



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 444-8208
www.hcaog.net

AGENDA ITEM 6a
HCAOG Board Meeting
October 15, 2026

DATE: October 5, 2026
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner
SUBJECT: **Memorandum of Understanding to Establish a Regional Climate Committee and Climate Program Manager for Implementing the “Regional Climate Action Plan”**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Memorandum of Understanding (Enclosure)
- Summary of the Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan (Enclosure)

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 recommends that the HCAOG Board approve signing the Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Regional Climate Committee and Climate Program Manager for implementing the *Regional Climate Action Plan*.”

Staff Summary:

The Board of the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA), on September 24, 2026, approved the MOU to establish RCEA as host agency for the Regional Climate Committee (RCC) and the Climate Program Manager position for coordinating implementation of the Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP). RCEA has agreed to commit staff resources and incidental costs totaling approximately \$145,000 per year.

The MOU will become effective once it is adopted by a combination of City/County jurisdictions that, cumulatively, represent at least 85% of the overall population of Humboldt County. Staff from the County of Humboldt, City of Eureka, and City of Arcata intend to take the MOU to their decision makers in October. If those three bodies adopt the MOU, the minimum population threshold will be met. The Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) Board will consider adopting the MOU on October 7. Others are likely to follow in future months.

The HCAOG Board, at the August, 2026, meeting, saw the draft MOU. The final MOU, adopted by RCEA, sets a different funding methodology. However, as before, the MOU does not pose any fiscal or staff-time commitments from HCAOG; therefore, the revision does not make any material difference for HCAOG's participation.

The MOU still uses the same proportional population methodology, but now applies a flat annual contribution amount (see MOU-Exhibit A, enclosed). Signing on to the MOU commits the signatory party to their flat yearly contribution for the full term of the MOU; there is no early withdrawal provision in the revised MOU. Contribution amounts will not change depending on which jurisdictions participate. The final MOU establishes lower overall costs than the previous version, and it specifies that any remaining contributions will roll over year to year. The MOU shall terminate on December 31, 2030, unless extended by mutual written agreement of the signatory parties.

One additional revision in the final MOU is the added recital:

Annual Budget. RCEA will separately account for direct funding contributions, and will develop an annual RCAP implementation budget based on direct funding contributions for annual review and approval by the Committee. The budget shall be applied to Program Manager salary costs and direct RCAP implementation expenses, such as vendors, consultants, climate tracking software, and similar expenses. Any budgeted funds unspent at the end of a fiscal year will be carried over to following years. The Regional Climate Committee may revise the annual budget as needed.

Regional Climate Committee (RCC): The MOU specifies that the RCEA Board along with an elected representative from the boards of HTA, HCAOG, and HWMA would act as the Regional Climate Committee (RCC). Each official appointed to the RCC is charged with addressing climate change at a coordinated regional level to implement the RCAP. The RCC would operate similar to how HCAOG's Policy Advisory Committee does, i.e., meetings would normally occur during regularly-scheduled RCEA Board meetings; the RCEA Board would adjourn and reconvene as the RCC body. However, unlike the PAC, the RCC would convene only for RCAP-specific agenda items. When deciding on grants, contracts, or other agreements where RCEA is the prime applicant or party, the RCEA Board would serve as the final decision maker.

Regional Climate Program Manager: The RCAP calls for the creation of a Climate Program Manager to lead coordinating the RCC's efforts and to coordinate with staff of the participating agencies to undertake the work of the RCC. The Program Manager will also coordinate a staff-level Technical Advisory Committee that will advise the Regional Climate Committee.

Thus, in signing the MOU, HCAOG would be committing to appointing one HCAOG Board member to serve on the Regional Climate Committee, and would have the opportunity to appoint a staff member to serve on the RCC's Technical Advisory Committee. Agreeing to be a signatory party to the MOU would support the goals, objectives, and policies adopted in the Regional Transportation Plan (*Variety in Rural Options of Mobility (VROOM) 2026-2046*), especially those of the Global Climate Crisis Element. HCAOG's annual Overall Work Program, since 2018, has

included a Work Element that dedicates staff time for “Global Climate Change and Sea Level Rise.” Task #10 of that Work Element is to “(f)acilitate formation and coordination of the RCAP’s Regional Climate Committee. Coordinate and collaborate to facilitate and implement transportation measures of adopted RCAP.”

HCAOG staff continues to collaborate with RCEA and the other jurisdictions to coordinate, formulate, and organize regional efforts to implement the RCAP, on both the individual and collective agency level.