



**HCAOG**  
*Regional Transportation  
Planning Agency*

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County of Humboldt*

TO: John Ford, Director, Humboldt County Planning and Building  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

FROM: Beth Burks, Executive Director

DATE: September 19, 2024

SUBJECT: Draft Regional Climate Action Plan

Dear John,

Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) appreciates the leadership of you and your team in completing the Draft Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP). As administrator of the Regional Early Action Plan (REAP) funding that partially supported the development of this document, we are encouraged that funding has been used to create a draft that can lead to a qualified RCAP and accomplish Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining for future projects. We have appreciated collaborating with the County and the RCAP working group while the RCAP was being developed.

*Current HCAOG Activities that Support Implementation of the RCAP*

As noted in the Draft RCAP the transportation sector is the largest source of greenhouse gas 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 RCAP.

Additionally, we provide support to the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) 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)

#### *SSTT and RCAP Implementation Measures*

HCAOG is in support of the multitude of RCAP implementation measures that focus on transportation. These measures echo many of the policies already contained in the Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets (SSTT) contained in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which HCAOG is actively working to accomplish.

Although the SSTT and the Draft 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. At HCAOG we are not viewing this as a conflict. The SSTT were developed as part of a publicly informed process of updating the 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. HCAOG remains committed to working towards, and aggressively pursuing funding to implement the SSTT, and supporting our regional partners to do the same.

~~The SSTT were not developed or evaluated in a way that would allow streamlining of specific development projects in a CEQA context, as the environmental document for the RTP does not serve this purpose. HCAOG appreciates that the RCAP measures have the benefit of each being supported by substantial evidence and would allow for CEQA streamlining.~~

Although the SSTT and RTP were developed consistent with best practices and best available information, the specific greenhouse gas reduction levels were not quantified for each target. Therefore, the RTP Environmental Impact Report and subsequent addendums to not provide sufficient detail that would support CEQA streamlining for future development projects. HCAOG appreciates that the Draft RCAP measures have the benefit of each being calculated in this way and supported by substantial evidence that 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, Humboldt Waste Management Authority, and Redwood Coast Energy Authority, and other partner organizations. The Regional Climate Committee will be responsible for implementing RCAP measures and actions facilitated by a Climate Program Manager.

HCAOG intends to continue collaborating with regional partners on RCAP implementation and will explore if our joint powers agency will be a good fit for the Regional Climate Committee and Climate Program Manager position.

Thank you for your leadership and we look forward to the continued regional collaboration to move this important plan forward.

Sincerely,



Beth Burks  
Executive Director