission analysis for individual projects, so long as they can show consistency with the RCAP. To achieve this streamlining benefit, the RCAP must be a Qualified CAP meaning that substantial evidence demonstrates that the assumed greenhouse gas reduction is

accurate and feasible. The Draft RCAP has been written to achieve the status of a Qualified CAP including the substantial evidence demonstrating how it will meet state targets for GHG emissions reductions. Targets of the RCAP include reaching forty percent (40%) below 1990 levels of GHG emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.

You can find the [draft RCAP](#) and the at: <https://humboldt.gov/2464/Humboldt-Regional-Climate-Action-Plan>.

Current HCAOG Activities that Support Implementation of the RCAP

As noted in the RCAP the transportation sector is the largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in our County. One of HCAOG's biggest areas of focus is reducing GHG from the transportation sector by supporting safe active transportation, public transit, and transitioning to zero emission vehicles. We also support land use policies that can reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve mobility choices.

In doing this work, we have many active projects and initiatives that compliment or directly advance implementation measures in the Draft RCAP. The attached table summarizes the RCAP implementation measures that HCAOG is already working on.

Additionally, HCAOG provides support to Humboldt Transit Authority to:

- Increase frequency and span of service of transit routes,
- Improve passenger experience such as streamlined fares and transfers, and supporting infrastructure such as shelters and trip planning,
- Pursue grant opportunities,
- Implement community outreach and marketing efforts, and
- Support regional planning efforts on first/last mile infrastructure and connectivity to transit routes.

The following HCAOG adopted plans are relevant to advancing the RCAP implementation measure related to transportation:

- Regional Transportation Plan (includes Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets) (2022)
- Humboldt County Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan (2021)
- McKinleyville Transit Study (2021)
- Mobility-on-Demand Strategic Development Plan (2020)
- HCAOG Public Participation Plan (2018)
- Humboldt Regional Bicycle Plan (2018)
- Humboldt County Transit Development Plan (2017 or most current)
- Humboldt Regional Trails Master Plan (2010)
- Humboldt County Regional Pedestrian Plan (2008)

Differences in Targets set by the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets (SSTT) and Draft RCAP Implementation Measures

Although the SSTT and the RCAP work towards the same goal of reducing carbon emissions from the transportation sector, the SSTT has different target numbers, often more ambitious than the RCAP. Staff does not view this as a conflict. The SSTT were developed as part of a publicly informed process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). They set ambitious policy targets that reflect regional priorities and our vision for optimal transportation system conditions from a sustainability, safety, and equity perspective. They are particularly useful to demonstrate regional support for these priorities to potential funders and to inform HCAOG's work program.

The SSTT were not developed or evaluated in a way that would allow streamlining of specific development projects in a CEQA context and were not intended to serve that purpose. We appreciate that the RCAP measures have the benefit of being supported by substantial evidence and would allow for CEQA streamlining.

Future potential role of HCAOG

Within the RCAP "the Humboldt Regional Cornerstone Strategy focuses on fostering collaboration between jurisdictions and key organizations to establish a regional approach to climate-related challenges through coordinated efforts". Implementation measures commit to establishing a Regional Climate Committee from municipalities across Humboldt County as well as representatives from regional agencies such as the HTA, HCAOG, HWMA, and RCEA, and other partner organizations. The Regional Climate Committee will be responsible for implementing RCAP measures and actions facilitated by a Climate Program Manager.

Region wide discussions continue on the formation of the Committee and how the position will be funded. There has been interest in exploring HCAOG's willingness take on these roles. Staff is asking for preliminary feedback on the HCAOG Board's level of interest taking on RCAP activities. If the Board is interested, staff will continue discussions with regional partners and bring a specific plan back to the Board with details.

In addition to the feedback, staff also requests a vote to send the attached letter to the County as part of the public comment period on the RCAP.