



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

**Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies**

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AGENDA ITEM 7a
HCAOG Board Meeting
January 15, 2026

DATE: January 8, 2026
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Brendan Byrd, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Receive update on the Regional Climate Action Plan and HCOAG's potential role in accommodating the Regional Climate Committee and the Climate Program Manager.**

Discussion Item Staff Report

Contents:

- Staff Summary
- Draft Funding MOU for Climate Program Manager
- Draft Job Description
- Draft Recommended Regional Climate Committee Structure

Staff Summary:

Over the past several years the PAC has received presentations from HCAOG and County staff regarding the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP), which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 16th, 2025. Over the course of those discussions, HCAOG staff have presented to the PAC the possibility of HCAOG taking on the role of forming the Regional Climate Committee (RCC) and staffing the Climate Program Manager (Manager), both of which are identified as key first steps in implementing the RCAP.

Most recently, in June of 2025 staff presented to the PAC some initial alternatives for the how the Manager position and RCC could be implemented at HCAOG. The presentation included the staff recommendation that the Board consider directing staff to:

1. Continue to evaluate HCAOG as the agency to take on the RCAP coordinator role;
2. Initiate a legal review of HCAOG's Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Cooperative Agreement and determine if any modifications would be necessary to take on the additional RCAP coordination role at HCAOG;
3. Develop a regional funding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Manager position, where local agencies that have adopted the RCAP would provide proportional funding to HCAOG for the newly created position;
4. Consider an updated RCC organization structure where the RCC would be a staff-level committee that would provide recommendations to the HCAOG Board; and
5. Develop a draft position description and wage scale.

The PAC directed staff to proceed with advancing the work in all items noted above and to bring back for future PAC consideration. One item to note in the list above is that the PAC did not have a clear preference at that time as to the exact structure for the RCC (item 4 above), and the staff direction for that item was to continue to review and consider all potential alternatives.

Since June staff have continued to work collaboratively with the County, the RCAP working group and local agency staff to determine the next steps for the RCC and the Manager position. Updates on each item are presented below.

Review of HCAOG JPA Agreement

HCAOG's legal counsel reviewed the existing JPA Agreement and the roles and responsibilities of the Manager position and the RCC as presented in the recently adopted RCAP. They provided the determination that HCAOG would not need to modify the existing JPA Agreement to take on this role, as the work as described fits within the allowances of the agreement. A supplementary MOU or cooperative agreement could be drafted that defines HCAOG's role in RCAP implementation, which could also serve as the regional funding MOU (discussed further below). Legal counsel did point out that HCAOG's JPA agreement explicitly notes HCAOG's role as a 'planning and advisory' agency, and therefore to fit within the existing agreement the RCC and the Manager position would need to regionally act in a similar capacity to the current Policy Advisory Committee and existing HCAOG staff.

Draft Regional Funding MOU, Position Description and Wage Scale

Based on input from HCAOG's Legal Counsel, staff have developed a draft regional funding MOU for the regional Manager position. The draft MOU is included as an attachment for review and comment. Staff will note that although this MOU has been reviewed by Legal Counsel and provided to local agency staff for review and comment, the MOU has not been presented to any local agency councils/boards. Key components of the funding MOU include:

- A framework for assigning the RCC and the Manager position to HCAOG
- A 5-year funding term (through 2030)
- A regional funding distribution to local agencies based on their size (as measured by population)
- A process for how to manage unforeseen cost increases or agency withdrawal

As shown in the draft MOU there are initial draft funding amounts that would be requested from each agency, assuming all agencies proceed in adopting the RCAP and commit to providing partial funding for a position. These proportional funding amounts were developed using a draft salary scale of approximately \$105,000 - \$128,000 annually, which in this agreement was informed by developing the draft position description (attached) and reviewing salaries for local agency staff with similar job expectations. Staff will note that the draft position description was heavily informed by input from local agency staff, who see this position as a regional leader with a high level of professional skill and expectation. The funding share in this agreement also includes all other associated employment costs at HCAOG (insurance, retirement, etc), in addition to a small travel and supplies allowance and a budget for a climate compliance tracking software program. Staff will note that the cost-share figures presented in this agreement are draft, and prior to recruitment for any position HCAOG would continue to work with our regional partners on the position's projected employment costs.

RCC Organization

As noted above, the PAC directed staff to continue to explore organizational options for the RCC. Over discussions with the regional working group over the past several months, the group

recommendation for the RCC is to form it similar to the existing HCAOG PAC, where the RCC would be a Board-level advisory committee to the HCAOG Board. To form the standing committee a resolution would need to be passed, and the current regional recommendation would be to have the RCC consist of the HCAOG Board, and one Board member each from HWMA, RCEA and HTA (although additional membership could also be considered). In addition to the Board-level advisory committee it is recommended that a Climate Technical Advisory Committee also be formed, which would be a regional staff-level committee that would function similarly to HCAOG's existing technical advisory committee (TAC). Similar to the existing TAC, additional assignments on this committee could be provided to an expanded network of regional partners, including regulatory agencies, tribal governments, utility districts, and Caltrans. A draft organization chart of this recommended structure is included as an attachment.

RCAP Coordinating Agency

In working with the regional working group one additional discussion topic has been for the group to evaluate Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) as another potential agency that could accommodate the formation of the RCC and staff the regional Manager position. In evaluating RCEA in addition to HCAOG there would be more certainty that the RCAP will find a suitable 'home', and assuming both agencies would be willing to step into that role it would allow the region to consider which agency is better positioned to take on the RCAP coordinating and oversight role. RCEA's Executive Director has participated in these recent discussions and plans to bring the idea to their Board for consideration in late January. After that meeting the regional working group will continue to work collectively to consider options, and the group anticipates providing a recommendation or staff-level support for the agency that is best suited to take on the RCAP role.

Lastly, as noted above the RCAP and the associated Environmental Impact Report were adopted and certified by the Board of Supervisors on December 16th, 2025. The next step at the regional level will be for each local agency council to review and consider adoption of the RCAP. Local agency staff have indicated they anticipate taking this item to their councils in early 2026.

For this staff report, staff are asking that the PAC consider the information included and provide any comments or direction to staff for how to continue to proceed. At a minimum staff are seeking concurrence from the PAC on continued support in taking on the RCAP coordination role, and any specific comments that the PAC may have on the regional funding MOU and the RCC organizational structure.