

City of San Diego Climate Action Plan *October 2015*

SDCTA Position:

SUPPORT

Rationale for Position:

SDCTA supports the City of San Diego Climate Action Plan (CAP) as a roadmap toward meeting the current greenhouse gas reduction targets set forth by state legislation and current City planning documents. SDCTA supports the CAP but reserves the ability to independently review and consider any particular policy throughout the CAP's long term implementation.

Additionally, SDCTA recommends that City of San Diego staff:

- Clearly communicate and track performance metrics as CAP methods are implemented
- Conduct an economic or cost-benefit analysis of each implementation measure
- Establishes independent oversight of implementation strategies with a broad stakeholder group that includes impacted parties
- Protects local taxpayers and businesses to the extent possible throughout the process of implementation while also meeting State requirements
- Retains flexibility in the plan's implementation in order to protect the ability to utilize future technological advancements in achieving CAP goals

In supporting this phase of the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan, the SDCTA commits to regularly review the specific policies involved in implementing the CAP.

Title: City of San Diego Climate Action Plan

Jurisdiction: City of San Diego

Type: Regional Initiative

Vote: Expected vote at December 15 City Council meeting

Status: Pending

Issue: Energy—Greenhouse gas reduction

Description: Pursuant to AB 32, SB 375 and Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-30-15, the City of San Diego has designed a plan to gradually reduce the amount of greenhouse gases by focusing on five broad policy strategies.

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of the Climate Action Plan will vary depending on what policies and strategies the City pursues as part of the Plan's implementation. As part of the FY2015 City budget, the Mayor and City Council approved \$200,000 for administrative staff to oversee the program's implementation. Additional fiscal concerns relate to the risks of non-compliance if the City were to not enact a reduction plan. Not meeting California state mandates could put result in loss of State funds and block grants as well as increasing the risk of litigation over planning documents.

Background:

In 2005 Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-3-05, which acknowledged the threat of climate change to California's economy and well-being by setting a goal to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions statewide to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The pathway to reach these goals was further articulated in several bills passed through the legislature in proceeding years, most importantly the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32 – Nunez), and the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375 – Steinberg). The first of the two to go into effect, AB 32, contained a number of provisions to combat greenhouse gas emissions including two that are specifically relevant to the development of Climate Action Plans by local entities statewide, including San Diego:

- 1: Develop a scoping plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from sources of GHGs by 2020
- 2: Identify the statewide level of greenhouse gas emissions in 1990 to serve as the target the emissions limit in 2020.

Both the initial scoping plan for AB 32, as well as the recently released updated scoping plan point to local entities such as city, county and metropolitan governments as key partners in the planning and implementation of greenhouse gas reduction strategies. Similarly, SB 375 requires the California Air Resources Board to “develop regional reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions and prompt the creation of regional plans to reduce emissions from vehicle use throughout the state. Taken in tandem, these bills make clear that the City of San Diego should create a Climate Action Plan to tackle the challenges presented by climate change. Additionally, the City of San Diego General Plan as well as subsequent planning documents call for specific efforts to mitigate the effects of growth and development—these efforts are the purview of a City-specific CAP.

Summary of Policy Recommendations:

The current iteration of the Climate Action Plan suggests that the problem of greenhouse gas emission can be best dealt with by improving San Diego's performance in 5 broad areas:

1. Energy and Water Efficient Buildings
2. Clean and Renewable Energy
3. Bicycling, Water, Transit and Land Use
4. Zero Waste (Gas and Waste Management)
5. Climate Resiliency

Beyond these five policy areas, the Climate Action Plan's recommendations are notably broad. With twenty years of implantation to follow the passage of this document, the plan avoids committing the City to any strict policy regiment to achieve reduction goals. The flexibility afforded the City in how it will go about meeting these goals provides opportunity

to take advantage of future technological innovation as well as allowing for robust debate about implementation strategies at each stage of the process.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of the Climate Action Plan will vary depending on what policies and strategies the City pursues as part of the Plan's implementation. While the plan outlines specific target areas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is not specific about what strategies will be implemented in its current form. Because these goals will be met over a two decade period, this lack of specifics allows for future flexibility in how the City will meet these targets but makes assigning a true cost to compliance difficult.

As part of the FY2015 City budget, the Mayor and City Council approved \$200,000 for administrative staff to oversee the program's implementation. Additional fiscal concerns relate to the risks of non-compliance if the City were to not enact a reduction plan. Not meeting California State mandates could put result in loss of State funds and block grants as well as increasing the risk of litigation over planning documents.

Proponents:

- San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer
- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
- The Environmental Health Coalition

Proponent Arguments:

- The Climate Action Plan will put the City of San Diego in compliance with current greenhouse reduction mandates while allowing for flexibility in how to achieve those goals.

Opponents:

- Few groups are in total opposition but various groups have expressed different concerns with the plan as written.

Opponent Arguments:

- The Climate Action Plan does not provide specific enough details about implementation to pinpoint a true cost to taxpayers.
- Population forecasts in SANDAG's regional transit plan are incongruous with goals outlined in the CAP.