



October 9, 2026

Humboldt County Association of Governments
Board of Directors and Policy Advisory Committee
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501

Re: Support for PAC Item 6a (October 15, 2026) — Memorandum of Understanding to Establish a Regional Climate Committee and Climate Program Manager for Implementing the Regional Climate Action Plan

Dear Chair and Members of the Board:

The Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) urges the HCAOG Board to approve signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing the Regional Climate Committee and Climate Program Manager, as recommended by staff. We further urge HCAOG to treat signature not as the finish line but as the starting gun for rapid implementation of the Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP).

EPIC has advocated for an ambitious regional climate plan for Humboldt County for almost a decade. Over those years, we have watched the RCAP move from concept to draft to environmental review, and finally to adoption. The County Board of Supervisors adopted the RCAP and its Final EIR on December 16, 2025, and most incorporated cities have since followed, with Trinidad, Ferndale, and Blue Lake expected to complete adoption this September. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority approved the MOU on September 24 and committed roughly \$145,000 per year in staff and incidental costs to host the Committee and Program Manager. The plan is in place. What remains is to get to work.

HCAOG's seat at the table is essential. Transportation is the region's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, and the RCAP expects its biggest reductions to come from that sector. Eleven of the plan's measures (T-1 through T-11) address transportation, and several are tied directly to HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan: raising urban active transportation mode share from 9% to 12% by 2030, growing urban transit mode share from 2% toward 20%, aligning infill development with the RTP's baseline connectivity score, and building regional mobility hubs and a zero-emission vehicle



charging and fueling network. No other agency is better positioned to carry these measures forward.

Signing the MOU is also consistent with commitments HCAOG has already made. It advances the Global Climate Crisis Element of VROOM 2026–2046. And since 2018, HCAOG's Overall Work Program has included a "Global Climate Change and Sea Level Rise" Work Element whose Task #10 is to facilitate formation of the RCAP's Regional Climate Committee and to help implement the plan's transportation measures. Approving the MOU fulfills that task.

The cost to HCAOG is minimal; the value is substantial. As the staff report confirms, the MOU imposes no fiscal or staff-time commitment on HCAOG. Funding for the Program Manager comes from the municipal jurisdictions, and RCEA serves as host. HCAOG's obligation is simply to appoint one Board member to the Regional Climate Committee, with the option of assigning a staff member to the Technical Advisory Committee. In return, HCAOG gains a voice in how the region prioritizes climate investments, a coordinated structure that avoids duplicated effort, and a stronger regional case when competing for state and federal grants. The RCAP also functions as a qualified GHG reduction plan with CEQA thresholds, which can streamline review of the very transit, active transportation, and infill projects HCAOG supports.

Time is short. The RCAP targets a 40% reduction below 1990 levels by 2030, consistent with SB 32, and carbon neutrality by 2045 under AB 1279. Its measures are estimated to cut about 219,446 MT CO₂e by 2030. That deadline is barely four years away, and the MOU itself expires December 31, 2030. Every month spent on process rather than projects narrows the window to hit the 2030 milestone. To move quickly, EPIC respectfully asks the Board to:

1. Approve signing the MOU on October 15 so HCAOG is a founding member when the MOU takes effect.
2. Appoint HCAOG's Regional Climate Committee representative promptly, and designate staff to the Technical Advisory Committee.
3. Prioritize the RCAP's "ready-to-go" transportation measures in HCAOG's work program, RTP implementation, and funding decisions, with particular attention to the transit and active transportation mode-share targets.
4. Pursue grant funding jointly through the Committee to build implementation capacity, including the additional staff the RCAP anticipates beyond the Program Manager.



5. Support transparent progress reporting so the public can see whether measures are delivering projected reductions, and so the plan can be strengthened if they are not.

Humboldt's communities have done the important work of agreeing on a shared plan. HCAOG now has the opportunity to help turn that plan into action at no cost to the agency. EPIC thanks staff for their years of work on the RCAP and urges the Board to sign the MOU and move swiftly to implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Simmons", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matt Simmons, Climate Attorney
Environmental Protection Information Center