

ENCLOSURE

Summary of the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP)

Note: With the exception of the last paragraph (noted with an *), the following summary is abridged from staff reports for City Council meetings when adoption of the RCAP was agendaized.

INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

The shared Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) establishes a shared framework to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and prepare communities for climate change. It focuses on major sources of local emissions:

- Transportation and vehicle travel
- Electricity use
- Natural gas consumption
- Waste and materials management
- Water and wastewater systems
- Carbon sequestration

The RCAP is designed to reduce countywide GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 32, and to make substantial progress toward carbon neutrality by 2045, consistent with Assembly Bill (AB) 1279. The RCAP is meant to function as a "playbook" that local agencies can use to prioritize actions, coordinate projects, and track progress over time, recognizing that implementation will be phased and dependent on available capacity and funding.

The plan outlines a range of possible local and regional actions, such as:

- Expanding renewable and carbon-free energy
- Increasing building energy efficiency
- Electrifying vehicles and municipal fleets
- Improving transit, walking, and biking options
- Reducing waste and landfill emissions
- Enhancing natural carbon sequestration (e.g., forests and soils)

The RCAP document, along with supporting appendices and the full technical and CEQA record, is available on the County's website at: <https://humboldt.gov.org/2464/HumboldtRegional-Climate-Action-Plan>.

The RCAP is grounded in a 2022 countywide GHG emissions inventory that covers both incorporated and unincorporated Humboldt County. The RCAP also includes future emissions forecasts for 2030 and 2045, which help show how emissions may change with growth and with the implementation of already adopted State programs. These forecast scenarios establish the emissions trajectory absent additional local action and help identify the remaining gap between projected emissions and the RCAP's 2030 reduction target, which the RCAP is designed to address.

Strategies and Measures

The RCAP organizes the emissions-reduction approach under eleven overarching strategies. Table 1 summarizes the suite of general strategies by sector.

Table 1: Sector-Based Strategies to Reduce GHGs

Sector	Strategy
Cornerstone (C)	1. Develop a regional climate coalition
Building Energy (BE)	2. Increase carbon-free electricity 3. Decarbonize existing construction 4. Decarbonize new construction
Transportation (T)	5. Shift driving to walking and biking 6. Shift driving to public transit or car-share 7. Shift land use to reduce vehicle miles traveled 8. Increase zero-emission vehicle adoption
Solid Waste (SW)	9. Reduce organic waste
Water & Wastewater (WW)	10. Conserve water and reduce wastewater emissions
Carbon Sequestration (CS)	11. Increase carbon sequestration
Refrigerants	12. Explore reduction in harmful refrigerant release

Table 2: Humboldt RCAP GHG Emission Reduction Measures: Transportation Strategies

Measure ID	Measure / Strategy	Key Actions
C-1	Regional Climate Committee	Establish a Regional Climate Committee comprised of elected officials from each jurisdiction, HTA, HCAOG, HWMA, and RCEA.
	Transportation Measure / Strategy	Key Actions
T-1 Urban	Transportation System Efficiency	Implement programs, such as those identified in HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), to increase the mode share of active transportation in urbanized areas from 9% to 12% by 2030, thereby achieving a regional active transportation mode share of 8%.
T-1 Rural	Transportation System Efficiency	Implement programs, such as those identified in HCAOG's RTP, that increase access to safe active transportation, to increase the mode share of active transportation in rural areas from 5% to 6% by 2030 thereby achieving a regional active transportation mode share of 9%.
T-2 Urban	Active Transportation & Land Use	Expand the public transit network in support of HCAOG's RTP to increase public transit mode share from 2% to 20% public transit mode share in urbanized areas to achieve a regional 13% public transit mode share by 2030.
T-2 Rural	Active Transportation & Land Use	Develop a robust public transit network in support of HCAOG's RTP to increase public transit mode share from 1% to 10% in rural areas and achieve a regional 13% public transit mode share by 2030.

Measure ID	Measure / Strategy	Key Actions
T-3	EV Infrastructure Expansion	Reduce regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by increasing promotion of mixed-use development in infill priority areas in alignment with HCAOG's baseline connectivity score included in the RTP.
T-4	EV Infrastructure Expansion	Develop and implement regional mobility hubs and ZEV car-share programs to support mode shift from single occupancy vehicles.
T-5	Transportation Efficiency	Require commercial and industrial employers with 25 employees or more to develop a Transportation Demand Management plan.
T-6	Transportation Efficiency	Decarbonize 15% of passenger vehicle miles traveled by 2030 and 100% by 2045 through increased adoption of low and zero-emission vehicles and development of a regional electric vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling network.
T-7	Transportation Efficiency	Increase commercial zero-emission vehicle use and adoption to 10% by 2030 and 100% by 2045 through a regional charging network and development of hydrogen hubs.
T-8	Transportation Efficiency	Electrify or otherwise decarbonize 12% of applicable small off-road engines (SORE) offroad equipment by 2030 and 100% by 2045 and replace fossil diesel consumption with renewable diesel in 55% of applicable large diesel in alignment with EO N-79-20 by 2030.
T-9	Transportation Efficiency – Jobs	Establish Humboldt as a pilot program for the decarbonization of the transportation sector to help drive state and philanthropic investment throughout Humboldt.
T-10	Transportation Efficiency – Jobs	Work with the state and biofuel industry to establish a biofuel network within Humboldt thereby funding new green industry and job growth to support the decarbonization of the transportation sector.
T-11	Transportation Efficiency	Lead by example and electrify or otherwise decarbonize 50% of the municipal fleet by 2030 in alignment with the state's Advanced Clean Fleet Rule

Implementation of the RCAP's full suite of measures is estimated to reduce emissions by approximately 219,446 MT CO₂e by 2030 and 1,228,128 MT CO₂e by 2045. The biggest reductions are expected to come from the same sectors that are currently the largest emitters, primarily transportation, followed by key actions in energy and waste. The RCAP's central takeaway suggests that the largest reductions will depend on cleaner vehicles and fuels, better transit options, and major improvements to waste handling and organics management, with support from policies and partnerships to realize those outcomes.

Implementation of the RCAP

The RCAP is intended to function as a long-term, programmatic plan that will be implemented through ongoing monitoring and periodic updates to support California's SB 32 GHG reduction

goals and to demonstrate substantial progress toward the State’s AB 1279 carbon-neutrality goal. Just as important, it provides a shared countywide framework that helps the County and cities work from the same playbook to align priorities, coordinate implementation, and create a practical structure for follow-through over time.

The RCAP recognizes that implementing its full suite of measures will take sustained effort and resources. Our region has limited staffing and funding capacity, so many of the higher-cost actions will depend on long-term coordination and, in many cases, outside funding and other partnerships.

To keep implementation realistic, the RCAP recommends a phased approach that prioritizes “ready-to-go” actions and encourages jurisdictions to integrate measures into work they already do, such as plan updates, capital projects, and development review, while also pursuing grants, new revenue sources, and other strategic partnerships to build staffing and project capacity.

If measures are not implemented or if the bi-annual reporting shows implemented measures are not achieving projected emissions reductions, the RCAP could be updated to include additional actions or revised actions needed to meet the 2030 milestone goal.

Benefits of Joint Adoption

The adopted RCAP helps the Cities, County, and regional JPAs coordinate more consistently and strategically.* That coordination matters because it helps avoid duplicating work, makes it easier to align investments across agencies, and improves participating jurisdictions’ ability to compete for grant funding and deliver infrastructure and economic development projects that benefit from regional scale. In practical terms, the RCAP strengthens regional partnerships, supports shared tools and staffing capacity, and helps the region stay accountable through coordinated progress tracking and reporting.

*HCAOG is equally committed to maintaining and strengthening coordination with Tribes and Tribal governments to work together to address climate change and its impacts. HCAOG values Tribes’ stewardship, knowledge, and achievements in environmental protection and restoration, and will benefit from collaborating with and learning from Tribes, and from receiving assistance as it is offered.