CHAPTER 9 COMMENT RESPONSES AND SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

This chapter contains comment letters received during the public review period for the Draft SEIR, which concluded on January 5, 2024. In conformance with Section 15088(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, written responses were prepared addressing comments on environmental issues received from reviewers of the Draft SEIR. This chapter also summarizes all revisions made to the CAP Update and SEIR since release of the draft documents.

9.1 Comments on the Draft EIR and Responses

Table 9-1 presents the list of commenters, including the numerical designation for each comment letter received, the author of the comment letter, and the date of the comment letter.

The verbal and written individual comments received on the Draft EIR and the responses to those comments are provided below. The comment letters and verbal comments made at the public hearing are reproduced in their entirety and are followed by the response(s). Where a commenter has provided multiple comments, each comment is indicated by a line bracket and an identifying number in the margin of the comment letter.

Table 9-1 List of Commenters

Letter No.	Commenter	Date
AGENCIES		
A1	Padre Dam Municipal Water District	November 27, 2023
A2	California Department of Transportation	December 18, 2023
A3	California Air Resources Board	January 4, 2024
A4	Caltrans Aeronautics Program	January 5, 2024
ORGANIZATIONS		
O1	Citizens Against Gillespie's Expansion Low Flying Aircraft	November 5, 2023
O2	Climate Action Campaign and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569	December 15, 2023
O3	Environmental Center of San Diego	December 19, 2023
O4	Sierra Club San Diego	December 28, 2023
O5	Peppertree Park Villages 7-10	December 29, 2023
O6	San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping	December 29, 2023
O7	Endangered Habitats League	January 3, 2024
O8	CleanEarth4Kids	January 4, 2024
O9	SanDiego350's Climate Action Plan Team	January 4, 2024
O10	SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team	January 4, 2024
O11	San Diego Building Electrification Coalition	January 4, 2024

Letter No.	Commenter	Date
O12	NAIOP San Diego Building Owners and Managers Association San Diego California Apartment Association California Restaurant Association Building Industry Association of San Diego San Diego County Lodging Association	January 5, 2024
O13	Center for Biological Diversity	January 5, 2024
O14	CleanEarth4Kids	January 5, 2024
O15	San Diego Gas & Electric Company	January 5, 2024
O16	Nolen Communities, LLC	January 5, 2024
O17	San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce	January 5, 2024
O18	Chatten-Brown Law Group on behalf of Sierra Club	January 5, 2024
O19	San Diego County Farm Bureau	January 5, 2024
O20	San Diego Community Power	January 5, 2024
INDIVIDUALS		
I1	Robyn Griffith	October 26,2023
I2	Matthew Pfeffer	October 26, 2023
I3	Mike Borrello	October 30, 2023
I4	Matt Pfeffer	November 6, 2023
I5	Daphne Galang	November 15, 2023
I6	Jarrod Caswell	November 20, 2023
I7	Bridgett Ross	December 21, 2023
I8	Michelle Baca	January 1, 2024
I9	Albert Perdon	January 1, 2024
I10	Dan Sheffield	January 1, 2024
I11	Aurora Foster	January 2, 2024
I12	Rosie Higuera	January 2, 2024
I13	Elena Baker	January 3, 2024
I14	Summer Boger	January 3, 2024
I15	Marcie Farthing	January 3, 2024
I16	David Freund	January 3, 2024
I17	Patti Kirchwehm	January 3, 2024
I18	Barbara Stanforth	January 3, 2024
I19	Mike Townsend	January 3, 2024
I20	George and Diane Tye	January 3, 2024
I21	Stacey Baker	January 3, 2024
I22	Susan Custer	January 4, 2024
I23	Tamara Dixon	January 4, 2024
I24	Kelly Le Berthon	January 3, 2024

Letter No.	Commenter	Date
I25	Julie Lynne	January 4, 2024
I26	Richard Newton	January 4, 2024
I27	Judy Oconnor	January 4, 2024
I28	Sam Smith	January 4, 2024
I29	Mrs. Wolter	January 3, 2024
I30	Mike Bullock	January 5, 2024
I31	Paul Hannosh	January 7, 2024
I32	Bill Tippets	February 6, 2024

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2024.

9.1.1 Master Responses

The following master responses provide clarification on topics raised in multiple comments. These master responses explain the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to land use changes; describe the approach to analysis of smart growth alternatives in this SEIR; and clarify that the CAP Update establishes appropriate GHG reduction targets and identifies adequate measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. Responses to detailed comments are provided individually below, with references to the relevant master responses provided, as appropriate.

9.1.1.1 Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change

The County received public comments requesting the incorporation of land use changes into the CAP Update to reduce GHG emissions associated with vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This master response provides clarification about the relationship between the CAP Update and the General Plan and clarifies the distinction between the CAP Update as a mechanism for reducing GHG emissions and the San Diego County General Plan (General Plan) as the County's land use planning and policy document.

CAP Update and SEIR Background

The General Plan was updated and adopted in August 2011. The General Plan provides the policy framework and long-range vision for growth in the unincorporated county. It also establishes goals, policies, and programs to foster healthy, livable, and sustainable communities, and provides a guide for future land use, housing, and economic development. The probable environmental impacts of implementing the General Plan were evaluated in the *San Diego County General Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report* (2011 GPU PEIR). Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4, Mitigation Measures CC-1.2, CC-1.7, and CC-1.8 were included in the 2011 GPU PEIR to ensure GHG emissions associated with buildout of the General Plan were reduced to a level below significance. Mitigation Measures CC-1.2, CC-1.7, and CC-1.8 require the County to prepare a CAP to achieve specified GHG emissions from community and local government operations, to modify the County's guidance on evaluating GHG emissions

impacts and determining a project's consistency with the CAP, and to adopt a threshold to reduce GHG emissions.

As discussed in Chapter 1, "Project Description," of this SEIR, the County prepared a CAP in 2012 and a revised version in 2018, but the related CEQA documents for both CAPs were litigated, and the 2018 CAP SEIR was decertified. The CAP Update that is the subject of this SEIR is intended to fulfill the mitigation measures identified in the 2011 GPU PEIR and to meet current California legislative emissions reductions targets in response to the *Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego,* 50 Cal.App.5th 467 (2020) (hereafter Appellate Decision) and subsequent Superior Court writ of mandate. This SEIR has been prepared to provide subsequent analysis to the 2011 GPU PEIR and is intended to analyze the impacts of implementation of the CAP Update.

The Purpose of This CAP Update

The CAP Update is not a land use plan. Rather, it is a programmatic document that contains strategies, policies, and actions that would mitigate GHG emissions from existing and future development allowed under the General Plan and in County operations. Making land use planning changes to the General Plan while trying to mitigate for buildout would result in an unstable project description and a circular process. The CAP Update contains actions demonstrated to reduce emissions levels that exceed the County's 2030 reduction target of 43.6 percent below 2019 levels and 2045 reduction target of 85.4 percent below 2019 levels. The CAP Update also establishes actions to achieve a goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2045.

The CAP Update has been prepared in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b) and Section 15126.4. These guidelines do not include changes to land use as required elements of CAPs generally or CAPs—like this one—that serve as mitigation measures.

Although the CAP Update is not the appropriate document within which to propose changes in land use in the unincorporated county, the County acknowledges that changes in land use can have the effect of reducing GHG emissions by reducing VMT through higher-density development in close proximity to transit, infrastructure, and retail and commercial services. Although the CAP Update does not include changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning, it does include measures that would support investments in multimodal transportation near development (Measure T-5 would improve County roadways to encourage walking, biking, or rolling to and from transit and destinations and increase transportation efficiency) and measures that would acquire and manage land for carbon storage (Measure A-1 would acquire and manage conservation lands to preserve natural lands and maximize carbon storage potential in unincorporated areas, and Measure A-3 would preserve agricultural lands to prioritize carbon storage and balance economic ad development goals).

Furthermore, although the CAP Update does not prescribe changes in the patterns of land use development, this SEIR does evaluate how changes in the distribution of land uses could reduce GHG emissions in the unincorporated area compared to the proposed

project (existing General Plan land use map, as amended) as part of the alternatives analysis (see Chapter 5, "Alternatives," of this SEIR). In response to the Superior Court writ, this SEIR includes smart growth alternatives that describe conceptual land use configurations that would reduce projected VMT when implemented, beyond that which the CAP Update would do alone. Please refer to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," below, for more details. These alternatives could be adopted in addition to the CAP Update.

The CAP Update's Relationship to the County's Other Climate Change Efforts

The County is developing and implementing other programs that would inform land use planning, reduce VMT, and reduce GHG emissions. A few of these programs include: (1) the County's Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) is anticipated to establish an approach to facilitating development in VMT-efficient and infill areas based on parcel-level analysis of on-the-ground development feasibility; (2) the Sustainable Land Use Framework (SLUF) identifies principles of sustainable development to inform future land use planning and helps the County balance housing production, sustainability, conservation, resiliency, and equity with respect to land use change; (3) the County's Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) will generate a group of GHG reduction actions that can be voluntarily implemented by public or private entities in the county, which could move the entire San Diego region to zero-carbon emissions by midcentury in buildings, transportation, energy supply, food systems, and land use sectors; (4) the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) conserves open space and natural habitats; (5) the purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program preserves land for long-term agricultural use; and (6) the County's adopted VMT threshold and upcoming VMT mitigation program will further encourage development in low-VMT and therefore low-GHG areas. As described in Chapter 2, Project Description, of the SEIR, implementation of the CAP Update includes a combination of regulations, programs, incentives, and outreach and educational activities to reduce GHG emissions. This includes existing County initiatives such as the Multiple Species Conservation Program and the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, both of which promote land conservation as a means of both preserving habitat and agricultural lands while contributing toward GHG reduction.

The CAP Update has been revised to more clearly explain how the CAP Update mitigates development allowed under the General Plan and how, if land use changes were to occur as a result of these plans and programs, future iterations of the CAP would account for any changes in land use and its associated GHG (see page 9 of the CAP Update). As such, the plans and programs in the paragraph above remain separate from the CAP Update, and any reduction in GHG emissions that results from their implementation is not captured in the CAP Update emissions forecasts. As a result, CAP Update emissions forecasts for the unincorporated county may be higher—and more conservative—than would be realized with the implementation of other County programs. Because the CAP Update forecasts do not take credit for these separate actions, this approach increases the "gap" between the emissions forecasts and GHG reduction targets identified in the CAP and results in the CAP Update identifying an aggressive suite of actions, demonstrating that the County can achieve its targets independent of separate County

land use programs. Thus, any GHG reductions achieved through the County's separate land use planning efforts (e.g., DFA and SLUF) and any separately obtained GHG emissions reductions (e.g., RDF) would be in addition to what would be achieved through implementation of the CAP Update measures and actions to reach GHG reduction targets identified in the CAP.

Again, while the County acknowledges the important relationship between land use and GHG emissions, the CAP Update is not a land use plan. As articulated in this SEIR, large-scale changes to the land uses in the adopted 2011 General Plan would require additional study, public outreach, and coordination. As noted above, the CAP Update is intended to achieve the requirements set forth in GPU EIR Mitigation Measures CC-1.2, CC-1.7, and CC-1.8: to prepare a CAP to achieve specified GHG emissions from community and local government operations, to modify the County's guidance on evaluating GHG emissions impacts and determining a project's consistency with the CAP, and to adopt a threshold to reduce GHG emissions. Because the CAP Update achieves these goals through implementation of other types of measures and actions, instituting General Plan land use changes through the CAP Update, is not necessary. Further, such changes would be circular and prevent a stable project description as required by CEQA. As described below and in Chapter 5, "Alternatives," of this SEIR, the smart growth alternatives present land use focused options that the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) could direct staff to implement. These alternatives, if selected, would likely require future changes to land use, zoning, and development processes.

9.1.1.2 Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR

The County received several comments related to the evaluation of smart growth alternatives in this SEIR. This response provides an overview of the need to evaluate alternatives in this SEIR, the development and feasibility of the smart growth alternatives, and the analysis and conclusions provided in this SEIR.

EIRs are required to describe and evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project and would avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects of the project and to evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[a]). Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (CEQA Section 21002.1), the discussion of alternatives is intended to focus on alternatives to the project that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening significant effects of the project (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[b]). The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[c]). The EIR must then include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[d]). If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects must be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project (State CEQA

Guidelines 15126.6[d]). A No-Project Alternative must be evaluated to allow decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[e]). If, in analyzing the No-Project Alternative, not approving the project is determined to be environmentally superior, "the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives" (State CEQA Guidelines 15126.6[e][2]).

The Court of Appeal found the 2018 SEIR's discussion of project alternatives to be deficient because the CAP's objectives included reducing GHG. The Court of Appeal determined that the SEIR should have included a smart growth alternative aimed at reducing VMT. The Court of Appeal cited state and local plans linking VMT and GHG reduction as evidence that at least one project alternative in the 2018 SEIR should have been focused primarily on significantly reducing VMT and concluded that failure to do so was prejudicial in that it precluded "informed public participation and decision making" (Appellate Decision, page 106).

This SEIR includes consideration of four smart growth alternatives that, if implemented, would reduce VMT, and by extension GHG emissions, in the unincorporated county. The smart growth alternatives are conceptual land use configurations that would reduce VMT beyond the reductions that would be achieved by the CAP Update by modifying the way the unincorporated area would be built out in the future. Implementation of the smart growth alternatives would be directed in addition to approval of the CAP Update and would require additional actions by the Board, such as direction of new technical studies, program development, and extensive stakeholder and community engagement. Implementation of these alternatives also likely would require planning, zoning, and land use changes not analyzed in this CAP Update SEIR. The Draft SEIR describes the various benefits of the smart growth alternatives and their consistency with the goals of the adopted General Plan (pages 5-19 and 5-20), summarizes the County's outreach efforts related to development of the smart growth alternatives (pages 5-19 through 5-22), and articulates potential implementation methods (pages 5-22 through 5-26).

Two of the smart growth alternatives—the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative and the Village Support Areas Alternative—could be implemented through zoning overlays. Zoning overlays were identified as the main method of implementation because they are relatively quick and easy to implement. The Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative could also be initiated though a zoning overlay, although as noted in the Draft SEIR, "a broader and more comprehensive set of General Plan land use map and Zoning Ordinance changes would be required that mirrors the [Road User Charge] program described in the Regional Plan," because the VMT assumed in the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) modeling (and incorporated into the Draft SEIR's analysis of the alternative's emissions) assume VMT reductions from the Road User Charge program that was subsequently removed from the SANDAG strategy by amendment (Draft SEIR page 5-30). The fourth smart growth alternative is a series of General Plan goal and policy edits. As explained in the Draft SEIR, "[t]he Board may choose some or all of these additional policy amendments and pair them with the proposed CAP Update or an alternative" (Draft SEIR page 5-31). All the alternatives would likely require additional CEQA review before adoption.

As explained on page 5-24 of the Draft SEIR, if the Board selects the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, the Village Support Areas Alternative, or the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative to move forward, staff would be directed to prepare and return to the Board with a Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Ordinance for CEQA review and adoption, which would result in the placement of a smart growth zoning designation on properties in the selected smart growth areas. The overlay zone would identify properties that would be eligible for future programs, process improvements, or land use changes that would incentivize residential, commercial, and mixed-use growth in the smart growth boundary. The County would conduct additional community outreach during development of the overlay zone to better align policies with community input.

Depending upon the nature and extent of the regulatory framework in the Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Ordinance, additional environmental analysis may be required prior to adoption. The necessity of additional outreach, analysis, and refinement does not render these alternatives infeasible, nor does it mean that they could not be implemented in a reasonable amount of time ("reasonable" is defined as being able to accommodate the community outreach and noticed public hearing processes required before adoption). The overlay process could be implemented more efficiently than wholesale changes to the General Plan land use map, which is the reason it is proposed. The County has implemented similar overlay zones in the past, for example, the County's Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI) Overlay, with success. The FCI Overlay was placed over certain properties in the FCI zone to specify areas for certain development. A Smart Growth Zoning Overlay would function in similar way to guide incentives, for example, for development in smart growth areas.

Similarly, the County has examples of successful General Plan policy updates, such as the July 14, 2021 (1) adoption of General Plan Amendments to update the Housing, Safety, and Environmental Justice Elements. The County anticipates that elements of the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative could be returned to the Board for adoption with CEQA review in as little as 6 months. If selected by the Board, some goal and policy edits may require more detailed CEQA analysis after adoption of the CAP Update.

As demonstrated in the examples above, the identified smart growth alternatives are feasible and could be implemented within a reasonable range of time following Board direction. Furthermore, CEQA does not require alternatives to be as fully developed and implementable as the proposed project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d)). The Appellate Decision does not direct the County to include land use changes as GHG reduction measures in the CAP Update, nor does the decision require the Board to select a smart growth alternative for advancement.

The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to foster informed decision making focused on the comparative impacts of the project (here, the CAP Update) to those of the alternatives. Alternatives are intended to identify how a project could be adjusted to reduce the effects of its implementation. The smart growth alternatives were included in the SEIR in response to the Appellate Decision and crafted in response to feedback received during public outreach, not just to explore ways to reduce project impacts but also the

environmental impacts of these alternatives were analyzed in comparison to the proposed project, albeit at a lesser level of detail, as is anticipated in the State CEQA Guidelines.

Additionally, these alternatives were included in the full suite of alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in the identification of the environmentally superior alternative. Table 5-2 in Chapter 5, Alternatives, of the SEIR provides a qualitative summary of the environmental effects of the alternatives evaluated in comparison to the effects of the CAP Update to identify the environmentally superior alternative. As required by Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, which states "[i]f the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives." Environmental superiority is based on the analysis conducted pursuant to Section 15126.6(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines and the potential for the alternative to reduce the anticipated impacts of project implementation, while achieving the basic objectives of the project and without causing additional environmental effects. The decision-making body has the discretion to select any or none of the alternatives evaluated in detail in the SEIR and is not obligated to select the environmentally superior alternative.

In sum, the alternatives analysis contained in the SEIR satisfies State CEQA Guidelines and responds to the Court of Appeal's requirements; provides a balanced analysis of each project alternative, and the smart growth alternatives, that is backed by substantial evidence for comparing the potential impacts of the alternative with those of the proposed project; contains the appropriate level of detail pursuant to the requirements of the State CEQA Guidelines for the consideration of project alternatives; and includes sufficient detail for the public and decision-makers to understand the process by which the smart growth alternatives could be implemented.

9.1.1.3 Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions

The County received several comments related to elements of the CAP Update, including its GHG reduction targets; strategies, measures, and actions to reduce GHG emissions to achieve the targets; and implementation and monitoring details. For example, comments assert that the GHG reduction targets are inadequately aligned with targets set forth in state legislation (e.g., Assembly Bill [AB] 1279) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan). Comments also reference additional measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions that are outside the scope of those included in the CAP Update and suggest revisions to the measures and actions included in the CAP Update. The comments related to additional and revised measures and actions to reduce emissions generally assert that these measures and actions would achieve additional or earlier GHG reductions relative to those reported in the CAP Update. Comments also assert that the CAP Update measures and actions do not include "analysis, timeline, (and) metrics" and assert that the CAP Update is "aspirational" because it does not include "defined actions" or "metrics." Additionally, some commenters offer suggestions for how the measures and actions should be implemented or request that additional details related to implementation, such as timing and cost, be included in a Final CAP.

This master response describes the following topics:

A. The regulatory framework for this CAP Update, including State CEQA Guidelines provisions for qualified plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Section 15183.5[b][1]) and Board direction provided in the *Framework for Future for Bold Climate Action* (Board direction).
B. The methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and Board direction.
C. The methodologies the County used to adequately develop measures and actions to reduce emissions, achieve the established targets GHG reduction targets, and make substantial progress toward the County's aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.
D. The implementation, monitoring, and amendment mechanisms included in the CAP Update.

Regulatory Framework for This CAP Update

The State CEQA Guidelines include provisions to streamline the environmental review process of projects that are consistent with a "plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" that meets specified criteria, which are outlined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1).

Elements of a Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5[B][1])

(A) Quantify GHG emissions, both existing and projected, over a specified period of time, resulting from activities within a defined geographic area.

(B) Establish a level, based on substantial evidence, below which the contribution to GHG emissions from activities covered by the plan would not be cumulatively considerable.

(C) Identify and analyze the GHG emissions resulting from specific actions, or categories of actions anticipated within the geographic area.

(D) Specify measures or a group of measures, including performance standards, that substantial evidence demonstrates, if implemented on a project-by-project basis, would collectively achieve the specified emissions level.

(E) Establish a mechanism to monitor the plan's progress toward achieving the level and to require amendment if the plan is not achieving specified levels.

(F) Be adopted in a public process following environmental review.

Under these provisions, a project that is consistent with a "plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" is eligible for streamlined analysis of its GHG emissions impacts under CEQA.

Board Direction: "Framework for Our Future for Bold Climate Action"

The Board-approved policy guidelines—the *Framework for Our Future: Actions to Achieve Bold Climate Action*—in January 2021 to, among other directives, achieve bold climate action and establish actions to meet a goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2035–2045, which is consistent with Board direction. Refer to CAP Update Section 1.1 (pages 1-3 and 1-4) for additional discussion of this Board direction. Overview of Statewide GHG Reduction Targets

The CAP Update appropriately sets GHG reduction targets and a net zero goal in alignment with state legislation (i.e., AB 1279), the 2022 Scoping Plan, and the Board's direction.

The State has established GHG emissions reduction targets through various statewide plans, laws, and executive orders to address climate change. In 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 32 mandated that statewide GHG emissions reach 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In 2022, AB 1279 mandated that statewide GHG emissions reach 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045, and also included a policy for the state to achieve net zero emissions as soon as possible.

To implement AB 1279, CARB adopted 2022 Scoping Plan, which identifies a technologically feasible and cost-effective scenario to achieve statewide carbon neutrality, or net zero emissions, by 2045. CARB's analysis determined that to achieve AB 1279 targets, statewide emissions reductions must exceed SB 32 requirements to reach 48 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets

The CAP Update adjusts the state-level GHG targets identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan to the County's 2019 GHG inventory. The CAP Update's target-setting methodology used 2019 data from the State's emission inventory and future emissions reductions in 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045 from the 2022 Scoping Plan. The future emissions in the 2022 Scoping Plan are 48 percent below statewide 1990 levels in 2030 and 85 percent below 1990 levels in 2045. Statewide emissions in future years from the applicable sectors were then compared to 2019 statewide emissions from applicable sectors to determine the percentage reduction for the unincorporated area. Data for 2019 were used because 1990 emissions data are not available for the unincorporated county and because 2019 is the baseline year of the GHG emissions inventory prepared for the CAP Update. The 2019 GHG inventory for the unincorporated area accounts for community-wide activities in the unincorporated area and County government operations in the unincorporated area and within incorporated cities and is consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1)(A).

The methodology used to establish 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets for the CAP Update, including identification of statewide sectors applicable to the County of San Diego, is described in full in CAP Update Appendix 5.

The CAP Update therefore demonstrates ways to achieve the following GHG reduction targets:

- 43.6 percent below 2019 levels by 2030, and
- 85.4 percent below 2019 levels by 2045.

The CAP Update also includes potential ways to achieve an additional goal of:

- net zero emissions by 2045.

The basis for the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and the 2045 aspirational goal are presented below. Appendix 5 to the CAP Update describes in full the methodology used to adjust state-level GHG targets to the County's 2019 inventory and establish the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and the 2045 aspirational goal. By establishing 2030 and 2045 GHG emissions reduction targets in alignment with legislative targets for statewide GHG emissions reductions and the State's 2022 Scoping Plan, the CAP Update is consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1)(B).

Basis for the CAP Update's 2030 GHG Reduction Target

For 2030, the CAP Update target is aligned with the 2022 Scoping Plan, which concludes that statewide GHG emissions levels need to be reduced to 48 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 for the state to stay on track to achieve net zero GHG emissions no later than 2045 (as required by AB 1279). This is a greater reduction than set forth in SB 32, which establishes a statutory limit of reducing statewide emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and is in alignment with Board direction to establish actions to meet a goal of net zero emissions by 2035–2045.

Basis for the CAP Update's 2045 GHG Reduction Target

For 2045, the CAP Update's target is aligned with AB 1279, which requires that the State's target of net zero emissions by 2045 include reducing statewide anthropogenic emissions by, at minimum, 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. Anthropogenic emissions include the primary sources and activities in the County's GHG emissions categories: on-road transportation, electricity, natural gas, waste, agriculture, propane, off-road transportation, water, and wastewater. To go beyond an 85 percent anthropogenic emissions reduction and achieve statewide net zero emissions by 2045, the 2022 Scoping Plan relies on large-scale deployment of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies and mechanical carbon dioxide removal (CDR) strategies, such as direct air capture machines. Because the 2022 Scoping Plan shows that natural and working lands are projected to be a net source of emissions through 2045, additional carbon dioxide removal strategies (e.g., CCS, mechanical CDR), are required to reach net zero emissions by 2045.

The County government does not have the jurisdiction or other ability to construct and operate CCS and mechanical CDR strategies at the pace and scale needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. The 2022 Scoping Plan also assumes that additional reductions in anthropogenic emissions beyond 85 percent by 2045 would not be cost-

effective or technologically feasible. As a result, the CAP Update's 2045 target is aligned with the AB 1279 target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045.

Basis for the CAP Update's 2045 Aspirational Goal

The CAP Update also includes an aspirational goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045, consistent with Board direction. This goal is in addition to the 2045 target aligned with reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. By including an aspirational goal for net zero carbon emissions in the CAP Update, the County demonstrates how it is going above and beyond reductions in anthropogenic emissions and working toward net zero emissions in the unincorporated area, for example through four quantified actions to increase carbon stored in natural and working (e.g., agricultural) lands, and 35 "Path to Net Zero" actions that do not result in quantified GHG reductions but contribute to achievement of the County's net zero emissions goal. The 2022 Scoping Plan concludes that achieving net zero emissions statewide by 2045 is cost-effective and technologically feasible. Because the draft 2022 Scoping Plan demonstrates that 2035 statewide carbon neutrality is not cost-effective or technologically feasible, the CAP Update's aspirational goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions is set for 2045.

Implementation: Measures and Actions to Reduce Emissions and Achieve GHG Reduction Targets

The County prepared GHG emissions projections for 2030 and 2045 to understand the scale of reductions needed to meet the 2030 and 2045 reduction targets and goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2045. The CAP Update's emissions projections estimate future emissions by considering forecasted growth in population, housing units, and employment, and the impact of adopted legislation and regulations on future emissions (CAP Update Appendix 3). The GHG emissions projections account for community-wide activities in the unincorporated area and County government operations in the unincorporated area and in incorporated cities. CAP Update GHG emissions projections are consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15183.5(b)(1)(A) and 15183.5(b)(1)(C).

Comparing the County's projected GHG emissions levels for 2030 and 2045 with the CAP reduction targets demonstrates that additional emissions reductions are needed for the County to achieve its targets (CAP Update Appendix 5, Table 6). To meet the 2030 CAP reduction target, annual GHG emissions would need to be 713,844 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) lower than projected 2030 levels. To meet the 2045 CAP reduction target, annual GHG emissions would need to be 1,243,815 $MTCO_2e$ lower than projected 2045 levels. To meet the CAP's aspirational goal of net zero emissions in 2045, annual GHG emissions would need to be 1,678,000 $MTCO_2e$ lower than projected 2045 levels.

CAP Update GHG Reduction Framework

The CAP Update establishes nine strategies, 21 measures, and 70 actions that the County will take to achieve the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make progress toward the 2045 net zero emissions goal. These actions reduce GHG emissions from five emissions reduction sectors:

- built environment and transportation,
- energy,
- solid waste,
- water and wastewater, and
- agriculture and conservation.

Each emissions reduction sector contains a net zero vision statement that describes what an equitable, net zero emissions future would look like in the unincorporated area and in County operations.

GHG Reduction Strategies, Measures, and Actions

The CAP Update identifies strategies, measures, and actions to reduce GHG emissions. The nine strategies describe the measures and actions in each sector and how they will help achieve the County's vision for net zero. The 21 measures describe the County's policy goals and include a total of 70 actions that outline the steps the County will carry out to achieve quantified GHG reductions that collectively achieve the 2030 and 2045 targets and also put the County on a path to reaching the aspirational 2045 net zero emissions goal.

The CAP Update's actions include both "implementing actions" that would achieve quantified GHG reductions and supporting, or Path to Net Zero, actions that do not result in quantified GHG reductions, but instead contribute to achievement of the sector's vision and the County's net zero emissions goal.

Criteria for Including Measures and Actions in the CAP Update

To be included in the CAP Update, the measures and implementing actions that achieve quantified GHG reductions were developed to meet each of the following criteria. Each quantified measure and action must be:

1. within the County's jurisdiction and ability to enforce,
2. able to be monitored with readily available data to demonstrate progress over time,
3. achievable within the County's regulatory framework, and
4. additional to existing regulations from the state or federal government.

Implementing Actions that Reduce Anthropogenic Emissions Would Reduce Emissions to Levels Below the 2030 and 2045 Targets

The CAP Update identifies the quantified emissions reductions that would result from the implementation of quantifiable implementing actions outlined under each GHG reduction measure (see CAP Update Section 4.4). Two types of implementing actions are quantified: (1) 31 actions that reduce GHG emissions from anthropogenic or human-caused activities, such as consuming fossil fuels, like gasoline, diesel, and natural gas; using electricity generated from fossil fuels; and generating and disposing of organic waste in landfills; and (2) four carbon storage actions that remove emissions from the atmosphere and store them in soil and vegetation. Each of the five emissions reduction sectors includes quantified actions to reduce anthropogenic emissions, and the agriculture and conservation sector also includes reductions from carbon storage actions.

The analysis presented in the CAP Update demonstrates that the quantified emissions reductions that would be collectively achieved by the implementing actions would exceed the County's 2030 and 2045 reduction targets by reducing GHG emissions to 44.5 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 ("beating" the 43.6 percent reduction target) and 89.8 percent below 2019 levels by 2045 ("beating" the 85.4 percent reduction target). (See CAP Update Table 6 and CAP Update Appendix 5.) The detailed calculations performed to determine the quantified GHG emissions reductions from each of the implementing actions are presented in CAP Update Appendix 7.

The 2030 and 2045 reduction targets are achieved solely by the 31 quantified implementing actions that reduce anthropogenic emissions. The four quantified carbon storage actions that remove emissions from the atmosphere are counted separately for their contribution toward the County's 2045 net zero emissions goal. As shown in CAP Update Appendix 5, the implementing actions that reduce anthropogenic emissions would exceed the County's 2030 and 2045 reduction targets by reducing emissions to the following levels (Table 7):

- 44.0 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 (exceeding the 2030 target of a 43.6 percent reduction below 2019 levels by 13,556 MTCO2e)
- 85.5 percent below 2019 levels by 2045 (exceeding the 2045 target of an 85.4 percent reduction below 2019 levels by 983 $MTCO_2e$)

Implementing Carbon Storage Actions Reduce Emissions to Levels Further Below the 2030 and 2045 Targets and Make Substantial Progress Toward the 2045 Net Zero Emissions Goal

- The CAP Update also identifies four quantified implementing actions that increase the amount of carbon stored in soils and vegetation in the unincorporated area through habitat restoration, tree-planting, and carbon farming (CAP Update Appendix 5).
- As shown in Table 9-2, carbon storage actions would result in the annual removal of 13,711 $MTCO_2e$ from the atmosphere in 2030 and 129,556 $MTCO_2e$ by 2045, which would result in the County further exceeding its 2030 and 2045 reduction targets and

making substantial progress toward its 2045 net zero emissions goal (Tables 8 and 9 of CAP Update Appendix 5).

- 44.5 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 (reducing 2030 emissions to levels 27,327 MTCO2e lower than if only implementing actions that reduce anthropogenic emissions are considered).
- 89.8 percent below 2019 levels by 2045 (reducing 2045 emissions to levels 130,539 $MTCO_2e$ lower than if only implementing actions that reduce anthropogenic emissions are considered).

Table 9-2 GHG Emissions Removed from the Atmosphere by Carbon Storage Strategies, Measures, Actions

Carbon Storage Strategies, Measures, Actions to Remove Emissions from the Atmosphere	Annual GHG Emissions Removed from Atmosphere ($MTCO_2e$/year)	
	2030	2045
Agriculture and Conservation		
Strategy: Preserve Natural Lands and Improve Land Management Practices to Protect Habitat and Increase Carbon Storage	**3,013**	**8,000**
Measure A-1: Acquire and manage conservation lands to preserve natural lands and maximize carbon storage potential in the unincorporated area		
Action A-1.2 Develop a Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework for County-owned land and restore 480 acres by 2030 and 80 acres per year thereafter to increase carbon storage.	*76*	*1,223*
Measure A-2: Develop a tree-planting program that expands canopy across the unincorporated area and prioritizes underserved communities		
Action A-2.1 Expand the County's existing tree planting initiative and implement an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to plant 70,560 trees by 2030 and 6,650 trees per year thereafter on County property and in the unincorporated area.	*2,498*	*6,029*
Action A-2.2 Implement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single-family residential development in the unincorporated area.	*439*	*747*
Strategy: Support Climate-Friendly Farming Practices and Preserve Agricultural Land	**10,758**	**121,556**
Measure A-4: Incentivize carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land and support climate-friendly farming practices in the unincorporated area		
Action A-4.1 Develop a Climate Smart Land Stewardship Program by 2026 to increase carbon sequestration on 3,000 acres by 2030 and 36,214 acres by 2045.	*10,758*	*121,556*
Total Carbon Storage	**13,771**	**129,556**

Note: $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent.

Source: CAP Update Appendix 5.

The detailed calculations performed to determine the quantified GHG emissions reductions from each of the quantified implementing actions are presented in CAP Update Appendix 7.

Implementing "Path to Net Zero" Actions Would Make Additional Substantial Progress Toward the 2045 Net Zero Emissions Goal

The CAP Update also contains 35 "Path to Net Zero" actions that establish steps the County will take to meet the 2045 net zero emissions goal. Although the CAP Update does not identify quantified GHG emissions reductions for "Path to Net Zero" actions, their implementation could result in quantified reductions in the future with additional data and monitoring.

Measure Implementation Would Also Achieve Co-Benefits

Co-benefits refer to the complementary benefits, in addition to the primary GHG reduction benefits, that result from measure implementation. During development of the CAP Update, the County identified a list of 18 co-benefits that are important to stakeholders and grouped them to align with the County's five Strategic Initiatives: Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community, and Justice.

Using a co-benefits evaluation tool, the County evaluated the level of impact that each measure and action would have on each of the five co-benefits using an ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high. The County also used this tool to identify a Community Priority Score for each measure, which, on a scale of 1–10, reflects stakeholder feedback to demonstrate which measures would have the greatest positive impact on the co-benefits that are most valued by community members. Co-benefit impacts and Community Priority Scores are identified for each measure in CAP Update Chapter 4. Refer to CAP Update Appendix 2 for details on how these impacts were determined and the scores were calculated.

Chapter 4 of the CAP Update also identifies equity-based outcomes for each measure, which are descriptions of the tangible outcomes of measure implementation for frontline communities and priority populations.

The CAP Update Identifies Performance Standards, Timelines, and Other Implementation Details for Measures and Actions

The CAP Update provides a detailed summary of implementation details for the quantified implementing and "Path to Net Zero" actions. For quantified implementing actions, the CAP Update identifies the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. For "Path to Net Zero" actions, the CAP Update includes measurable performance outcomes the County will take to reach the 2045 net zero emissions goal. For all actions, the CAP Update also identifies the County department with lead responsibility for implementation and any County departments responsible for implementation support. Refer to CAP Update Chapter 4 (Tables 7–11) to view these implementation details for each action.

CAP Update Chapter 5 (Table 13) identifies additional implementation details for each action as part of the CAP Update's Implementation and Monitoring Program. These additional details for each action include the implementation enforcement mechanism,

relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high) and potential funding sources for implementation.

By setting forth a package of strategies, measures, and quantified implementing actions, including measurable performance outcomes and presenting data and analysis demonstrating that their collective implementation would achieve the established 2030 and 2045 reduction targets (e.g., CAP Update Chapter 4, "GHG Emissions Reduction Measures"; CAP Update Appendix 7, "Climate Action Plan Combined Measure Workbook"; and CAP Update Appendix 8, "CAP Consistency Checklist"), the CAP Update is consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1)(D).

Ongoing Monitoring: CAP Update Implementation and Monitoring Program

In Chapter 5, the CAP Update discusses how the County would implement the plan and monitor progress toward achieving its 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and the 2045 net zero emissions goal. The CAP Update would be implemented through a combination of regulations, programs, incentives, and outreach and educational activities to reduce GHG emissions. Following adoption, the County's Planning & Development Services (PDS) Department would maintain the CAP Update, support CAP Update implementation, and coordinate with other County departments to facilitate and oversee implementation and track and report on the progress of each measure and action.

The County would regularly monitor implementation progress to track the effectiveness of each measure and action, update the emissions inventory, and make adjustments, as needed, to keep the County on track toward meeting its GHG reduction targets. As part of its continuous monitoring, the County will ensure that:

- all measures include clearly defined steps necessary for implementation;
- individual measures are contributing to the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and 2045 net zero emissions goal;
- the CAP is on track to achieve its overall GHG reduction targets; and
- equity-based outcomes are attained.

Monitoring of the CAP Update would represent a continuation of the County's CAP Annual Monitoring Reports. The County has published annual monitoring reports from 2018 through 2022, available at https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/annualmonitoringreport/, to document the annual progress using quantitative and qualitative metrics that the County has achieved in implementing the 2018 CAP.

As part of the CAP Update's Implementation and Monitoring Program, County staff would make recommendations to alter or amend the CAP if its ongoing evaluation and monitoring of implementation indicates that the 2030 or 2045 GHG reduction targets will not be achieved. The CAP Update would be adjusted if measures fall short of the target or additional measures become available, consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1)(E).

CAP Update Monitoring and Update Schedule

The CAP Update sets forth the following schedule for monitoring and updating the CAP:

Table 9-3 CAP Monitoring and Update Schedule

2024	**CAP Implementation** CAP adoption by the Board of Supervisors and implementation begins.
2025	**Annual Monitoring Report** Staff prepares and publishes an annual monitoring report, assessing CAP annual performance in measure implementation.
2026	**GHG Emissions Inventory Update** Staff conducts an update to the emissions inventory at least every two years.
2030	**CAP Update** Based on the findings from the annual monitoring reports and inventory updates, staff prepares a CAP update at least every five years.

Source: CAP Update Table 12.

CAP Update Cost Analysis

In addition to the information on the relative cost of actions presented in the CAP Update, the County has prepared two additional reports regarding the costs of the CAP Update. The first is an implementation cost analysis that identifies the total costs to the County of San Diego to implement the CAP Update GHG reduction measures over the first 5 fiscal years (FYs) of implementation (FY2025/26 to FY2029/30). The *Implementation Cost Analysis* is available in Appendix 10 of the CAP Update.

The second cost report, *The Cost Effectiveness and Disproportionate Cost Analysis*, evaluates the effectiveness of CAP Update actions from a cost-benefit perspective and to address equity in CAP Update implementation, examines how some populations and local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from CAP Update implementation. This report will be available prior to CAP Update approval here: www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan/seir.

Conclusion

The CAP Update establishes 2030 and 2045 targets for the reduction of GHG emissions and an aspirational goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045. Both these targets and this goal satisfy state legislative targets for statewide GHG emissions reductions (AB 1279), the State's 2022 Scoping Plan and Board direction. The CAP Update also identifies "Path to Net Zero" actions that would result in the County making substantial progress toward its aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

The CAP Update sets forth a package of GHG reduction measures and quantified implementing actions that would meet and exceed the established 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets; quantified carbon storage actions included in the CAP Update would remove emissions from the atmosphere and result in the County further exceeding its established 2030 and 2045 targets. For quantified implementing actions, the CAP Update identifies quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes. For all actions, the CAP Update's Implementation and Monitoring Program identifies the County departments responsible for leading and supporting implementation, the implementation enforcement mechanism, relative cost, and potential funding sources for implementation.

The CAP Update also commits the County to annual monitoring of and reporting on measure implementation performance, future emissions inventory updates at least every 2 years, and updating the CAP at least every 5 years. It also commits the County to altering or amending the CAP if ongoing evaluation and monitoring of implementation indicates that the 2030 or 2045 GHG reduction targets will not be achieved.

As explained in Section 5.4, "CEQA Streamlining and Environmental Review," the CAP Update—including the 2019 emissions inventory; emissions projections for 2030 and 2045; 2030 and 2045 reduction targets; measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions; implementation, monitoring, and amendment mechanisms addressed in this master response; and this SEIR—meets the criteria for and qualifies as a "plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" (Table 14, "CAP Compliance with Elements of a CEQA Qualified Plan for the Reduction of GHG Emissions," pages 145–146).

The suite of measures and actions identified in the CAP Update function as a whole to enable the County to meet the established GHG reduction targets described above. The County acknowledges that additional measures and actions, such as those suggested by commenters, may be available to reduce GHG emissions in the unincorporated county. However, as described in this response, the County has undergone a thorough process to develop a methodology for establishing GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and Board direction and identifying measures and actions, through robust stakeholder engagement, to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the established targets and make substantial progress toward the County's net zero emissions goal. Therefore, no additional measures have been added to the CAP Update.

9.1.2 Agency Comments and Responses

Letter A1

East County Advanced Water Purification
Joint Powers Authority

November 27, 2023

VIA E-MAIL

County of San Diego
Meghan Kelly
Planning & Development Services
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan
Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: County of San Diego Climate Action Plan - Water and Wastewater W-3: Develop programs to increase stormwater and wastewater treatment efficiency to reduce imported potable water use in the unincorporated area

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the County of San Diego's (County) Climate Action Plan (CAP) and for including the East County Advanced Water Purification (AWP) Project in the CAP. As a fellow member of the East County AWP Joint Powers Authority (JPA), Padre Dam Municipal Water District (Padre Dam) the contracted administrator and operator for the JPA, has reviewed the CAP and offers the following comments for consideration. A1-1

The County has identified the East County AWP Project will provide a local water supply reducing GHG emissions resulting from importing water from the Colorado River and/or northern California. As part of this Project, the JPA also plans to implement an energy recovery component, AWP Package 5, further reducing GHG emissions in the region in two ways.

First, a combined heat and power (CHP) system is planned to be implemented to capture and utilize the alternative energy source found in biogas produced within the anaerobic digesters located at the AWP solids handling facility. Second, a new organic waste receiving facility will collect and distribute locally sourced food waste slurry to the anaerobic digesters to increase biogas production, assist waste management companies and local municipalities in complying with the requirements of AB 1826 (i.e. greater recycling of organics), and reduce dependence on fossil fuel-based energy purchased from San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E). A1-2

Energy recovery results in reduced GHG emissions in two ways: 1) energy produced from sludge generated biogas displaces a similar amount of energy generated from fossil fuels and associated GHG emissions; and 2) processing organic waste in the anaerobic digesters results in a reduction of more harmful greenhouse gas emissions, mainly methane, from the decomposition of food waste and also reduces GHG emissions by off-setting GHGs generated from fossil fuel energy production.

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JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY BOARD
Bill Pommering, Padre Dam MWD
Joel Anderson, County of San Diego
Steve Goble, City of El Cajon
Joel Scalzitti, Helix Water District, Ex-officio

East County Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority

Please consider including Package 5 (Energy Recovery Facilities) of the East County AWP Project in the CAP. Including recognition of this energy recovery component in the CAP demonstrates the County's support for the environmental benefits provided by the East County AWP Project and assists the JPA in securing specific grants and funding tied to GHG reduction. These project components could be considered in the Energy (E-1) and Solid Waste (SW-4) GHG reduction measures. Note that the JPA can supply the GHG emission reduction calculations upon request.

A1-2 cont.

As noted above, Padre Dam appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the County's CAP. Padre Dam also requests to be notified of any modifications to the proposed CAP prior to adoption by the County. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at mniemiec@padre.org.

A1-3

Sincerely,

Mark Niemiec, PE
Director of East County AWP

Letter A1 Padre Dam Municipal Water District

Mark Niemiec, PE
November 27, 2023

Comment A1-1
The comment states that Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) has reviewed the CAP Update and offers the following comments.

Response A1-1
The County appreciates comments from PDMWD for the CAP Update and associated Draft SEIR. The comment serves as an opening remark. No substantive comment is provided, and no further response is required.

Comment A1-2
The comment describes PDMWD's efforts to implement the East County Advanced Water Purification (ECAWP) Project and suggests that the County include the Package 5 (Energy Recovery Facilities) of the ECAWP Project as GHG emissions reduction measures in the CAP Update.

Response A1-2
As detailed in CAP Update Action W-3.1, the County would increase wastewater treatment efficiency to produce 12,900 acre-feet of water each year by 2030 through ECAWP. The description of Measure W-3 in the CAP Update has been revised to acknowledge that the ECAWP would utilize energy recovery systems to reduce the use of fossil fuel-based energy on-site. The GHG quantification methodology for Action W-3.1 has not been changed in response to this comment. This comment does not raise an environmental issue related to the adequacy of the Draft SEIR. No further response is provided here.

Comment A1-3
The comment requests the County to provide notification to PDMWD if modifications to the CAP Update are made.

Response A1-3
The PDMWD will be notified before adoption of the CAP Update and certification of the SEIR. This comment does not raise an environmental issue related to the adequacy of the Draft SEIR. No further response is provided here.

Letter A2

From: Vazquez, Sandra@DOT <Sandra.Vazquez@dot.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:42 PM
To: Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Cc: State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov; Allen, Reece@DOT <Reece.Allen@dot.ca.gov>; Dodson, Kimberly@DOT <kimberly.dodson@dot.ca.gov>; Vazquez, Sandra@DOT <Sandra.Vazquez@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] Caltrans Comment Letter for County of San Diego Climate Action Plan Update, DEIR/SCH# 2020120204

Greetings Ms. Kelly,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the information for the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan Update DEIR, SCH# 2020120204. Please see the attached Caltrans comment letter in response. If you have any questions regarding the letter please contact Reece Allen, Climate Action Program Manager, at (858) 688-1576 or by e-mail sent to Reece.Allen@dot.ca.gov. A2-1

Thank you,

Sandy Vazquez
Associate Transportation Planner
Caltrans District 11, LDR Branch MS-240
Sandra.Vazquez@dot.ca.gov
(619) 987-3580

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

California Department of Transportation

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December 18, 2023

11-SD-VAR
PM VAR
Climate Action Plan Update
DEIR/SCH#2020120204

Ms. Meghan Kelly
Project Manager
County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan Update located near various Interstates and State Routes. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

A2-2

Caltrans is committed to prioritizing projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities, to ultimately improve transportation accessibility and quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

We look forward to working with the County of San Diego in areas where the County and Caltrans have joint jurisdiction to improve the transportation network and

connections between various modes of travel, with the goal of improving the experience of those who use the transportation system.

A2-2 cont.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Climate Action

Caltrans supports the County's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as per AB1279, SB 32 and others, in a way that does not rely on purchase of carbon offsets to meet emissions targets. As an environmentally conscious agency, Caltrans strives to work with partner agencies like the County of San Diego in order to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change on the state highway system. Caltrans agrees that setting clear goals and metrics is an excellent step towards planning for, and meeting, emissions reductions targets that promote environmental justice and equity. Caltrans appreciates the large array of strategies and policies utilized to reduce GHG emissions, promote energy efficiency, and improve the overall quality of the San Diego County environment found in the Climate Action Plan Update (CAP). Additionally, due to the potential uncertainty of changing climate conditions, Caltrans recognizes and supports the application of adjustable adaptation strategies and plans that can be modified to fit future conditions. This updated CAP is an excellent step forward, and great example of the strategies and plans needed to improve air quality and curb GHG emissions across San Diego County. This draft CAP will be taken into consideration while Caltrans continues to expand the zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) charging grid, reduce Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT), and promote the use of ZEV across California. Caltrans looks forward to working with the County of San Diego in order to implement recommendations outlined in this CAP update when possible.

A2-3

For additional information regarding Caltrans' policies, plans, guidance, and strategies related to climate change impacts please refer to documents such as, but not limited to, Caltrans Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, Caltrans Climate Change Adaptation Priorities Report, Caltrans Climate Change Adaptation Strategies Report, Caltrans Climate Change Communication Guide, and Caltrans GHG Emissions Mitigation Report. These documents and other resources can be found at: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/office-of-smart-mobility-climate-change/climate-change.

Several other local agencies have also produced climate change adaptation guidance documents that may be helpful when finalizing the County's CAP. These documents include, but are not limited to, California's 4th Climate Change Assessment – San Diego Region Report, CalSTA's Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) and various city's Climate Action Plans.

Sustainability

The County of San Diego CAP contains several actions and strategies that align with Caltrans' responsibilities and priorities. Caltrans recommends collaboration between our agency and the County of San Diego CAP on the proposed transportation related topics including adaptation strategies to help improve the County's resilience to potential climate change impacts and strategies to reduce VMT, and off-road and on-road GHG emissions.

Caltrans recognizes that transportation is a leading contributor to GHG emissions in the region and is dedicated to reducing and mitigating transportation related emissions. We recommend collaborating with Caltrans on the following measures brought up by this plan increasing the use of ZEV, installing electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, identifying Right-of-Way (R/W) areas to be used for carbon sequestration, and complete streets. A2-4

The existing climate hazards discussed in this document will have an impact of the transportation system. We recommend working with Caltrans on determining the preventative strategies the Caltrans can take to keep roadways operational and ensure their longevity against climate stressors such as increased temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, wildfire, and flooding. Caltrans recognizes the central role that transportation planning plays in safety and ensuring that when these natural hazards do occur, citizens have a reliable evacuation route.

Electric Vehicles

On page 5-43 it states "Policy M-9.5 Electric Vehicle Recharging Infrastructure. Require new development to include electric vehicle recharging facilities to meet current and reasonably foreseeable increasing demand over time as the County's private vehicle fleet includes greater numbers of electric vehicles, consistent with State transportation and climate policies." A2-5

Please clarify if new electric vehicle recharging infrastructure for new development will be usable by the public or is it specifically for the County of San Diego's staff vehicle fleet. It is recommended that new development include the electric vehicle recharging facilities for public usage.

Complete Streets and Mobility Network

Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation network. Caltrans A2-6

supports improved transit accommodation through the provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements, signal prioritization for transit, bus on shoulders, ramp improvements, or other enhancements that promotes a complete and integrated transportation network. Early coordination with Caltrans, in locations that may affect both Caltrans and the County of San Diego, is encouraged.

To reduce GHG emissions and achieve California's Climate Change target, Caltrans is implementing Complete Streets and Climate Change policies into State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects to meet multi-modal mobility needs. Caltrans looks forward to working with the County to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is important. Mitigation to maintain bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is in accordance with Caltrans' goals and policies.

A2-6 cont.

Land Use and Smart Growth

Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local VMT and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies.

The County should continue to coordinate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges where the agencies have joint jurisdiction.

A2-7

System Planning

The final paragraph of the Chapter 1 Project Description introduction on page 1-2 indicates that the County is preparing a Transportation Program to address VMT mitigation measures for development within the unincorporated county. Please include Caltrans in the review process for the Transportation Program document. System Planning recommends discussing the CAP for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) in Section 2.13.2.2 State (Regulatory Framework), including the CAPTI guiding principles and implementation strategies.

System Planning recommends including a high-level summary of the completed, in-progress, and upcoming Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plans (CMCPs) in Section

A2-8

2.13.2.3 Local (Regulatory Framework). The CMCPs complement San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan (discussed in section 2.13.2.3) and highlight possible funding opportunities for the proposed transportation solution strategies. A2-8 cont.

Please ensure that the final paragraph on page 2.11-1 and the "Physically Divide an Established Community" issue topic in Table 2.11-1 are consistent. The last paragraph on page 2.11-1 indicates that the "implementation of the proposed project would not result in new or more significant impacts on land use and planning." Table 2.11-1 states that the CAP Update would result in a new or more significant impact, before and after mitigation, in the "Physically Divide an Established Community" topic area. A2-9

Environmental

Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as we have some discretionary authority of a portion of the project that is in Caltrans' R/W through the form of an encroachment permit process. We look forward to the coordination of our efforts to ensure that Caltrans can adopt the alternative and/or mitigation measure for our R/W.

An encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for this project, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Specifically, CEQA determination or exemption. The supporting documents must address all environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W and address any impacts from avoidance and/or mitigation measures. A2-10

We recommend that this project specifically identifies and assesses potential impacts caused by the project or impacts from mitigation efforts that occur within Caltrans' R/W that includes impacts to the natural environment, infrastructure including but not limited to highways, roadways, structures, intelligent transportation systems elements, on-ramps and off-ramps, and appurtenant features including but not limited to fencing, lighting, signage, drainage, guardrail, slopes and landscaping. Caltrans is interested in any additional mitigation measures identified for the project's draft Environmental Document.

Broadband

Caltrans recognizes that teleworking and remote learning lessen the impacts of traffic on our roadways and surrounding communities. This reduces the amount of VMT and decreases the amount of GHG emissions and other pollutants. The availability of affordable and reliable, high-speed broadband is a key component in supporting A2-11

travel demand management and reaching the state's transportation and climate action goals.

A2-11 cont.

Mitigation

Caltrans endeavors that any direct and cumulative impacts to the State Highway network be eliminated or reduced to a level of insignificance pursuant to CEQA and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards.

A2-12

Right-of-Way

Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.

Any work performed within Caltrans' R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158 or emailing D11.Permits@dot.ca.gov or by visiting the website at https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Reece Allen, Climate Action Program Manager, at (858) 688-1576 or by e-mail sent to Reece.Allen@dot.ca.gov.

A2-13

Sincerely,

Reece Allen

REECE ALLEN, MSTM
Climate Action Program Manager

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

Letter A2 California Department of Transportation

Reece Allen, MSTM, Climate Action Program Manager
December 18, 2023

Comment A2-1
The comment is an introductory statement.

Response A2-1
The County appreciates comments from California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) related to the CAP Update and associated Draft SEIR. This comment serves as an opening remark. No response is required.

Comment A2-2
The comment provides an introduction about Caltrans, including its mission, responsibilities, and goals.

Response A2-2
The County appreciates the introduction of Caltrans. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A2-3
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update and a desire to work with the County in implementing the CAP Update measures. The comment also references other Caltrans and local agencies' efforts to address climate change.

Response A2-3
The County appreciates Caltrans's support for the CAP Update. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A2-4
The comment recommends collaboration with Caltrans on implementing strategies related to transportation and determining preventative strategies to ensure resiliency in the transportation system and reliable evacuation in response to climate hazards.

Response A2-4
The County appreciates Caltrans's recommendation for further collaboration on CAP Update implementation. The County will continue working with Caltrans on transportation projects during implementation of the CAP Update. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A2-5
The comment requests clarification regarding the availability of electric vehicle infrastructure for public use and recommends that new development include electric vehicle recharging for public use.

Response A2-5
Electric vehicle infrastructure for public use is incorporated in the CAP Update Action T-3.1. CAP Update Action T-3.1 would increase publicly accessible electric vehicle recharging infrastructure in the unincorporated area through the installation of 2,040 publicly available electric vehicle charging stations by 2028. In addition, the CAP Consistency Review Checklist requires that all new multifamily residential and nonresidential projects comply with the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances as amended to require (Tier 2) California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs).

Comment A2-6
The comment expresses support for strategies to implement complete streets projects and encourages coordination with Caltrans.

Response A2-6
The County appreciates Caltrans's support for the CAP Update's transportation measures. The County will continue to collaborate with Caltrans to encourage alternative modes of transportation in the unincorporated area where the agencies have joint jurisdiction through implementation of the CAP Update Action T-5.1.

Comment A2-7
The comment expresses support for collaboration with local agencies regarding "smart growth" and suggests coordination with Caltrans to implement improvements at intersections and interchanges.

Response A2-7
The County appreciates Caltrans's support for local agency collaboration. The County will continue to collaborate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges to improve roadways to encourage multimodal transportation where the agencies have joint jurisdiction through implementation of the CAP Update Actions T-5.1 and T-6.2. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A2-8
The comment requests that the County include Caltrans in the review process for the Transportation Program discussed on page 1-2 of the project description. The comment recommends discussing the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure's guiding principles and implementation strategies in Section 2.13.2.2 of the SEIR and including Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plans and the possible funding opportunities for the proposed CAP Update transportation actions in Section 2.13.2.3 of the SEIR.

Response A2-8
As explained in Chapter 1, “Project Description” (page 1-2), the Transportation Program is separate from the CAP Update. The County acknowledges Caltrans’s offer to coordinate and review the Transportation Program.

The County has reviewed Caltrans’s recommendations related to inclusion of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure and Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plans in Section 2.13, “Transportation.” The purpose of the regulatory setting in this section is to describe the regulations that will affect the environmental analysis that follows. These two programs provide funding opportunities for transportation projects but are not regulations or policies related to environmental impact analysis. Therefore, no revision to the SEIR is required.

Comment A2-9
The comment identifies a discrepancy in the impact conclusion for issue topic “Physically Divide an Established Community” in Section 2.11, “Land Use and Planning,” of the Draft SEIR.

Response A2-9
The final paragraph on page 2.11-1 of the Draft SEIR has been revised as follows:

> As indicated, implementation of the proposed project would ~~not~~ result in new or more severe significant impacts on land use and planning.

Comment A2-10
The comment states that Caltrans accepts the role as responsible agency and summarizes encroachment permit requirements for work within Caltrans right-of-way (ROW). This comment also recommends that the Draft SEIR addresses impacts within Caltrans ROW and discloses mitigation measures.

Response A2-10
The County appreciates Caltrans’s acceptance as a responsible agency for the project. As discussed in Section 2.13, “Transportation,” of the Draft SEIR, implementation of the CAP Update would result in less-than-significant impacts related to transportation with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the Draft SEIR (see Section 2.13.5, “Mitigation Measures”).

The CAP Update would be implemented in the unincorporated areas of the County. As discussed in the Draft SEIR, specific locations for projects associated with the CAP Update are unknown. However, future discretionary projects would be required to be evaluated for project-specific impacts under CEQA and/or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) at the time of application. As part of this evaluation, impacts within Caltrans ROW, including the State Highway System, will be assessed, and mitigation measures will be proposed as needed to avoid or minimize impacts.

Comment A2-11
The comment suggests that availability of high-speed broadband VMT and GHG emissions by promoting teleworking and remote learning.

Response A2-11
The County appreciates Caltrans's recommendation for promoting teleworking and remote learning. The County has a Comprehensive Broadband Plan (https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/lueg/broadband/) to address inadequate broadband infrastructure and access in its communities. The CAP Update expands teleworking for County staff through implementation of Action T-4.1. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A2-12
The comment states that Caltrans endeavors to reduce or eliminate any impacts to the State Highway System in accordance with CEQA and NEPA requirements.

Response A2-12
See Response A2-10.

Comment A2-13
The comment identifies requirements, permits, and approvals needed for projects within Caltrans ROW.

Response A2-13
The County will obtain the necessary permits and approvals when specific projects associated with the CAP Update are being implemented. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD

Gavin Newsom, G
Yana Garcia, CalEPA S
Liane M. Randolp

Letter A3

January 4, 2024

Meghan Kelly, County of San Diego

Planning and Development Services

5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310

San Diego, CA 9212

Dear Ms. Kelly:

On behalf of California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff, I am writing to provide comments on the County of San Diego's Draft 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP) and its associated Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). These comments follow up on CARB's February 16, 2021 letter, which expressed support for the County's CAP development process. A3-1

Local governments have an essential role to play in advancing state goals. As part of the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (Scoping Plan), CARB included recommendations in Appendix D to help jurisdictions across the state ensure that their CAPs are consistent with applicable greenhouse gas (GHG) goals and requirements. This consistency is especially important if the jurisdiction adopting a CAP intends to rely on the CAP for streamlining the GHG emissions analyses in the CEQA documents for new projects.

Overall, CARB supports the County's effort to prepare a CAP and appreciates the efforts to incorporate the priority areas highlighted in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan. However, CARB recommends a few changes to the CAP to more fully align it with the recommendations in the Scoping Plan. These changes would provide additional certainty regarding the CAP's consistency with the Scoping Plan, ensuring that future residential and mixed-use developments can use the CAP to streamline their CEQA GHG analyses. A3-2

The County has developed the CAP and SEIR with the intent of allowing projects to tier their GHG analyses off of these documents. The appendices to San Diego County's CAP describe a process for determining whether a project is consistent with the CAP for purposes of streamlining CEQA review. To be eligible for CEQA GHG streamlining, the CAP requires new discretionary projects subject to CEQA to demonstrate consistency with the County's

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General Plan. If General Plan consistency can be demonstrated, projects then determine whether they are consistent with the measures and actions included in the CAP as "consistency requirements." Projects that demonstrate consistency with the General Plan and the CAP's consistency requirements are considered by the County to be consistent with the CAP overall, and therefore eligible for streamlining of the GHG emissions analysis portion of the applicable CEQA document. CARB commends the County for developing this approach to assist future land-use projects in assessing their consistency with the CAP, but recommends some changes to better ensure consistency with the Scoping Plan and therefore enable streamlining.

Table 3 of Appendix D of the Scoping Plan ("Key Residential and Mixed-Use Project Attributes that Reduce GHG's") lists characteristics that have been shown to reduce operational GHG emissions and allow for growth from residential and mixed-use development in a manner consistent with the state's climate and equity goals, including those in Senate Bill (SB) 32 (Pavley, Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016). Residential and mixed-use development that incorporates all of the attributes in Table 3 would be considered consistent with the Scoping Plan.

A3-2 cont.

San Diego's CAP's consistency analysis for streamlining residential and mixed-use projects includes some, but not all, of the project attributes listed in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan. Immediately below we summarize the areas in which the CAP is closely aligned with these project attributes and the State's climate goals. We then identify areas where the CAP does not incorporate the project attribute recommendations from Appendix D. New mixed-use or residential projects that incorporate all of the project attribute recommendations would be able to clearly demonstrate consistency with the Scoping Plan and State climate goals. This can provide additional certainty when these projects seek to streamline their CEQA GHG analysis.

Several aspects of the CAP currently align with Scoping Plan Appendix D Attributes

One example of an area where the CAP aligns with Appendix D of the Scoping Plan is building decarbonization. Table 3 of Appendix D identifies building decarbonization as a priority GHG reduction strategy that CARB recommends local governments take, and that the adoption of all-electric new construction reach codes for residential and commercial uses is an appropriate measure for enacting that priority. This strategy is clearly addressed in the CAP as action E-2.1 "Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require all-electric equipment in new residential, commercial and industrial construction to reduce energy emissions from new development in the unincorporated area."

A3-3

In addition, Table 1 below lists other key project attributes in the Scoping Plan's Appendix D that are reflected in the County's CAP consistency requirements. CARB appreciates that the County is making an effort to incorporate these attributes in new residential and mixed-use development to help achieve State climate goals.

Table 1. Appendix D Project Attributes Required in General Plan or CAP

Project Attributes from Scoping Plan Appendix D, Table 3	SD General Plan or CAP
Does not result in loss or conversion of natural or working lands	General Plan Policy COS-6.2 ("Protection of Agricultural Operations") would limit the loss of natural or working lands in the unincorporated county.
EV charging meeting most ambitious voluntary CA Green Building Code standard	CAP Action T-3.1 requires amendment of the County Code to require installation of Tier 2 CalGreen or similar EV charging infrastructure for new multi-family residential development.
At least 20 percent of units to be affordable	The General Plan commits to development of affordable housing that is at least 20% of new housing development in future years.
No net loss of existing affordable units	The General Plan commits to increasing the number of affordable housing units in future years.
Uses all-electric appliances with no natural gas connections	CAP measure E-2.1 commits the County to amending the County Code (by 2026) to require all-electric equipment in new construction.

A3-3 cont.

Certain aspects of the CAP could be revised to more fully align with Scoping Plan Appendix D Attributes

A3-4

While many aspects of the CAP reflect the attributes set forth in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan, some of the recommendations for project streamlining included in Appendix D are not reflected in the CAP. For instance, Appendix D includes several key project attributes to

help residential and mixed-use projects achieve reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), such as locating new development in "infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses and reuses or redevelops previously undeveloped or underutilized land that is presently served by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, sewer)." The County's General Plan includes several policies that are related to development that encourages VMT reduction. For instance, Policy LU-1.2 prohibits leapfrog development that is not consistent with the County's Community Development Model. However, these policies do not require new residential and/or mixed-use development to be built in areas that qualify as infill areas. In order to be more aligned with the recommendations in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan, we recommend that the County apply the CAP's provisions for CEQA streamlining of residential and mixed used projects only to projects located in infill areas.

Appendix D also recommends that VMT be reduced in residential and mixed-use development through limiting the amount of new parking and locating projects within ½ mile of existing or planned transit service. Neither the County's General Plan nor CAP policies eliminate parking minimums or enact parking maximums. While the CAP does include some policies that would encourage transit use, there are no requirements that new residential or mixed-use development be built with transit-supportive densities or be in proximity to transit. We recommend that the County apply the streamlining provisions for residential and mixed-use projects in the CAP only to projects that are located in proximity to existing or planned transit and that limit the provision of parking, either by eliminating parking minimums or enacting parking maximums.

A3-4 cont.

Table 2 below lists the key project attributes from Scoping Plan Appendix D that the CAP currently does not require for residential and mixed-use projects seeking CEQA streamlining under the CAP. CARB recommends that the County include these project attributes into the CAP's consistency analysis for residential and mixed-use projects seeking CEQA streamlining in order to ensure that projects are consistent with the State's climate goals.

Table 2. Appendix D Project Attributes Not Required in General Plan Or CAP

Project Attributes from Scoping Plan Appendix D, Table 3	SD General Plan or CAP
Located on infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses and reuses or redevelops previously undeveloped or underutilized land that is presently served	There is no requirement in the County General Plan or the CAP that requires that residential or mixed-use development be infill to qualify for CEQA GHG streamlining.

by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, sewer)	
New mixed-use or residential development includes transit supportive densities, **or**; New mixed-use or residential development is in proximity to existing transit stops, **or**; More stringent criteria as specified in applicable SCS	There are no requirements (either in General Plan or CAP) for minimum residential densities. The General Plan includes zoning that would allow for residential development at lower densities. There are no requirements (either in the General Plan or CAP) for new residential development to be within one half-mile of existing or planned transit.
Reduced parking requirement	There are no reduced parking requirements for residential development in either the General Plan or CAP.

A3-4 cont.

Conclusion

CARB appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on San Diego County's 2024 CAP and Draft SEIR. The CAP includes elements that are consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan's recommendations for CAPs and for streamlining the GHG analysis of residential projects under CEQA. However, as explained above, there are also opportunities for the County to demonstrate an even more robust relationship between the CAP's recommendations for new residential and mixed-use development and the recommended key project attributes identified in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan. Strengthening the CAP to take advantage of these opportunities will assist the County with using the CAP for the purposes of CEQA streamlining of residential and mixed-use development and will help to ensure that new development in San Diego County is consistent with California's climate goals for such projects. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pedro Peterson at (279) 208-7367 or by email at pedro.peterson@arb.ca.gov.

A3-5

Sincerely,

Jennifer Gress

Jennifer Gress, Ph.D., Division Chief, Sustainable Transportation and Communities Division

cc: See next page.

cc:
Annalisa Schilla, Ph. D., Assistant Division Chief, Sustainable Transportation and Communities Division

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Letter A3 California Air Resources Board

Jennifer Gress, PhD, Division Chief, Sustainable Transportation and Communities Division
January 4, 2024

Comment A3-1
The comment introduces the comment letter and expresses support for the CAP Update development process.

Response A3-1
The County appreciates the CARB's support for the CAP Update development process. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment A3-2
The comment notes the importance of Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan for streamlining GHG emissions analyses and that the CAP Update includes some, but not all, of Appendix D's project attributes. The comment also states that changes to the CAP Update are required to provide additional certainty regarding the CAP Update's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan and to ensure that future residential and mixed-use development can use the CAP Update to streamline their CEQA GHG analyses.

Response A3-2
The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 recognizes the important role of CAPs in the CEQA process and sets forth a basic framework for developing a plan to reduce GHG emissions (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5[b]) that allows for the streamlining of the GHG impact analysis for later projects. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), a lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable if the project complies with the requirements in a previously adopted plan or mitigation program (i.e., a qualified GHG reduction plan or CAP) under specified circumstances (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5[b]), thus eliminating the need for a project-specific GHG analysis for projects that are consistent with the CAP. Therefore, when a future specific project is consistent with the CAP Update, the County may presume that the project's GHG emissions are less than significant. If there is substantial evidence that the effects of a particular project may be cumulatively considerable notwithstanding the project's compliance with the specified requirements in the CAP Update, an EIR must be prepared for the project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5[b][2]). See Table 14 of the CAP Update for a summary of how the CAP Update meets the criteria for, and qualifies as, a plan for the reduction of GHG emissions. See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for further discussion of the CAP Update GHG reduction targets and consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan.

As described in this SEIR, the County has developed a CAP Consistency Review Checklist (Checklist), Appendix 8 to the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance: Climate Change*. For applicants choosing to streamline project-specific

GHG CEQA analyses, the Checklist would be used to determine the consistency of future projects with the CAP Update. The Checklist provides individual projects with the opportunity to demonstrate that they are reducing GHG emissions in a manner that is consistent with the requirements and assumptions in the CAP Update. If a project would be consistent with the General Plan and can demonstrate consistency with the CAP Update by completing the Checklist, the project would be considered consistent with the CAP Update and eligible for CEQA streamlining of its project-level GHG analysis.

Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan, "Local Actions," provides optional, nonregulatory and non-exhaustive guidance for local governments and lead agencies related to how local climate action planning can support the State of California's climate goals. It includes recommendations intended to build momentum for local actions that align with the State's climate strategies, with a focus on climate action planning and approval of new land use development projects but does not represent a binding or exhaustive list of everything local governments can or must do to support state climate goals. Therefore, it is not required that future projects consistent with a CAP include all project-specific attributes included in Appendix D. Rather, Appendix D (page 23) states the following:

> *These project attributes are intended as a guide to help local jurisdictions qualitatively identify those residential and mixed-use projects that are **clearly** consistent with the State's climate goals, since these attributes address the largest sources of operational emissions for residential projects. In general, residential and mixed-use development projects that incorporate **all** of these key project attributes are aligned with the State's priority GHG reduction strategies for local climate action as shown in Table 1 and with the State's climate and housing goals. As such, they are considered to be consistent with the Scoping Plan or other plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHGs; therefore, the GHG emissions associated with such projects may result in a less-than-significant GHG impact under CEQA. Lead agencies may determine, with adequate additional supporting evidence, that projects that incorporate some, but not all, of the key project attributes are consistent with the State's climate goals.*

Appendix D further states that residential and mixed-used projects should contain key project attributes in Table 3 (of Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan) "absent consistency with an adequate, geographically specific GHG reduction plan such as a CEQA-qualified CAP." Given the nature of Appendix D, and the fact that the County's CAP Update will, upon adoption, serve as a CEQA-qualified CAP, CARB's suggestion that future mixed-use and residential projects consistent with the CAP Update should be required to incorporate all the project attribute recommendations included in Appendix D to qualify for streamlining pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 is incorrect. The County is not required to include all recommended project attributes of Appendix D's Table 3 in the Checklist to provide CEQA streamlining benefits under the CAP Checklist. And while the Checklist does not, and is not required to, replicate the Scoping Plan Appendix D, Table 3 attributes, it does demonstrate the County's ability to meet overall GHG reduction goals.

Comment A3-3
The comment describes several aspects of the County's General Plan and CAP Update currently aligning with the 2022 Scoping Plan Appendix D attributes.

Response A3-3
The County appreciates CARB's acknowledgement of the County's efforts to incorporate Scoping Plan project attributes into the General Plan policies and CAP Update measures and actions. See Responses A3-2 and A3-4 for a discussion of CEQA requirements for a qualified CAP and the applicability of Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan to the CAP Update.

Comment A3-4
The comment suggests that streamlining of residential and mixed-used projects should be limited to areas that are infill, higher density, and near transit to be more aligned with the recommendations in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan to achieve reductions in VMT. The comment also suggests reduced parking requirements for residential and mixed-use projects located in proximity to existing or planned transit. The comment provides a list of project attributes in Appendix D of the Scoping Plan that are not included in the CAP Update.

Response A3-4
The 2022 Scoping Plan states that projects that incorporate all project attributes contained in Appendix D Table 3 would be "clearly consistent" with the State's climate goals and the 2022 Scoping Plan and "may result in a less-than-significant GHG impact under CEQA." However, as described above, in Response A3-2, the Scoping Plan also states that projects that do not achieve every attribute listed in Table 3 may still be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, provided there is evidence supporting this conclusion.

The CAP Update's targets align with CARB's statewide targets for 2030 and 2045, as explained in the Draft SEIR (pages 2.8-24 through 2.8-29) and Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," above. These targets represent levels below which GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)(3), stating "[i]n determining the significance of impacts, the lead agency may consider a project's consistency with the state's long-term climate goals or strategies." The CAP Update shows a quantitative pathway toward achieving these targets through implementation of its numerous strategies, measures, and actions. The CAP Update meets the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), thereby allowing future projects to streamline their GHG impacts evaluation pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4. For additional discussion of the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), please refer to Response A3-2.

The County understands the connection between land use and transportation and acknowledges that promoting infill development can have the effect of reducing VMT and associated GHG emissions. The CAP Update is not a land use plan. Rather, it is a programmatic document that contains strategies, policies, and actions that would mitigate

GHG emissions from the existing and future development allowed under the General Plan and in County operations. The County is developing or implementing other programs that would change land use planning, reduce VMT, and reduce GHG emissions. See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for further discussion of this topic. Furthermore, as discussed in the Draft SEIR, the CAP Update serves two purposes: reflecting the County's attempts to reduce its share of statewide GHG emissions and being a CEQA mitigation measure to reduce GHG impacts from the General Plan (Draft SEIR page 1-2). No changes to General Plan land use designations, zoning, land use, or specific projects are proposed as part of the CAP Update. However, the Draft SEIR includes consideration of four smart growth alternatives, which are conceptual land use configurations that would reduce VMT by modifying the way the unincorporated area would buildout in the future. See Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for further discussion.

The County acknowledges the suggestion to limit use of the streamlining provision to only residential and mixed-used projects that are infill, higher density, and near-transit areas. However, the County has provided substantial evidence that all future projects that demonstrate consistency with the General Plan and incorporate relevant measures and actions in the CAP Update would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan. Such projects are also within the scope of the GHG emissions forecasts in the CAP Update and eligible for streamlining under the CAP Update. Limiting the function of the CAP Update's streamlining provisions would require project-level GHG emissions analyses for more projects but may not result in additional VMT reductions and would not be required to achieve the GHG reduction targets set in the CAP Update.

Regarding the lack of reduced parking requirements in the General Plan and CAP, the County notes that reduced parking is generally not an effective GHG reduction strategy in rural and semi-rural areas because there are limited options for alternative modes of transport to induce mode shifts and there is typically ample free parking outside designated parking lots. Proposed CAP Update Measures T-5 and T-6 would work together to provide access to alternative modes of transportation, including multimodal and transit to reduce VMT and provide options for residents and businesses to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips. As part of the development of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) ordinance under Action T-6.2.a, the County would consider reduced parking requirements as part of the overall approach to reducing single occupancy vehicle trips.

Comment A3-5
The comment provides a summary of detailed comments provided above.

Response A3-5
The County appreciates comments from CARB related to the CAP Update's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan. As stated in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan, residential and mix-used projects should contain key project attributes in Table 3 (of Appendix D of the Scoping Plan) "*absent* consistency with an adequate, geographically specific GHG reduction plan such as a CEQA-qualified CAP" (emphasis added). Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan also states that projects that do not achieve every attribute listed in Table 3 may still be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, provided there is evidence

supporting this conclusion. As discussed in Response A3-2 above, the CAP Update and Draft SEIR demonstrate, with substantial evidence, that the CAP Update meets the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), thereby allowing future projects to streamline their GHG impacts evaluation pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064, 15064.4, and 15183.5. Therefore, the CAP Update is not required to include all project attributes contained in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan to be consistent with the Scoping Plan and to allow for streamlining of future projects. The CAP Update's targets align with statewide GHG reductions for 2030 and 2045 identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan, as explained in the Draft SEIR (pages 2.8-24 through 2.8-29) and Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," above. These targets represent levels below which GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)(3), stating "[i]n determining the significance of impacts, the lead agency may consider a project's consistency with the state's long-term climate goals or strategies." With the suite of measures and actions proposed, the CAP Update shows a quantitative pathway toward achieving these targets through implementation of its numerous strategies, measures, and actions. The Checklist identifies measures and actions that new development projects intending to streamline must implement to show consistency with the CAP Update and to contribute their fair share to the CAP Update's targets. These and other elements demonstrate that the CAP Update meets the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), thereby allowing future projects to streamline their GHG impacts evaluation pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4. For additional discussion of the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), please refer to Response to A3-2.

Therefore, the CAP Update is not required to include all project attributes contained in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan to demonstrate consistency with the Scoping Plan.

Letter A4

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY GAVIN NEWSOM, GO

California Department of Transportation

AERONAUTICS PROGRAM
DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
P.O. BOX 942873, MS–40 | SACRAMENTO, CA 94273–0001
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January 5, 2024

Ms. Meghan Kelly Electronically Sent <meghan.kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Project Manager
County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Re: 2020120204, County of San Diego Climate Action Plan Update

Dear Ms. Kelly:

The California Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Program has reviewed the Draft Environmental Review for the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan Update. One of the goals of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Aeronautics Program, is to assist cities, counties, and Airport Land Use Commissions or their equivalent (ALUC), to understand and comply with the State Aeronautics Act pursuant to the California Public Utilities Code (PUC), Section 21001 et seq. Caltrans encourages collaboration with our partners in the planning process and thanks you for including the Aeronautics Program in the review of the Draft EIR.

The Aeronautics Program commends the County of San Diego for including mitigation measures regarding airport hazards and noise, and encourages the continued collaboration of the County with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA) acting as the ALUC for San Diego County, County Airports, and the FAA when applicable to ensure safety practices and land use compatibility are upheld.

A4-1

Compatibility concerns regarding airport obstructions and hazards to flight (such as wildlife attractants, lighting, or glare i.e., solar, etc.) should also be considered for further review upon site specific updates or projects. Proposed structures that exceed FAA Regulations Part 77 height criteria are subject to an Obstruction Evaluation/Airspace Analysis for determination.

Per the California Public Utilities Code Section 21001 et seq. relating to the State Aeronautics Act, Section 21676(b) prior to the amendment of a general plan…within the planning boundary established by the airport land use commission pursuant to Section 21675, the local agency shall first refer the proposed action to the commission. If the commission determines that the proposed action is inconsistent with the

A4-2

commission's plan, the referring agency shall be notified. Any proposed development in the defined safety zones or Airport Influence Area (AIA), therefore, must adhere to the safety criteria and restrictions defined in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan(s) formed by the ALUC pursuant to the PUC, Section 21674.

An ALUCP is crucial in minimizing noise nuisance and safety hazards around airports while promoting the orderly development of airports, as declared by the California Legislature. A responsibility of the ALUC is to assess potential risk to aircraft and persons in airspace and people occupying areas within the vicinity of the airport.

A4-2 cont.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: tiffany.martinez@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Martinez

Tiffany Martinez
Transportation Planner, Aeronautics Program

c: State Clearinghouse

- Letter A4 Caltrans Aeronautics Program

Tiffany Martinez, Transportation Planner
January 5, 2024

Comment A4-1
The comment explains the goal of the Caltrans Aeronautics Program and commends the County for including mitigation measures regarding airport hazards and noise. The comment also encourages the continued collaboration of the County with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA).

Response A4-1
The County appreciates comments from Caltrans Aeronautics Program related to the CAP Update and associated Draft SEIR. The comment is an introductory statement and does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. The County will continue collaboration with SDCRAA through implementation of adopted Mitigation Measure Haz-1.5 as described in Section 2.9.5, "Mitigation Measures," of the Draft SEIR.

Comment A4-2
The comment suggests that further review upon site-specific updates or projects should consider compatibility concerns related to airport obstructions and hazards to flight. The comment references applicable regulations related to airport hazards.

Response A4-2
As discussed in Section 2.9.3.4, "Issue 2: Result in Safety Hazards or Excessive Noise from Public and Private Airports," of the Draft SEIR, future projects associated with the CAP Update would be subject to federal, state, and local regulation related to airport safety and hazards, including Federal Aviation Administration Regulations Part 77, US Department of Defense Air Installations Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) regulations, the State Aeronautics Act, and applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. In addition, future projects associated with the CAP Update would implement mitigation measures to minimize impacts related to airport hazards as needed. Specifically, the following adopted 2011 GPU PEIR mitigation measures would be applied to the CAP Update: Mitigation Measure Haz-1.1, which requires new development projects to be reviewed in accordance with the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance: Airport Hazards* to ensure compatibility with surrounding airports and land uses; Mitigation Measure Haz-1.3, which requires new development projects to be reviewed in accordance with the applicable AICUZ to ensure consistency with the land use compatibility and safety policies; and Mitigation Measure Haz-1.5, which requires coordination with the SDCRAA and County airports for issues that may affect airport planning and operations.

9.1.3 Organization Comments and Responses

Letter O1

From: Robert Germann
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SEIR Public Comment
Date: Sunday, November 5, 2023 9:09:15 AM

Good Morning, in Oct. 2023 the EPA declared an Endangerment Finding on the leaded fuel (Av/Gas). This gas is used at all 16 airports in San Diego County. This is the beginning of the movement concerning all aviation fuels the aviation complex uses and stores at our local air airports. Right now the flying aviation industry is excerpt to a very large degree from ant Emission standards. San Diego should accept the future of "No Exemption" for the aviation and should lead in this change. For 80 yrs San Diego Counties communities have been bombarded by toxic Leaded fuel. Please include San Diego County aviation industry in any report or study you present to the Board of Supervisors and public.
Thank for the opportunity to comment on this important topic.
Robert Germann
Citizens Against Gillespie's Expansion Low Flying Aircraft

Sent from my iPad

O1-1

Letter O1 Citizens Against Gillespie's Expansion Low Flying Aircraft

Robert Germann
November 5, 2023

Comment O1-1
The comment expresses concern about lead fuels used and stored at local airports.

Response O1-1
The County appreciates the comment from the Citizens Against Gillespie's Expansion Low Flying Aircraft related to concern about lead fuel usage and storage. Impacts related to the use and storage of hazardous materials are discussed in Section 2.9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," of the Draft SEIR. Impacts related to the transport, use, disposal, or accidental release of hazardous materials are discussed in Section 2.9.3.3. Impacts related to airport hazards are discussed in Section 2.9.3.4. Future projects associated with the CAP Update would be subject to federal, state, and local regulations related to airport safety and hazards. See Response A4-2 above.

Letter O2

From: Kelly, Meghan
To: Spoon, Steven (Chad)
Subject: FW: [External] Climate Action Campaign & International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569 Joint Comments on County Climate Action Plan Draft
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:54:56 AM
Attachments: CAC & IBEW Local 569 CAP Draft Letter - December 2023.pdf
image001.png
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image003.png
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image005.png

Please save.

Meghan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan | Sustainability Planning Division
619.323.6462 | meghan.kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

From: Serena Pelka <serena@climateactioncampaign.org>
Sent: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:41 PM
To: Hamburger, Ariel <Ariel.Hamburger@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Farmer, Tyler <Tyler.Farmer@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Moss, Claire <Claire.Moss@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Cc: Corinna Contreras <corinna@climateactioncampaign.org>; Ali Mariko Dressel <ali@climateactioncampaign.org>; Cristina Marquez <cmarquez@ibew569.org>; cSchumacher@ibew569.org
Subject: [External] Climate Action Campaign & International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569 Joint Comments on County Climate Action Plan Draft

Hello County CAP Team,

Thank you so much for your dedication to ensuring the County CAP is a powerful tool for climate action! Together with IBEW Local 569, we have attached a letter including our initial feedback on the CAP draft and look forward to engaging more on this over the course of 2024.

Meghan and Claire, it was great to have a preliminary conversation with you this week via SDBEC regarding some of the recommendations - thank you for answering many initial questions. As our team will be out of office over the holidays, I was hoping to get something on the calendar for all of us to connect in January to discuss the recommendations made in the letter. Please let us know when you have availability after January 8th to connect and Cristina will confirm a date based on her and Cori's schedule.

Thanks so much - wishing everyone a healthy and happy holiday!

O2-1

Warmly,
Serena Pelka (she/her)
Policy Advocate
Climate Action Campaign
(619) 419-1222 ext. 715


Like what we do? Support Climate Action Campaign today.

Our mission is simple: create a zero carbon future through effective and equitable policy action





December 15th, 2023

County of San Diego
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: Climate Action Campaign & International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569 Joint Comments on County Climate Action Plan Draft

Dear County Sustainability Planning Division Team,

Climate Action Campaign has played an active role in the development of every Climate Action Plan (CAP) in the region since 2015, including the County's CAP development and implementation process. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 569 represents 3,600 power professionals and union electricians in San Diego and Imperial Counties and has a history of fighting climate change while ensuring a more resilient regional economy. As we work towards a collective zero-carbon future that will improve quality of life throughout the region, it is critical that the County adopt a CAP that meets the scale and scope of the climate crisis and confirms San Diego's position as a national climate leader.

This letter identifies four key areas to strengthen the CAP and build on our previous recommendations:

- Energy
- Built Environment and Transportation
- Resiliency
- Regional Collaboration

The recommendations below ensure the County CAP will address the urgency and severity of the climate crisis through implementation benchmarks, milestones, and stronger commitments to maximize emissions reductions.

02-2

Energy

The Energy sector is the most consequential area of focus for Green House Gas (GHG) emissions reduction identified in the CAP. Thus, the associated measures and implementing actions must reflect this significance through urgent implementation dates and high prioritization. Given the safety implications associated with the energy sector, from energy

02-3

generation to transmission and delivery, this area of focus should also include strong labor standards and workforce training.

In Measure E-1, there are opportunities for emissions reductions beyond the commitments in the Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan (ZCPP) that should be harnessed. The County should update the ZCPP to ***require*** appliances be replaced at end of life, or sooner, with electric alternatives. Additionally, the ZCPP goal for the County to utilize 100% renewable energy by 2030 needs to reflect the urgency of the climate crisis and the CAP should identify a faster timeline for renewable energy procurement, such as 2025. This is particularly feasible given the County has control through the Direct Access program to expedite procurement of 100% renewable power or to switch to San Diego Community Power's Power100 level.

For Measures E-2 and E-3, which address electrification of new and existing buildings, the CAP must include language that ensures building electrification (BE) is woven into all aspects of County programming and operations. In particular, the CAP should include an implementing action that commits all funding provided by the County for new development and building retrofits to include an electrification requirement. For example, money that is distributed from the Innovative Housing Trust Fund for affordable housing must have an electrification requirement and such opportunities need to be identified in the CAP. Any such distribution of County funds should also require all electrical work be done by C-10 licensed contractors employing state certified general electricians.

O2-3 cont.

The CAP should include a range of pathways to ensure the success of BE, and a commitment to seek additional policy pathways to move faster when possible. One key approach for consideration is a heat pump replacement policy that requires all air conditioning units to be replaced upon burnout with heat pump appliances, as was adopted in the City of San Mateo. Other examples include a high performance reach code and streamlined permitting for all-electric builds. These alternative pathways to incentivize and require electrification must be identified to ensure BE goals are met if traditional reach code pathways are unavailable. Any alternative pathways that are subsidized by County funds should require all electrical work be done by C-10 licensed contractors employing state certified general electricians.

BE is a key strategy to improve public health and quality of life in the unincorporated County. As such, the goal to electrify 90% of existing buildings should be targeted for 2035 to adequately reflect the urgency needed to protect communities from the impacts of the climate crisis, such as extreme heat. Also, all BE, energy efficiency and energy resiliency implementing actions need to include details such as their scope, scale, estimated costs, specific benchmarks for planning and implementation timelines, and outlines for community and stakeholder engagement. The County's local job training program identified in E-3 needs to be implemented with partners such as IBEW Local 569 who have a Joint Labor Management State of California Approved Apprenticeship program to ensure that opportunities to fight climate change are paired with high road green energy careers. Equitable access to electrification for underserved communities as well as new job opportunities for fossil fuel workers as identified in the County's Workforce Development Study are also critical elements that should be part of all BE strategies.

Built Environment and Transportation

The current strategies outlined in the 2024 draft report do not reduce enough GHGs from the built environment and transportation sector. There is no clear path to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. More must be done to further reduce GHGs in this sector as it is projected to be 37.3% of overall GHG emissions in 2045 per Appendix 3.

Today, transportation remains the greatest source of GHGs in the region, at 47% for both on-road and off-road GHGs. We urge a focus on the planning and constructing of electrical infrastructure for Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs). This must be done in coordination with school districts, transit agencies, water districts, waste companies, and other government agencies transitioning their fleets to ZEVs. We encourage a thoughtful, streamlined permitting process for zero-emission infrastructure for unincorporated areas if such streamlined permits require all electrical work to be done by C-10 licensed and state certified general electricians. Local dollars can thus be efficiently leveraged to build the charging and maintenance infrastructure for the rapid transition of fleets, landscaping and construction equipment, school buses, public transit, and personal ZEVs.

Missing from the draft CAP is an emphasis on producing infill housing and other smart growth strategies. Though it is hard to quantify GHG emissions reductions from land use and housing, it is necessary to mention them in the CAP as they impact GHG emissions reductions in other sectors such as transportation and energy. Currently, smart growth is buried in the appendices. This must change. We urge the inclusion of measures to prevent sprawl and advance the development of affordable, higher density, infill development near job centers, transit, and high-frequency bus lines. Such measures should be in alignment with SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the County's housing and land use plans. O2-4

The CAP should also provide clear transportation mode share goals and an implementation plan for Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction targets for unincorporated areas. We recommend strong community engagement with unincorporated communities to identify specific areas to enhance biking, walking, and public transit accessibility. With community input, VMT reduction can improve. We recommend integrating feedback gathered from the Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) outreach and engagement, as many rural communities (such as Jacumba and Potrero) have already identified specific areas where they would like to see increased vehicle-free transportation accessibility.

The County's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) provides another opportunity to increase mode shift. The current ATP network is missing critical links both within and between communities. This network needs seamless, safe connections to public transit to help communities shift to more sustainable transportation options. The ATP needs updating to help plan more Class IV bikeways to meet the incoming demand of residents adopting e-bikes and other micromobility for their first/last mile transportation needs. If the infrastructure for walking, rolling, and biking is not connected and safe, residents will be hesitant to use it for their transportation needs.

Resiliency

With 2023 the hottest year on record, communities are already facing the impacts of extreme temperatures, especially throughout East County and rural desert areas. While steps are being taken to reduce carbon emissions, the health impacts of extreme heat, drought, fire, and other climate-related issues will become more severe in the years to come. These health impacts can be addressed and mitigated by establishing an integrated and accessible framework for resiliency measures. We recommend that the County include a commitment in the CAP to integrate a Resiliency Plan that lays out specific strategies and opportunities for protecting the health of communities in the wake of extreme heat caused by climate change, using tools such as heat pumps for cooling, as the need to adjust to changing climate conditions increases. All resilience measures should be incorporated with community input and knowledge in mind.

O2-5

Regional Collaboration

To become a regional leader, the County must take stronger steps towards integrating regional collaboration in the Climate Action Plan. In general, the County CAP would be greatly improved by including a detailed plan or framework on exactly how the County plans to collaborate with other cities, jurisdictions, tribes, agencies, community organizations, and local community leaders. In particular, the County should identify where and how public transportation options require cross-jurisdictional collaboration so that efficient and accessible transit opportunities can successfully *connect* unincorporated communities to the larger cities.

Also, as SANDAG is in the process of developing a priority Climate Action Plan (p-CAP) to serve as the foundation to a regional-scale CAP, it is of utmost importance that the County CAP team connects with SANDAG. The success of a regional CAP depends on the success of all CAPs within the region, so the importance of communicating and collaborating with SANDAG now in order to maximize efficacy and efficiency is critical. This collaboration will also reveal any potential gaps, strengthening the quality of both CAPs.

O2-6

With strong, effective, collaborative, and community-driven CAPs in place, San Diego as a region has a much higher chance of securing crucial climate action funding from federal and state sources, such as the $4.6 billion Climate Pollution Reduction Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (due April 1st, 2024). By working together with multiple jurisdictions and SANDAG, the County can help position the San Diego region to receive the funding that it needs to implement all of the necessary climate action infrastructure and programs.

Conclusion

The County CAP offers a rare opportunity to help shape climate policy in our region and state, and model the implementation needed for a zero carbon future. We recognize and appreciate the dedicated work of the CAP team to ensure thorough community engagement efforts and the integration of traditional ecological knowledge and Indigenous wisdom and stewardship as components of the CAP. We also want to acknowledge the improvements that have been made from previous County CAP versions, particularly around the transportation sector.

O2-7

We applaud the County's commitment and tenacity to improve the CAP to ensure a meaningful plan to reduce emissions. In general, the CAP consists of strong components, but we feel its long-term success is dependent on key benchmarks, milestones and detailed pathways and plans that are currently absent and are needed for transportation mode shift, building electrification, resiliency, and regional collaboration. Without identifying detailed timelines to reduce emissions, the County will struggle to stay on track and meet stated goals. A plan by itself will not lower carbon emissions in our region, but a plan with thoughtful and intentionally laid out implementation milestones and pathways that are community driven will succeed in moving the needle toward climate resilient and healthy communities. San Diego has enormous potential in being a leader in regional collaboration—together, let's make it a reality. O2-7 cont.

Sincerely,

Serena Pelka
Policy Advocate
Climate Action Campaign

Cristina Marquez
Environmental Organizer
IBEW Local 569

Letter O2 Climate Action Campaign and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569

Serena Pelka, Policy Advocate, Climate Action Campaign
Cristina Marquez, Environmental Organizer, IBEW Local 569
December 15, 2023

Comment O2-1
The comment provides an introduction to the comment letter and looks forward to further engagement on the development of the CAP Update.

Response O2-1
The County appreciates comments from the Climate Action Campaign and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 569 related to the CAP Update and associated Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O2-2
The comment provides background information of the organizations and a summary of comments to the CAP Update.

Response O2-2
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O2-3
The comment provides recommendations to expand on the energy measures in the CAP Update, including increased requirements for electric appliances, renewable energy procurement, building electrification, and heat pump appliances. The comment also requests specific timelines, benchmarks, costs, and so forth for implementing measures and equitable access for underserved communities.

Response O2-3
See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explain that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation. Note that the Equity Framework detailed in Chapter 5 of the CAP Update would guide the implementation of all measures while seeking equitable outcomes. The *Implementation Cost Analysis,* with further cost information, will be made available as an appendix to the CAP Update.

Comment O2-4
The comment states that current strategies in the CAP Update do not sufficiently reduce GHG emissions from the built environment and transportation sector. The comment provides recommendations to focus on constructing ZEVs infrastructure, promoting infill housing/smart growth, and achieving VMT reduction through improving active transportation infrastructure. The comment also states that infill housing, land use, and other smart growth strategies are missing from the CAP Update and that related measures should be aligned with the Regional Transportation Plan and the County's housing and land use plans.

Response O2-4
See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explain that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045. See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a discussion about the CAP Update and land use change, and Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for a discussion about smart growth strategies.

Comment O2-5
The comment recommends incorporating resilience measures to address community health in response to climate change/extreme heat.

Response O2-5
The recommendation to include climate change resilience measures in the CAP Update is noted. The San Diego County General Plan Safety Element includes a policy to implement the County's Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Report (Policy S-12.1). The Vulnerability Assessment Adaptation Report includes a comprehensive vulnerability assessment and adaptation goals and policies, which are required to be incorporated into the General Plan Safety Element, in compliance with SB 379, Government Code section 65302(g)(4). The report includes adaptation strategies for climate hazards, including extreme heat. Additionally, the CAP Update (see Chapter 1, "Introduction") includes a description of how the County's climate action planning and GHG mitigation efforts under the CAP align with other County plans and programs to address public health, climate adaptation and resilience, and workforce and housing development. The CAP Update's analysis of co-benefits considers how additional beneficial outcomes that would address community health and resiliency, among others, could be achieved through CAP Update implementation.

Comment O2-6
The comment recommends including a detailed framework for regional cross-jurisdictional collaboration (e.g., connecting unincorporated communities to larger cities through public transportation) and, specifically, coordination with SANDAG.

Response O2-6
In the process of preparing the CAP Update, the County conducted various community outreach and engagement events to solicit diverse feedback on the CAP Update, from community leaders and individuals, regional and community-based organizations, regional agencies, and local jurisdictions, among others. In 2021, the County hosted general overview and equity-focused workshops on the CAP Update process to introduce the project and create vision statements. Between the end of 2021 and 2022, the County collected feedback on conceptual measures to be included in the CAP Update. From 2022 through 2023, the County gathered feedback on co-benefits outcomes of the measures. During the community outreach and engagement process, the County held 170 community-oriented meetings and events, including meeting with residents in frontline communities, such as the County's identified Environmental Justice Communities (Spring Valley, Sweetwater, North El Cajon, and North Lemon Grove); meeting with youth through high schools outreach; meeting with older adults through the County's Aging and Independence Services; and meeting with low-income communities and communities of color through the Partner Relay Network and the Farmworker CARE Coalition. The community outreach and engagement process was intended to ensure that the CAP Update is community driven. Pease see Chapter 2, "Community Outreach and Engagement," of the CAP Update for detailed discussion of the community and engagement strategies the County has facilitated during preparation the CAP Update. A summary of the public outreach strategy is also provided on pages 1–22 of the Draft SEIR. In addition, the County conducted public outreach specifically on smart growth alternatives to gather suggestions for development of alternatives. Please refer to Section 5.5.1.1, "Summary of Outreach Related to Smart Growth Alternatives," for more details regarding outreach related to smart growth alternatives development.

Additionally, Chapter 5 of the CAP Update has been revised to clarify the role that inter-agency collaboration and partnerships with other organizations will play in CAP implementation. The County has experience with participating in regional partnerships, such as through the Accelerate to Zero Emissions Collaboration, that have led to increased access to funding opportunities and investments that benefit the unincorporated area and the region as a whole, as described on page 5 of the CAP Update. The County will continue to seek and participate in regional partnership opportunities, including participation in the development and future implementation of the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), as part of the CAP Update's implementation strategy.

Comment O2-7
The comment provides a summary of detailed comments provided above.

Response O2-7
See Responses O2-3, O2-4, and O2-5, regarding benchmarks, milestones, pathways related to energy, transportation, and building electrification measures. See Response O2-6, regarding regional collaboration.

Letter O3

From: Bill Tippets
To: CAP; Kelly, Meghan
Cc: Pam Heatherington; Bill Tippets
Subject: [External] Public Comments on County CAP and SEIR
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:19:44 AM
Attachments: CAP 2023 Comments_19Dec2023.pdf
CAP 2023 SEIR Comments_19Dec2023.pdf

Dear Ms. Kelly and CAP Project Staff:

Please include the attached comment letters in the CAP and CAP DSEIR project records. As described in the letters, regarding the CAP we strongly recommend certain improvements and strengthened commitments to ensure that it will meet necessary GHG emission reduction targets. Also, regarding the DSEIR, we strongly recommend that certain improvements be made, including making currently permissive/voluntary GHG emission reduction mitigation measures mandatory and selection of the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative as the Environmentally Superior alternative and to replace the currently Proposed Project. O3-1

Bill Tippets
619-822-4323

"*However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results*"
Winston Churchill

Date: 19 December 2023

County of San Diego, Planning and Development Services (cap@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Attention: Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

From: Environmental Center of San Diego – Pam Heatherington (pjheatherington@gmail.com) and Bill Tippets (billtippets@gmail.com)

Subject: Public Comments on the County of San Diego Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the Climate Action Plan (October 2023)

We have read and evaluated the referenced document and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) that is analyzed in the Draft SEIR. The CAP measures, if mandatory and when fully implemented, would put the County on a trajectory to meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets. However, as described in the CAP, and reiterated by the SEIR analysis, the CAP does not provide the necessary mandatory measures that would fully commit the County to reach net zero emissions/carbon neutrality by 2045. The CAP's mandatory measures would only ensure attaining 85% GHG emission reductions by 2045, with the remaining 15% expected to be achieved (without specific reduction thresholds for each) by a set of permissive/voluntary compliance measures. That approach is insufficient. O3-2

Also, a different alternative (Sustainable Communities Strategy) is more appropriate for selection as the environmentally superior alternative than the Distributed Energy Only Alternative, but the former alternative is dismissed as not feasible. The reasons for rejecting this alternative do not appear to be sufficient, even though the environmental benefits are supported in the SEIR analysis. This alternative should be reconsidered for selection not only as the environmentally superior alternative, but as the preferred project, as described later in this comment letter. O3-3

Our specific comments follow.

SEIR Summary

Pages 3-4. We concur with the list of Project Objectives, which if fully met by the CAP Update (CAP), would be a significant improvement of the previous CAP and achieve necessary GHG emission reductions and provide co-benefits. Our comments identify several items in the CAP that must be revised to meet its objectives and targets. Contrary to the SEIR analysis/findings, and based on our assessment of the revised CAP, the CAP does not fully meet the Project Objectives and a "smart growth" alternative, combined with the revised CAP would meet those objectives. Our comments on the CAP are attached. O3-4

Pages 5-7. The Consistency Modifications with the General Plan and 2011 GPU PEIR state that the CAP will meet the GHG emission reduction target of net zero by no later than 2045. Specifically, the SEIR states the County will revise and comply with new General Plan Goal COS-20 (Governance and Administration): "Reduction of local community-wide (i.e., unincorporated county) and County operations GHG emissions contributing to climate change that meet or exceed requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, as amended by Senate Bill 32 (as amended, Pavley. California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: emissions limit) and Assembly Bill 1279 (2022) to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2045." However, the mandatory mitigation measures only commit the County to 85% reduction by 2045; the remaining 15% reduction is to be addressed by voluntary/permissive measures to put the County on a "Path to Net Zero." To meet the consistency modification commitment of net zero by 2045, those voluntary/permissive measures must be mandatory commitments. O3-5

Pages 7-8. To ensure that the GHG Threshold, Guidelines for Determining Significance for Climate Change, CAP Requirements, and CAP Consistency Checklist produce the required GHG reductions, the CAP must commit to achieving net zero by 2045. As noted in the preceding comment, without making the voluntary/permissive mitigation measures mandatory (and monitored and enforced), the County cannot rely on the threshold and checklist consistency to assure net zero compliance.

Pages 11-14. The SEIR includes a reasonable range of alternatives, including at least one smart growth alternative (Sustainable Communities Strategy) that would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). O3-6

Pages 15-56 (Table S-1). Item 2.8.1. It is not clear why the SEIR concludes that the project would not cause significant GHG emissions. The Consistency Modifications incorporated the stated commitment to meet the carbon neutrality/net zero target by 2045 (i.e. complying with AB 1279), but the CAP's committed mandatory mitigation measures only attain 85% reduction. The remaining 15% may be achieved by "Path to Net Zero" measures, but those are not mandatory and tied to specific GHG emission reduction targets/thresholds, and it is unclear whether they would be enforceable. Because achieving net zero by 2045 is the committed threshold and the mandatory mitigation measures only commit to an 85% reduction by 2045, the finding of "less than significant" impact after mitigation is not supported. O3-7

Items 13.1.1 and 13.1.2. The CAP relies on other County plans, such as the County's Transportation Strategy Guidelines (TSG), which implement AB 743, and are intended to enhance transportation options (e.g., reduced reliance on vehicles) and reduce VMT. However, the County's TSG exempts some new housing within transportation opportunity areas that are not efficient (i.e., not 15% below the regional VMT average), did not fully analyze VMT (and consequent GHG emissions) effects from several other exemptions, and has not yet prepared/adopted a mitigation plan. For those reasons, the finding of "less than significant" impacts after mitigation is not supported. O3-8

Biological Resources (Section 2.4)

Pages 2.14.14-17. As stated in the document "the potential for the construction of large-scale renewable energy infrastructure was not evaluated in the 2011 GPU PEIR," but the SEIR focuses its analysis on potential large wind energy facilities based on the Wind Energy EIR, with little analysis of large solar facilities. Wind and solar facilities have different siting criteria (to maximize performance efficiencies) and on-the-ground (terrestrial plants and animals) and aerial (i.e., avian) impacts. The County's Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) identified large solar (and wind) facilities as critical to providing needed electricity. Because the 2011 GPU PEIR did not analyze large scale renewable energy infrastructure, the SEIR must provide additional information and analysis of potential impacts from scale solar facilities on biological resources that is comparable to that for large scale wind facilities. O3-9

Pages 2.14-17 and 18. The proposed project relies on the CAP and other County plans (e.g., General Plan policies, TSG) that direct land use and associated transportation infrastructure and resulting GHG emissions. However, the CAP assumes that rapid transitioning to EVs will produce about 85% of the Built Environment/Transportation GHG emission reductions, with the remaining 15% of reductions from transit and transportation alternatives.

A large increase in EV use (replacing existing vehicles and accommodating new drivers) and continued development in the unincorporated area, combined with with new transportation infrastructure, could have a larger impact to biological resources compared to more compact, sustainable development. That potential for impacts is not sufficiently analyzed in the SEIR. O3-10

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Section 2.8)

Pages 2.8. 25-29. The EIR states that the CAP Update would conform with (contribute to implementation of) the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, which is projected to reduce per capita GHG emissions that are consistent with State law. The RTP/SCS relies on each local jurisdiction's planning align with its key elements. However, the County's CAP relies disproportionately on EVs reduce Built Environment and Transportation-related GHG emissions (85% compared to 15% for land use/transportation alternatives), and does not adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (see subsequent comments on the Alternatives). If the CAP Update does not integrate with the RTP/SCS, that could potentially increase County GHG emissions due to conflicts with the regional approach. The significance of that potential impact must be addressed. O3-11

Pages 2.8.31-36. As described in previous comments, the CAP commits to mandatory measures to reach 85% GHG emission reductions, but does not include all the necessary and mandatory measures to achieve carbon neutrality/net zero GHG emissions by 2045 (mandated per AB 1279). While the CAP establishes a "Path to Net Zero" goal by 2045 and identifies several non-mandatory mitigation measures (which lack GHG reduction metrics and enforcement), that is not a definitive commitment to achieve net zero by 2045. The climate crisis is worsening and climate specialists believe that the global community continues to emit GHGs that would put the global temperature rise above the "acceptable O3-12

risk" of 1.5 C rise as soon as 2030 (https://www.kold.com/2023/11/20/earth-smashed-warming-limit-first-time/). Draft text from the Cop28 meeting identified serious concerns that the window is rapidly closing to limit global temperature to 1.5 C by 2030 (https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/DT.DD_.SBI59.i8_SBSTA59.i5.1.pdf). And, because net zero is considered essential to limiting long term global climate change effects to "acceptable risk" levels, the CAP appears to result in a considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact, which would be a new or more severe impact than identified in the 2011 GPU PEIR.

O3-12 cont.

Alternatives (Chapter 5)

The analysis of alternatives concludes that the Distributed Energy Only Alternative "...would be environmentally superior to the project because it would reduce significant and unavoidable impacts related to the induced demand for large-scale renewable energy systems while potentially achieving both the primary objective of GHG emissions reductions consistent with SB 32, AB 1279, and all other supporting project objectives." However, the County's Regional Decarbonization Framework found that utility scale renewable facilities were necessary to meet the region's clean energy needs (net zero emissions) by 2050 (https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/lueg/regional-decarb-frameworkfiles/RDF_Technical_Report_FINAL_2022.pdf). Infill and rooftop solar alone could not provide the necessary clean energy supplies for the region. While that regional (countywide) and County's CAP jurisdiction energy supply and demand are not directly comparable, it isn't clear why the SEIR selected the distributed generation alternative as the environmentally preferred one. It may not be sufficient to meet the clean energy demands within the unincorporated County, and that concern does not appear to be appropriately analyzed and discussed.

O3-13

In contrast, the SEIR discounts the Sustainable Communities Strategy because implementing it requires land use changes and the current Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy had one of its measures (Road Use Charge) removed. That measure, which would not have been implemented until 2030, will be replaced by others in the next iteration (2025) of the RTP/SCS. In all other regards, the RTP/SCS alternative, as described on the SEIR and summarized in Table 5-2 (Page 5-45), this alternative would reduce Transportation and GHG Emissions impacts compared to the proposed project, while meeting all of the other CAP objectives. As described in the section on General Plan and Policies as an alternative, which could be implemented stand-alone or in combination with another alternative, it is likely that some changes to land use policies will be necessary to implement the CAP. The objections to selecting the Sustainable Communities Strategy as the environmentally superior alternative are not credibly justified. It should be selected as the preferred project to replace the proposed project.

O3-14

As described in the preceding comments and recommendations, the CAP and SEIR must be revised to fully meet the CAP objectives, especially ensuring fully reaching net zero emissions (carbon neutrality) by 2045 per AB 1279. When making those changes, the County should give serious consideration to selecting the Sustainable Communities Strategy not just as the environmentally preferred alternative, but it should replace the currently proposed project.

O3-15

Our contact for these comments is Bill Tippets (billtippets@gmail.com).

O3-15 cont.

Letter O3 Environmental Center of San Diego

Pam Heatherington and Bill Tippets
December 19, 2023

Comment O3-1
The comment provides a summary of detailed comments provided below, including requesting increased GHG reductions in the CAP Update, making voluntary measures mandatory, and expressing preference for the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative.

Response O3-1
The County appreciates comments from the Environmental Center of San Diego related to the CAP Update and associated Draft SEIR. See responses to the detailed comments below.

Comment O3-2
The comment states that the CAP Update and Draft SEIR indicate that the CAP Update does not include "the necessary mandatory measures that would fully commit the County to reach net zero emissions/carbon neutrality by 2045." The comment states that the CAP Update only includes mandatory measures to achieve 85 percent of the required GHG reductions by 2045 and that the remaining 15 percent is met be relying on "permissive/voluntary" measures, which, it asserts, is not sufficient.

Response O3-2
By achieving its 2030 and 2045 reduction targets, the CAP Update is aligned with state legislation and plans for achieving net zero GHG emissions by 2045. The CAP Update establishes 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets that are aligned with state legislation (AB 1279) and plans (the 2022 Scoping Plan) to achieve net zero GHG emissions on a statewide basis by 2045. It identifies 35 quantified implementing actions that would achieve quantified GHG reductions and demonstrates that the reductions from these actions would collectively achieve the County's 2030 and 2045 reduction targets.

Moreover, each action included in the CAP Update is in the County's jurisdiction and ability to enforce; able to be monitored with readily available data to demonstrate progress over time; achievable within the County's regulatory framework; and additional to existing regulations from the state or federal government. The CAP Update does not rely on "a set of permissive/voluntary compliance measures" as asserted by the commenter.

The CAP Update also contains 35 "Path to Net Zero" actions that establish steps the County will take to meet the 2045 net zero emissions goal. Although the CAP Update does not identify quantified GHG emissions reductions for "Path to Net Zero" actions, their implementation could result in quantified reductions in the future with additional data and monitoring.

The implementation and monitoring program is described in Table 13 of the CAP Update. Measurable outcomes, implementation timeline, County department lead, enforcement

mechanism, estimated GHG reduction potential, relative cost, and potential funding sources are provided.

The County would monitor implementation of the CAP Update closely and anticipates reaching net zero through the CAP Update and other ongoing land use planning changes (e.g., Sustainable Land Use Framework, Development Feasibility Analysis, VMT threshold and forthcoming mitigation program).

Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update establishes GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identifies measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Comment O3-3
The comment states that the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative is more appropriate for selection as the environmentally superior alternative than the Distributed Energy Only Alternative but was "dismissed as not feasible" without sufficient evidence.

Response O3-3
The Sustainable Communities Strategy is evaluated as a smart growth alternative in the Draft SEIR. It is not dismissed as infeasible. In fact, the alternatives analysis concludes that this is the only smart growth alternative that modeling indicates "would result in greater GHG emission reductions and less VMT than the CAP Update alone." However, the analysis does acknowledge that "this modeling assumes a shift in existing travel behavior based on a Road User Charge. SANDAG is reconsidering the feasibility of such a charge and the benefits of the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative may be reduced without this assumption" (Draft SEIR page 5-34). Furthermore, as summarized in Table 5-2 of the Draft SEIR, the Distributed Energy Only Alternative is anticipated to reduce the physical environmental impacts of CAP Update implementation across seven resource topics, although the alternative may impede the County's ability to meet short-term GHG reduction targets. Based on this alternative's potential to reduce impacts while achieving the basic objectives of the project, it was identified as environmentally superior. The Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative, by contrast, would only reduce impacts in two resource areas (GHG emissions and transportation). Nonetheless, because the relative environmental effects of implementing this alternative are disclosed in the Draft SEIR, the Board may direct staff to implement this alternative.

See also Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for further discussion of the smart growth alternatives considered.

Comment O3-4
The comment asserts that the CAP Update does not fully meet the CEQA objectives listed on page 3-4 of the Draft SEIR or achieve the established targets. The comment states that the CAP Update in combination with a smart growth alternative would meet the project objectives. The comment generally references attached comments on the CAP Update as evidence, but no details are provided in the comment.

Response O3-4
Project objectives are a component of a project description for an EIR. As explained in Section 15124(b) of Article 9 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports) of the State CEQA Guidelines, this statement of objectives "includes the underlying purpose of the project and may discuss the project benefits." The objectives aid in the identification and evaluation of alternatives. As indicated in Section 15126.6(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the "range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects."

The comment does not identify any specific deficiencies in the Draft SEIR's analysis or specify which of the project objectives would not be achieved. Furthermore, the comment does not specifically identify how the CAP Update together with a smart growth alternative would meet the project objectives. Therefore, no further response can be provided.

Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update establishes GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and describes how the co-benefits of measures and actions are considered in the CAP Update.

Comment O3-5
The comment states that the voluntary/permissive measures must be mandatory commitments to meet the net zero emissions target by 2045 and that without making the voluntary mitigation measures mandatory, the County cannot rely on the GHG threshold and Checklist consistency to assure net zero compliance.

Response O3-5
Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. See also Response O3-2 above regarding net zero compliance.

Comment O3-6
The comment expresses support for the scope of the alternatives analysis.

Response O3-6
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O3-7
The comment states that the finding of less-than-significant impacts related to GHG emissions is not supported by the analysis because 15 percent of the GHG emissions reduction are based on voluntary/permissive measures.

Response O3-7
This SEIR analyzes the impacts of implementation of the CAP Update, which has been developed to reduce GHG emissions associated with the buildout of the General Plan,

pursuant to 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 (“Prepare a County Climate Change Action Plan”). Any future construction related to implementation of the CAP Update would be sporadic and inherently short term and would facilitate the development of projects that would ultimately reduce GHG emissions. Operation of the CAP Update measures and actions would, by design, reduce GHG emissions in the unincorporated county to the extent that the County has done its “fair share” in assisting the state in meeting its long-term GHG emissions reduction targets. Any temporary construction GHG emissions would be offset by the overall net benefit of GHG emissions reduction. Therefore, implementation of these measures and their associated actions would not generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. Section 2.8.3.4 of the Draft SEIR, analyzes the project impacts related to conflicts with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The Draft SEIR analysis concludes that implementation for the CAP Update would achieve the state’s GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and supports, with substantial evidence, the less-than-significant conclusion.

The thresholds used in the GHG analysis in this SEIR are appropriately aligned with the CAP Updates GHG targets and the 85 percent reduction target in AB 1279. The net zero target set in the 2022 Scoping Plan is intended to apply at the state level; attainment is based on programs (i.e., direct carbon capture and mechanical carbon dioxide removal) that are not feasible at the county level. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, “Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions,” which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. Projects, including the proposed CAP Update, do not need to quantify attainment of a net zero threshold to demonstrate that they would not 1) generate GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment or 2) conflict with an adopted plan for the reduction of GHG emissions (i.e., the 2022 Scoping Plan).

Comment O3-8

The comment makes unclear reference to “Items 13.1.1 and 13.1.2.” The comment states that the CAP Update “relies on other plans” that reduce VMT and explains that certain projects may be exempt from these requirements. This is provided as evidence that the impact determinations in the Draft SEIR are not supported.

Response O3-8

The Draft SEIR does not include “Items 13.1.1 and 13.1.2.” Because of the content of the remainder of the comment, the County assumed that the comment relates to the analysis of transportation impacts in Section 2.13, “Transportation,” of the Draft SEIR. This section uses the County’s Transportation Study Guidelines (TSG) as part of the framework for determining significance criterion to evaluate the project’s VMT impacts. The TSG was developed as a guide for analyzing the transportation impacts of proposed projects in the unincorporated county and the manner in which transportation impacts under CEQA are measured due to SB 743, which shifts the focus from Level of Service to VMT. The County’s TSG identifies screening criteria for VMT analysis, including infill development in Transit Opportunity Areas. The TSG describes how infill areas in the unincorporated

county were identified and where projects can be screened from VMT analysis. In addition, as outlined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1), new development located within 0.5 miles of a major transit stop should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact, regardless of if their anticipated VMT generation.

The impact analysis in Section 2.13 describes the effect of the CAP Update on countywide VMT (See "Issue 2: Exceed Threshold for VMT" beginning on page 2.13-30 of the Draft SEIR). This analysis identifies VMT associated with anticipated growth under the General Plan for the years 2035 and 2050 based on the SANDAG activity-based model. The analysis also explains that "the TSG establishes VMT thresholds for large land use plans as 15 percent below the existing regional average VMT per resident and 15 percent below the existing regional average VMT per employee for residential and employment uses, respectively" and, based on this threshold, "growth consistent with the General Plan would exceed the TSG thresholds for land use plans" (Draft SEIR page 2.13-31). This impact analysis subsequently concludes that implementation of the CAP Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to VMT. Specifically, the Draft SEIR includes evaluation of the VMT reductions anticipated from CAP Update Actions T-3.1, T-4.1, T-4.1.a, T-4.2, T-5.1, T-5.1.a, T-5.1.b, T-5.2, T-6.1, T-6.2, T-6.2.a, T-6.2.b, and T-6.3. These actions could result in the construction of new transit-supportive roadway treatments and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the implementation of transportation demand management programs to reduce the use of single occupancy vehicles, and educational initiatives to encourage increased alternative transportation in the unincorporated county. Modeling was conducted to evaluate the VMT reductions from CAP Update actions (see Tables 2.13-3 and 2.13-4 in the Draft EIR). The VMT analysis included in Section 2.13 of the Draft SEIR is consistent with the provision of the County's TSG and State CEQA Guidelines.

The VMT modeling that is used in the CAP Update forecasts is based on a SANDAG modeling scenario. Although the TSG informs the thresholds used in the SEIR analysis, the CAP Update VMT data does not reflect implementation of the TSG. The TSG are also not specifically referenced in the CAP Update measures and actions. Specific CAP Update modeling assumptions are explained in CAP Update Appendix 3 (Unincorporated County of San Diego 2019 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Projections).

Therefore, the SEIR analysis does not inappropriately assume VMT reductions from future projects that would be exempt from the TSG and CAP Update. Implementation would not affect the implementation of those separate guidelines for future projects.

Comment O3-9
The comment states that the Draft SEIR should include additional information and analysis of potential biological impacts related to large-scale solar facilities.

Response O3-9
The comment refers to the discussion of the effects of energy measures and actions related to "Issue 1: Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species" in the Draft SEIR pages 2.4-14 through 2.4-17. This impact analysis covers all the energy-related measures, including potential for increased demand for renewable energy to indirectly result in the

development of small- and large-scale solar facilities. The Draft SEIR does not proport to cover the entirety of the impacts from individual renewable projects, which would be designed and proposed by others as separate projects subject to separate discretionary actions that receive separate CEQA review. The purpose of the discussion in the Draft SEIR is to disclose the potential for indirect impacts due to growing demand. The discussion is appropriately informed by readily available information that is incorporated by reference. The actual impacts would depend on many factors (such as size and location of renewable energy projects) about which the County is not required to speculate.

The impact analysis in the Draft SEIR discloses that implementation of CAP Update Action E-3.3 could result in the construction of solar arrays, small wind turbines, and large-scale renewable energy infrastructure. Pages 2.4-18 and 2.4-19 explain:

> Subsequent projects associated with CAP Update implementation would be required to comply with applicable existing federal, state, and local regulations, as well as with the General Plan Policies COS-1.3, COS-1.6, COS-1.7, COS-1.8, COS-1.9, COS-1.10, COS-1.11, COS-2.1, COS-2.2, LU-6.1, LU-6.2, LU-6.3, LU-6.4, LU-6.6, LU-6.7, LU-10.2, and M-12.9 that would reduce the potential for impacts to special-status species. Specifically, projects would be evaluated for their consistency with policies and regulations including County Grading Ordinance regulations, and the County RPO regulations, and the 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measures Bio-1.1, Bio-1.5, and Bio-1.6. CAP Update Mitigation Measures Bio-1 and Bio-2 also would be applied to the project to further reduce impacts associated with large-scale renewable energy development. These measures would require implementation of measures to avoid sensitive biological resources; preserve habitat; requirement revegetation of disturbed areas; and restrict lighting, runoff, access and/or noise on future renewable energy development sites. Additionally, standard measures as outlined in the *County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Biological Resources* would be required to be implemented.

The Draft SEIR provides sufficient detail of the potential indirect effects of CAP Update implementation to foster informed decision making. Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. No revisions have been made to the Draft SEIR in response to this comment.

Comment O3-10

The comment states that an increase in electric vehicle use and continued development in the unincorporated county, in combination with new transportation infrastructure, could have larger impacts to biological resources compared to more compact and sustainable development.

Response O3-10

The CAP Update is a mitigation measure for the adopted General Plan. As explained in Section 9.1.1.3, “Master Response: CAP Update GHG Targets, Measures, and Actions,” the County’s forecasts are set based on reasonably foreseeable growth under the adopted General Plan and the targets are achieved through a suite of GHG emission

reduction measures. The effects of growth and development under the adopted General Plan were evaluated in the 2011 GPU PEIR.

Section 2.4, "Biological Resources," of this SEIR provides a detailed evaluation of the effects of implementing the CAP Update, including the proposed built environment and transportation measures and actions. The analysis concludes that impacts would not be more severe than disclosed in the 2011 GPU PEIR. Further, any transportation infrastructure (e.g., EV charging stations) constructed because of CAP Update implementation would be subject to separate CEQA review as part any subsequent discretionary action by the Board to evaluate the physical environmental effects of their construction and operation. The CAP Update does not include land use or zoning changes and would not directly allow or prohibit development. Transitioning to EVs would reduce GHG emissions from forecasted buildout of the General Plan; there is no evidence that implementing these measures as part of the CAP Update would affect the location or rate of growth in the unincorporated county. There are not, therefore, changes to the adopted land use plan that are omitted from analysis in the Draft SEIR and no evidence that implementing the CAP Update in conjunction with the adopted General Plan would result in greater effects to biological resources than implementing the adopted General Plan alone.

For a discussion of the relative impacts of the adopted General Plan and CAP Update compared to scenarios with more compact development, refer to Section 5.5, "Smart Growth Alternatives," of the Draft SEIR and Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," above. If directed by the Board, these smart growth alternatives could be implemented in conjunction with the measures and actions in the CAP Update to influence the locations of future growth in the county. Refer also to Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for more information regarding the purpose of the CAP Update.

Comment O3-11

The comment indicates that CAP Update conflicts with the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) because it "relies disproportionately" on electrical vehicles to reduce GHG emissions in the Built Environment and Transportation sector.

Response O3-11

Under SB 375, SANDAG's RTP/SCS must include local land use patterns and regional transportation strategies that, if implemented, would achieve CARB-established 2035 targets for the reduction of GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. The CAP Update includes several actions that would complement the RTP/SCS by reducing vehicle miles traveled by passenger vehicles to reduce GHG emissions (T-3.1, T-4.1, T-4.1.a, T-4.2, T-5.1, T-5.1.a, T-5.1.b, T-5.2, T-6.1, T-6.2, T-6.2.a, T-6.2.b, and T-6.3). In addition, the CAP Update includes actions to reduce GHG emissions through electrification of passenger vehicles and other vehicle categories (T-1.1, T-3.1, T-3.1.c, and T-4.2). The GHG emissions reductions realized by these actions of the County's CAP Update would be additional to passenger vehicle GHG emissions reductions achieved by implementation of the RTP/SCS. Moreover, the proportion of GHG emissions reductions achieved by

VMT reduction actions relative to transportation electrification actions in the County's CAP Update has no bearing on SANDAG's ability to achieve the passenger vehicle GHG emissions reduction targets of the RTP/SCS.

The applicable GHG emissions reduction plans discussed in the Draft SEIR Section 2.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," are the 2022 Scoping Plan and the Regional Plan (including the RTP/SCS). The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies three priority areas for local governments as they develop their local climate plans, measures, policies, and actions. The three priority areas include VMT reduction, electrification of transportation, and buildings decarbonization. The CAP Update has been prepared in consideration of these three priority areas. Specifically, the CAP Update includes VMT reduction actions T-3.1, T-4.1, T-4.1.a, T-4.2, T-5.1, T-5.1.a, T-5.1.b, T-5.2, T-6.1, T-6.2, T-6.2.a, T-6.2.b, and T-6.3; transportation electrification actions T-1.1, T-3.1, T-3.1.c, and T-4.2; and buildings decarbonization actions E-1.1, E-2.2, E-2.2.c, and E-3.2.a.

As discussed on pages 2.8-25 and 2.8-26 of the Draft SEIR, the Regional Plan reduces per capita GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks to 20 percent below 2005 levels by 2035, exceeding the region's state-mandated target of 19 percent. The 2021 Regional Plan also meets federal air quality conformity requirements. The CAP Update would align with the goals of the Regional Plan by achieving GHG reductions through reductions in anthropogenic GHG emissions through implementing measures and actions aimed at promoting multimodal transportation and reducing VMT (e.g., Actions T-4.1, T-4.2, T-4.6, T-5.1, T-5.1.a, T-5.1.b, T-5.2, T-6.1, T-6.2, T-6.2.a, T-6.2.b, and T-6.3).

Therefore, implementation of the CAP Update would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, including the RTP/SCS contained in the 2021 Regional Plan.

Comment O3-12

The comment states that the CAP Update would result in a considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact because the CAP Update only commits to mandatory measures to reach 85 percent GHG emissions reduction compared to the net zero GHG emissions by 2045 mandated per AB 1279.

Response O3-12

As explained above in Response O3-2, AB 1279 does not establish that GHG emissions must be reduced to net zero by 2045 in order to avoid significant cumulative impacts. Rather, this legislation established a policy for the state to achieve net zero emissions as soon as possible and ensure anthropogenic emissions are reduced to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Global climate change is inherently cumulative. Therefore, GHG emissions related to implementation of the CAP Update discussed in Section 2.8.3.3, "Issue 1: Generate GHG

Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, That May Have a Significant Impact on the Environment," of the Draft SEIR (pages 2.8-17 through 2.8-24) also serve as the cumulative impact analysis. Given the cumulative nature of the analysis of GHG impacts, the conclusion, as supported by substantial evidence, that the CAP Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to generating GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment, translates into a finding that the CAP Update would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

Comment O3-13

The comment quotes the conclusion in the Draft SEIR that the Distributed Energy Only Alternative would be environmentally superior to the project because it would reduce significant and unavoidable impacts related to the induced demand for large-scale renewable energy systems while potentially achieving both the primary objective of GHG emissions reductions consistent with SB 32, AB 1279, and all other supporting project objectives. The comment then cites the 2022 *San Diego Regional Decarbonization Framework Technical Report* as evidence that this alternative may not sufficiently meet clean energy demands and suggests that the concern is not adequately addressed in the Draft SEIR.

Response O3-13

As explained in the Draft SEIR, the Distributed Energy Only Alternative was identified as a potential alternative to the CAP Update in response to comments received during the NOP scoping process. CAP Update Action E-3.3 would require the County to develop a program to provide the unincorporated area with 100 percent renewable energy from San Diego Community Power by 2030. Implementation of proposed CAP Update Action E-3.3 could result in the construction of new large-scale renewable energy systems, including large-scale solar and wind turbines. As outlined in Section 5.4.1.2, "Distributed Generation Only Alternative," of the Draft SEIR, this alternative would modify Action E-3.3, which would commit the County to developing a program to provide the unincorporated county with 100 percent renewable energy through distributed generation. The Draft SEIR indicates that the first step in implementing this alternative would be the completion of a feasibility study that would inform the types of distributed generation and potential incentives. The description also explains that the County would continue to allow the construction of large-scale renewable energy "subject to its ordinances, policies, and standards" (Draft SEIR page 5-12). However, this alternative would eliminate the assumed development of large-scale renewable energy systems as a result of implementation of CAP Update Action E-3.3.

The *San Diego Regional Decarbonization Framework Technical Report* identifies distributed energy generation as a key component of a program to reduce GHG emissions that is used in a variety of CAPs. The report notes that local jurisdictions "play an essential role in furthering distributed generation" (McCord et.at. 2022: 505). The *San Diego Regional Decarbonization Framework Technical Report* reflects energy demand for the entire region and provides examples of how, under current land use, technology, and grid conditions, the region can generate renewable energy to meet projected demand.

Although the analysis does not specifically reference the findings of the 2022 *San Diego Regional Decarbonization Framework Technical Report*, the discussion acknowledges that "it would be more complicated and time-intensive to produce energy in this manner" and that "challenges could add substantial time and complexity to the generation of distributed energy within the unincorporated county." For this reason, the SEIR notes, "it is anticipated that the Distributed Generation Only Alternative may not meet the project objectives related to meeting the SB 32 target in 2030" (Draft SEIR pages 5-12 through 5-13). However, because the alternative would meet other project objectives (e.g., supporting the sustainability principles in the General Plan and minimizing undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners), it was carried forward for full analysis (See Chapter 5, "Alternatives"). Furthermore, the County would use the reporting and inventory requirements to monitor the success of the measure and adjust accordingly.

The Draft SEIR provides a clear rationale for identifying the Distributed Energy Only Alternative as environmentally superior and appropriately discloses the challenges associated with alternative implementation and the potential effect on near-term reduction goals. No changes to the Draft SEIR have been made in response to this comment.

Please also refer to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for further discussion of the County's obligation to evaluate alternatives to the project and an explanation of the identification of an environmentally superior alternative.

Comment O3-14

The comment indicates that the "objections to selecting" Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative as the environmentally superior alternative are not credibly justified in the Draft SEIR and the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative should be "selected as the preferred project."

Response O3-14

The Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative is discussed in Section 5.5.3.3 of the Draft SEIR. As discussed in the Draft SEIR on pages 5-19 through 5-21, the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative could result in more GHG emissions reductions associated with VMT in the unincorporated county compared to the CAP. However, the anticipated VMT reductions are based on the Regional Plan's premise of a distribution of growth in Mobility Hubs that encompass areas outside the County's control and a pattern of growth that is inconsistent with the existing General Plan density and historical development patterns. Future development patterns that would be consistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy would require substantial land use and zoning changes by the County. Therefore, the actual VMT reductions achieved under this alternative likely would be less than modeled for the analysis in the Draft SEIR.

As described above in Response O3-3, assuming the implementation of the Road User Charge or another equally effective measure in a future plan, the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative would reduce GHG emissions (which are already less than significant with implementation of the proposed CAP Update) and VMT (which is a

significant impact with implementation of the proposed CAP Update). However, the Distributed Energy Only Alternative would reduce the effects of implementing the CAP Update measures and actions across seven resource areas for which significant and unavoidable impacts are identified. Therefore, based on its ability to best reduce the effects of CAP Update implementation, the Distributed Energy Only Alternative was identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

See Section 9.1.1.2, “Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR,” for further discussion.

Comment O3-15
The comment provides a summary of Comments O3-4 and O3-14.

Response O3-15
See Response to O3-4, regarding project objectives, and Response O3-14, regarding Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Letter
O4

Sierra Club San Diego Chapter
4241 Jutland Drive, STE 303
San Diego, CA 92117

December 28, 2023

Sent via email to: CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov

County of San Diego
ATTN: Meghan Kelly
Climate Action Plan SEIR Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue,
Suite 310 San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Ms. Kelly and County Officials:

This letter is the official response by Sierra Club San Diego to the County's latest Climate Action Plan and SEIR. This letter is provided in the spirit of collaboration between the County of San Diego (hereafter County) and Sierra Club San Diego (hereafter Sierra Club). In the past the Sierra Club brought successful court actions concerning the two prior County Climate Action Plans (CAP). We are hopeful that the County will negotiate and collaborate with us to strengthen the latest CAP and avoid the delays and substantial monetary costs that litigation has created in the past.

The latest CAP has many excellent provisions and actions. We agree that there are substantial co-benefits to the health and wellbeing of residents from reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and the concomitant reductions in air pollution, growing the green economy and reducing household transportation costs. 04-1

Sierra Club greatly appreciates that in the opening page of the 2024 CAP the document calls our present circumstance a "Climate Emergency." It is this emergency that requires developing the strongest County Climate Action Plan.

Similarly, Sierra Club supports a primary goal of the SEIR: "The underlying purpose of the project is to reduce GHG emissions that could be generated by development under the General Plan, and to reduce those emissions consistent with state legislative mandates and the

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requirement to prepare a CAP pursuant to Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR. This mitigation measure sets out to reduce GHG emissions from community-wide sources and County local government operations (County operations) that are consistent with the General Plan." Likewise, Sierra Club supports: "Goal COS-20 in the San Diego County General Plan sets a target to reduce local GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 to be consistent with the statewide goal established by AB 32." Sierra Club strongly believes it is not sufficient to merely reduce GHG; the CAP must provide reduction of GHG to 1990 levels and below.

O4-1 cont.

Despite Sierra Club's support for many provisions of the CAP the CAP does not contain any apparent analyses that show the CAP's collective plans will result in a given amount of GHG emission reduction and particularly not reduced to 1990 GHG levels or below. Sierra Club requests that such an analysis be completed with detailed action by action metrics that show how these measures would result in the desired reductions in GHG to below 1990 levels.

O4-2

Similarly, the Sierra Club is surprised that the CAP is almost entirely goal oriented and therefore only aspirational in context. The CAP mostly requires subsequent legislation, programs, and actions to implement the specifics of the CAP rather than being a free-standing document that could be quickly implemented and serve as the basis for future decision-making. Sierra Club requests upgrading the CAP to a free-standing legal document.

The County's new CAP is wedded to the 2011 General Plan. The CAP states that the: "General Plan Goal COS-20 (Governance and Administration) Reduction of community-wide (i.e., unincorporated county) and County operations GHG emissions contributing to climate change that meet or exceed requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, as amended by Senate Bill 32 (as amended), Pavley. California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: emissions limit) and Assembly Bill 1279 (2022) to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2045." Again, it is unclear if the new CAP amends the General Plan to become law or is a free-standing document that still requires other actions by the Board of Supervisors. The enforceability of the CAP needs to be clearly articulated.

O4-3

This CAP appears to amend the General Plan to provide: a Climate Action Plan for the reduction of community-wide (i.e., unincorporated county) and County operations GHG emissions consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15183.5 (or as amended). A revised CAP should clarify the CAP's relationship with the General Plan.

ANALYSIS OF THE TERMS DOCUMENT

In January 2021 Sierra Club San Diego provided a Terms Document (hereafter called Terms) in response to the County's Notice of Preparation on the CAP. In the following sections Sierra Club analyze each of the Terms and the degree to which the CAP was responsive to each term. Sierra Club began by offering five primary terms.

O4-4

A. Addressed 2021 Sierra Club Terms:

1. **Community Choice Aggregation.** Sierra Club's first term requested that "**the County stablish Establish a Community Choice Aggregation program to provide 100% renewable energy by 2035."**

   We are gratified that the SEIR contains a provision for a Community Choice Aggregation Program, that the County joined *San Diego Community Power* in 2021, and that the CAP is committed to "100 percent renewable electricity by 2030." The SEIR states: "In 2021, the San Diego County and National City voted to join SDCP. SDCP is a Community Choice Aggregation that allows customers to enroll on a voluntary basis. San Diego Community Power (SDCP) purchases electricity from renewable resources that is then delivered to consumers through a grid infrastructure owned and maintained by San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDGE)."

   As important an aspiration that clean energy goals are stated, Sierra Club is disappointed and concerned that the CAP lacks any details on how this goal of 100% clean energy by 2030 will be achieved. A thorough search of the CAP and the SEIR reveals no details on how the County could achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030. This goal will be very hard to achieve because selecting 100% renewable energy is an option for each individual energy user enrolled in SDCP. Approximately 95% of customers in the County get their power from SDCP. However, the vast majority of customers receive 50% renewable energy not 100% renewable energy. Individual customers must opt up for Power100 which provides 100% renewable energy but only 5-10% have opted up for Power100 thus far. SDCP is striving to get more customers to opt up for Power100. Perhaps a resolution is for the CAP and SEIR to provide a provision to make Power 100 mandatory by 2030 or 2035. A final EIR should provide considerably more detail as to how this goal will be achieved. Short of such detail 100% renewable energy is still just an aspiration. The CAP could propose a mechanism to achieve its goal of "100 percent renewable electricity by 2030" but it fails to do so. For example, the County could propose to subsidize the cost difference between 50% and 100% renewable energy which is less than a percent difference in cost. Or the County could devise other incentives to meet their goal of 100% renewable energy by 2030. In summary, the revised CAP needs to include such incentives or mechanisms whereby 100% renewable energy can be achieved. O4-5

2. The **Firesafe and low VMT program.** Sierra Club's second term requested the County "(**d)ownzone lands in Calfire's high/highest fire risk areas and highest vehicle miles (VMT) travelled areas of the county."** Sierra Club is disappointed that O4-6

neither the CAP nor SEIR call for such a measure as the primary alternative. In the Smart Growth section of the SEIR one of the primary alternatives calls for a "Firesafe and low VMT program" that prohibits development in the high and very high fire zone. Sierra Club is disappointed that the CAP and SEIR did not recommend the "Firesafe and low VMT program" (Firesafe), as the primary Smart Growth measure. The Firesafe program has three major advantages over the other Smart Growth alternatives.

First, according to the EIR it: "Moves half of unincorporated County household growth to unincorporated VMT efficient areas that are considered fire safe." Sierra Club submits that permitting more building in the highest fire zones of California defies logic and common sense.

Second, the Firesafe alternative reduced the most VMT and the corresponding GHG. Sierra Club has always maintained that building closest to existing development and transit is the best way to reduce GHG. Indeed, a viable climate action plan should seek to reduce GHG as much as possible and the Firesafe plan accomplishes that goal.

Third, the Firesafe plan alternative preserves the most coastal sage scrub and chaparral. This is not just a matter of conserving open space for plants and animals; the sage scrub and chaparral habitat provide fabulous and abundant storage of GHG. In another unrelated section the CAP it does state that: "Acquisition of conservation land reduces emissions that would have occurred if the land were developed and prevents the loss of critical habitat." However, the CAP provides no analysis for the benefits of avoided conversion nor is the GHG savings of open space ever quantified in the CAP. Sierra Club respectfully asks for a new analysis in a revised EIR of how much carbon storage will be lost in the various Smart Growth alternatives. This must be included in a viable CAP.

O4-6 cont.

3. **Bar General Plan amendments.** Sierra Club's third term states that the CAP should: **Bar General Plan amendments for increased commercial or residential development in Calfire's high/highest fire risk areas and highest vehicle miles (VMT) travelled areas of the county.**

   As stated above, the Firesafe and low VMT program that would bar developments from the high and very high fire areas should be the stated preferred plan advocated by the County SEIR.

O4-7

In fact, the CAP maintains that land use should NOT be part of the CAP. The SEIR explicitly states that: "Because the CAP mitigates for the General Plan, it cannot and does not make land use changes (although some of those changes are analyzed as Alternatives and can be directed by the Board along with CAP approval)." The CAP goes on to say that: "Because of the limited scope of the CAP tool, the County is also simultaneously working on a range of other programs to address climate change: a Sustainable Land Use Framework to address potential land use changes; a Regional Decarbonization Framework to provide a voluntary regional framework for governments and private entities to reduce carbon emissions; and a Transportation Program that will address VMT mitigation measures for development within the unincorporated county." Sierra Club strongly believes that land use is a vital part of the CAP and must be included and analyzed. The County Regional Decarbonization plans are laudable voluntary programs but they must be central to the CAP not peripheral programs outside of the CAP. Similarly, an auxiliary transportation program that County says will "address VMT measures" should be a central component of the County CAP. Remember, VMT produces more GHG than any other source; the CAP and SEIR must make this a central part of the carbon reduction in the county.

O4-7 cont.

In summary, this CAP update fails to deal with land use, one of the most important issues in our Sierra Clubs term sheet for settlement of our existing litigation. Land use and corresponding VMT is absolutely central to a viable CAP. The Sierra Club respectfully requests that land use be included as a central part of a revised CAP.

4. **FANITA RANCH, HARVEST HILLS, LILAC HILLS, NEWLAND SIERRA, OTAY RANCH VILLAGE 13, 14, 16, 19, RANCHO GUEJITO.** Sierra Club's fourth term stated: "Purchase Fanita Ranch, Harvest Hills, Lilac Hills, Newland Sierra, Otay Ranch Village 13, Otay Ranch Village 14/16/19, and Rancho Guejito to avoid conversion to development and/or as a natural habitat lands GHG mitigation bank."

Sierra Club is gratified that the CAP has a strong provision for purchase of natural habitat lands. Although the Sierra Club finds nothing in the SEIR or CAP to purchase any of these specific tracts of land, the general CAP does say: "To preserve and manage the region's unique, native habitats and wildlife biodiversity for future generations, the County will acquire conservation land and develop a framework for restoring these lands to their natural state. Acquisition of conservation land reduces emissions that would have occurred if the land were developed and prevents the loss of critical habitat. Through 2022, 8,766 acres have been acquired. A Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework will guide the restoration and

O4-8

management of lands to increase carbon storage within the conserved areas." Sierra Club is supportive of the CAP's plan to acquire substantial additional conservation land.

Similarly, Sierra Club is generally supportive of three specific provisions that have been included in the CAP.

First, the CAP promises to "Acquire 11,000 acres of conservation land by 2030 and 1,000 acres per year thereafter to preserve land in perpetuity." Sierra Club supports this provision.

Second the CAP states that the County intends to: "Develop a Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework for County-owned land by 2030 and restore 80 acres per year thereafter to increase carbon storage." Sierra Club supports the concept of such a habitat restoration program but wishes it would be substantially more than 80 acres per year.

Sierra Club supports a third provision that the County will: "Partner with tribal governments to incorporate tribal ecological knowledge and apply indigenous land management practices to contribute towards habitat restoration efforts on County land."

In a revised CAP Sierra Club requests the provisions of metrics that estimate how much GHG would be avoided by preserving the aforementioned habitats.

O4-8 cont.

5. **Recycling of organic waste.** Sierra Club's fifth term is to: **Establish a program to recycle 100% of all organic waste.**

The CAP incentivizes the development of new composting/anaerobic digestion facilities and on-farm digesters to divert compostable waste from landfills in the unincorporated area. Sierra Club is supportive of this measure.

The County CAP advocates for: "Solid Waste: Increased waste diversion and improved waste management practices." More specifically it will create a "county-wide culture of avoiding, recycling, or composting waste, where emissions associated with landfills have been eliminated, and people have equitable access to recycling and compost facilities, opportunities for economic development, and are encouraged to reuse and share materials." Sierra Club supports avoiding, recycling, and composting waste. However, a revised CAP should provide an estimate of how much GHG emission is avoided by such measures.

O4-9

The CAP proposes to continue this program through 2025. "In 2017, the County adopted the Strategic Plan to Reduce Waste, containing over 15 individual programs and initiatives to reduce various waste types and sources, such as reducing food and other organic waste generated from residential and commercial uses, to establish a 75% waste diversion target by 2025." Sierra Club supports this ambitious goal. O4-9 cont.

B. Additional Sierra Club 2021 terms for County facilities:

In addition to the five primary terms the Sierra Club provided a set of *additional terms* for changes at both **County facilities** and for the unincorporated county that should be included in the County CAP. **The County should implement the following additional measures to achieve net negative 100% GHG emissions by 2035:**

1. **Electrification of Facilities:** The first Sierra Club term recommends that **the CAP should include a provision to convert natural gas or propane utilities to electric at County facilities.**

   Sierra Club is supportive of the CAP measures to phase out GHG-producing natural gas and propane at County facilities. The CAP says that "the County will ensure County facilities are reducing its energy use intensity—the power needed to operate a building per square foot—and emissions through zero net energy construction, building electrification, and on-site renewable generation. For new and existing development, the County will develop policies and programs to transition to renewable energy powered buildings." However, no analysis, timeline, or metrics are provided to offer details as to how this will be accomplished. Sierra Club respectfully requests that these details of how and when natural gas and propane will be phased out to County buildings and how and when the County will transition to "renewable energy powered buildings." Like some other parts of this CAP, the plan is aspirational rather than stating defined actions and providing metrics. O4-10

2. **Renewables Upgrades:** The second Sierra Club term states: **Install photovoltaic solar panels, wind turbines, and/or other onsite renewable energy and batteries at County facilities.**

   The CAP and SEIR contain provisions on renewables that the Sierra Club generally supports. The CAP states: "The County has received certification in 'Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design' (LEED) for 29 County facilities through 2022, equating to 1,720,015 square feet of built resource efficiency." Sierra Club applauds the County for this substantial progress toward renewable energy at County O4-11

facilities. However, this progress has already occurred; it is not a Climate Action Plan which must adopt policies for the **future**.

The CAP also says: "To continue this forward progress, the Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan, developed in 2021, outlines steps the County will take to further reduce operational carbon emissions. This measure will implement the Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan and demonstrate leadership and best practices in County facilities." Although details are not provided, Sierra Club will await their availability in the County's Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan.

The CAP also pledges: "to implement the County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan to achieve 90% reduction in operational carbon emissions by 2030 through building electrification and zero net energy construction, energy efficiency, energy management, and renewable energy use and generation." Sierra Club supports these general provisions."

The CAP contains no specific plans for solar, wind, or other renewable energy sources nor does the CAP provide for battery storage of renewable energy. Sierra Club would like to see more details of renewable energy at County facilities in a revised EIR and CAP.

O4-11 cont.

3. **Electric Heat Pumps:** The third Sierra Club term was recommended to: **Install electric heat pumps to provide air and water heating and cooling at County facilities.**

   There is no mention of heat pumps in the CAP. However, the CAP promises: "Through implementation of measures within this sector, the County will ensure County facilities are reducing its energy use intensity—the power needed to operate a building per square foot—and emissions through zero net energy construction, building electrification, and on-site renewable generation." Again, these are good, though vague generalities; more detail is needed in a revised CAP on specific plans for county facilities to reduce its energy use intensity.

O4-12

4. **Install improved weatherization.** Although there is nothing specific on weatherization or insulation at County facilities in the CAP, it does provide for: "Lower utility rates through reduced consumption at County facilities. Improved energy efficiency and air quality in buildings that are often accessed by frontline communities for direct services." It is likely that the CAP's promise of improved energy efficiency would include measures like weatherization and insulation but the current statements lack sufficient specificity to know for sure.

The CAP also promises to: "Implement the County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan to achieve 90% reduction in operational carbon emissions by 2030 through building electrification and zero net energy construction, energy efficiency, energy management, and renewable energy use and generation." While more specificity would be desirable in a revised CAP, Sierra Club trusts that these efficiency measures would include insulation and weatherization.

O4-12 cont.

5. **Install graywater systems at County facilities.** The Sierra Clubs fifth term for reducing GHG at County facilities is installing gray water systems at County facilities.

   The CAP says: "Through implementation of measures within this sector, the County will ensure all County facilities are installing water efficiency and water reuse systems wherever feasible."

   Additionally, the CAP pledges to decrease GHG by: "Reducing potable water use in County facilities through the implementation of water efficient improvements and retrofit projects will reduce utility consumption and costs and conserve regional water resources."

   If these provisions are consistent with Sierra Club's call to increase graywater use at County Facilities, then Sierra Club supports this provision.

O4-13

6. **EV County fleet.** The sixth Sierra Club term for reducing GHG in County operations was to **convert County vehicle fleets to electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.**

   The CAP includes several relevant statements on the County fleet: "Expanding previous County efforts that have reduced fleet emissions by 10% in 2022, this measure will reduce the County fleet's fossil fuel consumption by implementing County plans that guide fleet vehicle retirement and replacement with zero-emission options, increasing the use of cleaner fuels, and establishing policies that limit vehicle and small equipment emissions from County operations." These are great goals supported by Sierra Club but again lacking detail, metrics, and timelines.

   The CAP also states that: "The 2019 Electric Vehicle Roadmap and 2023 Green Fleet Action Plan guide the transition of over 4,300 County vehicles and off-road equipment to zero emission options and cleaner fuels." Sierra Club is supportive of these fleet improvements but would like more specificity, timelines, and metrics in a revised CAP.

O4-14

Sierra Club praises the CAP's statement that: "Through 2022, the County has planned or installed 56 EV chargers that are available for the public and an additional 203 EV chargers for County fleet vehicles."

Similarly, we support this goal: "The County will prioritize clean transportation by supporting and incentivizing access to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, particularly in frontline communities, converting the County fleet to electric."

These goals are on the right track but Sierra Club would like more specificity and timelines in a revised CAP.

O4-14 cont.

7. **<u>County employee dividend account parking.</u>** The seventh Sierra Club term for improvement at County facilities was: **Provide dividend account parking for all County employees.**

   Unfortunately, Sierra Club can find no evidence of a plan for dividend account parking in the CAP. Sierra Club urges the County to provide a transportation stipend for all County employees while also charging for parking. This would provide a powerful incentive for thousands of County employees to walk, cycle, carpool, or take transit on their daily commutes. Sierra Club implores the County to include such a plan in the revised CAP.

   The CAP does include a provision supported by Sierra Club that states: "Expand County Benefit Program by 2026 to provide County employees with tax-free transportation benefits, alternative work schedules, and expand part-time or full-time teleworking options to reduce vehicle miles traveled from employee commutes by 40% in 2030 and 64% in 2045." Sierra club supports these provisions by would like to see dividend account parking added to these measures.

O4-15

8. **<u>Increase diversion of solid waste and capture landfill methane.</u>** The eighth Sierra Club term for improvement at County facilities asked to increase solid waste diversion. Sierra Club supports and supports the County for their goal Provided in the CAP to capture GHG from landfills.

   The CAP plans to reduce waste by: "Integrating recycling, reusing, and composting practices into the County's operations will reduce waste generation and increase waste diversion at County facilities. In 2022, County operations had an 80% diversion rate. This measure will expand upon previous practices (e.g., recycling, organic waste collection services, food waste prevention, working with waste haulers) to achieve zero waste (90% diversion) at County facilities by 2030."

O4-16

Additionally, the CAP Vision Statement says: "county-wide culture of avoiding, recycling, or composting waste, where emissions associated with landfills have been eliminated, and people have equitable access to recycling and compost facilities, opportunities for economic development, and are encouraged to reuse and share materials."

The CAP contains another good provision that the Sierra Club supports: "Conduct a feasibility study by 2027 and implement a landfill gas system pilot project at privately managed landfills by 2030 to exceed State requirements by 10% by 2045 in the incorporated area. SW-4.1a Incentivize the development of new composting/anaerobic digestion facilities and on-farm digesters to divert compostable waste from landfills in the unincorporated area." Sierra Club is highly supportive of these goals; the only caveat is that the Sierra Club would like to achieve these goals substantially earlier than 2045. Perhaps a revised CAP could revisit and accelerate these goals particularly since the CAP states that we are indeed in a "climate emergency."

O4-16 cont.

9. **Prohibit all gas-powered leaf blowers.** Consistent with the Sierra Club ninth term, the CAP states that the County will: "Amend Board policy to require 100% of landscaping equipment used on County property to be zero-emissions by 2030."

   The need for this measure in provide in the CAP. "Emissions from smaller gas and diesel-powered landscaping and off-road equipment, such as leaf blowers, lawnmowers, and other handheld equipment and vehicles used for construction and recreation (e.g., all-terrain vehicles, small boats, motorbikes), accounted for two percent of emissions in the unincorporated area in 2019. Using incentive programs and new policy, this measure will accelerate adoption of alternative fuel and zero emission options for landscaping and off-road construction equipment for both household and professional use." Sierra Club is supportive of these goals and looks forward to specific policy details from the Board of Supervisors. We take it that these plans include off-road equipment that is used by the County.

   Additionally, the CAP plans to: "Develop a program by 2026 to provide residents and businesses incentives to purchase alternative fuel and/or zero-emission construction and landscaping equipment to reduce emissions 3% by 2030. T-2.2 Develop and adopt a landscaping equipment ordinance to require the use of zero emission landscaping equipment by 2030 and zero emission construction equipment by 2045 in the unincorporated area." This plan is consistent with the Sierra Club Zero Waste policies and is an exemplary provision.

O4-17

10. **Plant and maintain trees.** Sierra Club's tenth term encourages and the CAP proposes to plant more trees: The CAP states: "The County's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) initiated its Tree Planting Program for the unincorporated area to plant a minimum of 3,500 trees annually starting in 2017 at County parks and open space preserves. Through 2022, 30,029 trees have been planted." Sierra club supports the County's existing tree planting initiative and implementation of an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to plant 70,560 trees by 2030 and 6,650 trees per year thereafter on County property and in the unincorporated area. DPR, PDS (DPW, DGS) 70,560 trees 103,810 trees 137,060 trees 170,310 trees 2,498 MTCO2e 3,675 MTCO2e 4,852 MTCO2e 6,029 MTCO2e A-2.1a Develop a program to preserve native trees in the unincorporated area. DPR (PDS) Program developed and implemented GHG reductions not quantified for "Path to Net Zero" actions A-2.1b Educate the public on the benefits and maintenance of native, fire resistant, and drought-tolerant tree plantings. PDS Educational programs implemented GHG reductions not quantified for "Path to Net Zero" actions A-2.2 Implement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single family residential development in the unincorporated area. O4-18

Additionally, the CAP proposes that: "Trees can be significant sources of carbon capture and storage due to their size and longevity. From 2015 to 2022, the Tree Planting Program at County Parks has planted 30,029 trees. This measure expands this effort to comprehensively focus on the preservation and expansion of tree canopy in the unincorporated area through the implementation of an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to improve air and water quality, and community health. Tree planting also enriches local ecosystems, supports biodiversity, provides shade, prevents soil erosion, and buffers against wind and noise." Sierra Club concurs with this analysis.

Specifically, the CAP plans to: Expand the County's existing tree planting initiative and implement an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to plant 70,560 trees by 2030 and 6,650 trees per year thereafter on County property and in the unincorporated area. A-2.1a Develop a program to preserve native trees in the unincorporated area. A-2.1b Educate the public on the benefits and maintenance of native, fire-resistant, and drought tolerant tree plantings. A-2.2 Implement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single family residential development in the unincorporated area.

Additionally, the CAP includes the following provisions which are supported by the Sierra Club.

a. Expand the County's existing tree planting initiative and implement an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to plant 70,560 trees by 2030 and 6,650 trees per year thereafter on County property and in the unincorporated area.

b. Develop a program to preserve native trees in the unincorporated area.

c. Educate the public on the benefits and maintenance of native, fire-resistant, and drought tolerant trees.

d. Implement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single family residential development in the unincorporated area.

O4-18 cont.

11. **Collaborate with SANDAG to support and implement the Five Big Moves.** Sierra Club's eleventh term requests that the County CAP to support an expanded county transportation system that extends practical, user-friendly transit into the unincorporated county. Sierra Club is disappointed that there is **no** mention of SANDAG "Five Big Moves" in the CAP of the EIR. However, also see the related term 12 below.

12. **Support short term extension of mass transit prior to implementation of SANDAG's "Five Big Moves.**" The Sierra Club is very disappointed that the CAP provides virtually no plans for extension of mass transit into the county. All that is provided in the CAP is an equivocal plan to "(e)valuate options for increasing transit service to unincorporated communities." Evaluating is not exactly a viable plan. The largest share of GHG comes from transportation. No CAP is viable if it fails to provide a transit plan that reduced driving and increase mass transit. Sierra Club respectfully requests that some real, concrete plans be provided in a revised CAP.

    The CAP establishes that "few areas served by public transportation particularly in semi-rural and rural communities." So, the need for viable public transportation in the unincorporated area is established.

O4-19

13. **<u>Support construction of bicycle trails and protected lanes for bikes and scooters.</u>** The CAP incorporates a general vision that includes provisions for: "Complete communities that leverage the unique characteristics of the unincorporated area, support critical services and amenities such as local businesses, parks, and libraries, include accessible options such as sidewalks and bike lanes, and where infrastructure to support public transportation and zero-emission vehicles is widely available."

O4-20

More specifically, the CAP seeks to: "Implement the County's Active Transportation Plan to install 345 miles of sidewalk and 315 miles of bikeways by 2030 to encourage alternative modes of transportation in the unincorporated area." Sierra Club contends that this increase of sidewalks and bikeways is extremely inadequate across the entire county! These measures should be expanded in a revised CAP if the County is serious about people using bicycles for transportation.

Sierra Club does support the CAP provision to: "Provide educational programs and campaigns to encourage County staff to walk, bike, and take transit."

O4-20 cont.

14. **Support installation of public electrical vehicle charging stations.** The CAP is supportive of this term and states: "In conformance with state law, the County's EV charger installation permitting system is streamlined to help unincorporated residents apply online and receive same day permits for residential EV charging stations."

Likewise, we support the CAP provision: "To reduce GHG emissions and air pollution from fossil fuel powered internal combustion engine vehicles, the County will facilitate a transition to zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) by helping to overcome drivers' concerns about up-front ZEV purchase price and a lack of access to charging stations. Through 2022, the County has planned or installed 56 public electric vehicle chargers. This measure will continue to expand access to charging stations and increase the number of ZEVs on the road through policy changes, ZEV infrastructure improvements, and incentive programming that increases access to ZEVs for priority populations."

Sierra Club also supports the CAP provision to: "Increase the use of electric and other zero-emission vehicles in the unincorporated area by: - Installing 2,040 publicly available electric vehicle charging stations by 2028. - Requiring the electrification of loading docks and idling reduction in new commercial and industrial development by 2030. - Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for ZEVs for new multi-family residential and non-residential construction. - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize EV purchases and school bus electrification."

"Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CalGreen or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for ZEVs for new multi-family residential and non-residential construction. Sierra Club supports preferred parking for ZEVs and would like it extended to all locations in the county."

O4-21

14

15. **Support construction of pedestrian overpasses and other pedestrian infrastructure.**

    The CAP does not refer to bridges or overpasses but it does offer the following which may be consistent with the Sierra Club Term: "The Active Transportation Plan improves pedestrian and bicycle safety and identifies opportunities to create a network of interconnected sidewalks." Likewise, the CAP says they plan to "(I)implement the County's Active Transportation Plan to install 345 miles of sidewalks." Sierra Club strongly recommends that the sidewalk expansion plan be dramatically increased in a revised CAP.

O4-22

16. **Support establishment of a local natural habitat lands GHG mitigation bank.** Sierra Club's sixteenth term provides for a local natural habitat lands GHG mitigation bank with avoided conversion to development and conservation management in perpetuity of habitat land inside or bordering existing or planned regional multiple species conservation plan preserves (e.g. City of San Diego Multiple Habitats Planning Area or County of San Diego Pre-Approved Mitigation Area) or the Cleveland National Forest inholdings.

    For many years Sierra Club has advocated for a mitigation bank within the County of San Diego and discussed it in many interactions with the County. Sierra Club is disappointed that there is no provision for a within-county mitigation bank in the CAP or SEIR. Nonetheless, plans for expanding MSCP land is related. Please see subsequent detailed discussion of MSCP discussion in a later part of this letter.

O4-23

17. **Support establishment of a local disadvantaged communities GHG mitigation bank.** Sierra Club's seventeenth term provides for establishment of a local disadvantaged communities GHG mitigation bank with replacement of commercial or personal GHG-emitting vehicles and equipment with electric vehicles and equipment, commercial or residential electrification, and other energy efficiency improvements to businesses or residences.

    Sierra Club find no provision in the cap for a mitigation bank. A private mitigation ban is already being established at the San Diego Foundation. Under this plan, GHG from construction projects that cannot mitigated on-site, would be mitigated through contributions to the San Diego Foundation mitigation bank. Funds from the mitigation bank would be used for projects to reduce GHG. Sierra Club strongly recommends including such a public or private mitigation bank in revised CAP.

C. Additional Sierra Club 2021 terms for businesses and residents.

Sierra Club provided a set of measures in our 2021 term sheet for existing businesses and residences: **The County should provide incentives and subsidies to existing businesses and residences for the following measures to achieve net negative 100% GHG emissions by 2035**:

1. **Conversion of natural gas or propane utilities to electric.** Residential power use constitutes the second largest share of GHG in San Diego County. The CAP does provide some measures to deal with this source of GHG.

   The CAP does include a provision that Sierra Club generally supports to: "Increase energy efficiency and reach 30% electrification in residential and 17% electrification in non-residential existing development in the unincorporated area by 2030 by: - Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar energy efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements. - Adopting a Building Energy Performance Standard by 2026 for commercial and multi-family residential properties. - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize building electrification and energy efficiency." Sierra Club is generally supportive of this provision in the CAP and will await the details of the program.

   One proposal in the CAP is to "Develop a program to phase out propane use for existing buildings." Sierra Club supports this goal.

   However, and most importantly, these plans need to be reconciled with the County's plan provided in the SEIR to provide "100 percent renewable electricity by 2030" which appears to contradict this provision. In a revised CAP and a revised EIR these plans need to be consistent to provide a coherent roadmap for the County's Climate Action Plan. We recommend the staff working on the CAP and other staff members working on the EIR collaborate to resolve these seemingly inconsistent provisions in the CAP and the SEIR.

O4-24

2. **Installation of photovoltaic solar panels and/or other onsite renewable energy and batteries.** Sierra Club strongly supports the CAP provision for "(t)transitioning away from fossil fuels and towards clean and renewable energy sources, such as solar photovoltaics and wind generated power, is essential to reducing the unincorporated area's GHG emissions and supporting a more sustainable future."

   The CAP points to considerable progress in permitting solar in the county. "The County has permitted residential solar power equivalent of nearly 81,000 homes through 2022. Over 90% were permitted through the County's Online Permits platform." It would be interesting to know what percentage of homes in the county

O4-25

have implemented Solar power as well as plans to provide regulations or incentives to increase the penetration of solar across the county.

The CAP acknowledges the need for more wind and solar power "(t)ransitioning away from fossil fuels and towards clean and renewable energy sources, such as solar photovoltaics and wind generated power, is essential to reducing the unincorporated area's GHG emissions and supporting a more sustainable future." What needs to be included in a revised CAP are estimates of how much GHG will be avoided through the use of these alternative energy sources. Moreover, Sierra Club would like to see a provision by the County for require solar in all new construction.

The CAP makes several proposals for the implementation of increased solar in the unincorporated county. The CAP proposes to: "E-3.2 Expand and implement the County's streamlined solar permitting process to install 5,002 kW of renewable energy on existing development by 2030 and 12,505 kW by 2045." Sierra Club supports any proposal in the CAP to maximize solar implementation in the county. It is unclear, however, if this is an annual kW production of renewable energy; this should be clarified in a revised cap.

O4-25 cont.

The CAP plans to: "E-3.2a Develop a program to incentivize renewable energy on low-income homes." Sierra Club believes this is an excellent goal but, greater details on these incentive programs need to be provided. Sierra Club favors subsidies to residents of low-income homes from a mitigation fund or from general revenues to create more renewable energy in low-income homes and communities.

Additionally, the CAP proposes to: "E-3.2b Work with partners to promote and support on-site renewable (wind and solar) energy generation and storage (microgrids, Site-specific and/or community scale) to increase renewable energy generation and use in the unincorporated area." Sierra Club strongly supports the CAP proposal to support renewable energy generation and storage and will await specific plans for the implementation of this measure in a revision CAP or other measures passed by the County.

Also, the CAP will: "E-3.2c Support local job training program for solar installation to support green economy workforce development." Again, the Sierra Club supports job training and retraining for the green economy and looks forward to specific plans to realize this goal.

Finally, the CAP seeks to: "E-3.3 Develop a program to provide 100% renewable energy to residents and businesses participating in San Diego Community Power by

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2030 in the unincorporated area." Sierra Club strongly supports this goal but needs detail on how it will be developed and implemented.

O4-25 cont.

3. **Installation of electric heat pumps to provide air and water heating and cooling.** Sierra Club can find nothing in the CAP that calls for installation of electric heat pumps to provide air and water heating and cooling is existing businesses or residences. This constitutes a major oversight that should be corrected in a revised CAP.

   Other water programs are proposed in the CAP. "Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar water efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements." Additionally, the CAP proposes to "(u)pdate the Green Building Incentive program by 2026 to include incentives for water efficiency, conservation, and reuse improvements for new and existing development to reduce potable water consumption in the unincorporated area." These are good plans but they are incomplete, aspirational, and abstract. Moreover, they fail to address efficient building electrification.

O4-26

4. **Installation of improved weatherization and insulation.** There is no specific mention of weatherization or insulation in the CAP. Specific recommendations and plans for increasing weatherization and insulation in existing businesses and residences should be included in a revised CAP.

   "Supporting the transition to efficient, renewable energy powered homes and businesses creates additional co-benefits, such as improved public health,"

   Increase energy efficiency and reach 30% electrification in residential and 17% electrification in non-residential existing development in the unincorporated area by 2030 by: - Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar energy efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements. - Adopting a Building Energy Performance Standard by 2026 for commercial and multi-family residential properties. - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize building electrification and energy efficiency.

   Develop a voluntary energy assessment/benchmarking program for existing development to identify opportunities for energy efficiency improvements.

5. **Installation of graywater systems.**

There are a couple of relevant provisions on graywater in the CAP. First, "Update the Green Building Incentive program by 2026 to include incentives for water efficiency, conservation, and reuse improvements for new and existing development to reduce potable water consumption in the unincorporated area." And more specifically, the CAP recommends that the County needs to: "Collaborate across County departments to streamline and simplify graywater capture permitting process to reduce potable water use in the unincorporated area. DEHQ (PDS) Permitting processes streamlined GHG reductions not quantified for "Path to Net Zero" actions." Sierra Club also supports the CAP provision to "(d)evelop and distribute materials to assist renters with implementing water efficiency and conservation improvements." As in other sections of the CAP, this plan is overly aspirational and fails to provide for its implementation and funding. O4-27

6. **Planting and maintaining trees.**

See previous detailed Sierra Club response on trees (*infra* paragraph 10). The County's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and Tree Planting Program help preserve and strategically grow the county's unique, native habitats and tree canopy and ensure development happens in the right areas. Sierra Club supports an expanded tree planting program. O4-28

7. **Free mass transit passes to students and residents of disadvantaged communities.**
There are relevant proposal for this term in the CAP. "Prioritize distribution of transit passes to frontline communities." And "create incentive programs that expand transit access and affordability for children, seniors, and low-income families." And "Develop a program to provide free transit passes and/or free trips in the unincorporated area to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the unincorporated area by 1.2% by 2030." These are excellent provisions that Sierra Club support that will reduce VMT and GHG as well as providing co-benefits to the residents. Sierra Club recommends that in the revised CAP a more aggressive free transportation program be provided that reduces VMT by more than 1.2%. Transportation is the only area of government that expects it to pay for itself: It is never asked of schools, fire protection, or police. Sierra Club recommends free transit passes be provided to all county residents. O4-29

Another vague, but related, measure in the CAP the Sierra Club supports, recommends that the County can partner with the region's transit agencies (e.g., San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, North County Transit District) to support transit ridership for unincorporated area residents.

There is another related provision in the CAP. EV purchases and schools bus electrification incentives are developed first and/or are bigger for frontline communities. The County appears to be complying with this Sierra Club term. O4-29 cont.

8. **Carpooling.**

The CAP seeks to "remove obstacles to individuals using public transit and ridesharing for trips in the unincorporated area." Again, because this is vague and aspirational without specific plans, the Sierra Club requests more specific plans for ridesharing. O4-30

9. The ninth Term for existing businesses and residents advocated: **Purchase of electric vehicles.** The CAP contains the following provision which is somewhat responsive to this Sierra Club term. The County will prioritize clean transportation by supporting and incentivizing access to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, particularly in frontline communities." While this is an excellent goal, Sierra Club recommends that the revised CAP provide the specific regulations, subsidies, and incentives to achieve this goal.

Similarly, Sierra Club supports the CAP's provision to provide that: "EV charging installations prioritized in frontline communities. EV purchases and schools bus electrification incentives are developed first and/or are bigger for frontline communities. Reduced medium- and heavy-duty vehicles' contribution to air pollution burdens (e.g., carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, particulate matter, and high asthma rates) faced by frontline communities. O4-31

10. **Free parking for electric vehicles.** The CAP contains no measure for providing free parking for electric vehicles. The CAP does recommend: "(a)mending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CalGreen or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for ZEVs for new multi-family residential and non-residential construction." This is a good proposal that should be extended to all business and residential areas of the county.

11. **Capture methane from agricultural facilities.** The CAP contains the following provisions: "Agriculture and Conservation: Increased preservation and restoration of natural and working lands and transitions to efficient and zero-emission agricultural equipment." O4-32

"Natural and agricultural lands are preserved, invested in, and optimally managed to capture carbon, support the local food and farming community, maintain biodiversity, and provide access to healthy outdoor spaces."

"Emissions associated with this sector accounted for four percent of the total emissions in 2019. Natural and working lands are uniquely positioned to capture and store carbon in soil, plants, and crops. Total carbon stock in the unincorporated area was approximately 178 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent as of 2016. Evaluating the carbon storage potential in the carbon stock estimates (Appendix 6) helped identify and calculate how improved agricultural practices and land management strategies within the County's jurisdiction can increase the amount of carbon captured on these lands to help the County meet its net zero emission goals."

"Support Climate-Friendly Farming Practices and Preserve Agricultural Land."

"Incentivize the development of new composting/anaerobic digestion facilities and on-farm digesters to divert compostable waste from landfills in the unincorporated area."

"A-4: Incentivize carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land and support climate-friendly farming practices in the unincorporated area."

O4-32 cont.

"Evaluate options to incentivize voluntary alternative manure management and livestock feed projects to reduce manure management and enteric fermentation emissions in the unincorporated area."

"Develop a Carbon Farming Program by 2026 to increase carbon sequestration on 3,000 acres by 2030 and 36,214 acres by 2045."

Sierra Club requests that the CAP include incentives to use animals rather than off road vehicles to clear grass and brush.

However, Sierra Club supports these measure which are consistent with term 11.

12. **Avoided conversion to development of agricultural cropland.** Avoided conversion is not mentioned per se. However, the below terms speak to the preservation of agricultural land which Sierra Club supports.

"Implement the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program to preserve 6,058 acres of agricultural land by 2030 and 400 acres per year thereafter."

"To maintain the County's agricultural landscape, economy, and food source for years to come, the County will implement the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Program, which compensates willing property owners for placing

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a perpetual easement on their property to limit its use to agriculture. This program preserves agricultural land by eliminating future development potential and making continued agricultural use more viable. Between 2015-2022, the PACE Program has preserved 2,135 acres."

"VISION STATEMENT: Natural and agricultural lands are preserved, invested in, and optimally managed to capture carbon, support the local food and farming community, maintain biodiversity, and provide access to healthy outdoor spaces."

O4-32 cont.

"The preservation and long-term viability of agricultural working lands in the unincorporated area is critical. Climate change is threatening the ability of farmers to grow food."

"The County will preserve natural and agricultural lands, incentivize climate-friendly farming practices, and expand tree planting across our unincorporated communities."

13. **Production and distribution of locally grown produce and foods.** These provisions in the CAP is consistent with this Sierra Club term. "Support the local food system through development of a food sourcing policy that prioritizes contracts with local, equitable, and sustainable food suppliers in County operations."

    "Natural and agricultural lands are preserved, invested in, and optimally managed to capture carbon, support the local food and farming community, maintain biodiversity, and provide access to healthy outdoor spaces."

    "The County's Regional Decarbonization Framework Technical Report a science-based analysis of decarbonization pathways, and the Let's Get There Playbook, a resource guide created to support the Regional Decarbonization Framework, consider how Food Systems, or all aspects of food production, use, and disposal, can support GHG reductions by using cleaner fuels and sustainable agricultural practices (e.g., agriculture easements, carbon- farming, urban gardens)." Sierra Club supports a regional decarbonization framework and looks forward weighing in on that plan.

    The CAP also recommends to: "Develop a Carbon Farming Program by 2026 to increase carbon sequestration on 3,000 acres by 2030 and 36,214 acres by 2045." Sierra Club is in support of a carbon farming program.

    The CAP also references the fact that: "On June 8, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the use of $7 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to support the

development of community food production projects in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The $7 million is part of $20 million in total funding allocated to strengthening access to fresh, healthy food in the region."

O4-32 cont.

D. <u>Additional Sierra Club 2021 terms for</u> future public and private commercial development

Finally, in our January 2021 Term Sheet for the County CAP, Sierra Club Proposed a set of terms to minimize GHC emissions in **future** public and private commercial development. We proposed the following terms in new construction to: Minimization of GHG Emissions – Public projects and private commercial developments shall minimize onsite GHG emissions by incorporating climate-friendly and environmental design to the maximum extent feasible with the minimum following conditions:

1. **<u>Developments shall be electric and prohibit plumbing for natural gas.</u>** The CAP proposes that in all residential, commercial, or industrial new construction to: "Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require all-electric equipment in new residential, commercial, and industrial construction to reduce energy emissions from new development in the unincorporated area." This provision is consistent with term 1 and Sierra Club is extremely supportive of this provision in the CAP to require all new development to be electric.

2. **<u>Developments shall include photovoltaic solar panels and/or other onsite renewable energy and onsite batteries to provide 100 percent of any project's annual electricity needs.</u>** The CAP included the following provision: "E-3.1 Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar renewable energy requirements for new residential and non-residential construction to increase renewable energy generation in new development." Sierra Club supports this amendment but suggests it be strengthened to require that all new development use 100% renewable energy.

   "Expand and implement the County's streamlined solar permitting process to install 5,002 kW of renewable energy on existing development by 2030 and 12,505 kW by 2045." Sierra Club is generally supportive of this measure and want the County to take steps to maximize solar energy production in the county.

   Sierra Club largely supports this measure and calls for increased electrification beyond these goals. "Increase energy efficiency and reach 30% electrification in residential and 17% electrification in nonresidential existing development in the unincorporated area by 2030 by: Amending the County's Code of Regulatory

O4-33

Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar energy efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements. - Adopting a Building Energy Performance Standard by 2026 for commercial and multi-family residential properties. - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize building electrification and energy efficiency."

"Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar renewable energy requirements for new residential and non-residential construction to increase renewable energy generation in new development. PDS 43,000 kW installed 97,000 kW installed 146,000 kW installed 198,000 kW installed 252 MTCO2e 69 MTCO2e 28 MTCO2e 0 MTCO2e E-3.2 Expand and implement the County's streamlined solar permitting process to install 5,002 kW of renewable energy."

3. **Developments shall include electric vehicle charging stations to serve all projected project-related vehicles.** Sierra Club is in support of these measures that are consistent with our third term: "T-3: Install electric vehicle charging stations and provide incentives for zero-emissions vehicles in the unincorporated area."

O4-33 cont.

"Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CalGreen or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for ZEVs for new multi-family residential and non-residential construction."

"Switching from fossil-fuel based on-road and offroad vehicles and equipment to those that are zero emission or use cleaner fuels is key to reducing GHG emissions from this sector. The County will prioritize clean transportation by supporting and incentivizing access to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, particularly in frontline communities, converting the County fleet to electric."

4. **Developments shall include electric heat pumps to provide one hundred percent of air and water heating and cooling.** While the CAP discussed increased energy efficiency at a number of points, there is nothing in the CAP specifically regarding heat pumps.

5. **Developments shall prohibit vehicle idling.** The CAP contains several measure that the Sierra Club supports: "Adopt a County Operations anti-idling policy to reduce emissions from vehicle idling."

   "Requiring the electrification of loading docks and idling reduction in new commercial and industrial development by 2030."

6. **Developments shall include graywater systems.** Sierra Club support the CAP provision to "(a)mend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar water efficiency requirements and reduced outdoor water use for landscaping requirements for new development to reduce potable water consumption from new development by 17% in the unincorporated area."

7. **Developments shall minimize water consumption.** Happily, the CAP proposes plans to reduce water consumption in new construction. "Update the Green Building Incentive program by 2026 to include incentives for water efficiency, conservation, and reuse improvements for new and existing development to reduce potable water consumption in the unincorporated area." Sierra Club looks forward to working with the County on strategies to minimize water consumption.

8. **Developments shall include shade trees**. The CAP proposed to implement this Sierra Club term. The CAP proposes to "(i)mplement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single family residential development in the unincorporated area.

9. **Developments shall provide transit passes to residents**. The Sierra supports the following provisions in the CAP but calls for a substantial expansion of these two provisions.

   "Develop a program to provide free transit passes and/or free trips in the unincorporated area to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the unincorporated area by 1.2% by 2030."

   "Prioritize distribution of transit passes to frontline communities."

O4-33 cont.

E. Mitigation and Offsets in the SEIR

Sierra Club is grateful that the new County CAP removed the out-of-county offset mitigation measure (M-GHG-1) that was declared illegal by both the San Diego Superior Court and the California Court of Appeals. However, Sierra Club objects to the CAP's encouragement of the use of offsets for General Plan Amendment (GPA) projects, without any direction on adequate protocols, as detailed in the letter by Chatten-Brown Law Group. (Supplemental EIR, p. 5-7.)

First and foremost, Sierra Club advocates for transit-oriented development, and opposes GPA projects that increase development in high VMT, high fire severity areas, and result in significant GHG impacts.

O4-34

But, if the County does proceed with a GPA project, it must ensure the Project is net negative 100%, or at least carbon neutral, so it will not impede the County's ability to achieve the CAP's GHG reduction targets. In these instances, Sierra Club advocates for an in-county mitigation program established by a third-party administrator, such as the San Diego Foundation. The in-county program should ensure rigorous and effective protocols, in compliance with *Golden Door* and the below outlined terms.

Mitigation of GHG Emissions – To the extent that onsite minimization of any public or private commercial development project's GHG emissions to net negative 100% is not feasible, offsite GHG mitigation shall be provided to achieve net negative 100% GHG emissions that is in addition to any existing laws, regulations, or plans already compelling reductions in GHG emissions. The Sierra Club term requested that new:

1. **Developments' GHG offsite mitigation shall be entirely within San Diego County and within the same disadvantaged communities as emissions.** During numerous CAP workshops conducted by the County, Sierra Club has advocated for a within-county mitigation bank.

   Sierra Club is disappointed the CAP specifies that offsets can still be used for GPA projects, without providing any **legally binding** requirements or protocols to ensure compliance with *Golden Door* and in-County off-site mitigation. [1] If the CAP is going to still allow for the use of offsets for GPA projects, Sierra Club urges the revised CAP to explicitly require within-county GHG mitigation.

2. Sierra Club recommended that: **Offsite GHG mitigation may include any of the following:**

   a) Preservation of natural habitat land inside or bordering existing or planned regional multiple species conservation plan preserves (e.g. City of San Diego Multiple Habitats Planning Area or County of San Diego Pre-Approved Mitigation Area) or private holdings within Cleveland National Forest. Preservation of natural habitat land as GHG mitigation shall include private property acquisition and conservation stewardship management in perpetuity. The amount of GHG mitigation provided by preservation of natural habitat land shall be determined

O4-34 cont.

[1] The CAP does contain the following provision: "Because of the limited scope of the CAP tool, the County is also simultaneously working on a range of other programs to address climate change: a Sustainable Land Use Framework to address potential land use changes; a Regional Decarbonization Framework to provide a voluntary regional framework for governments and private entities to reduce carbon emissions; and a Transportation Program that will address VMT mitigation measures for development within the unincorporated county." We are similarly disappointed that a Sustainable Land Use Framework to address potential land use changes and a Regional Decarbonization Framework to provide a voluntary regional framework for governments and private entities to reduce carbon emissions is not incorporated in the CAP.

by calculating reduced GHG emissions on the property over one hundred years resulting from avoided conversion to development of the number of existing legally entitled or zoned units and/or square feet on the preserved property.

b) Direct replacement of GHG-emitting vehicles and equipment (e.g. diesel generators) with electric vehicles and electric equipment including at any site under the jurisdictional authority of the Port of San Diego (including cargo and cruise ship terminals), of the Metropolitan Transit System, of the North County Transit District, and of the San Diego Airport Authority.

c) Create environmental justice grant programs in disadvantaged communities for direct replacement of commercial or personal GHG-emitting vehicles and equipment with electric vehicles and equipment, commercial or residential electrification, and other energy efficiency improvements to businesses or residences.

O4-34 cont.

As noted earlier, it appears the Draft SEIR provides that General Plan Amendment projects could use mitigation measures or offsets. As stated in the CAP: "The CAP Update does not prohibit the use of carbon offsets where appropriate to address the GHG emissions of projects that would require amendments to the General Plan and that would not rely on the CAP Update for GHG reductions (i.e., projects that would be outside of the scope of the General Plan and would conduct project-level GHG emissions modeling and recommend project-specific mitigation, and would not attempt to streamline evaluation of GHG emissions using the tiering and streamlining provisions of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5). CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(c)(3) allows mitigation through "off-site measures, including offsets that are not otherwise required, to mitigate a project's emissions."

If GPAs are allowed to utilize offsets, the offsets must be in-County, and compliant with *Golden Door*. The best approach to ensure this is for the County to establish an in-County GHG mitigation program.

Sierra Club respectfully requests that a revised CAP specify that any off-site GHG mitigation for GPA developments occur solely within San Diego County.

F. Smart Growth Alternatives

In accordance with our Golden Door victory, the SEIR was required to consider Smart Growth Alternatives that would additionally reduce GHG. These are discussed in detail in: Chapter 5, "Alternatives," of this SEIR includes an analysis of four smart growth alternatives to the project: a Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, a Village Support Areas Alternative, an alternative consistent with the RTP/SCS, and an alternative that includes potential amendments to General

O4-35

Plan goals and policies. These alternatives were crafted based on their ability to reduce VMT and on extensive stakeholder engagement.

"This draft SEIR also includes consideration of smart growth alternatives that are intended to significantly reduce VMT as required by the Court of Appeal for Division One of the Fourth Appellate District (Appellate Court) in *Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego* (2020) 50 Cal.App.5th 467. The smart growth alternatives discussed below propose actions that, if adopted in addition to the CAP update measures and actions, are intended to further reduce GHG emissions by reducing VMT through changes in development patterns. Note, however, that the efficacy of alternatives focused on incentives and disincentives for future development is limited because most forecast VMT in the unincorporated county is associated with existing development." Sierra Club and the requirements for smart growth are for future avoided development and corresponding future VMT that should be prevented if the County is to reach its goals for GHG reduction.

O4-35 cont.

Appendix C of the DEIR provides for an analysis of Smart Growth Alternatives and the impact on VMT authored by Fehr and Peers. Four alternatives were considered.

1. **Project scenario – SANDAG Regional Plan EIR Alternative 2 land uses and transportation network.**

This is the County's primary recommendation in the EIR. For this scenario data used the "SANDAG Regional Plan EIR Alternative 2 (Data Set 39) that projects relative to the year 2016, growth in the unincorporated county of 14,706 new households by 2035 and 18,707 by 2050." Sierra Club does not support this smart growth alternative for several reasons:

a) Such a plan would produce considerably more GHG than alternatives that authorize fewer new households.
b) This plan would result in more development in previously undisturbed land that would both reduce the carbon sink of native vegetation and would continue to threaten protected species.
c) Such a plan would substantially increase the chance of fire; fires contribute huge amounts of GHG.
d) Such a plan would necessarily exacerbate evacuation during wildfire. Many areas of the unincorporated county are already among the most difficult areas to evacuate in California. This plan would worsen residents' ability to evacuate.

The land use assumptions contained in Data Set 39 are consistent with historical growth patterns in the unincorporated county and reflect expected growth consistent with the General Plan for the County.

Sierra Club believes that the County CAP should NOT be consistent with a 2011 general plan when climate change was not a primary concern. Allowing this much growth will increase VMT

and GHG, create greater fire risk and evacuation problems in the county, destroy vital conservation areas and increase traffic. O4-35 cont.

2. One alternative Smart Growth plan is the: **2021 Regional Plan Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Alternative – SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan land uses and transportation network.**

The model used the road user charge proposed by SANDAG. "The adopted SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan assumes 9,902 new households in the unincorporated County between the base year and 2050 (with almost all of the growth occurring between the base year and 2035). Additionally, the 2021 Regional Plan/SCS version of the model includes the Road User Charge as a funding source for the Regional Plan."

However, the SANDAG Board voted on September 22, 2023, against including the "Road User Charge" in the 2025 Regional Plan. So, this alternative is either gone or unlikely to progress.

This alternative would result in the least VMT but is dependent on a road use charge that is unlikely to be adopted. Moreover, the widely unpopular road use tax may cause poor publicity for Sierra Club if we advocate for it. Moreover, nobody would have any idea how much VMT would be reduced without the road use tax.

SANDAG did a new analysis that Sierra Club provides: "The amendment removes the regional RUC (road use tax) of 3.3 cents per mile starting in 2030. The resulting decrease in the cost to operate an automobile, results in an increase in single occupancy drivers that would cause an increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and an increase in GHG emissions and air pollutants from tailpipe emissions compared to the 2021 Regional Plan. The amendment results in an increase of 1.3 million VMT per day in 2035. This results in a 18.6% per capita reduction in GHG emissions in 2035 relative to 2005 levels." Thus, this plan would not achieve the desired reductions in VMT and GHG outlined in the SEIR. O4-36

3. **SEIR's "Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative"**

"The Regional Plan incorporates smart growth planning concepts into a regional growth pattern focused around "Mobility Hubs." Mobility Hubs are envisioned as places of activity where capital transportation investment will support future housing and jobs and encompass areas that are both within incorporated city boundaries and within the unincorporated county."

The adopted SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan assumes 9,902 new households in the unincorporated county between the base year (2016) and 2050 (with almost all of the growth occurring between the base year and 2035). Additionally, implementation of the Road User Charge is assumed in the transportation modeling currently available from SANDAG and was captured in this analysis because the 2021 Regional Plan version of the model includes the Road User Charge as a funding source for the Regional Plan.

However, the SANDAG Board voted on September 22, 2023, against including the Road User Charge in the 2025 Regional Plan. On September 23, 2022, the SANDAG Board directed SANDAG staff to prepare an amendment to the 2021 Regional Plan without the Chapter 5 Alternatives County of San Diego CAP Update Page 5-30 October 2023 Road User Charge.

This alternative would not affect implementation of the CAP Update measures and actions, the effects of implementing the CAP update relative to the topics addressed in Sections 2.1 through 2.15 of this draft SEIR would not be affected by implementation of this smart growth alternative, and the analysis of this alternative is focused on transportation (VMT) and GHG impacts.

O4-36 cont.

4. Among the alternatives provided in the SEIR Sierra Club supports the: "**Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative – Project scenario cumulative land use totals and transportation network. Moves half of unincorporated county household growth to unincorporated VMT efficient areas that are considered fire safe.**"

Sierra Club supports this alternative. Under this alternative, growth of household in the unincorporated county above 2016 would be 8445 by 2035 and 9902 by 2050. Among the alternatives in the DEIR, Sierra Club should support this alternative for conservation, and wildfire, evacuation, VMT and GHG.

Under this scenario, compared to the Project Alternative:

- Half of all unincorporated county growth outside fire safe and VMT efficient master geographic reference areas (MGRAs) was moved to those MGRAs (MGRAs within VMT efficient TAZs and outside high and very high fire hazard areas). The other half of unincorporated county growth was not moved.
- No growth was moved from unincorporated MGRAs that are over 90% tribal, military, federal, or state land (not under County control) with growth greater than 10 households.
- All growth moved to VMT efficient MGRAs was distributed proportionally based on land area of the MGRAs (uniformly increasing the density of the MGRAs).
- Under this alternative, future land development that is consistent with the General Plan and an accompanying proposed Smart Growth Overlay would be focused in currently urbanized areas that are identified as VMT efficient outside of High and Very High Fire Hazard Zones.

O4-37

The DEIR provided an analysis of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative. "The Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is a smart growth alternative that the County developed through stakeholder outreach. The smart growth geographies were defined as areas that are both outside of areas mapped by the California Department of Forestry as areas with High or Very High fire risk and within areas mapped by the County as at least 15 percent below the regional average for residential VMT."

The SEIR goes on to say: "Because this alternative would not affect implementation of the CAP Update measures and actions, the effects of implementing the CAP Update relative to the topics addressed in Sections 2.1 through 2.15 of this draft SEIR would not be affected by implementation of this smart growth alternative, and the analysis of this alternative is focused on transportation (VMT), wildfire hazards, and GHG impacts."

"If implemented, this alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 6.6 percent in 2035 and 3.0 percent in 2050. However, when viewed in conjunction with existing development, the magnitude of overall VMT reduction is relatively small because the vast majority of unincorporated county VMT under future year alternatives can be attributed to existing land uses." Sierra Club supports this alternative in the CAP because it results in the biggest decreases in VMT and GHG.

O4-37 cont.

5. **Village Support Areas Alternative** – Project scenario cumulative land use totals and transportation network. Moves all unincorporated county household growth to designated unincorporated villages or unincorporated areas within a half-mile of those villages.

The DEIR provided analysis of the Village Support Areas Alternative. "This alternative builds on the Villages established in the adopted General Plan. The Village regional category, which allows the most intensive land uses in the unincorporated county under the adopted General Plan, facilitates the use of compact development patterns. Villages that contain a mix of land uses encourage strong neighborhoods and contribute to meeting a community's daily commercial, civic, and social needs."

"To spur redevelopment in the Villages and create a synergy for smart growth, this alternative would establish 0.5-mile buffers around the established Villages, referred to as Village Support Areas, wherein housing development and services to support development in the Villages would be encouraged."

O4-38

The SEIR also states: "As with the other smart growth alternatives discussed in this SEIR, this alternative would be implemented through a zoning overlay and development incentives. Supporting efforts are also assumed to include transit and connectivity improvements between the Villages and Village Support Areas. Further, it is assumed that all measures and actions in the CAP update would be implemented as proposed."

"Because this alternative would not affect implementation of the CAP Update measures and actions, the effects of implementing the CAP Update relative to the topics addressed in Sections 2.1 through 2.15 of this draft SEIR would not be affected by implementation of this smart growth alternative, and the analysis of this alternative is focused on transportation (VMT) and GHG impacts."

Based on this modeling, the Village Support Areas Alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 1.0 percent in 2035 and 0.3 percent in 2050. If the modeling were

refined to assign growth into specific Village Support Areas closer to incorporated cities, greater VMT reductions would be anticipated.

This plan is not the preferred plan of Sierra Club. It will create a fair amount of growth among existing villages ranging from 4486 by 2035 and 5704 by 2050. A disadvantage is that in most of these additional village residents would actually do long high VMT commutes to metro San Diego increasing traffic, VMT, and GHG. Many residents of the village work, shop, and recreate in the urbanized portions of San Diego.

O4-38 cont.

G. **General Plan Goal and Policy Edits:** In this section other additional alternatives to replace or pair with Smart Growth Alternative are discussed in this section.

"In addition to, or in lieu of, any of the alternatives described above, County staff have identified potential amendments to General Plan goals and policies from the Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, Mobility, and Safety Elements of the adopted General Plan that would further enhance the smart growth principles described above and embodied in the General Plan. The Board may choose some or all of these additional policy amendments and pair them with the proposed CAP Update or an alternative."

These alternatives discussed in section 5.6 are all plans from the 2011 GPU PEIR and would require some modification of the 2011 plans. Some of the other alternatives could be combinations of other plans-the SEIR maintains that each of the other alternatives would require substantial planning. Climate change was much less of a salient issue back in 2011 than it is today. In reading this, the urgency of VMT and climate change seems to be missing.

O4-39

Here are some of the alternatives that the SEIR examined:

1. **Hybrid Map Alternative**. "The Hybrid Map Alternative would decrease the countywide acreage of the following land uses, as compared to the proposed project: village residential (-487 acres); semi-rural residential (-11,717 acres); specific plan area (-683 acres); commercial (-325 acres); and industrial (-189 acres). When compared to the adopted General Plan, the Hybrid Map Alternative would increase the acreage of the rural land use designations (+13,672). The Hybrid Map Alternative would result in significantly less acres of semirural residential land uses and significantly more acres designated for rural lands than the adopted General Plan." Although this is not a primary alternative, Sierra Club could find this alternative acceptable.

2. **Draft Land Use Map Alternative** "This alternative would decrease the acreage of the following land uses, as compared to the adopted General Plan: village residential (-514 acres); semi-rural residential (-15,313 acres); specific plan area (-683 acres); commercial (-344 acres); industrial (-266 acres); and village core mixed use (-12 acres). When compared to the proposed project, the Draft Land Use Map Alternative would increase the acreage of the following land use designations: rural lands (+17,198) and office

professional (+18 acres).” Again, though not a primary alternative, Sierra Club could work with this alternative.

3. **Environmentally Superior Map Alternative** “reflects a more stringent application of the planning concepts that take into account environmental considerations and constraints and is more aggressive in restricting growth in portions of the semi-rural residential and the rural lands designations. The Environmentally Superior Map Alternative was developed in response to the areas of significant impacts that were identified for the adopted General Plan, where changes in land use designations would have the potential to reduce or alleviate the impact. The Environmentally Superior Map Alternative would result in significantly less acres of semirural residential land uses and significantly more acres of rural lands than the proposed project. the environmental impacts under the Environmentally Superior Map Alternative would be less than Hybrid Map Alternative. The Environmentally Superior Map Alternative would accommodate less growth and development in the unincorporated county, which would translate to less GHG emissions from community and government operations. Additionally, the Environmentally Superior Map Alternative would result in less VMT than the adopted General Plan, which would translate to less GHG emissions from transportation.” The Environmentally Superior Map Alternative is a plan that Sierra Club likes but it is not among the ones that are considered. Again, we would be happy to work with the County on this alterative if it becomes one of the proposed alternatives. O4-39 cont.

4. **Comparison of Alternatives.** “Of the smart growth alternatives, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, Village Support Areas Alternative, and General Plan Policy Edits Alternative would not reduce the impacts of CAP Update implementation; as such they are not considered environmentally superior to the CAP Update.” Sierra Club disputes this conclusion. Sierra Club believes that the “Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative” is environmentally superior. O4-40

5. **Environmental Justice.** Section 2.7, “Environmental Justice, has been included in the SEIR to address the potential for disproportionate effects of CAP Update implementation on EJ communities.” Sierra Club supports measures to create increased environmental justice. O4-41

6. **Cumulative Impacts.** “This SEIR includes a discrete evaluation of the effect of all known, in-process GPAs on cumulative conditions in the unincorporated county. The discussion includes quantification of GHG emissions from the identified GPAs. See Chapter 4, Other CEQA Sections. O4-42

7. **GHG Inventory and Monitoring.** The CAP states: “The inventory has again been updated using a base year of 2019 to reflect current conditions in the unincorporated county. O4-43

The 2019 inventory represents the most complete data available that are unaffected by COVID-19 impacts (e.g., reduced traffic patterns) and was used as the baseline for the CAP Update. The CAP Update 2019 inventory is discussed in Section 1.4.1.1." There is not a good argument for using a baseline of 2019. The goal of the State and County is to reduce emissions back to below 1990 levels. Indeed, in 2021 the Board of Supervisors approved a framework using 1990 levels as the basis for reducing GHG. As state in the SEIR: "On January 13, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the Framework for the Future, "Actions to Achieve Bold Climate Action at the County of San Diego", which created policy recommendations for the CAP Update that include achieving at a minimum Senate Bill 32 GHG emissions reductions of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and establishing actions to meet a goal of net zero carbon emission by 2035-2045." Sierra Club supports monitoring but also needs specific provisions to reduce emissions to 40% below 1990 levels."

According to the SEIR CEQA requires an agency to conduct regular monitoring. "Regular monitoring and performance measuring of CAP Update activities would allow the County to make timely adjustments to existing measures; replace ineffective or obsolete actions; or add new measures as technology, federal and state programs, and circumstances change." Sierra Club would like to see specific procedures for inventory updates and monitoring.

O4-43 cont.

The CAP also call for: "Annual Monitoring Report Staff prepares and publishes an annual monitoring report, assessing CAP annual performance in measure implementation 2026 GHG Emissions Inventory Update Staff conducts an update to the emissions inventory at least every two years. 2030 CAP Update Based on the findings from the annual monitoring reports and inventory updates, staff prepares a CAP Update at least every five years." These are all good proposals but a revised CAP need more specific details on monitoring including the method and the targets for monitoring.

The CAP states: "PDS would coordinate with other County departments to facilitate and oversee implementation, including tracking and reporting on the progress of each measure." This is a good provision but excessively general and vague. Sierra Club requests more detail in the revised CAP.

8. **<u>County Conservation and MSCP.</u>** The Sierra Club beliefs that the Multiple Species Conservation Program is the cornerstone of County conservation efforts. The County Conservation section of the CAP has sections on the East County, North County, and South County MSCP. Sierra Club strongly endorses the acquisition of more MSCP land. As the CAP notes: "Acquisition of land by the County under the MSCP would reduce GHG emissions through preservation of land which can otherwise be developed. GHG emissions reductions are realized from reductions in transportation, energy use, waste, and water consumption."

O4-44

Regrettably, the East County MSCP has failed to get off the ground. As stated in the CAP: "Unfortunately, County budget constraints and staffing reductions have caused progress of the East County Plan to slow significantly. Once the budget and staffing constraints are resolved, plan development is intended to resume." Sierra Club urges the County to appropriate additional money and hire additional staff to move forward quickly with the East County MSCP.

Similarly, the Sierra Club is dissatisfied with the North County MSCP which staff has been directed to develop in much greater detail. We applaud to goal of creating an MSCP "to achieve many of the same environmental and economic benefits realized through the adopted South County Subarea Plan." But progress on the North County MSCP has been painfully slow and we hope the County and various municipalities will move quickly on a strong and sustainable MSCP.

The South County MSCP that was established in 1997 is the most developed of the MSCP plans. Its goal is to protect or acquire nearly 100,000 acres. The Sierra Club urges the County to protect even more land both to conserve species and to sequester additional GHG.

The SEIR states: "The County would also acquire conservation land and develop a framework for restoring these lands to their natural state. Acquisition of conservation land reduces emissions that would have occurred if the land were developed (as assumed in the 2011 GPU PEIR) and prevents loss of the region's unique, native habitats and wildlife biodiversity. Sierra Club supports and applauds the acquisition of more conservation land including both coastal sage scrub and chapparal that would both conserve species and provide additional absorption of carbon.

O4-44 cont.

9. **CAP Targets.** The SEIR stathe that "the CAP Update's target is aligned with AB 1279, which requires that the State's target of net zero emissions by 2045 include reducing statewide anthropogenic emissions by at minimum 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045." Given the accelerating pace of climate change, Sierra Club believes that Net Zero by 2045 is too long a timeline. Sierra Club continues to recommend much faster progress. In our legal negotiations on our successful CAP lawsuits, we provided a 2021 term sheer that recommends that: The Sierra Club urges the County to achieve net negative one hundred percent (100%) GHG emissions by 2035.

O4-45

10. **County GHG emissions.** Sierra Club appreciates that the County inventories and discussed various sources of GHG.
    a. On-Road Transportation: On-road transportation emissions associated with gasoline and diesel consumption from driving that occurs on roadways, in addition to emissions from County fleet operations and employee commute.
    b. Implement the County's 2019 Electric Vehicle Roadmap and 2023 Green Fleet Action Plan to reduce fleet emissions 35% by 2030 and 100% by 2045.

O4-46

c. Electricity Use: Emissions associated with electricity generation because of electricity consumption in residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural facilities. This includes electricity consumption at local government facilities such as County buildings, streetlights, and stormwater pumps.
d. Natural Gas Use: Emissions associated with natural gas consumption in residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural facilities. This includes natural gas use at County facilities located outside the unincorporated areas.
e. Solid Waste: Waste emissions associated with landfills in the county (including County operated closed landfills) and waste generated by the unincorporated county, discounting any overlap. Solid waste generated by local government facilities is also included in this category. Project Description Page 1-14 County of San Diego CAP Update October 2023 Draft SEIR. The SEIR however maintains that: "Although the County does not collect solid waste from the community, it influences and supports waste diversion through solid waste management agreements with waste collectors, zero waste policies and programs for County operations and the community, and ordinances that direct material separation and diversion."
f. Agriculture: Agricultural emissions associated with livestock, fertilizer use, soil management, and agricultural equipment. No agricultural emissions are attributed to local government operations.
g. Propane Use: Emissions associated with propane consumption in residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural facilities. This includes propane use at County facilities located outside the unincorporated areas.
h. Off-Road Transportation: Off-road vehicle and equipment emissions associated with gasoline and diesel consumption in the unincorporated areas. This includes County government operations off-road vehicle use.
i. Water: Water-related emissions associated with energy and fuel used to convey, extract, treat, and distribute water used in the unincorporated areas for domestic, irrigation, and industrial purposes. This includes a small amount of water use at County facilities located outside the unincorporated areas.
j. Wastewater: Wastewater treatment emissions associated with the energy consumed and emissions produced to process domestic sewage and industrial wastewater either at on-site septic systems or centralized wastewater treatment plants. This includes a small amount of wastewater generation at County facilities located outside the unincorporated county.

It concludes with the following percentages of GHG production. a) On-road transportation (45%) b) Electricity (20%) c) Natural gas (16%) d) Solid waste (6%) e) Agriculture (4%) f) Propane (4%) g) Off-road transportation (2%) h) Water (1%) i) Wastewater (1%)

O4-46 cont.

The CAP states "To reach the 2030 and 2045 targets, the CAP establishes nine strategies, and 70 actions that the County must take to reduce GHG emissions from five emissions reduction sectors." These are 70 actions that the County must take to reduce GHG emissions from five emissions reduction sectors."

O4-46 cont.

11. **Construction.** The Sierra Club recognizes the need for greater housing in the county and has supported numerous housing projects of the right type in the right location.

    Sierra Club is in strong support of the County's goal to: "Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require all-electric equipment in new residential, commercial, and industrial construction to reduce energy emissions from new development in the unincorporated area."

    Similarly, Sierra Club support this measure: "Use alternative fuel and/or zero-emission construction equipment in county projects to reduce emissions from medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and equipment."

O4-47

12. **Energy.** The CAP says, "the County will ensure all County facilities are reducing emissions through Zero Net Energy construction, building electrification, and on-site renewable generation; and develop policies and programs for new and existing development to transition to renewable energy powered buildings." Sierra Club is in support of such a measure.

    The SEIR states: "County facilities would reduce emissions through zero net energy construction, building electrification, and on-site renewable energy generation. For new and existing development, the County would develop policies and programs to transition to renewable energy powered buildings and electrification."

    These are good general measures that are supported by Sierra Club but more detail and metrics are needed.

    "Implement the County Facilities Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan to achieve 90% reduction in operational carbon emissions by 2030 through building electrification and zero net energy construction, energy efficiency, energy management, and renewable energy use and generation."

    Sierra Club supports "Increased energy efficiency and reach 30% electrification in residential and 17% electrification in non-residential existing development in the unincorporated area by 2030 by: - Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar energy efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements. - Adopting a Building Energy Performance Standard by 2026 for commercial and multi-family residential properties. - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize building electrification and energy efficiency."

O4-48

"Develop a program to phase out propane use for existing buildings."

"Develop a program to increase energy resiliency in the unincorporated area to ensure continued access to electricity and services during extreme weather events." Sierra club would like a mandate for burying all utility lines in the county.

These are good programs for which the Sierra Club has general support.

"Expand and implement the County's streamlined solar permitting process to install 5,002 kW of renewable energy on existing development by 2030 and 12,505 kW by 2045."

"Develop a program to incentivize renewable energy on low-income homes."

"Work with partners to promote and support on-site renewable energy generation and storage to increase renewable energy generation and use in the unincorporated area."

"Develop a program to provide 100% renewable energy to residents and businesses participating in San Diego Community Power by 2030 in the unincorporated area. Construction and operation of large-scale renewable energy projects."

O4-48 cont.

The overall conclusion in the SEIR is that the CAP could exacerbate wildfire risk but not after appropriate mitigation. The County admits that their analysis is potentially problematic and hypothetical. "Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial incremental effect that would result in a new significant impact related to the exacerbation of wildfire risk. The impact would be less than significant. Implementation of the CAP Update would not result in new or more severe impacts than disclosed in the 2011 GPU PEIR."

O4-49

13. **Water and Wastewater** This goal will be achieved by the County "installing water efficiency and water reuse systems wherever feasible; new development meets certain water efficiency standards and explores reuse opportunities; existing development is mandated and/or incentivized to increase water efficiency and reuse (through building permits)."

    However, Sierra Club finds: No statement about where new development will occur. And Sierra Would like to know will they do reuse from septic systems that are prevalent in the county.

O4-50

14. **Wildfire**. The SEIR examines if the CAP would increase the risk of wildfire in section 2.15. "This section describes the existing conditions for wildfire in the unincorporated county and evaluates the potential effects that implementation of the project may have on wildfire. Specifically, this section evaluates the potential for the CAP Update to result in impacts regarding the project's potential to interfere with emergency response/evacuation, exacerbate wildfire risks, or expose people or structures to postfire risks."

O4-51

"This section incorporates by reference the wildfire setting and impact analysis from the 2011 GPU PEIR as it applies to the CAP Update and supplements with relevant setting conditions that have changed since certification of the 2011 GPU." The Sierra Club believes that any wildfire analysis from 2011 is hopelessly obsolete. The unincorporated county is much hotter and drier than it was 12 or 13 years ago. More recent wildfire analysis should be provided in a revised EIR.

"Table 2.15-1 summarizes the wildfire impact conclusions reached in the 2011 GPU PEIR and identifies if a new or more severe significant impact would occur with implementation of the proposed project." Again, Sierra does not put any trust in a decade-old wildfire analysis.

Indeed, the County contradicts these estimates when they say: "Because of the County's changing climatic, geological, and topographical conditions, the County Fire Code is amended every 3 years when the State of California repeals, revises, and republishes the California Building Standards Code." Then they contradict themselves again in the DEIR when they state: "No substantial changes have occurred to the existing conditions described in the 2011 GPU PEIR. Therefore, the existing conditions in the 2011 GPU PEIR remain applicable."

O4-51 cont.

The Sierra Club appreciates the opportunity to review the latest County CAP and SEIR. The Sierra Club hope that with sufficient revision we can support the new CAP and the SEIR.

O4-52

Respectfully Yours,



Dr. Peter Andersen, Vice Chair
Conservation Committee
Sierra Club San Diego

Dr. Lisa Ross, Chairperson
Executive Committee
Sierra Club San Diego

Alan Geraci, Member
Executive Committee
Sierra Club San Diego

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Letter O4 Sierra Club San Diego

Dr. Peter Andersen, Vice Chair Conservation Committee
Dr. Lisa Ross, Chairperson, Executive Committee
Alan Geraci, Member, Executive Committee
December 29, 2023

Comment O4-1
The comment expresses support for the underlaying CAP Update goal to reduce GHG emissions. However, the comment states that it is not sufficient to merely reduce GHG emissions; the CAP Update must provide reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels and below.

Response O4-1
The County appreciates Sierra Club's support for the CAP Update goal to reduce GHG emissions. The objectives of the project are described in Section 1.2, "Project Objectives," of the Draft SEIR. GHG emissions reductions targets are discussed on pages 1-15 through 1-18 of the Draft SEIR. As described on page 1-17, the adjusted reduction targets for the CAP Update are 43.6 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 and 85.4 percent below 2019 levels by 2045. Data for 2019 is used as baseline because 1990 emissions data are not available for the unincorporated county and because 2019 is the baseline year of the GHG emissions inventory prepared for the CAP Update. The CAP Update also includes an aspirational goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2025. This goal is in addition to the 2045 target aligned with reducing anthropogenic emission to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," regarding the legal and regulatory framework for the GHG reduction targets and approach set forth in the CAP Update.

Comment O4-2
The comment indicates that there is no detailed analysis provided to show how the CAP Update measures would result in the desired reduction in GHG emissions to below 1990 levels.

Response O4-2
See Response O4-1, regarding the target of 1990 GHG levels, and refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. The calculations performed to estimate the GHG reduction potential of the CAP Update's 35 quantified implementing actions are provided in CAP Update Appendix 7.

Comment O4-3
The comment refers to the CAP Update as, "almost entirely goal oriented and therefore only aspirational in context" and in need of "upgrading…to a free-standing legal document." The comment also asserts that the "enforceability of the CAP needs to be clearly articulated" and comments that the CAP appears to amend the General Plan.

Response O4-3
The CAP Update is a free-standing document prepared as required by 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 and consistent with state legislative requirements. Refer to Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," regarding the relationship of the CAP Update to the 2011 GPU PEIR. Refer also to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. This Master Response also explains that the CAP Update identifies the implementation enforcement mechanism for each action.

Comment O4-4
The comment provides an introduction for the "Terms Document" and the comments provided below.

Response O4-4
The comment references a January 2021 "Terms Document" that the San Diego Chapter of Sierra Club submitted in response to the County's NOP for the SEIR (see Appendix A to the Draft SEIR). The purpose of the NOP and early public consultation is primarily to identify a range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant effects that should be analyzed in detail in the EIR (see State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15082 and 15083).

The County acknowledges the comments provided for the CAP Update with respect to the "Terms Document." Comments related to the environmental review of the proposed CAP Update were considered during preparation of the Draft SEIR. See specific Responses O4-5 through O4-33.

Comment O4-5
The comment asserts that the CAP Update lacks details on how the goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2030 will be achieved.

Response O4-5
The CAP Update includes Action E-3.1, under which the County would develop a program to provide 100 percent renewable energy to residents and businesses participating in San Diego Community Power by 2030 in the unincorporated area. Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," describes, among other things, the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for the 35 quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, which includes Action E-3.1. These include the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action, including E-3.1, as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation. The calculations performed to estimate

the GHG reduction potential of the CAP Update's 35 quantified implementing actions are provided in CAP Update Appendix 7.

Comment O4-6
The comment expresses disappointment that neither the CAP Update nor the SEIR propose downzoning of lands in high fire risk areas and highest VMT areas of the county. The comment cites three perceived advantages of such a measure over the other smart growth alternatives analyzed in the SEIR: "permitting more building in the highest fire zones of California defies logic and common sense"; reductions in VMT and GHG; and preservation of coastal sage scrub and chaparral.

Response O4-6
The comment notes that Sierra Club's scoping comment requested that the project include a CAP measure that would downzone land with high fire risk and with the highest VMT. No such measure is included in the CAP Update. Refer to Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for further discussion of the relationship between the CAP Update and land use planning. The CAP Update demonstrates the County's ability to achieve all established targets without changes in land use.

As noted in the comment, the Draft SEIR includes evaluation of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative. As described in the Draft SEIR (page 5-25), this alternative would encourage future growth to be "focused in currently urbanized areas that are identified as VMT efficient outside of High and Very High Fire Hazard Zones" through a Smart Growth Overlay. As further explained in the Draft SEIR, "the County would not prohibit development of properties outside of the fire safe and VMT efficient overlay" because the Smart Growth Overlay would apply to a relatively limited geography. This is the basis for the 50 percent transfer of development used in the analysis. The opinion provided in the comment related to the merits of permitting additional growth outside the Smart Growth Overlay identified under this alternative are noted and will be provided to decision-makers for consideration.

Contrary to the statement made in the comment, the analysis of VMT and GHG emissions conducted for the Draft SEIR indicates that the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative, not the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, would reduce the most VMT and associated GHG emissions (see Draft SEIR Appendix C). (Although it is noted that the analysis of the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative assumes application of the Road User Charge, which has been removed from the plan.) Furthermore, the standards established for a qualified CAP do not support the claim that a viable CAP must reduce GHG emissions "as much as possible" and in exceedance of established reduction targets. Refer to Response A3-2 for further discussion of the requirements for a GHG reduction plan pursuant to Section 15183.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Finally, the CAP Update does quantify the GHG emissions reduction potential of preserving natural lands and agricultural lands and recommends the following measures to achieve such reductions: Measure A-1: Acquire and manage conservation lands to preserve natural lands and maximize carbon storage potential in the unincorporated area

(page 101); Measure A-3: Preserve agricultural lands to prioritize carbon storage and balance economic and development goals (page 104); and Measure A-4, Incentive carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land and support climate-friendly farming practices in the unincorporated area (CAP Update Chapter 4, page 105). Quantified GHG emissions reductions potential of actions underneath these measures are presented in CAP Update Chapter 4 in Table 11 (pages 107–112).

The Draft SEIR analyzes the impacts of implementation of these measures and actions and provides a comparative analysis of the impacts of alternatives, including the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, relative to the proposed project. The function of the requested analysis of "how much carbon storage will be lost in the various Smart Growth alternatives" is unclear. Any alternative that reduces the potential for development of natural and agricultural lands relative to the assumptions used in the CAP Update for reasonably foreseeable growth under the County's adopted General Plan would be assumed to result in a commensurate increase in potential for carbon sequestration.

Refer also to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for further discussion of the County's obligation to evaluate alternatives to the project.

Comment O4-7

The comment requests that land use change should be a central part of the CAP Update and should be analyzed in the Draft SEIR. The commenter also states that the Fire Safe and Efficient VMT Alternative that would bar developments from High and Very High Fire areas should be the preferred plan.

Response O4-7

See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a discussion about the CAP Update and land use change and Response O4-6, regarding the Fire Safe and Efficient VMT Alternative.

Comment O4-8

The comment expresses support for land conservation measures in the CAP Update and requests "metrics that estimate how much GHG would be avoided" through habitat preservation.

Response O4-8

The County appreciates the support for the land conservation measures included in the CAP Update. Table 13 of the CAP Update (Chapter 5) identifies the quantified GHG reduction potential and performance metrics for each measure and action in the agriculture and conservation sector, including Measure A-1 and Actions A-1.1 and A-1.2, which call for the preservation and restoration of natural lands and habitat. Additional GHG reduction quantification information can be found in CAP Update Appendix 7. Please also refer to the Response O4-6.

Comment O4-9
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update measures related to avoiding, recycling, and composting waste and requests quantifying the GHG emissions reduction associated with the solid waste measures. The comment also supports the goal to continue the Strategic Plan to Reduce Waste program.

Response O4-9
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update solid waste measures and actions and notes the commenter's support for the Strategic Plan to Reduce Waste program. Chapter 5 of the CAP Update identifies the quantified GHG reduction potential and performance metrics for each measure and action included in the CAP Update, including those related to waste reduction. Additional GHG reduction quantification information can be found in CAP Update Appendix 7. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Please also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update. These include the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045.

Comment O4-10
The comment expresses support for electrification of County facilities but claims no specific action and metrics are provided.

Response O4-10
Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. This Master Response also describes the implementation details included for measures and actions in the CAP Update, which include GHG reduction potential and measure performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. With respect to electrification of County facilities, the CAP Update presents quantified GHG reduction potential and performance outcomes for Action E-1.1 in Table 8 (pages 71–72) and additional GHG quantification information in CAP Update Appendix 7.

Comment O4-11
The comment expresses support for renewable energy development but requests that the County provide specific plans for renewable energy sources.

Response O4-11
The CAP Update is a multi-objective plan that sets policy and programmatic commitments to reduce GHG emissions through the implementation of measures and actions to reach net zero carbon emissions in the unincorporated county and in County operations. It does not include specific proposals for renewable energy development. Thus, as noted in Response O3-9, the Draft SEIR does not proport to cover the entirety of the impacts from individual renewable projects, which would be designed and proposed by others as separate projects, subject to separate discretionary actions. The purpose of the discussion in the Draft SEIR is to disclose the potential for indirect impacts due to growing demand.

Renewable energy would be obtained through the *County of San Diego: Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan* (San Diego County n.d.), which is a programmatic plan that includes timelines and details regarding the installation of renewable energy infrastructure on County facilities (see Measure M6). The purpose of this plan is to clearly articulate a path to take bold action on cutting County carbon emissions. This plan articulates clear steps, including costs, to reach as far as possible by 2030 to align with the Regional Decarbonization Framework. By testing these actions on County facilities and operations, the region will benefit from lessons learned about the implementation processes, strengthening the County of San Diego's leadership position. The measures identified in the plan will result in a 90 percent reduction in operation emissions from County occupied facilities.

Comment O4-12
The comment states that the energy efficiency measures identified in the CAP Update are too generalized and requests that County provide specific plans for recommended measures (e.g., electric heat pumps, insulation, and weatherization).

Response O4-12
The request to provide more specific measures (e.g., electric heat pumps, insulation, and weatherization) to reduce County facilities' energy use intensity is noted. The CAP Update has been revised to include heat pumps and weatherization as examples of implementation pathways. The County would reduce County facilities' energy use intensity through implementation of CAP Update Measure E-1, which would result in policies and programs to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and electrification in County operations. Refer to Response O4-5 for discussion of analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions."

Comment O4-13
The comment states that Sierra Club supports the wastewater measures if the measures will result in installation of graywater systems at County facilities.

Response O4-13
This comment expressing support for measures and actions in the water and wastewater sector that result in installation of graywater systems at County facilities is noted. As noted

in the comment, the CAP Update does include measures and actions to reduce potable water use, including through the installation of graywater systems, in line with the commenter's term.

Comment O4-14
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update's actions related to transitioning County vehicle fleets to zero emission options or cleaner fuel and prioritizing clean transportation in frontline communities. The comment also asks the County to provide specific details and timelines regarding how these actions would be implemented.

Response O4-14
The CAP Update includes substantial evidence of the GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action in several sections of the document. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program: the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Comment O4-15
The comment requests that the County include a dividend account parking measure in the CAP Update.

Response O4-15
This measure was evaluated as part of the CAP Update and was not included for the reason cited below. Upon careful consideration and evaluation, the County determined that a dividend account parking system, as recommended in this comment, would be infeasible as a GHG reduction measure in the CAP Update at this time. County employees work in widely varying roles and in diverse locations where parking is either free and plentiful or expensive and scarce. The dividend account parking system would require calculating a fair parking charge and transportation stipend applicable to all County employees, which would be virtually impossible under these varied conditions. Even if calculating a fair parking charge and transportation stipend was possible, free or subsidized parking is currently a benefit provided to all County employees; therefore, to institute a dividend parking policy would affect County Employee's Terms and Conditions of Employment, which would require negotiation and agreement from each of the County's 13 labor unions, something that cannot be guaranteed at this time. Charging for parking would require both the elimination of subsidies paid to some classes of employees who park in paid lots and charging employees who park for free in lots owned by the County. This would potentially affect employee income. As discussed, the County cannot propose changes to staff income without further negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with County employees.

The bargaining agreements for each of the labor unions would need to be negotiated when they come up for review (every 3 years), and the outcome of each of the agreements is not pre-determined. Because the result of further negotiations is speculative and contingent on future negotiations with a third party, the dividend account parking system is infeasible. State CEQA Guidelines define feasible as, "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15364). In order for actions to be included for GHG reductions, they must be in the jurisdiction of the County to control. The results of negotiations toward a dividend account parking system are too uncertain to support with evidence reductions to GHG emissions. It is uncertain that negotiations could be accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time.

In addition, the proposed dividend account parking system may have a disproportionate impact on employees who work at facilities in more rural areas of the County, where there is no or limited public transportation alternatives available. It would be costly and, in many locations, be the responsibility of other public agencies to build transportation infrastructure to reach each County facility. In sum, due to the practical difficulties with calculating a fair parking charge in the context of widely varied County facility locations; the time, cost, and resources required for labor negotiations; and the lack of viable alternative transportation options for many County employees, a dividend account parking system was not ultimately included as a GHG reduction measure in the CAP Update. However, this does not preclude the ability of the County to consider the dividend account parking in the future.

A dividend accounting measure would not result in significant GHG reduction benefits due to employee commute patterns (particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic) and would be difficult to implement because of labor agreements. CAP Update Measure T-4 would reduce GHG emissions from County employee commutes using other methods that have proven success. As noted in the description of this measure in the CAP Update, the County has reduced employee commute VMT by 26 percent (through 2022) relative to 2014 levels through teleworking and alternative work schedules. Therefore, the CAP Update includes measures and actions, with demonstrated effectiveness, to reduce County employee VMT. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the County's GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-16

The comment expresses support for solid waste reduction measures in the CAP Update and requests that County accelerate the timeline to implement these measures.

Response O4-16

As noted in the comment, the CAP Update includes measures and actions to increase solid waste diversion in the unincorporated county. The County appreciates the commenter's support for these measures and actions. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master

Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the County's GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-17
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Actions T-1.2, T-2.1, and T-2.2.

Response O4-17
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-18
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Actions A-2.1, A-2.1.a, A-2.1.b, and A-2.2.

Response O4-18
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-19
The comment states that SANDAG's Five Big Moves is not included in the CAP Update and claims that the CAP Update is not viable without a transit plan.

Response O4-19
The SANDAG's 5 Big Moves is included in the discussion of the San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan (2021 Regional Plan) on page 2.13-10 of the Draft SEIR. The 2021 Regional Plan combines the Regional Transportation Plan, Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Regional Comprehensive Plan. The 2021 Regional Plan strategies are organized around the 5 Big Moves. As discussed in Section 2.13.3.3, "Issue 1: Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance or Policy Addressing the Circulation System," of the Draft SEIR, implementation of the CAP Update would be consistent with the 2021 Regional Plan, including the strategies associated with the 5 Big Moves. In addition, the CAP Update includes measures and actions in support of promoting transit use in the unincorporated county, including Action T-6.2.b, which would evaluate options for increasing transit service to unincorporated communities, and Action T-6.1, which would develop a program to provide free transit passes or free trips in the unincorporated area. While the County does not have control over the capital (SANDAG) or operations (MTS, NCTD) of the transit strategies identified in SANDAG's plan, the County will continue to explore and collaborate with SANDAG on options to expand alternative modes in the unincorporated area.

Comment O4-20
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Action T-4.1.a but suggests the implementation of Action T-5.1 is not adequate across the entire county.

Response O4-20
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update Action T-4.1.a. Sierra Club is correct that Action T-5.1 would implement the Active Transportation Plan to install 345 miles of sidewalk and 315 miles of bikeways by 2030. As shown in Table 7 of the CAP Update, the County would install sidewalks and bikeways under this action through 2045. The CAP Update establishes the following performance outcomes for this action: install an additional 345, 360, 375, and 390 miles of sidewalks and 315, 472, 629, and 786 miles of bikeways by 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045, respectively. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve its GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-21
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Measure T-3 and Action T-3.1.

Response O4-21
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-22
The comment advises the County to increase the sidewalk expansion plan.

Response O4-22
With regards to installation of sidewalks under the CAP Update, please see Response O4-20.

Comment O4-23
The comment recommends that that County include a local natural habitat lands GHG mitigation bank and/or a local disadvantaged communities GHG mitigation bank in the CAP Update.

Response O4-23
The County acknowledges the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The County would acquire and manage conservation lands to preserve natural lands and reduce GHG emissions through implementation of CAP Update Measure A-1 and Actions A-1.1 and A-1.2. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the County's GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-24
The comment advises the County to provide incentives and subsidies to existing businesses and residences to convert natural gas or propane utilities to electric.

Response O4-24
The County acknowledges the suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The CAP Update includes Measures E-1 and E-2 to develop policies and programs to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and electrification in County operations and in the unincorporated area. Specifically, CAP Update Action E-2.2.c would develop a program to phase out propane uses for existing buildings. Refer also to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve its GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-25
The comment requests details about GHG emission reduction quantification of renewable energy measures identified in the CAP Update.

Response O4-25
The CAP Update includes sufficient detail regarding the implementation and GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Comment O4-26
The comment requests that the County include additional energy efficiency measures (e.g., installation of electric heat pumps) for existing buildings.

Response O4-26
The County acknowledges the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The CAP Update includes Measures E-1 and E-2 to develop policies and programs to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and electrification in County operations and in the unincorporated area. Implementation of CAP Update Actions E-1.1 and E-2.2 would result in building electrification in County operations and in the unincorporated area, respectively. Refer also to Response O4-5 for a discussion of the analytical and implementation details for measures and actions that are included in the CAP Update. Also refer Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions."

Comment O4-27
The comment states that CAP Update Actions W-2.3, W-2.3.a, and W-2.3.b and the "Path to Net Zero" actions are overly aspirational and lack specific details related to implementation and funding.

Response O4-27
The CAP Update includes substantial evidence of the GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action in several sections of the document. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. As explained in the Master Response, the CAP Update also contains 35 "Path to Net Zero" actions that establish steps the County will take to meet the 2045 net zero emissions goal. Although the CAP Update does not identify quantified GHG emissions reductions for "Path to Net Zero" actions, their implementation could result in quantified reductions in the future with additional data and monitoring. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation."

Comment O4-28
The comment expresses support for an expanded tree-planting program.

Response O4-28
The County appreciates the support for the tree-planting program. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-29
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Measure T-6 and suggests free transit passes be provided to all County residents.

Response O4-29
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update Measure T-6. The County will develop a program to provide free transit passes or free trips in the unincorporated county through implementation of CAP Update Action T-6.1. The comment does not raise significant environmental issues related to the Draft SEIR, and no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-30
The comment references a statement in the CAP Update regarding removal of obstacles to using public transit and ridesharing and requests more specific plans be provided for ridesharing.

Response O4-30
Regarding public transit and ridesharing, in the built environment and transportation sector, the CAP Update includes Measure T-4: Reduce emissions from County employee commutes; Measure T-5: Improve County roadways to encourage walking, biking, rolling to/from transit and destinations and increase transportation efficiency; and Measure T-6: Support transit and transportation demand management to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area. These measures include actions to decrease vehicle miles traveled by increasing use of public transit and decreasing single occupancy vehicle trips, for example through increased ride sharing. Also refer to Response O4-5 for discussion of the analytical and implementation details for measures and actions that are included in the CAP Update and refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions."

Comment O4-31
The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Measure T-3 and Action T-3.1. The comment also recommends that the County provide the specific regulations, subsidies, and incentives to achieve Measure T-3 and to extend the requirements of electric vehicle charging infrastructure to all business and residential areas.

Response O4-31
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update Measure T-3 and Action T-3.1.

The CAP Update includes substantial evidence of the GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action in several sections of the document. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Comment O4-32
The comment expresses support for the vision statement, strategy, and net zero emissions vision for agriculture and conversion; Measures A-3 and A-4; and Actions A-3.1, A-4.1, A-4.1.a, A-4.1.c, and SW-4.1.a. The comment also requests that the CAP Update include incentives to use animals rather than off-road vehicles to clear grass and brush.

Response O4-32
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update vision statement, strategy, and various measures and actions. The recommendation to incentivize use of animals for brush clearing could be considered as part of implementing the CAP Update strategy to decarbonize off-road vehicles in the future. It has not been included at this time due to lack of data on overall effectiveness of such a program in reducing GHG emissions. Refer

to Section 9.1.1.3, “Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions,” which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-33
The comment expresses general support for the CAP Update energy, built environment and transportation, solid waste, water and wastewater, and agriculture and conservation measures. The comment advises the County to require that all new developments use 100 percent renewable energy, to take steps to maximize solar energy production in the county, and to include electric heat pumps.

Response O4-33
The County appreciates the general support for the CAP Update measures. The County acknowledges the commenter’s suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The CAP Update Actions E-3.2, E-3.2.a, E-3.2.b, and E-3.3 would result in increased renewable energy use, generation, and storage in the unincorporated area. Implementation of CAP Update Actions E-1.1 and E-2.2 would result in building electrification within County operations and in the unincorporated area, respectively.

Please also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, “Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions,” which describes how the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O4-34
The comment states that the Draft SEIR encourages use of offsets for General Plan Amendment (GPA) projects. The comment suggests that offsets must be in-county and an in-county GHG mitigation program should be prepared.

Response O4-34
The comment incorrectly identifies Mitigation Measure M-GHG-1 from the 2018 CAP as part of the CAP Update. As described in Table 1-1, “Summary of SEIR Response to 2020 Appellate Court Ruling,” in the Draft SEIR:

> M-GHG-1 is a mitigation measure that was included in the 2018 SEIR. It provided two options for in-process and future GPAs to “ensure that CAP emission forecasts are not substantially altered such that attainment of GHG reduction targets could not be achieved”: a “No Net Increase” option and a “Net Zero” option. These options included the potential to purchase carbon offset credits after all feasible on-site design features and mitigation measures had been incorporated. No equivalent mitigation is proposed in this SEIR for in-process or future GPAs, and the CAP Update and this SEIR do not provide a pathway for GPAs to comply with the CAP Update. In-process and future GPAs will have to conduct their own GHG analysis. See Chapter 4, “Other CEQA Sections.”

The CAP Update does not, as the comment asserts, specify that offsets can be used for GPAs. The comment does not provide evidence to support the claim that the CAP encourages the use of offsets for GPAs other than a reference to page 5-7 of the Draft SEIR. On this page of Chapter 5, "Alternatives," the County explains the reasons for rejecting the Carbon Offset Alternative from detailed analysis in the Draft SEIR. In this discussion, the County does acknowledge that the CAP Update does not prohibit use of carbon offsets for projects that are outside the scope of the General Plan and the CAP Update, for which project-level analysis and mitigation would be required. The Draft SEIR accurately summarizes State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(c)(3), which allows mitigation through "off-site measures, including offsets that are not otherwise required."

The comment proceeds to set forth detailed requirements that the County could impose upon future GPA projects, if and when they are proposed, to ensure that any such projects achieve net negative GHG emissions. The County appreciates this feedback. As articulated throughout the Draft SEIR, GPA projects are outside the scope of the CAP Update and would require their own environmental analysis, including appropriate mitigation for any significant environmental impacts, at the time of discretionary review by the County. Preparation of an off-site GHG mitigation program outlined in the comment would require direction by the Board to initiate, technical analysis for feasibility and the funding requirements of the program, public engagement, and separate evaluation and consideration by decision-makers and, therefore, cannot appropriately be added to the CAP Update. Furthermore, the development of a mitigation program for private development would not be consistent with the CAP Update's Project Objectives. In addition, setting up an off-site GHG mitigation program as requested for GPA projects would only serve to provide a pathway for GPA projects, which this CAP Update does not propose.

Although not a component of the proposed CAP required to meet state targets, the County may consider a carbon offset program in the future. At this time, the County does not have evidence that it is feasible to establish a carbon offset program that meets established protocols. Recent academic studies have concluded that there are limited opportunities for offset credit projects using existing protocols in the San Diego region. Limitations are due in part to California's comprehensive regulations related to GHG emissions, the number of protocols that include activities applicable to the San Diego region, and the scale of activities related to eligible project types under relevant protocols (EPIC 2021).

Similarly, the comment expresses disappointment that other County programs (e.g., Sustainable Land Use Framework to address potential land use changes and a Regional Decarbonization Framework to provide a regional framework for governments and private entities to reduce carbon emissions) were not included in the CAP Update. This is not to diminish the importance of these separate policy ideas, but to allow for independent utility of the CAP Update as a program to mitigate reasonably foreseeable growth under the adopted General Plan. The CAP Update identifies a GHG reduction program and demonstrates that the County can achieve its reduction targets. If these separate County programs are adopted, they could result in greater GHG reductions than identified in the CAP Update.

Comment O4-35
The comment states that the Draft SEIR is required to consider smart growth alternatives per the Appellate Decision and that the requirements for smart growth are for future avoided development and the prevention of corresponding future VMT to reach GHG emissions reduction goals. The comment asserts that the County CAP Update should not be consistent with the 2011 General Plan because it was adopted when climate change was not a primary concern.

Response O4-35
Please see Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," regarding the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship with the 2011 GPU PEIR, and 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR."

The comment that the CAP Update should not be consistent with the 2011 GPU PEIR because it was adopted when climate change was not a primary concern is incorrect. Please see General Plan Chapters 1, 5, and 7, which address climate change. Table I-1 of the General Plan lists the policies with strategies to reduce GHG emissions and help prevent impacts from climate change. These policies include COS-20.1, Climate Change Action Plan. See also, Chapter 2.17, "Global Climate Change," of the 2011 GPU PEIR for analysis, existing and regulatory setting, impact conclusions, and mitigation. The County conducted a GHG inventory as part of the 2011 GPU PEIR and developed mitigation to require a climate action plan (Mitigation Measure CC-1.2).

Comment O4-36
The comment summarizes the Draft SEIR analysis of the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative and states that this alternative is either gone or unlikely to progress because the SANDAG Board has voted against including the Road User Charge in the 2025 Regional Plan. The comment contains an excerpt of analysis Sierra Club provided to SANDAG and concludes that the plan would not achieve the desired reductions in VMT and GHG outlined in the SEIR.

Response O4-36
Section 5.5.3.3, "Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative," of the Draft SEIR (pages 5-29 through 5-31) acknowledges that the Road User Charge has been voted against by the SANDAG Board and therefore states that "this scenario does not represent reasonably foreseeable land use, transportation policy/network, and VMT under the County's adopted General Plan." In addition, the Draft SEIR acknowledges that this alternative may result in less VMT reductions than anticipated:

> "As noted above, this alternative is assumed to substantially reduce GHG emissions associated with VMT in the unincorporated county compared to the General Plan. However, as discussed above, the total VMT reductions are based on the Regional Plan's premise of a distribution of growth within Mobility Hubs that encompass areas outside of the unincorporated county, which are outside the County's control. Furthermore, the Road User Charge, which results in lower VMT forecasts in the Regional Plan than scenarios without the Road User Charge, has

> been removed from the Regional Plan. Therefore, the actual VMT reductions achieved under this alternative may be less than modeled for the purposes of this analysis."

This alternative is one of the smart growth alternatives discussed in the Draft SEIR and was selected for detailed analysis based on stakeholder input. Please refer to Section 91.1.2. "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for a discussion about the Sustainable Community Strategy Alternative in the SEIR.

Comment O4-37
The comment summarizes the Draft SEIR analysis of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative and expresses support for this alternative.

Response O4-37
The County acknowledges the support for the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-38
The comment summarizes the Draft SEIR analysis of Village Support Areas Alternative and states that this alternative is not the preferred alternative of Sierra Club.

Response O4-38
The County acknowledges that the Village Support Areas Alternative is not Sierra Club's preferred alternative. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-39
The comment summarizes both the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative and 2011 GPU PEIR alternatives and expresses general support for these alternatives.

Response O4-39
The County acknowledges Serra Club's general support for the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative and 2011 General Plan EIR alternatives. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-40
The comment disputes the conclusion in the Draft SEIR that Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, Village Support Areas Alternative, and General Plan Policy Edits Alternative would not reduce the impacts of CAP Update implementation and expresses a belief that the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is environmentally superior.

Response O4-40
Although the comment states that Sierra Club disputes the conclusions of the Draft SEIR, the comment provides no evidence to support the dispute. The Draft SEIR includes

substantial evidence, including VMT modeling and GHG emissions calculations, in its analysis of the impacts of the alternatives as compared to those of the proposed project. The County acknowledges that the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is Sierra Club's preferred alternative. Refer to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," and Response O3-3 for further discussion.

Comment O4-41
The comment expresses support for measures to create increased environmental justice.

Response O4-41
The County appreciates the support for environmental justice measures. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-42
The comment acknowledges that the SEIR includes a discrete evaluation of the effect of in-progress GPA projects on cumulative conditions and includes a quantification of GHG emissions from in-process GPA projects.

Response O4-42
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-43
The comment expresses support for GHG emissions monitoring but requests specific provisions to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels. The comment also states that the use of the 2019 baseline is not fully justified in the Draft SEIR.

Response O4-43
The County appreciates the support for GHG emissions monitoring. The CAP Update includes substantial evidence of the GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action to achieve its GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045. As explained in the CAP Update and Draft SEIR, AB 1279 established a policy for the State to achieve net zero emissions as soon as possible and ensure anthropogenic emissions are reduced to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. The County's emissions reduction target for 2045 is aligned with this legislation. The CAP Update also establishes a goal to reach net zero emissions by 2045 and outlines actions the County will take to reach this long-term goal.

See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for detailed discussion related to GHG emissions targets and justification for use of the 2019 baseline included in the CAP Update.

Comment O4-44
The comment expresses support for the acquisition of conservation lands. The comment also urges the County to move forward with the East County and North County MSCPs and acquire more land in the South County MSCP.

Response O4-44
The County appreciates the commenter's support for the acquisition of conservation lands. The CAP Update includes Action A-1.1 regarding acquisition of conservation lands to preserve natural lands and maximize carbon potential in the unincorporated area. The commentary regarding the East County, North County, and South County MSCP is noted.

Comment O4-45
The comment requests that the County achieve net negative 100 percent GHG emissions by 2035.

Response O4-45
Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Comment O4-46
The comment expresses appreciation for the inclusion of a GHG emissions inventory in the CAP Update and then offers a summary of the emissions sources included in the inventory.

Response O4-46
Sierra Club's appreciation for the GHG emissions inventory is noted. The CAP Update summarizes the GHG emissions inventory in Part 2, and the complete inventory is provided in CAP Update Appendix 3.

Comment O4-47
The comment expresses support for two CAP actions to reduce GHG emissions.

Response O4-47
Sierra Club's support for these actions is noted. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O4-48
The comment expresses support for specified energy measures and actions of the CAP Update and comments that more detail and metrics are needed.

Response O4-48
The CAP Update includes substantial evidence of the GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action in several sections of the document. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and

Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation."

Comment O4-49
The comment quotes the cumulative wildfire impact conclusion for Issue 1 (Exacerbate Wildfire Risks) in Section 2.15.3.6, "Cumulative Impact Analysis," of the Draft SEIR. The comment also states that the County admits the analysis is potentially problematic.

Response O4-49
The County has not provided any statement on potentially problematic wildfire analysis. See Response O4-51 for a discussion of the wildfire analysis included in the SEIR.

Comment O4-50
The comment cites text from a CAP Update description of implementation measures for the water and wastewater sector and remarks that the quoted text does not include a "statement about where new development will occur." Sierra Club then states that it "would like to know will they do reuse from septic systems that are prevalent in the County."

Response O4-50
Regarding the location of new development, refer to Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," which explains that the CAP Update has been prepared to mitigate GHG emissions generated by new development under the County's General Plan, including GHG emissions associated with water and wastewater, and does not prescribe land use changes.

Regarding septic systems, the CAP update includes the following action to reduce GHG emissions:

> W-3.1a Evaluate Waterscape Rebate Program septic system improvements for opportunities to reduce wastewater emissions in the unincorporated area.

Comment O4-51
The comment states that the County provided contradictory arguments in the wildfire analysis and requests that more recent wildfire setting and analysis should be provided in the SEIR.

Response O4-51
In 2018, Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines was updated to include a separate section with new questions associated with evaluating a project's potential impact related to wildfire. The 2011 GPU PEIR was certified before the 2018 CEQA Guidelines update.

Therefore, the 2011 GPU PEIR did not include a separate section for wildfire analysis. Rather, wildland fire hazards and emergency evacuation and response plans are discussed in Section 2.7, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," of the 2011 GPU PEIR. Table 2.15-1 of the Draft SEIR summarizes the wildfire-related impacts and states that wildfire issues (exacerbate wildfire risks, install infrastructure that exacerbates fire risk, and expose people or structures to post-fire risks) were not evaluated in the 2011 GPU PEIR.

As discussed in Section 2.15, "Wildfire," the Draft SEIR incorporates by reference the wildfire setting and impact analysis from the 2011 GPU PEIR only as it applies to the CAP Update and supplements with updated setting conditions that have changed since certification of the 2011 GPU PEIR. The only wildfire existing condition included in the 2011 GPU PEIR is the description of the amount of land in the unincorporated county that is within a State Responsible Area (SRA), as identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The County reviewed the 2007 and 2022 fire hazard severity zones maps within SRAs prepared by CAL FIRE and concluded that the wildfire existing condition identified in the 2011 GPU PEIR is still applicable to the wildfire analysis. Although the 2022 CAL FIRE maps have yet to be adopted and the 2007 maps remain the most current adopted maps at the time of preparing the Draft SEIR, the SEIR includes the 2022 maps as the most up-to-date information. Furthermore, the County provides relevant and recent fire incidents in the county in Section 2.15.1, "Existing Conditions," which are conditions that have changed since certification of the 2011 GPU PEIR.

In Section 2.15.2, "Regulatory Framework," the County provides a summary of the regulatory setting that is included in the 2011 GPU PEIR and is still applicable to the CAP Update. In the same section, the County provides additional recent regulations that are not included in the 2011 GPU PEIR but are applicable to the CAP Update. Therefore, the Draft SEIR incorporates by reference the wildfire setting from the 2011 GPU PEIR only as it applies to the CAP Update and supplements with relevant and recent setting conditions.

For these reasons, the existing conditions related to wildfire that are represented in the SEIR are current; and the analysis of impacts is based on the most current regulatory requirements. The wildfire analysis is current, and no contradictory arguments are made in the Draft SEIR.

Comment O4-52
The comment suggests that with sufficient revision Sierra Club can support the CAP Update and the SEIR.

Response O4-52
See Responses O4-1 through O4-51 regarding responses to suggested revisions for the CAP Update and Draft SEIR.

Letter O5

From: Kelly, Meghan
To: Spoon, Steven (Chad)
Subject: Fwd: Peppetree Park Villages 7 and 8 (and 9 &10)
Date: Friday, December 29, 2023 11:27:13 AM
Attachments: 231227 Comment to County"s CAP.pdf

Please save

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From: Howard Justus <hjustus@Justusenterprise.com>
Sent: Friday, December 29, 2023 10:54:35 AM
To: Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] FW: Peppetree Park Villages 7 and 8 (and 9 &10)

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Attached is Peppertree Park Villages 7-10's comments to the County's Climate Action Plan. O5-1

Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions or comments.

Howard Justus
Justus Enterprises, LLC
PO Box 60094
San Diego, CA 92166
(619) 405-3585

PEPPERTREE PARK VILLAGES 7-10
PO Box 60094
San Diego, CA 92166
(619) 405-3585

December 27, 2023

Ms. Meghan Kelly
County of San Diego, Planning and Development Services
5510 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
Via email to meghan.kelly@sdcountyca.gov

Dear Megan:

My name is Howard Justus. I am the owner/representative of the Peppertree Park Villages 7, 8, 9 and 10 properties in the Fallbrook Community Plan Area. The Peppertree Park Project is a Specific Plan, approved in 1991, that provided for the development of up to 274 residential units and ancillary improvements including parks and open space, roadways, utilities, etc. Since the initial approval, subsequent tentative and final maps have been processed on the areas now referred to as Villages or Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and 217 homes have been constructed. The final four units remain undeveloped; however, they are all in process with PDS.

I noticed in my review of the Climate Action Plan that Appendix B-2 describes the Peppertree Park project as an "In-Process General Plan Amendment". This is at the very least, an inappropriate description for Villages 7 and 8. These projects are consistent with the density and intensity of development contemplated in the Peppertree Specific Plan, which is part of the County's General Plan. This project may propose minor changes to the Specific Plan, these certainly should not rise to the level of a "General Plan Amendment". In fact, the very nature of designating properties with long build-out horizons and providing for their orderly development through a Specific Plan is to refrain from bringing forward continual General Plan Amendments and Rezones.

Relative to Village 9, the proposal thereon is to increase the intensity of development from 1.65 to 2.24 dwelling units per acre. This proposal is consistent with the trend towards producing more housing, especially in places that are semi-rural and in or adjacent to more VMT efficient areas such as the Fallbrook Village. Relative to Village 10, the proposal is to change the zoning from Office/Professional to General Commercial.

Since 2003, the development of the Peppertree Villages has been designated by the General Plan as being governed by the Peppertree Park Specific Plan. That will not change with the approval of the current development applications.

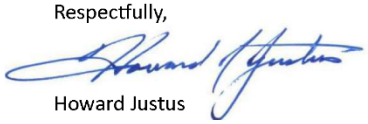
The County's Climate Action Plan has a history of drawing criticism, in particular regarding the treatment of General Plan Amendment projects identified in the CAP. Often, these have been significant projects proposing major upzoning in rural areas. Those projects have faced severe scrutiny and a higher threshold for review and approval. While amendments to the General Plan should be thoroughly reviewed and scrutinized, implementation of the Peppertree Park Specific Plan is not such an amendment to the General Plan and should not be characterized as such.

5-2

Therefore, I am requesting that the County revise Appendix B-2 to remove the reference to Peppertree Park as an In Process GPA and delete it from the analysis contained therein. At the very least, the County should clarify which project within the greater specific plan is a General Plan Amendment.

5-2 cont.

Respectfully,



Howard Justus

cc: Chelsea Ohanesian

Letter O5 Peppertree Park Villages 7-10

Howard Justus
December 29, 2023

Comment O5-1
The comment is an introductory statement.

Response O5-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O5-2
The comment provides a description of Peppertree Park Project Specific Plan and current development status. The comment states that the Peppertree Park Project is mischaracterized as an in-process GPA in Appendix B-2 ("VMT Assessment") and requests its removal.

Response O5-2
Peppertree Park is a large project that includes several villages. Some of these units have been built and are accounted for in the CAP Update. Others are the subject of in-process amendments to the General Plan (through specific plan amendments) to change adopted land use densities and increase the number of potential dwelling units. Because the General Plan must be amended to incorporate amendments to a specific plan, specific plan amendments, including those proposed to the Peppertree Park Project Specific Plan, are considered General Plan Amendments.

Draft SEIR Appendix B ("In-Process General Plan Amendment Project VMT and GHG Emissions Forecasts") lists Peppertree Park as an in-process GPA with potential to add 685 residential units above the growth accounted for in the baseline or forecast to occur without amendment to the General Plan. This accounts for the portions of the larger Peppertree Park Project that were not approved as of December 10, 2020.

The commenter states that Villages 7 and 8 (also described as Units 7 and 8) should not be included because these areas are consistent with the density and intensity of development contemplated in the Peppertree Specific Plan, which is part of the County's General Plan. The commenter states, "This project may propose minor changes to the Specific Plan, these certainly should not rise to the level of a 'General Plan Amendment.'" The County agrees with removal of Villages 7 and 8 from the list of in-process GPAs as the Specific Plan amendment will not affect density or intensity, nor will it change uses contemplated in the Specific Plan inconsistent with density or intensity. The Final SEIR has been modified to remove Peppertree Park SPA Units 7 and 8 from Table 4-1, "In-Process Projects that include General Plan Amendments," and the text on page 4-35 has been modified to reflect this change.

The commenter states, "Relative to Village 9, the proposal thereon is to increase the intensity of development from 1.65 to 2.24 dwelling units per acre…[R]elative to Village

10, the proposal is to change the zoning from Office/Professional to General Commercial." These changes in density/intensity and changes of use require a GPA. In addition, the applicant for Peppertree Park Units 9 and 10 has an in-process GPA application number PDS2003-3800-03-XX on file with Planning & Development Services (PDS). Therefore, based on the information available to PDS, Villages 9 and 10 are defined as in-process GPAs.

There is no pathway for GPAs in the CAP Update and Villages 9 and 10 will be required to analyze their GHG impacts within their CEQA documents and provide substantial evidence to support impact conclusions. If Units 9 and 10 require mitigation, then they must provide all feasible mitigation to reduce GHG impacts. Units 9 and 10 cannot streamline their GHG analysis using the CAP Update and CAP Update Consistency Review Checklist if they are increasing density or intensity above what is allowed in the Specific Plan.

Although Units 7 and 8 are removed from the Final SEIR, Appendix B, In-Process General Plan Amendment Project VMT and GHG Emission Forecast, remains unchanged. Because Units 7 and 8 are no longer listed as in-process GPAs, Appendix B overcounts the impacts of in-process GPAs and presents a conservative assessment of impacts.

Letter O6

From: Ron Askeland <ron.askeland@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 29, 2023 11:34 AM
To: Lynch, Dahvia <Dahvia.Lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] SD County CAP comments

Dear Dahvia,
I'm Ron Askeland, coleader of
SD-SEQUEL (San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable, & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping). Our coalition's goal is to protect worker health and the environment by advocating for the enactment of an equitable ban on gas-powered leaf blowers in all jurisdictions of San Diego County. SD-SEQUEL is committed to securing a trade-in or buyback program before the ban takes effect to ensure an equitable transition from gas to electric landscaping equipment (https://sd-sequel.org/). O6-1

I've submitted online comments on San Diego County's Draft Climate Action Plan, but also wanted to contact you directly.

We are very pleased that landscaping equipment was included in the Draft CAP and suggest an accelerated schedule as follows:

T-1.2 - Please accelerate the timeline to 100% of handheld, 2-stroke engine, landscaping equipment used on County property to be zero emissions by 2026 and 100% of ALL landscaping equipment used on County property to be zero emissions by 2028

T-2.1 - Please develop a program by 2025 to provide residents and businesses incentives to purchase zero emissions landscaping equipment

T-2.2 - Please develop and adopt an ordinance to require the use of zero emission handheld, 2-stroke engine, landscaping equipment by 2028 in the unincorporated area and a second ordinance to require the use of zero emission for ALL landscaping equipment by 2030 in the unincorporated area.

O6-1 cont.

On a related note, the Draft CAP doesn't mention synthetic turf. As you may know, synthetic turf contributes to climate change, contains environmentally hazardous substances and is harmful to human health. More information can be found at https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org

The County CAP should include:

1. No installation of synthetic turf on County properties.
2. A ban on synthetic turf installations in the unincorporated areas.

O6-2

Thanks,
Ron Askeland
SD-SEQUEL coleader
San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable, & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping
https://sd-sequel.org/



Letter O6 San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping

Ron Askeland, Coleader
December 29, 2023

Comment O6-1
The comment describes San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping's (SD-SEQUEL's) goal and efforts to ban gas-powered leaf blowers and suggests an accelerated schedule for the following CAP Update actions T-1.2, requiring use of zero-emission landscaping equipment on County property; T-2.1, regarding an incentive program for alternative fuel and/or zero-emission construction and landscaping equipment; and T-2.2, regarding an ordinance to require zero-emission landscaping and construction equipment.

Response O6-1
The measures and actions in the CAP Update adequately address GHG emissions and would achieve established GHG reduction targets as written. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions." The commenter's suggestions to implement the specified actions earlier than identified in the CAP Update are noted and will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update.

Comment O6-2
The comment requests a ban on synthetic turf on County properties and in the unincorporated county.

Response O6-2
The commenter's opposition to installations of synthetic turf on County property and in the unincorporated areas is noted. The CAP Update includes the following action to reduce GHG emissions by reducing outdoor water consumption through implementation of the County's Waterscape Rebate Program; note that artificial turf is not permitted in this rebate program.

> W-2.4 Implement the Waterscape Rebate Program to incentivize water efficiency and conservation to reduce outdoor water consumption in the unincorporated area.

Letter O7

From: Dan Silver
To: CAP
Cc: Kelly, Meghan; Darin Neufeld; Farmer, Tyler; Talleh, Rami; Lynch, Dahvia; Michael Beck
Subject: [External] SEIR Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 11:30:48 AM
Attachments: EHL-CAP comments-1.3.24.pdf
Safety and Land Use Elements motion.pdf

Dear Meghan:

Please find comments from Endangered Habitats League on the draft SEIR for the Climate Action Plan. We appreciate the opportunity to participate and would welcome a chance to discuss our views and suggestions. O7-1

If you would confirm receipt, it would also be appreciated.

With best wishes for the New Year,
Dan

Dan Silver, Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League
8424 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite A 592
Los Angeles, CA 90069-4267

213-804-2750
dsilverla@me.com
https://ehleague.org

ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE
DEDICATED TO ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE



January 3, 2023

Meghan Kelly
County of San Diego PDS
5510 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov

RE: Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update and Draft SEIR

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Endangered Habitats League (EHL) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the CAP. EHL is a longstanding participant in the process. We recognize the progress made in this new iteration, including the elimination of unreliable carbon offsets and of the associated streamlined path to GPAs. Our comments will focus on the alternatives analysis. O7-2

Alternatives

The DSEIR discusses rejected alternatives, several Smart Growth Alternatives, planning mechanisms, and options for new General Plan policies. EHL does not have the expertise to evaluate the Distributed Energy Only Alternative, which the DSEIR concludes is the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

The DSEIR finds serious barriers to the great majority of alternatives. The Enhanced Biological Preserve Alternative was rejected because TDR is not deemed practical. For the Smart Growth Alternatives that require major land use changes, the DSEIR repeatedly stresses that many additional actions, potentially years of public outreach, and major environmental review would be necessary to implementation. The Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative, while using SANDAG Series 9 forecasts (9,902 units until 2050) and significantly reducing VMT, would , according to the analysis, require transportation and land use actions outside of the County's control. The Village Support Areas Alternative is based on unsubstantiated premises regarding future Village development. It also not a true Smart Growth Alternative, and would destroy the decade of work and community outreach that went into General Plan and its foundational Village/Semirural/Rural components. O7-3

Unlike the other Smart Growth Alternatives, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative has the distinct advantage that it could be implemented quickly through overlays and incentives, and not take additional years of work. Coupled with effective

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changes in General Plan policies, it could bridge the gap between the CAP and the more comprehensive land use changes anticipated by the Sustainable Land Use Framework (SLUF). While the alternative would continue to allow development in high VMT and high fire risk locations, these trends could be tempered by a package of incentives, streamlining benefits, disincentives, and new policies. Indeed, work on this alternative has already begun with the feasibility analysis for VMT efficient and infill development for the four communities of Buena Creek, Casa de Oro, Spring Valley, and North El Cajon/Lakeside. The Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative would also take advantage of work already in progress for SB 743 implementation, whose mitigation program will offer incentives and disincentives. Complementary parameters for the SLUF could also be adopted in conjunction with the CAP.

O7-3 cont.

In light of these factors, we recommend adopting the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative. Such adoption will:

1) Get the County *on the right track* for addressing climate through land use and transportation;
2) Require only overlays and incentives instead of time-consuming major land use changes;
3) Complement ongoing housing feasibility initiatives and SB 743 implementation: and
4) Act synergistically with new General Plan policies.

In regard to complementary actions for the SLUF, direction should also be given to employ the SANDAG Series 9 forecast in the SLUF. The analysis in the DSEIR demonstrates major VMT and GHG reductions with this land use scenario.[1]

General Plan Goal and Policy Edits

We strongly recommend adoption of many of the General Plan and Policy Edits and suggest modification for others. These changes would have important immediate benefits and would require minimal additional environmental review. Specific recommendations are discussed below.

O7-4

Policy LU-1.2 Leapfrog Development

Strongly *support* this change. It is extremely important to update the leapfrog policy to include today's GHG and climate change considerations that were not prominent in 2011.

[1] The Alternatives Evaluated in the 2011 GPU EIR, incorporated by reference into the CAP, would also be helpful to the SLUF. These land use scenarios improve upon the 2011 General Plan in directing growth out of high fire risk and high VMT locations. Their use would allow the County to merge prior planning with newer considerations of climate change, VMT, and fire risk, all of which were not as prominent issues in 2011 as they are today.

2

Policy LU-1.4 Village Expansion.

Strongly *support* this change but a more appropriate level of tolerable risk should be substituted. Again, it is vital to update village expansion policies to include today's GHG and climate change considerations that were not prominent in 2011.

> Any expansion within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone would not subject future residents, occupants, and structures to ~~high levels~~ more than a low level of risk of loss of life or loss of structures

Policy LU-1.5 Relationship of County Land Use Designations with Adjoining Jurisdictions

Strongly *oppose* this change. The purpose of this policy is to respect urban-rural boundaries established for important purposes, such as protecting habitat, farmland, and limiting sprawl. Adding the clause, "except where such adjustments would result in land use patterns consistent with the County's climate policies implementing General Plan Goals LU-5 (Climate Change and Land Use) and LU-6 (Sustainable Development-Environmental Balance)" would eviscerate this important planning goal by allowing a wide range of secondary considerations to *override* the essential purpose of the policy.

GOAL LU-4. Inter-jurisdictional Coordination

O7-4 cont.

Support

Policy LU-4.1 Regional Planning

Support

Policy LU-4.6 Planning for Adequate Energy Facilities

Support

Policy LU-5.1 Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Vehicle Trips within Communities. and Vehicle Miles Traveled from New and Existing Development

Support with changes. The last sentence should be removed as it is unnecessary and largely redundant.

With the exception of "maximizing to the extent feasible the use of electric vehicles," the text preceding this sentence captures all the relevant actions to address vehicle trips. These actions are *broadly applicable* to any location, whether relatively low or high VMT. Second, it undermines the goal of focusing development in lower VMT locations by implying that electric vehicle use could serve as a *rationale* to sprawl into remote areas. Rather, gas-power will dominate vehicle use for decades to come. The best solution is to substitute "enhanced electric vehicle recharging infrastructure"

3

with "maximized use of electric vehicles and required construction of electric vehicle recharging infrastructure."

> **Policy LU-5.1 Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Vehicle Trips within Communities. and Vehicle Miles Traveled from New and Existing Development.** Incorporate a mixture of uses within Villages and Rural Villages and plan residential densities at a level that supports multi-modal transportation, including walking, bicycling, and the use of public transit, when appropriate, and the use of electric vehicles. Develop and implement strategies to avoid, minimize, reduce, and/or compensate for the greenhouse gas emissions associated with vehicle miles traveled from new development, including compensatory strategies that would fund reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from existing development and existing economic activities. Include *in-County* compensatory strategies such as improved energy and water conservation, increased reliance on large- and small-scale renewable energy, ~~enhanced electric vehicle recharging infrastructure,~~ maximized use of electric vehicles and required construction of electric vehicle recharging infrastructure, reductions in propane usage in rural areas, replacement of diesel- and gasoline-powered equipment and vehicles, landscape restoration and enhancement (e.g., tree-planting), preservation and enhancement of open space and rural lands to maintain or increase carbon sequestration, and other outcomes that reduce fossil fuel usage, reduce biomass combustion, and/or sequester carbon. ~~In unincorporated areas where new development would lead to comparatively high per capita vehicle miles traveled, maximize to the extent feasible the use of electric vehicles and require construction of electric vehicle recharging infrastructure.~~

O7-4 cont.

Policy LU-5.2 Sustainable Planning and Design

> *Support*

Policy LU-5.3 Rural Land Preservation

> *Oppose unless modified.*

The actual measures that would be taken to reduce wildfire risk are not specified. Unfortunately, counterproductive landscape-level vegetation treatments are common. These convert chaparral and coastal sage scrub to flammable non-native grasses, and actually increase fire danger.[2] Given this state of affairs, the proposed language would be

[2] See "1757 Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) Recommendations for Implementation Targets for Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Sector Climate Actions," November 2023, Shublands, page 39ff. < https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Initiatives/Expanding-Nature-Based-Solutions/1757_EAC_Recommendations_Implementation_Targets_for_NWL.pdf> Also see Syphard, A., et al, "Fire-driven vegetation type conversion in Southern California," *Ecological Applications*, 2022, and Syphard, A., et al, "Extent and drivers of vegetation type conversion in Southern California chaparral, Ecosphere, 2019.

counterproductive. An alternative is to modify the policy so as avoid type conversion. Otherwise, this new policy will do more harm than good.

> Encourage and support the management of public and private open space and rural lands so as to reduce the risk of uncontrolled wildfires with the potential to r elease large amounts of greenhouse gases with methods that do not result in the type-conversion of native habitat.

Policy LU-5.4 Planning Support.

Support

Policy LU-5.6 Develop Mechanisms for Avoiding Potential Regulatory Takings Where Development is Restricted to Achieve Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets.

Oppose unless substantially modified.

As written, this policy would willfully undermine the County's basic police power of land use. The most problematic part regards downplannng, which does *not* require compensation unless no economic use remains. The policy would reverse the County's proper and legally-correct position used throughout the 2011 Update, that standard downplannings are *not* regulatory takings. It would chill future downplanning in the public interest and create huge financial liability. The policy could be completely re-written to remove a misplaced focus on "regulatory takings" and instead focus on *positive* steps to facilitate emissions reduction.

O7-4 cont.

> **Policy LU-5.6 Develop Planning Mechanisms ~~for Avoiding Potential Regulatory Takings Where Development is Restricted~~ to Facilitate Achieving Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets.** ~~In consultation with SANDAG, cities within the County, the public at large, and key stakeholders such as business leaders, land developers, rural property owners, environmental organizations, and environmental justice advocates, develop and implement strategies for providing economic compensation to private landowners where the County restricts or limits the amount of development pursuant to their existing General Plan and zoning designation in order toto achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions consistent with State law and County General Plan policy. Explore the use of compensation mechanisms such as transferrable development rights, density transfers, density bonuses beyond those already permitted under State law, property tax reductions, compensated down-zonings, and subsidized permanent land conservation for carbon sequestration purposes.~~ In order to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions consistent with State law and County General Plan policy, explore and develop land use mechanisms to help reduce GHG emissions, such as transferrable development rights, density transfers, density bonuses beyond those already permitted under State law, property tax reductions, and easement purchase for permanent land conservation for carbon sequestration purposes.

5

GOAL LU-6. Sustainable Development-Environmental Balance

Support

Policy LU-6.1 Environmental Sustainability.

Support

Policy LU-6.2 Reducing Development Pressures

Support with changes. Just "considering" strategies would accomplish little. Also, the scope of the policy should include HFHSZs. Recommend the edits below.

> **Policy LU-6.2 Reducing Development Pressures.** Assign lowest-density or lowest-intensity land use designations to areas with sensitive natural resources.; ~~consider~~ develop strategies to reduce planned density in areas in which new development would lead to comparatively high per capita vehicle miles traveled, and in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Policy LU-6.3 Conservation-Oriented Project Design.

Support though the policy should include the existing Conservation Subdivision Program, which accomplishes exactly these goals.

O7-4 cont.

Policy LU-6.4 Sustainable Subdivision Design

Support

Policy LU-6.11 Protection from Wildfires and Unmitigable Hazards

Support

Policy LU-8.1 Density Relationship to Groundwater Sustainability

Support

Policy LU-8.2 Groundwater Resources

Support

Policy LU-11.6 Office Development

Support

Policy LU-11.6 Office Development

6

Support

Policy LU-11.8 Permitted Secondary Uses

Support

Policy LU-11.12 Plan for Mixed Uses

Support if modified. Not all locations are appropriate for new residential development, and market forces should not be the sole reason for changing a land use.

> **Policy LU-11.12 Plan for Mixed Uses.** Within Villages, consider land use designations and zoning standards that allow for the conversion from office and commercial uses to residential uses where office or commercial space ~~has become uncompetitive due to market conditions or other factors~~ is no longer needed and where residential uses would be both compatible with surrounding land uses and consistent with the County's climate policies implementing General Plan Goals LU-5 (Climate Change and Land Use) and LU-6 (Sustainable Development-Environmental Balance).

GOAL LU-12. Infrastructure and Services Supporting Development.

O7-4 cont.

Support

Policy LU-12.1 Concurrency of Infrastructure and Services with Development

Support

GOAL LU-19.

Strongly *oppose.* This policy is not necessary and is redundant. It also provides an unwarranted "greenlight" to GPAs. Yes, the County must meet its RHNA requirements. But given the enormous overcapacity in the current General Plan (60,000 unit capacity vs 9,000 units in Series 9), the task before the County is not up-planning but down-planning. But if a GPA is truly needed to meet RHNA or Housing Element requirements, there are ample new policies being proposed that would address the goal of limiting GHG impacts.

> ~~Limit the environmental impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions, resulting from General Plan Amendments that would either allow development where it is currently disallowed or increase the density or intensity of use beyond currently planned levels, while ensuring that the County can meet its share of the housing needed on a regional basis, as determined through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process overseen by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)~~.

7

Policy LU-19.1 Environmental Review

Support with modification. These are important factors for environmental review for any GPA proposed outside of "smart growth" locations. However, if the Board has not yet designated such locations, then the policy becomes problematic. Thus, the text should be modified as follows:

> ~~outside~~ not within a Board-designated "smart growth" area~~s designated by the Board~~

The text of the policy should clarify that out-of-county carbon offsets are an excluded mechanism for carbon neutrality. Also, for reasons described above, the reference to "compensated down-zonings" should be deleted. Finally, we note that the merits of this policy, particularly (viii), hinge on whether changes are made to LU-19.2.

Policy LU-19.2 Criteria for Approval.

Support if modified. This is an extremely important new policy. EHL strongly supports the "findings" approach to proposed GPAs. It is essential that a GPA reinforce and not undermine climate goals. *However, to be effective, the policy must also address the essential locational factors that determine the merits of a GPA.*

O7-4 cont.

Preliminary comments are as follows:

- Modify the introductory text as in LU-19.1:

  > ~~outside~~ not within a Board-designated "smart growth" area~~s designated by the Board~~

- Change the standard for findings to reflect contrary evidence that may be brought to the Board's attention:

  > which must each be supported by ~~substantial~~ a preponderance of the evidence before the Board:

Regarding the substance of the findings themselves, we *concur* with finding (i) concerning carbon neutrality and with the multiple findings (iii – viii) to ensure "no significant, unavoidable effects" occur on natural resources and public safety. However, significant improvement is critical for the housing finding (ii).

For the housing finding, we agree with using "smart growth" areas as the threshold, as these locations already meet high sustainability standards. These smart growth areas should be low VMT, low fire risk, *and within Villages*. Village designations are important to recognize as they are the *fundamental planning principal* of the General Plan, separating locations where more housing will be appropriate from rural, habitat, and agricultural lands where it is *not* appropriate. However, Village development

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does not necessarily reduce VMT and GHG emissions, as some are remote. For this reason, the policy is correct in using the threshold of "smart growth" areas for when findings are needed.

The crux of the problem with (ii)(A) as currently written is that the wrong question is asked. *A proposed up-planning will always increase overall housing stock; the proposed finding is therefore meaningless as it will always be successfully made. The right question is whether the up-planning is needed in the first place*, especially given the gross overcapacity in the General Plan. To answer this question, Village designations must be incorporated into the findings.

To accommodate all these considerations, we recommend introducing the concept of *necessity* into the housing findings. *A GPA is justified if it responds to a lack of housing capacity*. If so, a tiered approach should be used, which first prioritizes smart growth areas and then locations within existing Villages. We recommend the following changes:

> (ii) Compared with a scenario in which the proposed project would be disapproved (i.e., the CEQA No Project Alternative), the proposed project will contribute positively to meeting the County's housing needs by:
>
> (A) Demonstrating under-capacity in the General Plan such that, absent the project, the County will not meet its fair share of the housing needed on a regional basis, as determined through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process overseen by SANDAG;
>
> (B) Demonstrating that if the proposed GPA is outside of Villages there is no land available land within Villages where the housing need can be feasibly accommodated, including by re-designating residential or commercial land within Villages;
>
> (C) Demonstrating that land utilized outside Villages is the minimum amount necessary to accommodate the housing need after utilizing land within Villages, is adjacent to Villages consistent with the Community Development Model, and utilizes Semi-Rural rather than Rural land to the maximum extent possible.
>
> (D) Appreciably increasing the overall housing stock in the unincorporated County, consistent with the County's fair share of the housing needed on a regional basis, as determined through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process overseen by SANDAG by either providing a component of deed-restricted housing affordable to very low-income, low-income, or moderate-income households for 30 years or, for projects that do not include housing, creating job opportunities near existing residential areas and/ or transit.

O7-4 cont.

Policy COS-15.7 through Policy M-9.5

9

Support

GOAL S-3. Minimized Fire Hazards

Support if modified. Why not also in High Fire Severity Zones?

Minimize injury, loss of life, and damage to property resulting from structural or wildland fire hazards, particularly in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, consistent with the Safety Element.

Policy S-3.1 Defensible Development

Support if modified. Why not also in High Fire Severity Zones?

Require development to be located, designed, and constructed to provide adequate defensibility and minimize the risk of structural loss and life safety resulting from wildland fires. Require new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to employ construction practices (e.g., "hardened homes") and landscaping strategies that minimize the possibility of loss of life and structures from wildfires.

Policy S-3.8 Discourage New Subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

O7-4 cont.

Support if modified. First, it is unclear if this policy is intended to address subdivisions under existing zoning, GPAs, or both. *Please clarify.* However, new polices should address both circumstances in relation to fire hazard.

As a guiding principle, if there is an *unavoidable* need to increase density in high fire locations, it should absolutely *not* further expand the wildland-urban interface (WUI). WUI expansion leads to *additional* areas where human-caused ignitions will start wildfires and *additional* locations that firefighters must defend in a widespread conflagration. *WUI expansion is identified by fire ecologists as the underlying cause of today's fire crisis.*[3] If new development is within a Village, even if in a high fire severity zone, at least it will not expand the WUI and is surrounded by other development that is already being defended.

EHL generally supports the approach of Los Angeles County, which *prohibits* new subdivisions outside of existing communities in VHFHSZs, and discourages subdivisions in other FHSZs. This use of existing communities is a middle ground that allows some ongoing subdivision in VHFHSZs. Importantly, Los Angeles County goes on to prohibit GPAs in all fire hazard areas unless within an existing community. (See Motion enclosed.) San Diego County's equivalent to "existing communities" is Villages.

[3] Radeloff, V. et al, "Rapid growth of the US wildland-urban interface raises wildfire risk." PNAS, 2028 https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.1718850115.

10

EHL recommends policies along these lines, recognizing that the prohibition against GPAs (as opposed to subdivisions) is the priority.

A major flaw in the current policy is use of the concept of "sufficient" land. This is an oversimplification that does not take into account potential up-planning to increase density in less hazardous locations. However, it is probably unreasonable for a proposed subdivision (absent a GPA) to undertake a complete analysis of land sufficiency.

Based on all these considerations, we recommend the following:

Unless within Villages and providing safe emergency egress and safe access for emergency responders as determined by the County, prohibit ~~Discourage~~ new residential subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, except as necessary to avoid regulatory takings and/or to maintain sufficient land to meet the County's fair share of the housing needed on a regional basis, as determined through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process overseen by SANDAG. Discourage new residential subdivisions in ~~Very~~ High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, except as necessary to avoid regulatory takings and/or to maintain sufficient land to meet the County's fair share of the housing needed on a regional basis, as determined through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process overseen by SANDAG, but if they occur, provide safe emergency egress and safe access for emergency responders as determined by the County.

O7-4 cont.

Outside of currently designated Villages, privately-initiated development projects proposing a general plan amendment (GPA) that would either allow development where it is currently disallowed or increase the density or intensity of use beyond currently allowed levels within High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are prohibited.

Policy S-4.3 Forest Health.

Support if modified. As this policy does, it is important to differentiate forests from shrublands (coastal sage scrub and chaparral) which are managed completely differently. However, fuel management techniques even within conifer forests are controversial in Southern California. Specific methods should not be listed as "appropriate" unless the County first confers with expert fire ecologists.

Encourage and support the protection and management of woodlands, forests, and tree resources on public and private lands and limit fire threat through scientifically appropriate fuel management. ~~such as prescribed burns, herbivory, and the removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees and excessive flammable underbrush.~~

Thank you for considering our views and we hope to work with you on a successful Climate Action Plan.

11

Yours truly,



Dan Silver
Executive Director

Enclosure

Los Angeles County Safety and Land Use Elements motion

12

AGN. NO.

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER April 5, 2022

Update to the County's Safety Element

The Safety Element is just one component of the County's overall General Plan. The Safety Element Update factually focuses on the full range of potential hazards, with the goal of reducing the potential short and long-term risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fire, flood, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, and climate change in the County's unincorporated areas.

The Safety Element is required to be updated for two reasons. First, the State of California recently passed legislation requiring the Safety Element to address climate change and hazard risk reduction. The second reason is to integrate safety planning with our policies dealing with growth and future housing production. Recently enacted legislation (Senate Bill 1035) requires the Housing Element and Safety Element to be updated at the same time to ensure that we are not planning for new growth in hazard areas, particularly fire hazard zones. Additionally, Senate Bill 1241, enacted in 2012, requires development in fire hazard areas to have additional wildfire protections.

The Safety Element also recognizes that disadvantaged communities are uniquely vulnerable to climate-related hazards. This policy emphasis is appropriately reflected in a concerted effort to enhance the safety of existing at-risk communities through Resilience Hubs, Microgrids, Cooling Centers, and Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

Although fires are a natural part of the wildland ecosystem, development in wildland areas can potentially increase the danger of wildfires to residents, property, and the environment, which are increasing, again, in part due to climate change.

The Safety Element acknowledges the need to limit further development into the wildland-urban-interface. This acknowledgment is critical to reduce fire frequency, protect life and property, and reduce future fire-related costs to the taxpayer.

-- MORE --

MOTION

SOLIS _____

KUEHL _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

MITCHELL _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER
April 5, 2022
Page 2

However, the Safety Element, in a nod to the ongoing housing and homeless crises, achieves the necessary balance with mitigating environmental hazards, while also recognizing areas that are suitable for and already committed to development. New subdivisions or general assembly uses that are generally surrounded by existing or planned development and address the need for evacuation and emergency response, can continue to be developed.

Accordingly, to meet these goals, the County should make slight revisions to Policies S4.1, S4.20, and L1.10 as identified in redline below:

> Policy S 4.1: Prohibit new subdivisions in VHFHSZs unless: (1) the new subdivision is generally surrounded by existing or entitled development or is located in an existing approved specific plan or is within the boundaries of a communities facility district adopted by the County prior to January 1, 2022, including any improvement areas and future annexation areas identified in the County resolution approving such district; (2) the County determines there is sufficient secondary egress; and (3) the County determines the adjoining major highways and street networks are sufficient for evacuation as well as safe access for emergency responders under a range of emergency scenarios, as determined by the County. Discourage new subdivisions in all other FHSZs.
>
> Policy S 4.20: Prohibit new and intensification of existing general assembly uses in VHFHSZs unless: (1)the use is located in an existing approved specific plan or (2) the County determines there is sufficient secondary egress and the County determines the adjoining major highways and street networks are sufficient for evacuation, as well as safe access for emergency responders under a range of emergency scenarios, as determined by the County. Discourage new general assembly uses in all other FHSZs
>
> Policy L 1.10: Prohibit plan amendments that increase density of residential land uses within mapped fire and flood hazard areas unless generally surrounded by existing built development and the County determines the adjoining major highways and street networks can accommodate evacuation as well as safe access for emergency responders under a range of emergency scenarios, as determined by the County.

Understanding the need to balance environmental protection, limiting extreme hazards, and supporting the protection of existing or planned development:

-- MORE --

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER
April 5, 2022
Page 3

I, **THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Indicate your intent to adopt the Negative Declaration associated with Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2021005522, finding that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment;

2. Indicate your intent to approve the Project (Plan Amendment No. RPPL2021011001) with slight revisions to Policies S 4.1, S 4.20, and L 1.10 ;

3. Find that the Project, with these revisions, is consistent with the goals, policies, and principles of the General Plan; In the interest of public health, safety, and general welfare and in conformity with good zoning practice, and consistent with other provisions of Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code (County Code); and

4. Instruct County Counsel to prepare the final documents for the Project and bring them back to the Board for their consideration.

# # #

SUP:KB:ast

Letter O7 Endangered Habitats League

Dan Silver, Executive Director
January 3, 2024

Comment O7-1
The comment is an introductory statement.

Response O7-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O7-2
The comment states that the detailed comments provided below will focus on the alternatives analysis.

Response O7-2
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O7-3
The comment provides a summary of the alternatives analysis in the Draft SEIR. The comment asserts that "the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative has the distinct advantage that it could be implemented quickly through overlays and incentives, and not take additional years of work." The comment recommends adoption of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative because such adoption would "get the County on the right track through land use and transportation," via "overlays and incentives instead of time-consuming major land use changes," and would complement housing feasibility initiatives, SB 743, and new General Plan policies. The comment also offers suggestions related to the SLUF.

Response O7-3
The Endangered Habitats League's support for the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is noted for the record and will be provided to the Board for consideration. Refer to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for further discussion of smart growth development and implementation. The County agrees that through overlays and incentives, some of the smart growth alternatives could be implemented in a relatively short time frame, should the Board select an alternative.

As directed by the Board on February 9, 2022, County staff have embarked on a two-phased approach to identify policies to reduce VMT in the unincorporated county through the implementation of SB 743 (see https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB743). The SLUF will identify how and if the County should reconsider the existing 2011 General Plan principles and vision, and whether a new or revised vision should guide future land

use decisions. Comments on the County's evaluation of the separate SLUF program are acknowledged.

Comment O7-4
The comment expresses support, suggests modifications, and expresses opposition to various policies in the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative.

Response O7-4
The County appreciates and acknowledges the support, input, and refinements provided in the comment. Adoption of any part of the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative, as presented in the Draft EIR or as subsequently revised, is a question of County policy. These suggestions will be presented to the Board, which has the discretion to direct implementation of the suggested refinements as part of the alternative.

Letter O8

From: Suzanne Hume
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Comments for Draft 2024 Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 11:18:40 AM
Attachments: County San Diego CAP Letter Jan 2024 CleanEarth4kids.pdf

Attached is our comments for the County Draft 2024 CAP. O8-1

Wishing you a great day!

Suzanne

Suzanne M. Hume
(760)518-2776
S@CleanEarth4Kids.org
CleanEarth4Kids.org

Our Children's Health and Future Depend on the Actions We Take Today!

CleanEarth4Kids.org

January 4, 2024

CleanEarth4Kids.org thanks the County of San Diego staff for all the work that has gone into the Climate Action Plan (CAP).

Implementing a strong and comprehensive CAP will help protect the people of San Diego from air pollution and the impacts of climate change for a better future.

The proposed CAP is very goal-oriented and would require legislation and actions to be implemented. We ask the County to make the CAP a free-standing document that can be quickly implemented, clearly enforceable and tightly related to the General Plan. The CAP must be integral in County decision-making.

CleanEarth4Kids.org also asks the County to provide an analysis in the CAP of the proposed greenhouse gases (GHG) reduction plans with detailed action metrics, targets and dates including the measurement methodology to be used.

Our other comments and suggestions are:

1. Climate-Safe Investments
2. 100% Building Electrification for New Construction with No Exceptions
3. Clean, Renewable Energy and Electrify/Renovate Existing Buildings
4. Solar, EV Charging Stations, Microgrids and Virtual Power Plants (VPP)
5. Community and Environmental Dashboard
6. Add a Clean Air Section to the CAP
    a. Ban Leaf Blowers
    b. No Idling
    c. Stop Wood Burning
    d. Stop Smoking
    e. Stop Leaded Aviation Gas (AVGAS)
7. Protect and Conserve Water
8. Transportation
9. No False Solutions
10. Stop Toxic Synthetic Pesticides
11. Community Gardens
12. Create Pocket Forests
13. Protect Natural Habitat, Wetlands, Lagoons and Waterways
14. Ban Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf
15. Zero Waste and Ban Single-Use Plastics

O8-1 cont.

1. Climate-Safe Investments

1

- Divest any investments, bank accounts, etc. that support fossil fuels. Only invest in funds, stocks, bonds, etc. that guarantee they will not invest in fossil fuels.
- Include eco-friendly choices for employee retirement fund investment options.
- Use an eco-friendly bank, preferably a B-Corp, for all County cash accounts. Do NOT support banks that invest in fossil fuel projects.
- Provide informational sessions and support for builders and property owners to obtain grants and other funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements. For example, work with eco-friendly banks to provide Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loans and financing.

2. 100% Building Electrification for New Construction with No Exceptions

The County must prioritize building electrification with high-efficiency appliances and insulation to move away from fossil fuels and improve air quality to protect health and the environment. Over 60 cities in California have already passed electrification ordinances and others are underway.[1]

Natural gas is a marketing term for methane, a hazardous indoor air pollutant and a major contributor to climate change.[2,3] The use of gas stoves in the home increases the risk of asthma and other respiratory diseases.[4] And gas stoves leak methane even when turned off.[5] We must completely end the use of "natural gas".

O8-1 cont.

This important action will encourage green buildings, reduce carbon emissions and air pollution, and help protect the health of children and future generations.

Burning methane creates outdoor and indoor air pollution. Around 17% of greenhouse gasses (GHGs) in Oceanside come from the burning of methane, mainly for heat and hot water. Studies of human exposure to air pollutants show that "indoor levels of pollutants may be two to five times, and occasionally more than 100 times, higher than outdoor levels," and a major source of indoor air pollution is gas stoves.[6] Here is a link to our *Dangers of Natural Gas* video.[7] Please go to our Team 3: Clean Air Saves Lives page for more information.[8]

3. Clean, Renewable Energy and Electrify/Renovate Existing Buildings

The CAP currently needs more details on the stated goal of 100% clean energy by 2030. There must be a clear roadmap with metrics and dates and we ask the County to set the goal of 100% renewable energy to 2025.

[1] https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/del-mar-to-consider-building-electrification-ordinance
[2] https://www.vox.com/2022/1/27/22902490/gas-stoves-methane-climate-pollution-health-off
[3] http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/documents/Howarth_2021_Methane_and_Climate.pdf
[4] https://www.sciencetimes.com/gas-stoves-making-people-sicker-exposing-children-higher-risk-asthma.htm
[5] https://news.stanford.edu/2022/01/27/rethinking-cooking-gas/
[6] https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/why-indoor-air-quality-important-schools
[7] https://vimeo.com/704755689
[8] https://cleanearth4kids.org/clean-air#gas

With residential power as the2nd largest GHG in San Diego County, the CAP must provide incentives and subsidies to encourage owners of existing buildings to electrify.[9] The County must provide funding and assistance for owners and contractors to obtain state and federal grants to replace gas equipment as quickly as possible: installing electric heat pumps, water heaters, induction cooktops, etc. while providing energy efficiency improvements like insulated windows and LED lighting.

We ask the CAP to include all properties owned by the County, including leased, in the plans for zero emissions. We also ask all county housing policies, funding, contracts and leases to require all-electric buildings.

The CAP must also provide incentives toreduce embedded carbonin construction including the use of EV vehicles for construction projects.[10]

4. Solar, EV Charging Stations, Microgrids and Virtual Power Plants (VPP)

To maximize clean, local energy generation and grid reliability, coordinate with San Diego Community Power (SDCP) to install solar panels and wind turbines on all county-owned parking lots and buildings while integrating microgrids and VPP into the power grid. Also, greatly increase EV charging stations, especially for multi-unit housing. Engage with school districts throughout the county to do the same for all school buildings. Each city and school building will provide local power generation and fault tolerance while serving as a resilience center in case of fire, earthquake or heat wave.

The CAP must incentivize local, clean energy through microgrids for renters and subsidized housing throughout the county.

The County has to lead by upgrading all County facilities to be all-electric and use 100% clean/renewable energy including converting all County vehicles to electric. Timelines and metrics must be provided in the CAP. O8-1 cont.

5. Community and Environmental Dashboard

Create a Climate & Environmental Dashboard to increase citizen awareness, knowledge, and participation on issues such as air pollution and energy utilization. Resources like ClimateTrace.orgcan be used to identify major emitters of GHG in the County and publicize who they are on the dashboard.

These dashboards should be located in libraries, schools and businesses throughout San Diego.

6. Add a Clean Air Section to the CAP

The burning of fossil fuels does much more than just release GHGs. It also dumps toxic air pollution that harms everyone's health and the environment. We ask the County to include a Clean Air section in the CAP like theCity of San Diegowith clean air goals and yearly targets

[9] https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/regional-decarbonization/rdfsummary.html
[10] https://rmi.org/embodied-carbon-101/

to reduce air pollution.[11]

- Take Climate Action and Protect Our Air: Stop Burning Fossil Fuels

Air pollution from fossil fuels and petrochemicals has a significant detrimental impact on human health,[12] particularly on the brain and the cognitive abilities of children.[13] Exposure to ambient air pollutants like PM2.5, NO2 and ozone and heavy metals like lead, arsenic and mercury have been associated with lower academic performance;[14] attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms;[15] behavioral problems and autism spectrum disorders in children.[16] Air pollution increases the risk of neurological disorders and accelerated cognitive decline in children by causing neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration.[17] These pollutants have also been associated with several other indicators of poor health, including asthma and infant mortality.[18] Recent findings indicate that air pollution is linked to cognitive impairment through various biological processes, such as oxidative stress and inflammation, endocrine disruption, epigenetic modifications, and changes in brain structure.[19] Exposure to fine particulate matter is correlated with reduced cortical thickness and thinner gray matter,[20] which may impact learning, memory, and information processing.[21]

O8-1 cont.

Also causing significant harm to the brain, lowering cognitive abilities and reading and math scores are heavy metals including mercury, lead, manganese, and their compounds, and petrochemicals such as isoamyl alcohol, methanol, xylene, toluene, styrene, *n*-hexane, and ethylbenzene.[22]

- Fossil Fuel Air Pollution Harms Public Health

Fossil fuel combustion is a leading cause of deadly PM2.5 exposure.[23] Extended exposure to PM2.5 is responsible for 62% of all deaths from air pollution in 2019.[24] PM 2.5 is especially deadly because its small size allows it to enter deep into the lungs and pass into the bloodstream, making it a significant contributor to cardiovascular disease and mortality.[25,26,27] PM2.5 also increases heart disease, lung cancer, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), lower-respiratory infections, pneumonia, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and other serious conditions including gastrointestinal illness.[28,29] People with tuberculosis

[11] https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/san_diegos_2022_climate_action_plan_0.pdf
[12] https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/air-pollution/index.cfm
[13] https://journals.lww.com/The_Relationship_Between_Air_Pollution_and.1.aspx?context=LatestArticles
[14] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8663889/
[15] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30909100/
[16] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dmcn.14758
[17] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0278262608001747
[18] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2727943/
[19] https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.add0285
[20] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6132565/
[21] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6908886/
[22] https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.add0285
[23] https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-021-23853-y
[24] https://www.stateofglobalair.org/health/pm#major-impacts
[25] https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm
[26] https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/JAHA.120.016890
[27] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/what-makes-air-unhealthy/particle-pollution
[28] https://www.stateofglobalair.org/health/pm
[29] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002063

exposed to PM2.5 had increased replication of the disease.[30] PM2.5 impacts our most vulnerable populations, including minorities,[31] the elderly,[32] pregnant women,[33] and children.[34] Increased Particulate Matter reduced the health-related quality of life among the elderly, increasing pain and discomfort, anxiety, and depression.[35]

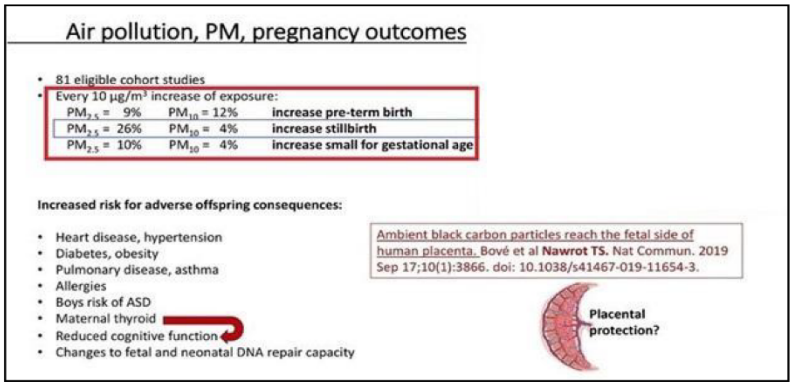
Childhood exposure to PM2.5 is linked to asthma,[36] which is the leading cause of school absences[37] and the third leading cause of hospitalizations among children under 15.[38] Poor air quality increases the likelihood of asthma attacks, breathing difficulty,[39] increased emergency room visits,[40] and hospitalization.[41] Air pollution can also inflame the brain, central nervous system, and hearts in children.[42,43]

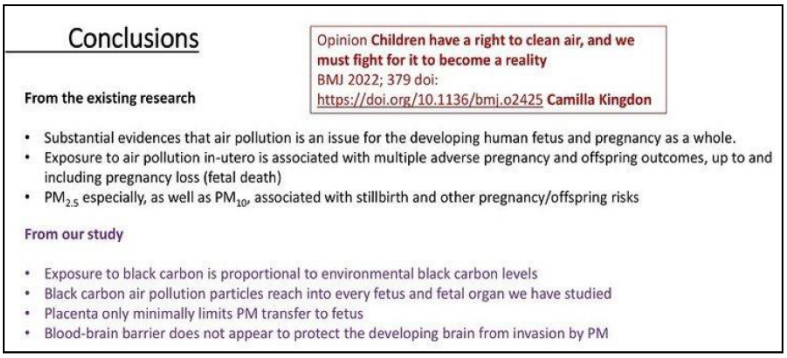
The health effects of air pollution start before a child is even born.[44] Pollutants can harm a fetus's brain, liver, lungs, and other organs because pollutants can travel to the tissues and organs of fetuses after being inhaled by pregnant women.[45,46] For example, black carbon[47] can enter the placenta, circulation system, and the organs[48] of the fetus via the mother's blood, which can affect the fetus's liver, lungs, and brain.[49] Exposure to air pollution during pregnancy and infancy[50] is linked to increased rates of stillbirth,[51] preterm birth,[52] low birth weight,[53] SIDS[54] (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and decreased development of the brain, among other serious long-term effects.[55] Exposure to air pollution, even at relatively low levels during pregnancy and childhood significantly harms children's health.[56] O8-1 cont.

Below are two slides from Dr. Paul Fowler's extensive research and informative webinar[57] and presentation showing a 26% increase in stillbirths when air pollution is increased by 10 µg/m3.[58] The harm done by air pollution to unborn babies is clear.[59] We must reduce air pollution to protect children's health, development, growth, learning, communication abilities, and future.

[30] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935123004875
[31] https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/racial-ethnic-minorities-low-income-groups-u-s-air-pollution/
[32] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002944
[33] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935122003930
[34] https://parentingscience.com/the-effects-of-air-pollution-on-children
[35] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002944
[36] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412022002240
[37] https://aafa.org/asthma/asthma-facts
[38] https://www.epa.gov/children/childrens-environmental-health-facts
[39] https://resphealth.org/clean-air/understanding-air-pollution/
[40] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2801735?resultClick=3
[41] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6546668/
[42] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7352229
[43] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35921508
[44] https://www.jpedhc.org/article/S0891-5245(21)00189-9/fulltext
[45] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/05/toxic-air-pollution-particles-found-in-lungs
[46] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32556259
[47] https://www.livescience.com/black-carbon-reaches-placenta.html
[48] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36719212/
[49] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(22)00200-5/fulltext
[50] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2767260
[51] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0269749121003328
[52] https://med.nyu.edu/pediatrics/divisions/environmental-pediatrics/air-pollution-preterm-births
[53] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22726801/
[54] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0045653520337139
[55] https://www.washington.edu/news/uw-link-between-air-pollution-and-child-brain-development/
[56] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/children-and-air-pollution
[57] https://youtu.be/40Ga9_StJQ0
[58] https://www.healthandenvironment.org/assets/images/CHE%20Jan%202023%20Fowler.pdf
[59] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36208643/

5





O8-1 cont.

- Air Pollution is A Racial, Social, Environmental, and Climate Justice Issue

Air pollution from the burning of fossil fuels harms people of color disproportionately.[60] Due to Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) factors, Black and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by air pollution in the United States.[61] Annually, fossil fuel industries in the US release about 9 million tons of methane gas and other toxic chemicals into the atmosphere.[62] Black and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by air pollution in the United States.[63] Exposure to poor air quality can cause numerous health problems such as emphysema and asthma[64]. Increased rates of asthma can lead to significant health disparities and reduced quality of life.[65] Approximately 13.4% of Black children suffer from asthma as compared to only 7.3% of White children.[53]

In total, African Americans are 75% more likely than White people to live in "fence-line" communities (areas near commercial facilities that produce noise, odor, traffic, or emissions that directly affect the population).[49]

6a. Ban Leaf Blowers

[60] https://psci.princeton.edu/tips/2020/8/15/racial-disparities-and-climate-change
[61] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/disparities
[62] https://psci.princeton.edu/tips/2020/8/15/racial-disparities-and-climate-change
[63] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/disparities
[64] https://www.catf.us/2017/11/study-african-american-health-impacts-oil-gas-pollution/
[65] https://aafa.org/asthma-allergy-research/our-research/asthma-disparities-burden-on-minorities/

6

Most gas-powered leaf blowers are 2 stroke engines that burn a mix of oil and gas. These engines not only put out a massive amount of pollution, but they also do not have a filter. The pollutants[66] from a single gas-powered leaf-blower are 300x more than a pickup truck with gas-powered lawn equipment using an estimated 800 million gallons of gasoline. This contributes to more air pollution in our air, and damaging ozone as these nitrous oxides contribute to the damage that occurs.

With and without a filter, the dangers of gas-powered leaf blowers are immense. Gas-powered leaf-blowers emit carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides, hydrocarbons and other pollutants[67] such as formaldehyde, benzine, fine particulate matter, and smog-forming chemicals. These pollutants are known to cause diseases that affect the heart and lungs, as well as cancer, dementia, and headaches[68]. The health effects[69] linked to gas-powered leaf blowers are asthma, cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, respiratory disease, and central nervous system disorders.

6b. No Idling

Car exhaust is full of toxic chemicals like benzene and carbon monoxide. 1 minute of idling puts more carbon monoxide into the air than smoking 3 packs of cigarettes.[70] Please take action to reduce idling by parked vehicles, including purchasing only zero-emission vehicles for the city fleet. Idling burns over 3.8 million gallons of fuel every day in the US, adding 30 million tons of CO2 to the atmosphere![71] Link for more information on idling.[72]

The CAP must adopt a no-idling policy along with requiring the electrification of loading docks and other facilities and eliminate vehicle idling. Also provide education through signs, social media and radio to bring awareness.

6c. Stop Wood Burning

O8-1 cont.

We ask the County of San Diego to take action to stop wood smoke.

a. Work with the SD APCD (San Diego Air Pollution Control District) and surrounding cities to stop wood-burning fireplaces and stoves in new construction and renovations like the City of London.[73]
b. Implement programs and incentives to remove (not replace!) existing wood-burning fireplaces and stoves.
c. Work with SD APCD and all city, county, and state governments and agencies to stop recreational wood fires on all public lands like beaches and parks to protect clean air and our health.
d. Fund radio, print, TV and social media ads about the harms of wood smoke. Please see the CleanEarth4Kids.org Stop Wood Smoke video created by our youth.[74]

[66] https://sustainability.wustl.edu/rethinking-lawn-equipment-2/
[67] https://sustainability.wustl.edu/rethinking-lawn-equipment-2/
[68] https://www.quietcleanpdx.org/leaf-blowers-dangers-pollution/
[69] https://www.quietcleandc.com/two-stroke-engine-public-health-issues
[70] http://enginesoff.com/pdfs/CASEO-Background-Report.pdf
[71] https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/idling_personal_vehicles.pdf
[72] https://cleanearth4kids.org/stop-idling
[73] https://www.theguardian.com/2023/feb/08/wood-burners-in-effect-banned-new-refurbished-homes-london
[74] https://vimeo.com/762477620

Wood smoke is a complex mixture of gases and fine particles, called particulate matter. PM2.5 is especially dangerous. These particles are 2.5 microns or smaller. By comparison, the average human hair is 50 microns wide. Researchers estimate that PM2.5 is responsible for almost 48,000 premature deaths in the US every year.[75] Particulate matter irritates the lungs and increases the risk of serious health outcomes including asthma, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and brain conditions like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and dementia.[76] Wood smoke also contains cancer-causing pollutants like benzene, formaldehyde, acrolein and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons or PAHs, along with carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and methane.[77] Burning 10 lbs. of wood in 1 hour creates the same cancer-causing PAHs as 6,000 packs of cigarettes.[78] That's like smoking a pack of cigarettes a day for 16 years…just by sitting next to a wood fire. Here is a link for information about wood smoke.[79] You can also contact Doctors & Scientists Against Wood Smoke Pollution.[80]

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SD APCD) 2021 Annual Air Quality Report and 2022 Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) show residential combustion (wood burning) is tied with construction as the main source of $PM_{2.5}$.[81,82] These reports show wood burning dumps almost 3.5 TONS of particulate matter into San Diego County air EVERY DAY. Data from the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) shows households with higher incomes are more likely to burn wood.[83] Wood burning is being done for recreation, not need. O8-1 cont.

6d. Stop Smoking

Ban public smoking like the City of Encinitas and others. Second and thirdhand smoke is toxic and emits lead.[84,85] Fund radio, print, TV and social media ads about the harms of second and thirdhand smoke. Also, ban smoking in multi-family housing.[86]

6e. Stop Leaded Aviation Gas (AVGAS)

CleanEarth4Kids.org asks the County of San Diego to stop the sale, use and storage of leaded aviation fuel at all County airports and work with local cities to do the same.

There is NO safe level of lead!

- Lead is Toxic

The WHO (World Health Organization),[87] CDC (Centers for Disease Control)[88] and the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics)[89] have all stated there is no safe level of lead, a toxic heavy

[75] https://www.lung.org/research/sota/health-risks
[76] https://woodsmokepollution.org/references.html
[77] https://www.verywellhealth.com/the-health-hazards-of-wood-burning-stoves-914956
[78] https://www.times-standard.com/2017/08/05/burning-firewood-is-an-airborne-public-health-hazard
[79] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-3-no-wood-smoke
[80] https://woodsmokepollution.org/index.html
[81] https://www.sdapcd.org/content/dam/sdapcd/documents/community/annual-air-quality-reports
[82] https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/1814058/Item_E2_AttA_2022_RAQS.pdf
[83] https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=15431
[84] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040625/
[85] https://thirdhandsmoke.org/thirdhand-smoke-may-bring-lead-into-homes/
[86] https://cleanearth4kids.org/nosmoking#sample
[87] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health
[88] https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/faqs/lead-faqs.htm
[89] https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/lead-exposure/Pages/default.aspx

8

metal.[90] Its adverse effects are particularly severe for children and unborn babies as it damages their brains and nervous systems.[91]

Exposure to lead lowers IQ and causes behavior problems, learning disabilities, and impaired impulse control.[92] Children's exposure to lead is linked to higher rates of suspension and detention along with lower reading and math test scores.[93,94] Childhood exposure to lead is also linked to higher crime rates.[95] According to the CDC, people with prolonged exposure to lead are at higher risk of high blood pressure, heart and kidney disease, and various forms of cancer.[96]

Most health impacts from lead exposure are lifelong and irreversible.[97] Lead exposure is also hazardous to adults, with 18% of all deaths in the US linked to lead exposure and is a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease.[98,99] Lead is the number one reason for fatal heart attacks in the US.[100] O8-1 cont.

Please see our CleanEarth4Kids.org Team 5 page #GetTheLeadOut for more information on the dangers of lead.[101]

- The Harm of Leaded Aviation Fuel on Communities

The EPA has issued its public endangerment finding on lead emissions from aircraft, stating it will "cause or contribute to lead air pollution."[102]

The impact of lead pollution is especially damaging to children living close to these airports as they are very likely to have significantly higher levels of lead in their blood.[103] In the US, over 5 million people, including over 360,000 children under the age of 5, live near at least one lead-emitting airport and face a severe risk of lead poisoning.[104] Communities of color are most likely to be close to these sources of lead, resulting in higher blood levels on average than white children.[105]

In the County of Santa Clara, children living within half a mile of their airport had lead levels nearly twice that of kids in Flint, Michigan at the height of their lead crisis.[106,107] Recognizing the danger, the County of Santa Clara has stopped the sale and storage of leaded fuel at their airport which has already significantly reduced lead emissions.[108]

[90] https://www.osha.gov/toxic-metals
[91] https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/health-effects.htm
[92] https://www.luc.edu/healthyhomes/leadsafeillinois/leadfacts/rippleeffectsofchildhoodleadpoisoning/
[93] https://www.nber.org/papers/w23392
[94] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4387706/
[95] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0166046222000667
[96] https://columbiainsight.org/dealing-with-washingtons-legacy-of-pesticides/
[97] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health
[98] https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/15/17107924/lead-health-adults-heart-problems
[99] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30025-2/fulltext
[100] https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/15/17107924/lead-health-adults-heart-problems
[101] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-5-get-the-lead-out
[102] https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-10/420f23022_0.pdf
[103] https://news.sccgov.org/news-release/study-commissioned-county-santa-clara-finds-increased-lead-levels
[104] http://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P100YG4A.PDF?Dockey=P100YG4A.PDF
[105] https://news.sccgov.org/county-santa-clara-finds-increased-lead-levels-children-living-near
[106] https://news.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb956/files/documents/RHV-Airborne-Lead-Study-Report.pdf
[107] https://www.nrdc.org/stories/flint-water-crisis-everything-you-need-know#summary
[108] https://countyairports.sccgov.org/pilots/aviation-fuel

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- Stopping Leaded Aviation Fuel

Leaded aviation fuel is used by some piston-engine planes and helicopters in general aviation. According to the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration), an estimated 170,000 aircraft operating from over 20,000 airports across the US use leaded aviation fuel (AVGAS).[109] These aircraft are responsible for almost 70% of airborne lead pollution, putting out around 500 tons of lead each year, and are the largest source of lead in US air.[110]

Unleaded fuel is now available. The sale and use of leaded aviation fuel must stop!

7. Protect and Conserve Water

Set water use reduction goals and develop policies, guidelines and education programs to replace ornamental grass and other landscaping with native plants while transitioning to gray water reuse. The CAP must require greywater systems and stormwater capture and conservation for new residential and commercial construction.

Create bioretention swales in medians and other areas like Los Angeles to serve as micro-reservoirs for landscaping while filtering stormwater runoff.[111,112]

Establish other rainwater capture and storage infrastructure throughout the County including capture barrels at every residential property.

O8-1 cont.

Under California law, water is a basic human right. San Diego must take action to end water shutoffs and subsidize access to water for lower-income residents.

8. Transportation

The CAP must identify methods to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by encouraging the use of public and active transportation.

The County's Active Transportation Plan must:

- Collaborate with SANDAG to support and implement the Five Big Moves.[113]
- Develop plans to extensively expand bike lanes and sidewalks throughout the County, create car-free areas and implement electric shuttles in high-traffic areas.
- Construct pedestrian overpasses and other safe pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure.
- Provide free mass transit passes to students, seniors and residents of disadvantaged communities.
- Create a transportation stipend program for all County employees while charging for parking.
- Establish practical and user-friendly public transportation in the unincorporated areas for semi-rural and rural communities.

[109] http://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsId=14754
[110] https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2022/epa-proposes-endangerment-finding-of-leaded-aviation-gasoline
[111] https://nacto.org/urban-street-stormwater-guide/green-stormwater-elements/bioretention-swale/
[112] https://dpw.lacounty.gov/WMD/STWQ/EastLA.aspx
[113] https://www.sandag.org/regional-plan/5-big-moves

- Provide education and campaigns to encourage walking, biking, and taking public transit.

9. No False Solutions

The CAP must clearly state the County of San Diego will not use or invest in false climate solutions like synthetic carbon capture (CCS, CCUS), dirty hydrogen, methane or biomass/biofuels. These types of greenwashed "solutions" only delay real climate action.

10. Stop Toxic Synthetic Pesticides

We ask the County of San Diego to create and implement education programs and assistance to help farmers transition to climate-resilient farms, stopping the use of synthetic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

99% of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers come from fossil fuels and the continued use of these petrochemicals is a direct threat to the climate and our world.[114]

Healthy soil is important for sequestering carbon.[115] But pesticides destroy the microbes that make healthy soil. O8-1 cont.

By promoting sustainable farming practices that prioritize soil health, the City of Oceanside will contribute to the protection of human health, clean air, and water which will protect pollinators, and wildlife, preserve biodiversity and enhance our environment and climate.

- Pesticides Are Toxic

Pesticides are known to increase children's cancer risk and 95% of pesticides used miss their target.[116,117] There is a massive amount of scientific studies showing the damage done by the use of synthetic pesticides to the environment and human health.[118] Pesticides are poison, they are designed to kill. That is their purpose.

California studies show 13 agricultural pesticides elevated children's cancer up to 2.5 miles away from the application sites.[119] Only 5 are classified as Restricted Use by the EPA.[120] But 11 of the 13 are banned or not approved in other countries with 10 of them banned in at least 28 countries. The US uses toxic pesticides banned in many other countries.[121] The US only bans 21 pesticides while China bans 54 and the EU bans 195. (For a list of pesticides banned in other countries, please click here.)[122] Legal does not mean safe!

The proximity to agricultural pesticides is very important because pesticides can drift miles,

[114] https://www.ciel.org/reports/fossil-fertilizers/
[115] https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/healthysoils/
[116] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1438463919306212?via%3Dihub
[117] https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/pesticide-drift/
[118] https://www.dw.com/en/pesticide-atlas-2022
[119] https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/2021/04/05/childhood-brain-tumors-linked-to-mothers-exposure-to-pesticides/
[120] https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-11/RUP-Report-10-31-2022.pdf
[121] https://biologicaldiversity.org/united-states-uses-85-pesticides-outlawed-in-other-countries-2019-06-06/
[122] https://pan-international.org/pan-international-consolidated-list-of-banned-pesticides/

harming children and families living near agricultural fields.[123,124] Pesticide drift settles on playgrounds, porches, laundry, toys, pools, furniture, gardens, and lawns where people and children live, learn, and play.[125] This exposes people, pollinators, and wildlife to danger from what they touch, breathe, and eat.

These toxic pesticides also contaminate our water. The National Water Quality Assessment (NWQA) shows agricultural runoff as the main cause of pollution in rivers and streams.[126,127] As pesticides travel through soil and bedrock cracks, they contaminate groundwater systems which provide 70% of the water used for public and private water supplies, irrigation, and industry.[128] Aquatic organisms also absorb pesticides through their skin, breathing, and mouths.[129] Long-term exposure has many negative consequences for aquatic life, such as mortality, reproductive failure, eggshell thinning, suppression of the immune system, and other fish health complications such as excessive slime on fish scales and gills, cancers, tumors and lesions.[130]

For more information on toxic pesticides, please see our Team 5: Stop Toxic Pesticides page.[131]

- Organic, Regenerative Farming, Permaculture and Agroecology

O8-1 cont.

Organic and regenerative farming practices do not use synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or GMOs. Methods such as cover crops, manure, crop rotation, and natural pest controls like neem oil are used to repel pests and maintain soil health which is a natural carbon sink.[132,133] They focus on biodiversity, reduced tilling and planting a wide variety of crops to better close the carbon cycle.[134]

Permaculture and agroecology work with nature instead of against it, combining landscapes, plants, animals, and humans in a symbiotic relationship.[135][136]

For more information on regenerative farming, permaculture, organics and healthy soils, please see our Team 5: Farming page.[137]

11. Community Gardens

Please create an expansive community garden program that will decrease heat islands, and increase carbon sequestration while reducing food insecurity.

12. Create Pocket Forests

[123] https://europepmc.org/article/AGR/IND20460440
[124] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11097803/
[125] https://www.epa.gov/reducing-pesticide-drift/introduction-pesticide-drift
[126] https://www.usgs.gov/mission-areas/water-resources/science/national-water-quality-assessment-nawqa
[127] https://www.epa.gov/nps/nonpoint-source-agriculture
[128] https://www.uky.edu/Ag/Entomology/PSEP/6environment.html
[129] https://biointerfaceresearch.com.pdf
[130] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2215153222001003
[131] https://cleanearth4kids.org/stop-pesticides
[132] https://www.sare.org/resources/transitioning-to-organic-production/#:~:text=More%
[133] https://regenerationinternational.org/2017/02/24/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/
[134] https://regenerationinternational.org/2017/02/24/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/
[135] https://www.nomos.net/post/what-is-permaculture-farming-a-simplified-guide
[136] https://www.agroecologyfund.org/what-is-agroecology
[137] https://cleanearth4kids.org/farming-regenerative

Identify small areas of 6 parking spaces or more and small vacant land areas for pocket forests. Engage with school districts throughout the county to plant a pocket forest on each school's grounds.

Pocket forests are small areas of native trees and plants that restore nature to the urban environment.[138] This method was adopted by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawake, the creator of Tiny Forests.[139] The Miyawake method emulates an area's native ecosystem through a dense-planting method of only native species.[140]

These pockets forests provide vital habitats for native wildlife, attract important pollinators, provide an equitable urban landscape;[141] improve water infiltration of the soil, decrease stormwater runoff, protect against erosion,[142] provide educational opportunities to the community and absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide.[143]

13. Protect Natural Habitat, Wetlands, Lagoons and Waterways

The CAP must support the establishment of local natural habitat lands for GHG sequestration and to conserve biodiversity. CleanEarth4Kids.org supports the Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework and asks the regional Multiple Species Conservation Plans (MSCP) to be incorporated into the CAP. O8-1 cont.

The CAP must address blue carbon storage by planting kelp and other seagrasses to sequester carbon while protecting coastal areas from pollution and sea level rise. Identify ecologically sound methods to protect beaches, cliffs, coastal roads and the LOSSAN train corridor from erosion.

14. Ban Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf

CleanEarth4Kids.org asks the County of San Diego to ban all installations of artificial grass/synthetic turf. With the signing of SB 676 by Governor Newsom on October 8th, you have the authority to stop the use of this toxic plastic carpet.[144] The City of Millbrae has already banned it.[145]

Our youth, interns, and volunteers have worked hard to create videos and resources that can be found on our CleanEarth4Kids.org Team 5: Stop Synthetic Turf page.[146]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Plastic Pollution

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is plastic, made from resins like polyethylene and nylon. PFAS are used in the extrusion of plastic yarn for the "grass" blades.[147] No synthetic grass/artificial turf manufacturer can state they are free of PFAS. PFAS, PAHS, lead, and

[138] https://www.americanforests.org/article/picking-pocket-forests/
[139] https://www.pocketforests.ie/new-page
[140] https://us.iahv.org/portfolio/greenpocketforests/
[141] https://a25.asmdc.org/20221206-assemblymember-kalra-introduces-bill-promote-urban-greening
[142] https://www.americanforests.org/article/picking-pocket-forests/
[143] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/tiny-urban-forests-miyawaki-biodiversity-carbon-capture/
[144] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB676
[145] https://www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/276/Prohibition-of-Artificial-Turf-Synthetic
[146] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-5-synthetic-turf-toxic-chemicals
[147] https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6434596-Kulikov2005.html

other toxic chemicals have been found in synthetic grass/artificial turf.[148]

The installation and use of synthetic grass/artificial turf is the intentional installation and use of microplastics[149] which does serious harm to the environment[150] and human health.[151] Recent research[152] has found microplastics in placentas, infant feces, breastmilk, and even infant formula. Other studies have shown microplastics changing lung and liver cells.[153] Microplastics were banned in United States cosmetics[154] in 2015, but the ban on microplastics should apply to all areas of life to reduce these health risks.

Plastics don't break down in the environment, simply breaking down into microplastics. Wildlife can mistake microplastics for food and marine animals have been found to consume microplastics accidentally.[155] Microplastics attract and carry pollutants in the water and also release toxic chemicals.[156,157] Lab studies have shown that microplastics may impact the developmental stages of animals, causing reproductive issues and their ability to fight disease.[158] Furthermore, since humans consume fish and other marine animals, the impacts of microplastics are passed on to humans through the food chain.

The plastic life cycle is incredibly toxic. Research shows it causes premature birth, low birth weight, decreased fertility, asthma, childhood leukemia, lymphoma, brain cancer, breast cancer, mesothelioma, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, neuropathy, and lung cancer.[159] O8-1 cont.

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf Hurts the Climate

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is plastic and plastic emits methane, a powerful greenhouse gas (GHG).[160] Plastics start as fossil fuels and emit greenhouse gasses in every stage of their lifecycle, from the extraction of oil/gas to the trash pile.[161] Plastics have a huge carbon imprint.[162] Research showed the emissions from plastics in 2019 were nearly 1.8 billion metric tons of greenhouse gasses, and that number is projected to continue growing.[163]

Dr. Sarah-Jeanne Royer of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in California wrote a letter in opposition to synthetic grass/artificial turf, citing methane as a major concern.[164] Dr. Royer and her colleagues found that polyethylene, used to make synthetic turf/artificial grass, releases more methane than any other plastic.[165]

[148] https://theintercept.com/2019/10/08/pfas-chemicals-artificial-turf-soccer/
[149] https://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/good-environmental-status/descriptor-10/pdf/microplastics_
[150] https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/plastic-planet-how-tiny-plastic-particles-are-polluting-
[151] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/dec/08/microplastics-damage-human-cells-study-
[152] https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220921/Microplastics-detected-in-placentas-infant-feces-breast
[153] https://www.onegreenplanet.org/environment/microplastics-are-disrupting-metabolism-of-lung-and-liver
[154] https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetics-laws-regulations/microbead-free-waters-act-faqs
[155] https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/what-marine-debris/microplastics
[156] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7924819
[157] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42452-019-1352-0
[158] https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/ftox.2022.748912/full
[159] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/plastics-cause-issues-from-cancer-to-birth-defects
[160] https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/synthetic-turf-will-contribute-greenhouse-gas-problems/
[161] https://www.ciel.org/reports/plastic-health-the-hidden-costs-of-a-plastic-planet-may-2019/
[162] https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/04/190415144004.htm
[163] https://www.oecd.org/environment/plastics/increased-plastic-leakage-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions.htm
[164] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O9NHwhVtY0ygHCcZDHhufkfcRdGFA35k/view
[165] https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-45043989

During the breakdown of polyethylene, the release of methane gas accelerates and the surface area of the plastic increases, reacting more with the sunlight and releasing more methane.[166] As synthetic grass/artificial turf is commonly made of polyethylene, these fields constantly release methane as it interacts with the sun and everyday use. Over a 20-year period, methane is 80x more potent at warming than carbon dioxide and is responsible for 25% of global warming.[167]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Not Recycled

Used synthetic grass/artificial turf is expected to produce 1-4 million tons of plastic waste[168] in the next ten years. The plastic carpet and rubber crumb infill from synthetic grass/artificial turf fields are often dumped illegally or sent to landfills since there are no United States recycling facilities for synthetic turf.[169,170] Reuse is not recycling![171]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is HOT

O8-1 cont.

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is 40°-70° hotter than surrounding air temperatures and has burned hands and feet.[172] A study by Brigham Young found the surface temperature of synthetic grass/artificial turf was 37° higher than asphalt and 86.5° hotter than natural grass.[173] A study found that in 90° weather, the surface temperature of a natural grass field was about 98° while a synthetic grass/artificial turf field was over 160°.[174] Shoes have melted from the heat on synthetic grass/artificial turf with players and coaches getting blisters on the bottom of their feet through their shoes.[175] First-degree burns occur at 118° with blistering and second-degree burns at 131°.[176] Several synthetic grass/artificial turf fields in the Los Angeles Unified School District are currently closed due to high heat and melting surfaces.[177]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Dangerous to Athletes

Playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf can cause more injuries. According to an NFL Players Association (NFLPA) study, playing and practicing on synthetic grass/artificial turf increases the chance of a lower extremity injury with a 69% higher rate of non-contact foot/ankle injuries than on natural grass.[178] The NFLPA has called for all NFL fields to be natural grass.[179]

A study of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) athletes found playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf greatly increased the chance of knee ligament injuries while another

[166] https://www.surfrider.org/new-study-shows-plastic-as-source-of-greenhouse-gases-potentially-contribut
[167] https://ecology.wa.gov/Blog/Posts/February-2023/The-trash-climate-connection-what-you-need-to-know
[168] https://www.ydr.com/in-depth/news/2019/11/18/old-artificial-turf-fields-pose-huge-waste-problem
[169] https://www.theatlantic.com/science/artificial-turf-fields-are-piling-no-recycling-fix/603874/
[170] https://peer.org/artificial-turfs-big-lie-old-fields-not-recycled/
[171] https://peer.org/artificial-turfs-big-lie-old-fields-not-recycled/
[172] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/heat-levels-synthetic-turf/
[173] https://aces.nmsu.edu/programs/turf/documents/brigham-young-study.pdf
[174] https://www.center4research.org/injuries-related-to-artificial-turf/
[175] https://ftw.usatoday.com/2015/08/its-so-hot-in-texas-turf-is-melting-cleats
[176] https://www.nist.gov/el/fire-research-division-73300/firegov-fire-service/fire-dynamics
[177] https://www.latimes.com/sports/highschool/story/2022-08-17/synthetic-l-a-unified-out-of-commission
[178] https://nflpa.com/posts/only-natural-grass-can-level-the-nfls-playing-field
[179] https://apnews.com/article/9b34d4402f2f82ae60708605f65aa560

study of high school athletes found they were 58% more likely to sustain an injury playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf than natural grass.[180,181]

The United States Men's Professional Soccer Team and other national teams only play on natural grass in the World Cup, and the United States Women's Soccer Team sued FIFA to not play on synthetic grass/artificial turf due to the increased risk of injury.[182] Soccer legend Lionel Messi will only play on real grass.[183]

- Natural Grass is Best

We ask the County of San Diego to follow organic land management practices, especially for managing playing fields. Training is available online through the University of California, Riverside and other locations.[184] High-use, organically managed, natural grass fields have been in use in many areas including Irvine, CA.[185,186]

Natural grass is the healthiest choice for playing fields and parks.[187] Natural grass fields are more cost-effective than synthetic grass/artificial turf fields which have higher maintenance and long-term costs.[188,189] Natural grass fields are also cheaper to install than synthetic grass/artificial turf.[190] With proper care and maintenance, a natural grass field can accommodate any amount of play as demonstrated by Marblehead, MA with 20 acres of organically managed fields for over 15 years.[191] O8-1 cont.

15. Zero Waste and Ban Single-Use Plastics

CleanEarth4Kids.org supports the development of composting/anaerobic digestion facilities to divert the majority of compostable waste from landfills. The CAP must also provide plans to reduce other waste and develop a circular economy by encouraging and incentivizing the elimination of single-use products while reducing, reusing and repurposing other items.

Take Climate Action NOW: There Is No Time To Waste

As shown in the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN/IPCC) report[192] released March 20th 2023, our climate situation is at the point of no return. Even if we start today with immediate and strong action, we only have a very moderate chance of limiting global warming to the 1.5°C threshold by the world scientific community. We are in a climate emergency!

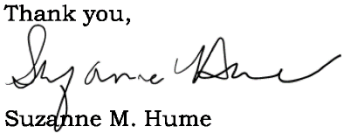
We already see the effects of climate change[193] as predicted by scientists: droughts, heat waves, extreme weather, raging wildfires, loss of sea ice, sea level rise, etc.

[180] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30995074/
[181] https://www.uhhospitals.org/articles-and-news/articles/2019/08/artificial-turf-vs-natural-grass
[182] https://www.npr.org/353312770/soccer-players-sue-over-proposed-turf-field-for-womens-world-cup
[183] https://www.sbnation.com/soccer/lionel-messi-inter-miami-mls-turf
[184] https://cpe.rutgers.edu/landscape/natural-turf-certificate
[185] https://www.nontoxiccommunities.com/organic-athletic-fields.html
[186] https://youtu.be/o3P1T3fgy6I
[187] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/health-benefits-of-natural-turf
[188] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/s/Natural_Grass_Athletic_Fields_Ppoint_Final.ppt
[189] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/maintenance-grass-vs-synthetic-turf
[190] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/cost-grass-vs-synthetic-turf
[191] https://www.turi.org/content/NaturalGrassPlayingFieldCaseStudyMarbleheadMAJune202019.pdf
[192] https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf
[193] https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/

If we do not greatly reduce greenhouse gases now, global temperature will continue to rise and these impacts will also increase and intensify. This is not a future problem, we are all being harmed right now. O8-1 cont.

The County of San Diego must implement a strong and enforceable CAP now.

Thank you,



Suzanne M. Hume
S@CleanEarth4Kids.org
(760) 650-2166
CleanEarth4Kids.org

CleanEarth4Kids.org works to protect children's health & future, public health, and the health and safety of communities, workers, and indigenous peoples globally and reminds all that clean air, water, a livable future, and access to nature are human rights. Streams, rivers, oceans, public lands, forests, trees, wildlife, ecosystems, climate, soils, and organic gardens must be protected. Access to healthy safe food, playgrounds, schools, homes, communities, cities and public lands- without toxic pesticides, chemicals, plastics, lead, heavy metals and pollution- is essential for life.

At the heart of CleanEarth4Kids.org: environmental protection, children's health and future, public health, environmental, racial, social and climate justice, education and JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion). CleanEarth4Kids.org works to stop toxic chemicals, PFAS, pesticides, lead and heavy metals, plastics and microplastics, toxic toys and products, synthetic turf, PIP (Pour In Place Playgrounds), fossil fuels, pollution, environmental destruction, degradation and injustice and works to uphold human rights and justice.

Letter O8 CleanEarth4Kids

Suzanne M. Hume
January 4, 2024

Comment O8-1
This comment letter has been revised and was resubmitted to the County on January 5, 2024.

Response O8-1
See responses to Comment Letter O14, below.

Letter O9

From: Brooke Wedner
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SanDiego350 CAP Team Comment Letter
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:09:55 PM

Hi Meghan,

Attached is the SanDiego350 comment letter for the County Climate Action Plan. Please, consider our comments. O9-1

County CAP Draft Comments

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Thank you,

Brooke Wedner
Chair, San Diego 350 Climate Action Team

SAN DIEGO 350
CLIMATE ACTION

January 4, 2024

County of San Diego PDS
5510 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

County of San Diego

RE: SanDiego350's CAP Team Comments on County Climate Action Plan Draft

Dear County Sustainability Planning Division Team,

SanDiego350 is an inclusive volunteer-led organization with more than 9,000 supporters in San Diego County. We're building a movement to prevent the worst impacts of climate change and climate injustice through education and outreach, public policy advocacy, and mobilizing people to take action.

The Climate Action Plan Team of SanDiego350 tracks and reviews Climate Action Plans across San Diego County providing input in the development phases and holding jurisdictions accountable in the implementation phase. The SanDiego350 CAP Team has reviewed the San Diego County Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) and we strongly urge you to consider the following comments as you prepare the County CAP. The recommendations below are intended to support the County in achieving its climate and equity goals and preventing the worst impacts of climate change and climate injustice through implementing the plan's measures.

O9-2

Built Environment and Transportation

The following comments are from SanDiego350's Transportation Team and were also submitted separately.

While we appreciate the focus on improving access to public and active transportation to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and improving access to EV technologies for county drivers, we would encourage you to give more attention to the reduction of sprawl, as well as the complications of hydrogen technologies.

In regards to the "Strategy: Decarbonize the On-Road and Off-Road Vehicle Fleet," reducing fleet and small equipment emissions is a good goal, especially since all-electric cars and small electric equipment are now available. Electric landscaping and off-road construction vehicles are all electric now and should replace current equipment as quickly as possible. Larger electric construction equipment does not seem to be readily available but is growing. See link: Report: Electric Construction Equipment Vital to Cleaner, Greener Construction. The availability of charging stations is a crucial incentive for people to buy electric vehicles. Charging station installations by the County would make EV owners confident in buying their cars without "range anxiety", and speed up the adoption of EVs. Adaptors for Tesla charging stations are available now which makes EVs even more attractive: Tesla Charging Adaptors.

SD350 does not support "the transition to hydrogen fuel for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles by increasing access to hydrogen fueling infrastructure through streamlined permitting processes and

O9-3

other efforts in the unincorporated area". While we recognize that hydrogen is often touted as a transitional technology, we are concerned that the many ways of obtaining or producing it also means that such commitments can have ambiguous outcomes. We oppose hydrogen that is produced from the chemical processing of fossil fuels. In particular, the language in the plan should stipulate a commitment to green hydrogen produced by renewable energy, but we also suggest that battery-electric vehicles are a better choice for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and, thus, deserve greater incentive in the CAP.

Regarding "Strategy: Support Active Transportation and Reduce Single-Occupancy Vehicle Trips," the goal to develop a program to provide free transit passes and/or free trips in the unincorporated area to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the unincorporated area by 1.2% by 2030, is an attractive idea. We have seen that the Youth Opportunity Passes provided by MTS have been very successful in increasing ridership, and we expect that free transit in the unincorporated areas would be successful as well, especially for low-income, elderly, and disabled people living closer to cities who need to commute to jobs and services in the cities of San Diego. Data from MTS shows an increase in ridership of youth of 105% from March/April 2022 to March/April 2023.

Pre-approved development in unincorporated areas can lead to increased VMT. Therefore, SD350 urges the County to follow the Transportation Study Guide for the unincorporated county, and clearly state how any approved project would achieve VMT reduction and prevent sprawl. We particularly note that measure T-6.2a supports the use of TDM agreements as the supposed mitigation of increased VMT and GHG emissions of County land use approvals. Research has shown that TDM is not an effective or significant reducer of VMT or GHG emissions. We suggest that this measure should be removed from the final draft.

SD350 supports the goal of improving Active Transportation and Reducing Single-Occupancy Vehicle Trips. We suggest that while improving Active Transportation, all roadway improvement incorporates Vision Zero policies to improve the safety of traveling by foot, bicycle, and other small devices.

SD350 also supports increased access to first/last mile transportation services and connections (e.g., neighborhood electric vehicles, microtransit, bike/scooter-share) to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 7% within the unincorporated area by 2030.

O9-3 cont.

Energy

The following comments are from SanDiego350's Building Electrification Team and were also submitted separately.

SanDiego350 is a founding member of the San Diego Building Electrification Coalition (SDBEC). SanDiego350 signed onto the letter SDBEC recently submitted and we would like to reiterate the following comments on the Energy measures below.

O9-4

Re: Energy Sector Vision (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 65), many measures and actions in this sector rely on electrification as well as energy efficiency to meet the targets, yet the vision does not mention electrification. We recommend a more inclusive Vision that includes things such as efficient electric buildings.

In "Measure E-1: County Operations" (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 67), while the County's Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan (ZCPP) reduces GHG emissions in municipal operations, we recommend adding additional actions to the CAP, in alignment with the City of San Diego's goals in their Zero Emissions Municipal Building Operation Policy (ZEMBOP). Those additional actions include: expanding the scope beyond "owned & occupied properties" to include properties owned by the County and leased to others, requiring gas equipment to be replaced at the end of life, or sooner, with electric alternatives, and accelerating the timeline for achieving 100% renewable energy to 2025.

In "Measure E-2: Unincorporated Area" (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68) the County has many policies that impact new and existing buildings, that can be updated to induce electrification.We recommend that all county housing policies, funding and contracts, and leases require all-electric buildings. We recommend that the "Equity-Based Outcomes" of "Reduced utility bills for homeowners and renters" be updated to include improved air quality. We recommend the "Community" co-benefit score be increased to reflect the public cost-savings of energy efficiency and electrification. Mass electrification will enable the decommissioning of expensive and aging gas pipelines.

Re: Action E-2.1: New Buildings (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68), due to ongoing litigation against all-electric mandated ordinances, we recommend that this action be supplemented to create an ordinance to highly incentivize but not require all-electric equipment, such as the High-Performance approach suggested by the State Codes and Standards group.

In "Action E-2.2: Existing Buildings" (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68) we recommend the following additions to address the urgency of electrifying existing buildings:

- Require all air conditioning units to be replaced upon burnout with heat pump appliances
- Streamline the permitting process for building electrification, especially emergency replacements
- Support residents with an Electrification Retrofit Accelerator program so that information about incentives, contractors, electric equipment, etc are easily available
- Accelerate the timeline for existing building electrification
- Commit to seeking additional policy pathways to electrify faster

In addition, details for each action including estimated costs, specific benchmarks, and implementation timelines are critical and must be transparently developed and robustly funded.

O9-4 cont.

Agriculture and Conservation

The following comments are from SanDiego350's Food & Soil Team and were also submitted separately.

We were very pleased to see that the intention is to make carbon farming a primary measure, with ambitious but potentially attainable goals in place for 2030 and 2045.We are also pleased to see the intention to reach out to disadvantaged farmers, prioritize County contracts with equitable food suppliers, reach out to tribal leaders to incorporate indigenous land management practices for habitat restoration, and evaluate opportunities to increase farmworker housing in the unincorporated area. All those items are in line with the environmental justice goals of SanDiego350, and we strongly encourage you to keep those as a prominent part of the CAP.

O9-5

Incentivizing carbon farming on conventionally farmed agricultural land and implementing these techniques in organic/regenerative operations is strongly encouraged as we see great potential in both. We also strongly support the idea of an incentive program rather than mandatory, as area farmers and ranchers are facing immense pressure.

Some questions and concerns that we have include:

- How additional sequestration attributable to carbon farming will be counted toward the overall CAP reduction target? Will the reduction be based solely on projections, such as through COMET-Planner? Or will it be necessary, in addition to doing projections, to verify how much carbon is actually sequestered, such as through the use of soil organic matter testing? Perhaps these details are still being worked out, but if the answer to this is known, it seems it would be beneficial to specify within the final CAP draft.
- We found the COMET projections on P. 483 of Appendix 1 to be very illuminating, but also they raised some questions for us. In particular, is it true that you are anticipating sequestration increases of 3.1 or 4.4 MT CO2E per acre per year as a result of compost application in different settings (cropland and rangeland, respectively)? Based on our knowledge of sequestration potential, those seem like very high expectations to achieve on a per-year basis. According to the ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture program, in a cropping context, “Compost can sequester an estimated 0.75 tonnes CO2 equivalent per acre, per year”. According to a variety of sources, such as the San Mateo RCD, Riyals and Silver’s 2013 study with the Marin Carbon Project found that, in a rangeland context, “a one-time application of compost sequesters 1.49 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per acre per year”. These numbers seem significantly lower than 3.1 and 4.4, respectively, so we are interested to better understand what explains that discrepancy. Of course, other carbon farming techniques can be applied in addition to composting, which can result in higher sequestration potential. For example, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources evaluated research on this and reported that “We found 77 multi-year experimental results measuring changes to no-till with an average carbon, sequestration benefit of 0.77 metric tons of CO2e per acre per year. We found 189 experimental results for planting cover crops, with an average sequestration benefit of 0.76 metric tons per acre per year”. Still, it seems that even if composting, cover cropping, and no-till changes were all practiced, that still may not add up to the target shown on P. 483. Nonetheless, we certainly would encourage the implementation of as many carbon farming techniques as seems practical, so that maximum sequestration and other co-benefits can be achieved.
- We have one other question related to sequestration and emissions. In Section 4 on P. 101 (according to the blue page number), it says: “A carbon farming program will incentivize a variety of techniques on natural and working lands that reduce GHG emissions and provide co-benefits such as water and land conservation”. Do you mean that additional sequestration from carbon farming will, in effect, reduce GHG emissions once additional sequestration is subtracted from total emissions? Or is the focus on the actual reduction of emissions rather than sequestration? It seems like perhaps the language could be refined to better communicate the intention to the public.
- Also, we noticed a discrepancy in estimates of agricultural acreage in San Diego County. On P.99 (blue number) of Section 4, it says: “More than 5,000 farmers call the county their home and make their living on 250,000 acres”. However, on P. 484 of Appendix 1 the amount of

O9-5 cont.

4

agricultural acreage appears to be much smaller: 114,746 acres of farmland in 2019. Without further information, there appears to be a discrepancy. Could this info be more clearly communicated in the final draft so that these numbers don't appear to be in conflict?

- We are interested in better understanding, given the $1-10 million budget for the carbon farming program in the first six years of implementation (per Section 5), how much of that is expected to be going directly toward farmers in the form of incentives. We expect there will be some administrative costs covered by that as well, and we would like to get more info about the expected balance of farmer benefits to admin costs. In terms of marketing, it seems like a large figure could be very attractive to area farmers, and we will want to help the CAP team get the word out to area farmers about this new incentive program, so more info there would be useful.

O9-5 cont.

Implementation and General

Implementation

The CAP should include more detailed objectives, steps, and milestones, and a timeline for their implementation. It will be impossible to meet the plan's ambitious goals without clear, detailed plans that allows the County to track its progress and stay accountable to its commitments.

O9-6

Planning for Climate Resiliency

With climate impacts and disasters becoming more frequent and extreme, it is crucial that the County create a Climate Resiliency Plan to complement the Climate Action Plan. The CAP should include a commitment and timeline for the creation of that plan, and the implementation should be connected since many measures could serve dual purposes or amplify each other. The unincorporated County is already seeing these impacts, especially extreme heat, wildfires and smoke, drought, and flooding - and these impacts will all become more severe with time. It is imperative that the County plan now so that it can protect the health of residents and the economy of the unincorporated County through resiliency measures, including air filtration equipment, creating cooling and smoke-free centers (we recommend looking at utilizing existing Community Colleges and libraries for this purpose), adapting outdoor industries such as farming to changing conditions, microgrids to protect against power outages, water and energy conservation measures, etc. We recommend doing community outreach, education, and engagement to identify the most effective measures for the different communities in the unincorporated County.

O9-7

Regional Collaboration

The County of San Diego's leadership is needed to ensure that the County as a whole succeeds in meeting its climate and equity goals as rapidly and effectively as possible. Regional collaboration and integration across cities and agencies are necessary to achieve these targets, across the County and the other municipal CAPs, the Regional Decarbonization Framework, SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan, the CAPs of large businesses, tribal nations, universities, the Port, Airport, MTS, NCTD, school districts, etc.

O9-8

This CAP should clarify how the County plans to collaborate with the municipalities, agencies, and other entities in the county, and specifically identify what that collaboration should look like. This is especially important when it comes to transportation and transit, where no City can act alone and where residents of the unincorporated County are in need of transportation solutions that connect them easily to employment centers, schools, and services.

There are two areas the CAP should specifically address and clarify its goals and roles: 1) the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) being developed by SANDAG as a region-level CAP, and take a leading role in its development and implementation, especially related to transportation and building electrification. 2) working in partnership with these entities to secure crucial federal and state funding for the necessary measures.

O9-8 cont.

Question Regarding Projected Emission Reductions

Figure 10 on pages 37-8 shows the County's projected emission reductions through 2025. We wanted to learn more about why natural gas emissions, which comprise a large portion of overall emissions, are expected to grow rather than shrink over the next 25 years when the State is expected to move to limit these emissions through building and transportation electrification policies and many municipalities are already taking steps to do so. Additionally, it seems that all projected reductions are coming from only two sectors - electricity and transportation. Why are there no expected reductions based on the measures from the other sectors? Furthermore, the projected reductions in transportation and the built environment are insufficient according to the projected emissions in Appendix 3.

The County CAP is an opportunity for the County to provide much-needed leadership in creating ambitious, accountable climate policy across our region and serving as a model for other counties. While this CAP demonstrates improvements compared to prior County CAP versions (for which we are grateful to staff), there is more to be done to truly unleash the potential for putting our communities on the path to a healthy, sustainable, equitable future.

O9-9

Sincerely,



Brooke Wedner
Chair, SanDiego350 Climate Action Plan Team

Letter O9 San Diego350's Climate Action Plan Team

Brooke Wedner, Chair
January 4, 2024

Comment O9-1
The comment is an introductory statement.

Response O9-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O9-2
The comment provides background information about SanDiego350 and its Climate Action Plan Team.

Response O9-2
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O9-3
This comment expresses support for various CAP Update strategies, measures, and actions to reduce GHG emissions and opposition to others.

Response O9-3
These comments are noted and will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update. CAP Action T-3.1.a has been revised to clarify that this effort would focus on clean hydrogen sources. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions

Comment O9-4
The comment suggests revisions to various CAP Update measures for energy.

Response O9-4
These comments are noted and will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O9-5
The comment poses questions and expresses concern about various CAP Update measures for agriculture and conservation.

Response O9-5
These comments are noted and will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

With regard to the question about the CarbOn Management & Emissions Tool (COMET) projections, the rates for $MTCO_2e$ sequestered per year resulting from compost application were derived from COMET-Planner for the California Department of Food and Agriculture Healthy Soils Program (CDFA HSP). COMET-Planner CDFA HSP estimates GHG reductions from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Practices that have been identified as having GHG mitigation or carbon sequestration benefits on farms and ranches. The COMET-Planner tool is available online: http://comet-planner-cdfahsp.com/.

The following COMET-Planner CDFA HSP outputs for the County of San Diego were used to estimate sequestration rates for compost application practices under Action 4.1 (Table 9-4).

Table 9-4 Approximate Carbon Sequestration and GHG Reductions Associated with Selected Conservation Practices

Practice	Quantity	Unit	CO_2 ($MTCO_2e$/yr)	N_2O ($MTCO_2e$/yr)	CH_4 ($MTCO_2e$/yr)	$MTCO_2e$/yr	Proportion (Input)	Notes
San Diego, CA Compost Application (Interim CPS 808) – Compost (C/N < or = 11) Application to Annual Crops, On-farm produced compost – 4 tons/acre	1,000	Acres	2,260	(200)	6	2,066	50%	COMET-Planner CDFA HSP includes 3 payment scenarios for this practice: 3, 4, and 5 tons/acre. Payment scenario does not affect GHG reductions. GHG reductions are also the same for on-farm produced compost and compost purchased from certified composting facility.
San Diego, CA Compost Application (Interim CPS 808) – Compost (C/N > 11) Application to Annual Crops, On-farm produced compost – 6 tons/acre	1,000	Acres	4,440	(190)	11	4,261	50%	COMET-Planner CDFA HSP includes 3 payment scenarios for this practice: 6, 7, and 8 tons/acre. Payment scenario does not affect GHG reductions. GHG reductions are also the same for on-farm produced compost and compost purchased from certified composting facility.
							100%	Two practices must add up to 100%.
San Diego, CA Nutrient Management (CPS 590) – Improved N Fertilizer Management on Irrigated Croplands – Reduce Fertilizer Application Rate by 15% - Basic NM	1,000	Acres	(35)	23	-	(12)	0%	Because practice does not offer a GHG reduction benefit, proportion is set to zero.
San Diego, CA Nutrient Management (CPS 590) – Improved N Fertilizer Management on Non-Irrigated Croplands – Reduce Fertilizer Application Rate by 15% - Basic NM	1,000	Acres	(10)	22	-	12	100%	Benefit of 15% reduction in fertilizer use, on top of compost application is marginal.
							100%	Two practices must add up to 100%.
San Diego, CA Compost Application (Interim CPS 808) – Compost (C/N > 11) Application to Grazed Grassland, On-farm produced compost - 7 tons/acre	1,000	Acres	4,440	(35)	14	4,419	100%	COMET-Planner CDFA HSP includes 3 payment scenarios for this practice: 6, 7, and 8 tons/acre. Payment scenario does not affect GHG reductions. GHG reductions are also the same for on-farm produced compost and compost purchased from certified composting facility.
San Diego, CA Compost Application (Interim CPS 808) – Compost (C/N > 11) Application to Grazed Irrigated Pasture, On-farm produced compost - 7 tons/acre	1,000	Acres	4,500	(110)	12	4,402	0%	COMET-Planner CDFA HSP includes 3 payment scenarios for this practice: 6, 7, and 8 tons/acre. Payment scenario does not affect GHG reductions. GHG reductions are also the same for on-farm produced compost and compost purchased from certified composting facility. *Assumes no grazed irrigated pastures in San Diego County.*
							100%	Two practices must add up to 100%.

Notes: C/N carbon:nitrogen ratio= , CPS = Conservation Practice Standard , $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent, COMET = CarbOn Management & Emissions Tool, CDFA HSP = California Department of Food and Agriculture Healthy Soils Program.

Source: adapted from COMET Planner by Ascent, 2024.

With regards to the question about sequestration and emissions, the County has revised the description of Measure A-4 in the CAP Update to clarify that carbon farming would reduce GHG emissions and increase sequestration potential.

Regarding the amount of agricultural land in San Diego County, the SANDAG Series 14 Growth Forecast reported that there were 114,746 acres of agricultural land in the unincorporated county as of 2019. SANDAG defines agricultural as orchards, vineyards, intensive agriculture, and field crops (refer to CAP Update Appendix 3, footnote 53, page 20). The 250,000 acres referenced on page 99 of the Draft CAP is from the US Department of Agriculture 2017 Census of Agriculture. The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of US farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even small plots of land—whether rural or urban—count if $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. This reference has been removed from the revised CAP Update to avoid confusion.

With regards to the question about the budget for carbon farming, the CAP Update includes substantial evidence supporting the implementation and GHG reduction potential of each recommended measure and action. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation."

Comment O9-6
The comment advises the County to provide more detailed objectives, steps, milestones, and timeline for the CAP Update implementation.

Response O9-6
See Response O9-5, which describes the implementation details included in the CAP Update.

Comment O9-7
The comment suggests the County prepare a Climate Resilience Plan to complement the CAP Update and to conduct outreach in different communities.

Response O9-7
The suggestion to prepare a Climate Resilience Plan is noted. The San Diego County General Plan Safety Element includes a policy to implement the County's *Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Report* (Policy S-12.1). The *Vulnerability Assessment Adaptation Report* was prepared in June 2021 by the County in accordance with General Plan Policy S-12-1. The report includes a comprehensive vulnerability assessment and adaptation goals and policies, which are required to be incorporated into the General Plan

Safety Element, in compliance with SB 379, Government Code Section 65302(g)(4). Public outreach was conducted during the preparation of *Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Report*. The report is available on the County website at: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/generalplan.html. Refer to Response O2-5 for further discussion of resiliency considerations included in the CAP Update.

Comment O9-8
The comment recommends that the County provide clarification on regional collaboration in the CAP Update.

Response O9-8
The County acknowledges the importance of regional collaboration in effective GHG emissions reduction. The suggestion that the County "take a leading role" in the development and implementation of SANDAG's forthcoming Priority Climate Action Plan (including securing funding) is noted. This effort would be independent of the County's CAP. The CAP Update has been revised to reference the Priority Climate Action Plan as an example of regional collaboration. Refer to Response O2-6 for further discussion of regional collaboration.

Comment O9-9
This comment addresses GHG emissions projections for the unincorporated area from 2019 through 2045 (as shown in Figure 10), which account for the effects of state and federal actions to reduce emissions but do not account for actions the County would take to reduce emissions.

Response O9-9
CAP Update Figure 10 shows the CAP Update emission projections and GHG reduction targets. CAP Update Figure 13 shows GHG emission reductions from CAP implementation.

As described in the CAP Update, "The CAP's emissions projections estimate future emissions by considering forecasted growth in population, housing units, and employment, and the impact of adopted legislation and regulations on future emissions" (Section 3.3, page 34, as shown in Figure 10). CAP Update Appendix 3 describes how the projections were developed, provides the indicators used for estimating emissions projections for each sector, and identifies the specific legislative and regulations actions accounted for in the County's GHG emissions projections. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Letter O10

From: David Pearl
To: Kelly, Meghan; Moss, Claire; Hamburger, Ariel; Farmer, Tyler; CAP
Subject: [External] Re: SanDiego350 and County of SD - Carbon Farming
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:28:40 AM
Attachments: SanDiego350 Feedback to County Staff on CAP Draft vis-a-vis Carbon Farming.pdf

Good morning,

Our carbon farming working group within SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team greatly appreciated meeting with you all back on 12/13/22.

We also were eager to closely read the carbon farming-related aspects of the CAP draft in recent months, and we would like to provide our detailed feedback in the attached PDF.

SanDiego350 is planning to submit an organization-wide response to the CAP draft, and it's my understanding that this carbon farming feedback will be incorporated into that in some form as well. We wanted to get it directly to you all, since we previously talked in some depth about these issues. As mentioned in the letter itself, we would be available to discuss further with you in advance of the final draft, if that would be beneficial.

Thank you for all your efforts in this area.

David

O10-1

On Wed, Dec 14, 2022 at 2:20 PM David Pearl <metacipher@gmail.com> wrote:

> Hi all,
>
> Thanks again for taking the time yesterday to meet with us. It was very informative, and we appreciate the opportunity for dialogue.
>
> Here's a link to the presentation Augusta (CCed) put together – no-frills, but very informative in my opinion. And here are a couple sources that were the basis for it:
>
> - Full study: https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/resources/Our-Food-Future/Investigating_Incentives_for_Regenerative_Agriculture-May-2021.pdf
> - Homepage: https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/ed-experimental-acres.aspx
>
> We look forward to staying in touch, and please let me know if we can assist with anything.
>
> Thanks,
> David
>
> On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 7:37 AM Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov> wrote:
>
> > Microsoft Teams meeting
> >
> > **Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**
> >
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+1 619-343-2539,,411623001# United States, San Diego

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O10-1 cont.

January 4, 2023

Dear CAP Staff,

SanDiego350 is an inclusive volunteer organization building a movement to prevent the worst impacts of climate change and climate injustice. We strive to create a future that supports a livable planet and just society through education and outreach, public policy advocacy, and mobilizing people to take action.

The Carbon Farming Working Group of SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team has closely studied the potential for carbon farming within San Diego County as a means of pulling down and sequestering carbon from the atmosphere. We've come to the conclusion that ramping up carbon farming efforts among area farmers and ranchers could be highly beneficial to their food production operations and greatly offset the amount of emissions that occur in unincorporated San Diego County. As such, in late 2021 we proposed that the County adopt carbon farming as a primary measure in the climate action plan (CAP) revision so this sequestration can be quantified and counted as part of the County's overall efforts to reduce emissions. We spoke in support of the Carbon Farming Pilot Program when it was proposed to the Board of Supervisors in August 2022, and we greatly appreciated meeting with CAP staff about our proposal and their efforts on the Pilot Program in December 2022.

We were eager to review the initial draft of the CAP revision that was recently released to the public, and we were very pleased to see that the intention is to make carbon farming a primary measure, with ambitious but potentially attainable goals in place for 2030 and 2045. Achieving a 10x ramp up in the 15 years between those two dates would be a remarkable achievement and of great benefit to San Diego County. O10-2

In addition, we were heartened to see the intention to reach out to disadvantaged farmers, prioritize County contracts with equitable food suppliers, reach out to tribal leaders to incorporate indigenous land management practices for habitat restoration, and evaluate opportunities to increase farmworker housing in the unincorporated area. All those items are in line with the environmental justice goals of SanDiego350, and we strongly encourage you to keep those as a prominent part of the CAP.

We also were pleased to see that there's an interest in incentivizing carbon farming on conventionally farmed agricultural land, because there is great potential in that, in addition to implementing these techniques in organic/regenerative operations. We also strongly support the idea of an incentive program rather than anything mandatory, as area farmers and ranchers are facing enough pressures as it is.

In reading the draft, we also had some questions about how various things will work, and in some cases we had concerns about specific calculations. We would like to share these with you so you can consider this feedback as you revise this draft. If it would be helpful, we would be happy to communicate with you further on these topics before the final draft is released. O10-3

First, we'd like to better understand how additional sequestration attributable to carbon farming will be counted toward the overall CAP reduction target. Will the reduction be based solely on projections, such as through COMET-Planner? Or will it be necessary, in addition to doing projections, to verify how much carbon is actually sequestered, such as through use of soil organic matter testing? Perhaps these details are still being worked out, but if the answer to this is known, it seems it would be beneficial to specify within the final CAP draft.

We found the COMET projections on P. 483 of Appendix 1 to be very illuminating, but also they raised some questions for us. In particular, is it true that you are anticipating sequestration increases of 3.1 or 4.4 MT CO2E per acre per year as a result of compost application in different settings (cropland and rangeland, respectively)? Based on our knowledge of sequestration potential, those seem like very high expectations to achieve on a per year basis. According to the ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture program, in a cropping context, "Compost can sequester an estimated 0.75 tonnes CO2 equivalent per acre, per year". According to a variety of sources, such as the San Mateo RCD, Riyals and Silver's 2013 study with the Marin Carbon Project found that, in a rangeland context, "a one-time application of compost sequesters 1.49 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per acre per year". These numbers seem significantly lower than 3.1 and 4.4, respectively, so we are interested to better understand what explains that discrepancy. Of course, other carbon farming techniques can be applied in addition to composting, which can result in higher sequestration potential. For example, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources evaluated research on this and reported that, "We found 77 multi-year experimental results measuring changes to no-till with an average carbon sequestration benefit of 0.77 metric tons of CO2e per acre per year. We found 189 experimental results for planting cover crops, with an average sequestration benefit of 0.76 metric tons per acre per year". Still, it seems even if composting, cover cropping, and no-till changes were all practiced, that still may not add up to the target shown on P. 483. Nonetheless, we certainly would encourage the implementation of as many carbon farming techniques as seems practical, so that maximum sequestration and other co-benefits can be achieved.

O10-3 cont.

We have one other question related to sequestration and emissions. In Section 4 on P. 101 (according to the blue page number), it says: "A carbon farming program will incentivize a variety of techniques on natural and working lands that reduce GHG emissions and provide cobenefits such as water and land conservation". Do you mean that additional sequestration from carbon farming will, in effect, reduce GHG emissions once additional sequestration is subtracted from total emissions? Or is the focus on actual reduction of emissions rather than sequestration? It seems like perhaps the language could be refined to better communicate the intention to the public.

Also, we noticed a discrepancy in estimates of agricultural acreage in San Diego County. On P. 99 (blue number) of Section 4, it says: "More than 5,000 farmers call the county their home and make their living on 250,000 acres". However, on P. 484 of Appendix 1 the amount of agricultural acreage appears to be much smaller: 114,746 acres of farmland in 2019. Without

further information, there appears to be a discrepancy. Could this info be more clearly communicated in the final draft so that these numbers don't appear to be in conflict?

We are interested to better understand, given the $1-10 million budget for the carbon farming program in the first six years of implementation (per Section 5), how much of that is expected to be going directly toward farmers in the form of incentives? We expect there will be some administrative costs covered by that as well, and we would like to get more info about the expected balance of farmer benefits to admin costs. In terms of marketing, it seems like a large figure could be very attractive to area farmers, and we will want to help the CAP team get the word out to area farmers about this new incentive program, so more info there would be useful.

O10-3 cont.

And finally, we strongly support everything under the banner of A-4, but it wasn't clear to us in the executive summary whether items A-4.1a, A-4.1b, A-4.1c, and A-4.1d are all a subset of 4.1 and therefore will be administered as part of the Carbon Farming Program or whether those are additional initiatives that will support climate-friendly farming practices but are not directly related to the carbon sequestration initiative. If it's the latter, perhaps organizing those under a new A-4.2 header and making those A-4.2a, A-4.2b, A-4.2c, and A-4.2d would provide more clarity to readers.

Hopefully this feedback is helpful, and we look forward to seeing your responses to these questions, either in the final draft or, if preferable, through communication with us prior to that. We will continue keeping close tabs on these efforts, and we look forward to seeing the next iteration and providing whatever assistance we can throughout the process. Thank you very much for your time and all your efforts in this area.

David Pearl

On behalf of the Carbon Farming Working Group, within SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team

Letter O10 SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team

David Pearl
January 4, 2024

Comment O10-1
The comment is an introductory statement.

Response O10-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O10-2
The comment provides background information about the Carbon Farming Working Group in the SanDiego350's Food and Soil Team and expresses support for the CAP Update carbon farming measures.

Response O10-2
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update carbon farming measures. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O10-3
This comment is encompassed in Comment O9-5 above. The comment expresses support for the CAP Update Measure A-4 and advises the County to reorganize the structure for Action A-4.1 and Actions A-4.1.a through A-4.1.d.

Response O10-3
Refer to Response O9-5. In addition, Actions A-4.1.a, A-4.1.b, A-4.1.c, and A-4.1.d are organized under Measure A-4, which states that the County will, "Incentivize carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land and support climate-friendly farming practices in the unincorporated area." These actions are organized under Measure A-4 because they are related to carbon farming and other climate-friendly farming practices.

SAN DIEGO BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION COALITION

Letter O11

4 January 2024

Re: **Feedback on the San Diego County draft Climate Action Plan**

Dear County Sustainability Planning Division Team,

The San Diego Building Electrification Coalition (SDBEC) is an alliance of community, business, faith, justice, and environmental organizations coming together to equitably accelerate electrification in residential and commercial buildings. Building electrification is essential to meeting California and San Diego's ambitious climate goals by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality in our homes and buildings, and protecting public health.

We are pleased that the County's Climate Action Plan recognizes the urgency to significantly reduce and avoid GHG emissions to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. And while the plan focuses on five emission reduction sectors, the importance of the Energy sector cannot be overstated. Electrifying buildings is one of the most effective ways to cut climate pollution. Our electricity is increasingly cleaner thanks to the County's decision to join San Diego Community Power. Furthermore, the technology needed to transition from methane gas to clean electricity already exists today.

O11-1

It is in this spirit that we offer the following recommendations on the draft Climate Action Plan:

Energy Sector Vision (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 65)

- Many measures & actions in this sector rely on electrification as well as energy efficiency to meet the targets, yet the vision does not mention electrification.
    - We recommend a more inclusive Vision, e.g. **efficient electric buildings**

Measure E-1: County Operations (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 67)

- While the County's Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan (ZCPP) reduces GHG emissions in municipal operations, we recommend adding additional actions to the CAP, in alignment with the City of San Diego's goals in their Zero Emissions Municipal Building Operation Policy (ZEMBOP)
    - Expand the scope beyond "owned & occupied properties" to include **properties owned by the County and leased to others**
    - **Require gas equipment be replaced at end of life**, or sooner, with electric alternatives
    - Accelerate the timeline for **100% renewable energy by 2025**

Measure E-2: Unincorporated Area (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68)

- The County has many activities that impact new and existing buildings, that can updated to include electrification
    - We recommend adding a measure that **all county housing policies, funding and contracts, leases require all-electric buildings.**

O11-2

SAN DIEGO BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION COALITION

- We recommend that the "Equity Based Outcomes" of "Reduced utility bills for homeowners and renters" be updated to include **improved air quality**.
- We recommend the "Community" co-benefit score be increased to reflect the **public cost-savings of energy efficiency and electrification**. Mass electrification will enable the decommissioning of expensive and aging gas pipelines.

Action E-2.1: New Buildings (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68)

- Due to on-going litigation, we recommend that this action be supplemented to create an ordinance to **encourage all-electric equipment, until it is possible to require it.**

Action E-2.2: Existing Buildings (Chapter 4, Energy Sector, page 68)

- We recommend the following additions to address the urgency of electrifying of existing buildings
  - **Require all air conditioning units to be replaced upon burnout with heat pump appliances**
  - **Streamline the permitting process for building electrification, especially emergency replacements**
  - **Support residents with an Electrification Retrofit Accelerator program**
  - **Accelerate the timeline for existing building electrification**
  - **Commit to seeking additional policy pathways to electrify faster**

O11-2 cont.

In addition, details for each action including **estimated costs, specific benchmarks and implementation timelines** are critical and must be transparently developed and robustly funded.

Our region is far behind in meeting mandated GHG reduction goals. Strong leadership at the County level must be demonstrated, leading by example, to achieve the significant results that are needed in the face of our climate emergency.

Sincerely,

SAN DIEGO BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION COALITION

Kelly Lyndon Co-Chair San Diego Building Electrification Coalition	Colleen FitzSimons Executive Director San Diego Green Building Council	Tanish-Jean Martin Climate Community Director San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition
Jim Miller Vice President AFT 1931	Ann Feeney Co-chair Building Electrification San Diego 350	Serena Pelka Policy Advocate Climate Action Campaign
Susan Wayo Board Member & Secretary Center for Community Energy	Amy Steward Executive Director Emerald Keepers	Leslie Gomez Board Member North County Climate Change Alliance
Sean Armstrong Managing Principal Redwood Energy	Adria Fox Managing Director C4GS-ZEDlife	Leslie Gomez San Diego Climate Reality Project

SAN DIEGO BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION COALITION

AIA San Diego American Institute of Architects San Diego	QuitCarbon Cooper Marcus CEO and Chief Quitter QuitCarbon	Green New Deal UCSD Adam Aron Green New Deal at UCSD
Mothers Out Front California Alicia Nichols Gonzalez Mothers Out Front Organizing Manager, California	Forward Dining Solutions LLC Chef Christopher Galarza, Founder Culinary Sustainability Consultant Forward Dining Solutions LLC.	Fallbrook Climate Action Team Joy Frew Co-founder Fallbrook Climate Action Team
IGC In Good Company Adrienne Fusek Executive Director In Good Company	Climate Justice Climate Change is a Moral Issue First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego Rhea and Armin Kuhlman Co-Chair, Climate Justice Team First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego	I am Green Reconnecting Our People to the Planet and Each Other Sister Maria A. Muhammad CEO I Am Green, Inc.
Move Faster Larry Peranich Founder Move Faster	Stay Cool Protect our grandkids from global warming Linda Giannelli Pratt Advisory Council Chairperson Stay Cool for Grandkids	**Citizens' Climate** Lobby San Diego Chapters Marc Friedmann Citizens' Climate Lobby San Diego Chapters

SAN DIEGO BUILDING
ELECTRIFICATION COALITION

Suzanne Hume Educational Director & Founder CleanEarth4Kids.org	Dan Rodriguez Sunrise Movement San Diego	

www.sdbec.org

info@sdbec.org

Letter O11 San Diego Building Electrification Coalition

January 4, 2024

Comment O11-1
The comment is an introductory statement and provides background information about the San Diego Building Electrification Coalition.

Response O11-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O11-2
The comment offers recommendations related to the energy sector vision statement, Measures E-1 and E-2, and Actions E-2.1 and E-2.2.

Response O11-2
See Section 9.1.1.3, “Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions,” which explains that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Letter
O12

NAIOP San Diego
BOMA San Diego
California Apartment Association
California Restaurant Association
Building Industry Association of San Diego
San Diego County Lodging Association

TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY

January 5, 2024

Meghan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan
Planning Development Services, County of San Diego
5510 Overland Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123

RE: DRAFT Climate Action Plan

Dear Meghan:

On behalf of the undersigned coalition, we submit the following comments regarding the draft County of San Diego Climate Action Plan.

Our coalition appreciates the County's intent to adopt a climate action plan that reflects environmental priorities and changes in state law. Our coalition's members have been leaders in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment. Our members see themselves as part of the solution to addressing climate change. Our members, and for those who have business commercial or residential property, their tenants also recognize and support reasonable measures to increase energy efficiency.

It's important to note, and as the 2019 greenhouse gas inventory demonstrates, 45 percent of climate emissions are from "on-road transportation." Our coalition believes the best way to control transportation emissions is to increase jobs creation adjacent to where people live. This live-work balance is even more important in the numerous unincorporated communities in the County of San Diego.

The remaining emission reduction opportunities are spread among eight categories. As the County looks to adopt even more stringent rules, we believe the County must be careful to not harm the ability of jobs providers to create new commercial and industrial spaces, detrimentally impact existing and potential employers, as that could be counter to the important goal of reducing GHG by better co-location and balance of jobs-housing-services.

O12-1

Below are some specific comments we'd like to submit regarding the proposed draft Climate Action Plan:

- T-3.1: While we support the movement toward electric vehicles and providing the necessary charging infrastructure, we ask any mandate to construct this equipment be aligned with demand, and not an arbitrary requirement to build the infrastructure for it to not be utilized. This is an extremely expensive requirement that is not easily achieved, particularly in commercial settings. Serving those additional loads on a property-by-property basis can be challenging, and expensive, particularly in the unincorporated county. Our coalition believes the cost-benefit should be a factor in this type of decision.
- T-6.2a: Transportation demand management is a cautionary tale. In some cases, mandates under a TDM program that drive either operational changes or impact employees from a cost or convenience standpoint could harm economic development efforts, as well as conflicts with the greatest means of reducing emissions, which is having jobs adjacent to homes. Voluntary programs, coupled with financial incentives to pay for ride sharing are something to be used and expanded, as outlined in Actions T-6.1 and T-6.3. Additional analysis should also be completed. Given COVID-era driven changes in work habits, a number of employers are allowing an even greater share of work from home opportunity, which may mean that these goals are already being readily met. Focus should also be paid to improving the areas transit services, including first and last mile connections. Convenience drives behavior, so that could assist greatly in reducing auto trips. Lastly, the State of California has already mandated the phasing out of combustion vehicle sales. There should be much less concern about vehicle emissions, given the time horizons for these mandates.
- E-2.1: Our coalition has opposed building electrification mandates. Numerous examples exist of the need for a variety of clean energy production methods that cannot meet this standard. Whether its life sciences, restaurants, or other manufacturers, including the provision of services in larger buildings, some processes or equipment require natural gas. It's a relatively small amount, by comparison to other emission sources, and shouldn't be immediately discarded given the implications. It is important to note that the decision this week by the full federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to uphold the denial of the City of Berkeley's electrification ordinance suggests that electrification mandates are not legal and should not be pursued.
- E-2.2 and W-2.1/2.2: The State of California already has some of the most stringent energy efficiency requirements in the world. Some jurisdictions like the public relations narrative of going beyond state requirements using "reach" or "stretch" codes. Even though the State has offered additional tiers beyond the CalGreen code, they are strictly voluntary, and in our member's experience, it has been a challenge to implement those more stringent "tiers" in other jurisdictions. As such, we would strongly encourage caution in going beyond already aggressive, mandatory state standards as it creates uncertainty in the development process.

O12-2

- Incentives work: We appreciate numerous action items utilizing incentives to achieve GHG reduction targets. When incentives, like tax credits, are applied, acceptance and adoption increase exponentially. When they drop, like the recent decision by the CPUC to change net metering rules, adoption is dramatically reduced. We support the County's actions focusing on incentives for change, rather than mandates.
- Leading by example: We fully support the measures the County seeks to adopt for its own operations and properties. Leading by example is important, as many jurisdictions delay implementation of the requirements they place on the private sector citing cost concerns. We strongly encourage the County's effort to reduce its own GHG emissions through this CAP.

O12-2 cont.

In closing, the undersigned coalition would also like to note that the implementation of the County's CAP and the specific measures to be utilized are critically important to ensuring a reasonable, practical, and feasible program. As such, we will continue to be involved in these conversations and appreciate your team's willingness to engage our organizations and our members.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts. Our organizations are willing to continue to discuss these issues as you proceed with more specific update proposals.

Sincerely,

Craig Benedetto, NAIOP San Diego & BOMA San Diego
Melanie Woods, California Apartment Association
Chris Duggan, California Restaurant Association
Lori Holt Pfeiler, Building Industry Association of San Diego
Fred Tayco, San Diego County Lodging Association

CC: Board of Supervisors

Letter O12 NAIOP San Diego, Building Owners and Managers Association San Diego, California Apartment Association, California Restaurant Association, Building Industry Association of San Diego, and San Diego County Loading Association

Craig Benedetto, Melanie Woods, Chris Duggan, Lori Holt Pfeiler, and Fred Tayco
January 5, 2024

Comment O12-1
The comment includes an introductory statement and offers general commentary related to the effects of where people live relative to their jobs on transportation emissions and potential effects of CAP Update measures and actions on developers and employers.

Response O12-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O12-2
The comment provides specific feedback related to CAP Actions T-3.1, T-6.2.a, E-2.1, E-2.2, W-2.1, and W-2.2. The comment expresses support for the County's actions focusing on incentives for change. The comment also expresses general support for the County's effort to reduce GHG emissions through the CAP Update.

Response O12-2
The County appreciates the support for the CAP Update and the specific suggestions provided. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Letter O13

From: Elizabeth Reid-Wainscoat
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Re: Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update and Draft SEIR
Date: Friday, January 5, 2024 3:06:41 PM
Attachments: CBD_CommentLetter_SDCountyCAP_2024-01-05.pdf

Dear Ms. Kelly,

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity regarding the proposed Draft Climate Action Plan Update and Draft SEIR, for consideration to San Diego County. References can be accessed here.

Please confirm that you have received this email and can access both the letter and the references folder.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth

O13-1

Elizabeth Reid-Wainscoat (she/her)
Urban Wildlands Campaigner
CENTER *for* BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Cell: (831) 428-3312
ereidwainscoat@biologicaldiversity.org



January 5, 2024

Sent via email

Meghan Kelly
County of San Diego PDS
5510 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update and Draft SEIR

Dear Ms. Kelly,

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity (the "Center") regarding the proposed Draft Climate Action Plan ("CAP") Update and Draft SEIR ("Draft"), for consideration to San Diego County. The Center supports the elimination of carbon offsets, but recommends that the County make a stronger commitment to sustainable land-use practices through the implementation of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative identified in the Draft.

O13-2

The Center is a non-profit, public interest environmental organization dedicated to the protection of native species and their habitats through science, policy, and environmental law. The Center has over 1.7 million members and online activists throughout California and the United States. The Center and its members have worked for many years to protect imperiled plants and wildlife, open space, air and water quality, and overall quality of life for people in Los Angeles County and throughout California.

I. The County Must Center Sustainable Land-Use as a Central Component of the CAP.

As emphasized in the CAP, the climate crisis requires bold action from all levels of government to reduce GHGs. Land-use planning that prioritizes infill and transit-oriented development is an essential strategy to achieving regional GHG reductions. Not including these measures as requirements for future development would be in direct opposition to the science as described below.

O13-3

a. Sprawl Development Increases Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Harms Public Health

Sprawl development increases the amount of truck and car trips, resulting in more climate-disrupting carbon pollution. A 2010 meta-analysis based on more than 50 surveys concluded that a region's local density, diversity and regional accessibility had a significant impact on travel behavior.[1] Specifically, population centrality, job-housing balance, shape of the city, and roadway density influences annual household vehicle miles travelled, or VMT.[2]

In 2021, the emissions associated with passenger vehicles in the U.S. totaled 370 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e).[3] California's annual average emissions associated with passenger vehicles between 2000 and 2020 was approximately 110 million metric tons of CO_2e.[4]

In addition to carbon pollution, increased daily vehicle trips result in emissions of NOx, carbon dioxide (CO_2), and methane (CH_4), which can lead to premature mortality, compromised birth outcomes, heart disease and a host of respiratory illnesses.[5]

An even more direct negative impact to increased VMT is the impacts to the individual commuter. In 2019, the duration of the average commute in the United States increased to a new high of 55.2 minutes, and a record 9.8 percent of commuters reported daily commutes of at least 2 hours.[6] These long commutes reduce time available to spend with family, friends, and community, and reduce opportunities for healthy recreation. The increase in inactivity and isolation can also lead to long-term health complications such as pre-diabetes, diabetes, obesity, asthma, isolation, stress and depression.[7,8]

Additionally, automobile crashes are the leading cause of death among young people (15 to 19 years old) in the United States.[9] An estimated 42,915 people died in car crashes in 2021 alone and 3.4 million people are injured each year, which costs an estimated $473.2 billion annually as measured by wage and productivity losses, medical expenses, motor-vehicle damage, and employers' uninsured costs.[10, 11, 12]

O13-3 cont.

Continuing to approve sprawl development in the county would inevitably increase the region's GHG emissions and reduce the region's air quality, which is in direct opposition to the CAP's purpose as well as both the federal and state government emission reduction goals.

b. Sprawl Development Increases Communities' Wildfire Risk

Almost all contemporary wildfires in California, 95% to 97%, are caused by human sources such as power lines, car sparks and electrical equipment.[13] Increasing sprawl development in highly fire-prone wildlands also increases unintentional ignitions and puts more people in danger.[14]

Wildfire is an important ecological process for many ecosystems. For millennia, Indigenous cultural burning and lightning strikes drove ecosystem-specific fire regimes. But the genocide of Native peoples and the criminalization of fire practices, along with 200 years of reckless land-use planning, have altered historical fire regimes.[15,16] This, in combination with climate change causing more extreme fire weather, longer fire seasons, and larger areas burned, has made wildfires more destructive to people and communities.[17]

Since 2016 more than 200 people in California have been killed in wildfires, more than 50,000 structures have been burned down, hundreds of thousands have had to evacuate their homes and endure power outages, and millions have been exposed to unhealthy levels of smoke and air pollution.[18]

Poor air quality from fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) in wildfire smoke has both acute and long-term health effects. Hospital visits for respiratory symptoms (*e.g.*, asthma, acute bronchitis, pneumonia or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) have been shown to increase during and/or after wildfire events.[19]

There is also evidence that increases in all-cause mortalities and hospital visits for cardiovascular symptoms (*e.g.*, congestive heart failure, ischemic heart disease, and myocardial infarction) are also linked to wildfires.[19] Epidemiologists recently found that increased exposure to wildfire smoke may also be linked to higher rates of dementia.[20] And wildland firefighters are suffering disproportionately high rates of cancer and other serious diseases, likely due to extreme smoke exposure,[21] as well as mental health issues due to extended fire seasons and working extended shifts away from their families.[22]

O13-3 cont.

In addition to particulate matter from smoke, harmful and toxic substances from burning structures, like lead and zinc, are released in the air and can travel many miles to other communities.[23] Such impacts disproportionately affect low-income and minority communities and vulnerable members of the population, like children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing health conditions.

The economic impacts of wildfires affect residents throughout the state. Wildfires in 2018 cost Californians an estimated $148.5 billion in capital losses, health costs related to air pollution exposure, and indirect losses due to broader economic disruption cascading along regional and national supply chains.[24] And the cost of emergency fire suppression continues to skyrocket year after year.

The county must stop approving new developments in wildfire severity hazards zones if they want to meet their GHG reduction targets and protect communities against the devasting impacts of unintentional human-caused wildfires.

c. Sprawl Development Decreases Nature's Carbon Sequestration Capacity

Developers cut down mature trees, pave over grasslands, and destroy native wildlife habitat. This undermines nature's ability to store carbon. Terrestrial ecosystems — including forests, woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, riparian areas, wetlands, and deserts — act as large carbon sinks, sequestering approximately 30% of anthropogenic emissions globally.[25] Protecting and restoring native habitats is a central component to any successful climate mitigation strategy.[26, 27] California's Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan acknowledges this fact and includes natural carbon sequestration as a central strategy to reach the statewide goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.[28, 29]

Development threatens this goal. Every time we pave over forest, woodlands, shrublands, grasslands and other open spaces to build more sprawl, we work against our goals to build climate resiliency by releasing that area's stored carbon and losing its potential to sequester carbon.

d. Sprawl Development Destroys Habitat Vital for Regional Biodiversity and Community Health

Loss in habitat from development destroys sensitive species and has the potential to degrade or diminish entire ecosystems:[30, 31, 32]

- **Roads** fragment habitat and cause direct mortality and genetic isolation of animals, which can drive wildlife species towards extinction. Many species, including mountain lions and desert tortoises, are often killed or injured if they attempt to cross roads.[33] Other animals, like some songbirds and lizards, avoid crossing roads altogether. Roads also facilitate the spread of non-native and invasive species, particularly plants and their seeds, which threaten the survival of native plants and animals.[34] Roads also facilitate more development, compounding the problem.
- **Structures and human activities** result in habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation. The presence of people can cause species to shift their behaviors and movement patterns, which can lead to genetic isolation and an increased risk of local extinctions. This is evident with struggling puma populations in California experiencing an extinction vortex due to severe habitat fragmentation caused by roads and development.[35] Predation and disease from domestic pets can also harm native species and erode ecosystems.[36]
- **Fences** create another type of habitat fragmentation by reducing mobility and preventing species from accessing areas that they depend on for survival. Even worse, fences can ensnare the animals that try to cross, resulting in suffering, injury or death.[37]
- **Chemical pollution in the form of pesticides, herbicides and rodenticides** are also a threat. Run-off pollution from roads and agriculture harms fish and amphibians that require aquatic habitats to survive.[38, 39,40] Rodenticides poison or kill bobcats, mountain lions, coyotes, Pacific fishers, raptors, and many others.[41, 42]
- **Light and noise pollution** can reduce the health and reproductive rates of many birds and other wildlife. [43]

Destruction of habitat results in greater wildlife mortality and potential extirpation.[44] The county needs to protect remaining native habitats to ensure we preserve regional biodiversity that is essential to community health and wellbeing.

O13-3 cont.

II. The County Should Adopt the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative.

The Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative would attempt to achieve the goals of "smart growth" through overlays and incentives that can be implemented quickly. The Center therefore supports this alternative as an achievable framework for the County to implement immediately for all future development. This moves the County toward reaching its GHG

O13-4

reduction goals and helps to protect future communities from the risk of wildfire. However, for this framework to be effective, **the county should amend the following policies:**

- **a.** *Policy LU-5.3 Rural Land Preservation*: The CAP should clearly identify and articulate specific methods that reflect the best available science and prioritize preservation of native habitats.
- **b.** *Policy LU-6.2 Reducing Development Pressures*: Remove passive language such as "consider" and include High in addition to Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- **c.** *Policy S-3.8 Discourage New Subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones*: increasing density in high fire locations should NEVER include the development of open space. Destruction of habitat for human development significantly increases a region's risk to wildfire. The Center supports the policy adopted by Los Angeles County in their Safety Element, which prohibits new subdivisions outside of existing communities in VHFHSZs, and discourages subdivisions in other FHSZs. Los Angeles County goes on to prohibit GPAs in all fire hazard areas unless within an existing community. The Center recommends such policies be included in the CAP.
- **d.** *Policy S-4.3 Forest Health*: Specific wildfire reduction methods should not be listed as "appropriate" unless supported by fire ecologists.

O13-4 cont.

III. Conclusion

Sprawl development increases the region's GHG emissions and significantly harms environmental and public health. Therefore, the Center requests that the County commit to sustainable land-use practices through adoption and implementation of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative and amendment of the CAP policies to be in alignment with said alternative.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Reid-Wainscoat
Campaigner, Urban Wildlands Program
Center for Biological Diversity

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Letter O13 Center for Biological Diversity

Elizabeth Reid-Wainscoat, Urban Wildlands Campaigner
January 5, 2024

Comment O13-1
The comment is an introductory statement and provides links to references cited in the comment letter.

Response O13-1
The County has received and considered the comments and reference documents provided. The comment does not raise significant environmental issues related to the Draft SEIR, and no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a). Responses to specific comments are provided below.

Comment O13-2
The comment expresses support for the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, recommending that the County make a stronger commitment to sustainable land use practices through implementation of this alternative, and provides background information about the Center for Biological Diversity.

Response O13-2
The commenter's recommendation that the County implement the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is noted. This suggestion will be presented to the Board, which has the discretion to direct implementation of the suggested alternative.

Comment O13-3
The comment states that the County must center sustainable land use as a central component of the CAP Update and provides a summary of the negative implications of sprawl development as it relates to GHG emissions.

Response O13-3
The information provided regarding the relationship of sprawl development to GHG emissions, wildfire risk, and carbon sequestration is noted. The CAP Update does not prescribe land use changes in the unincorporated county. Rather, such prescriptions are left to the General Plan. Refer to Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for more information regarding the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan. Refer also to Section 5.5, "Smart Growth Alternatives," of the Draft SEIR and Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," above, which provides a discussion of the selection and evaluation of the smart growth alternatives, including the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative.

Comment O13-4
The comment supports adoption of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative and asserts that four General Plan policies included as part of the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative should be amended and included for the framework in the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative to be effective.

Response O13-4

The comment's support for the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is noted and will be provided to decision-makers for consideration. Importantly, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is feasible and could be implemented independent from any of the goal and policy edits provided in the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative. Furthermore, these edits would be made to the County's 2011 General Plan and would not be included in the CAP.

As explained on page 5-31 of the Draft EIR:

> In addition to, or in lieu of, any of the alternatives described above, County staff have identified potential amendments to General Plan goals and policies from the Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, Mobility, and Safety Elements of the adopted General Plan that would further enhance the smart growth principles described above and embodied in the General Plan. The Board may choose some or all of these additional policy amendments and pair them with the proposed CAP Update or an alternative.

The County acknowledges the refinements to the potential amendments to Policies LU-5.3, LU-6.2, S-3.8, and S-4.3 that are provided in the comment. Adoption of any part of the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative, as presented in the Draft SEIR or as subsequently revised, is a question of County policy. These suggestions will be presented to the Board, which has the discretion to direct implementation of the suggested refinements as part of the alternative.

CleanEarth4Kids.org



January 5, 2024

RE: Climate Action Plan Response

CleanEarth4Kids.org thanks the County of San Diego staff for their important work on the Climate Action Plan (CAP).

Implementing a strong and comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CAP) will help protect children's health and future, public health, and our birds, wildlife, ecosystems and environment. A strong comprehensive Climate Action Plan will help reduce air, water and land pollution, ensure a healthier and more sustainable future and help protect us from the impacts of climate change.

We ask the County to make the CAP a free-standing document that can be quickly implemented, clearly enforced and closely tied to the General Plan. The CAP plays a vital role in the future of San Diego and must be central to County decision-making. The proposed CAP is goal-oriented and requires legislation and actions to be implemented. Simple adjustments in the proposed CAP must be made.

Additionally, CleanEarth4Kids.org asks the County of San Diego to provide an analysis of the proposed greenhouse gases (GHG) reduction plans with detailed action metrics, targets and dates. including the measurement methodology to be used.

O14-1

Please Implement 16 CAP Recommendations

1. Climate-Safe Investments
2. 100% Building Electrification for New Construction with No Exceptions
3. Clean, Renewable Energy
4. Electrify/Renovate Existing Buildings
5. Solar, EV Charging Stations, Microgrids and Virtual Power Plants (VPP)
6. Community and Environmental Dashboard
7. Add a Clean Air Section to the CAP
    a. Ban Leaf Blowers
    b. No Idling
    c. Stop Wood Burning
    d. Stop Smoking
    e. Stop Leaded Aviation Gas (AVGAS)
8. Protect and Conserve Water
9. Transportation
10. No False Solutions
11. Stop Toxic Synthetic Pesticides
12. Community Gardens

O14-2

1

13. Create Pocket Forests
14. Protect Natural Habitats, Wetlands, Lagoons and Waterways
15. Ban Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf
16. Zero Waste and Ban Single-Use Plastics

O14-2 cont.

1. Climate-Safe Investments

- Divest any investments, bank accounts, etc. that support fossil fuels. Only invest in funds, stocks, bonds, etc. that guarantee they will not invest in fossil fuels.
- Include eco-friendly choices for employee retirement fund investment options.
- Use an eco-friendly bank, preferably a B-Corp, for all County cash accounts. Do NOT support banks that invest in fossil fuel projects.
- Provide informational sessions and support for builders and property owners to obtain grants and other funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements. For example, work with eco-friendly banks to provide Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loans and financing.

O14-3

2. 100% Building Electrification for New Construction with No Exceptions

The County must prioritize building electrification with high-efficiency appliances and insulation to move away from fossil fuels and improve air quality to protect health and the environment. Over60 cities in California have already passed electrification ordinances and others are underway[1].

(Natural gas is a marketing term for methane, a hazardous indoor air pollutant and a major contributor to climate change[2,3]. The use of gas stoves in the home increases the risk of asthma and other respiratory diseases[4]. And gas stoves leak methane even when turned off.[5] We must completely end the use of "natural gas".)

O14-4

Building electrification is an important action that will encourage green buildings, reduce carbon emissions and air pollution, and help protect the health of children and future generations, clean air and water, birds, fish, wildlife, ecosystems and the environment.

Burning methane creates outdoor and indoor air pollution. Around3% of greenhouse gases (GHGs)in San Diego County come from the burning of methane[6]. Studies of human exposure to air pollutants show that "indoor levels of pollutants

[1] https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/del-mar-to-consider-building-electrification-ordinance
[2] https://www.vox.com/2022/1/27/22902490/gas-stoves-methane-climate-pollution-health-off
[3] http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/documents/Howarth_2021_Methane_and_Climate.pdf
[4] https://www.sciencetimes.com/gas-stoves-making-people-sicker-exposing-children-higher-risk-asthma.htm
[5] https://news.stanford.edu/2022/01/27/rethinking-cooking-gas/
[6] https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/GreenhouseGasEmissionsInventoryProjectionsandReductionTarget.pdf

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may be two to five times, and occasionally more than 100 times, higher than outdoor levels," and a major source of indoor air pollution is gas stoves[7]. Here is a link to our *Dangers of Natural Gas* video.[8]

Please go to our Team 3: Clean Air Saves Lives page for more information.[9]

O14-4 cont.

3. Clean, Renewable Energy

The CAP needs more details on the stated goal of 100% clean energy by 2030. There must be a clear roadmap with metrics and dates and we ask the County to move the goal of 100% renewable energy to 2025, not 2030.

Please go to our Team 1: Renewable Energy page for more information.[10]

4. Electrify/Renovate Existing Buildings

With residential power as the 2nd largest GHG in San Diego County, the CAP must provide incentives and subsidies to encourage owners of existing buildings to electrify.[11] The County must provide funding and assistance for owners and contractors to obtain state and federal grants to replace gas equipment as quickly as possible: installing electric heat pumps, water heaters, induction cooktops, etc., while providing energy efficiency improvements like insulated windows and LED lighting.

O14-5

We ask the CAP to include all properties owned by the County, including leased, in the plans for zero emissions. We also ask all county housing policies, funding, contracts and leases to require all-electric buildings.

The CAP must also provide incentives to reduce embedded carbon in construction including the use of EV vehicles for construction projects.[12]

5. Solar, EV Charging Stations, Microgrids and Virtual Power Plants (VPP)

To maximize clean, local energy generation and grid reliability, please coordinate with San Diego Community Power (SDCP) to install solar panels and wind turbines on all county-owned parking lots and buildings and please integrate microgrids and VPP into the power grid.

Also, please greatly increase EV charging stations, especially for multi-unit housing. Also, please engage and help school districts find and implement grants to add EV charging stations and solar for all school buildings and parking lots.

Help locate grants and work with each city and school district so that buildings can

[7] https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/why-indoor-air-quality-important-schools
[8] https://vimeo.com/704755689
[9] https://cleanearth4kids.org/clean-air#gas
[10] https://cleanearth4kids.org/renewable-energy
[11] https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/regional-decarbonization/rdfsummary.html
[12] https://rmi.org/embodied-carbon-101/

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provide local power generation, and fault tolerance, and serve as a Resilience Center in case of fire, earthquake or heat wave.

The CAP must incentivize local, clean energy.
This is possible by giving incentives to property owners and builders to install the necessary infrastructure for microgrids for apartment buildings, multiunit housing and subsidized housing for renters throughout the county.

The County has to lead by upgrading all County facilities to be all-electric and use 100% clean/renewable energy including converting all County vehicles to electric. Timelines and metrics must be provided in the CAP.

O14-5 cont.

6. Community and Environmental Dashboard

Create a Climate & Environmental Dashboard accessible on the first page of the County website and in libraries, schools and businesses throughout San Diego to increase citizen awareness, knowledge, and participation on issues such as air pollution, any pesticides that are being used throughout San Diego, energy utilization, etc. We look forward to meeting with you to show you examples. Resources like ClimateTrace.org can be used to identify major emitters of GHG in the County and publicize who they are on the dashboard.

O14-6

7. Add a Clean Air Section to the CAP, like the City of San Diego

The burning of fossil fuels does much more than just release GHGs. It also dumps toxic air pollution that harms everyone's health and the environment. We ask the County to include a Clean Air section in the CAP like the City of San Diego with clean air goals and yearly targets to reduce air pollution.[13]

- Take Climate Action and Protect Our Air: Stop Burning Fossil Fuels

O14-7

Air pollution from fossil fuels and petrochemicals has a significant detrimental impact on human health,[14] particularly on the brain and the cognitive abilities of children.[15] Exposure to ambient air pollutants like PM2.5, NO2 and ozone and heavy metals like lead, arsenic and mercury have been associated with lower academic performance,[16] attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms,[17] behavioral problems and autism spectrum disorders in children.[18] Air pollution increases the risk of neurological disorders and accelerated cognitive decline in children by causing neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration.[19] These pollutants have also been associated with several other indicators of poor health, including

[13] https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/san_diegos_2022_climate_action_plan_0.pdf
[14] https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/air-pollution/index.cfm
[15] https://journals.lww.com/The_Relationship_Between_Air_Pollution_and_1.aspx?context=LatestArticles
[16] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8663889/
[17] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30909100/
[18] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dmcn.14758
[19] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0278262608001747

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asthma and infant mortality.[20] Recent findings indicate that air pollution is linked to cognitive impairment through various biological processes, such as oxidative stress and inflammation, endocrine disruption, epigenetic modifications, and changes in brain structure.[21] Exposure to fine particulate matter is correlated with reduced cortical thickness and thinner gray matter,[22] which may impact learning, memory, and information processing.[23]

Also causing significant harm to the brain, lowering cognitive abilities and reading and math scores are heavy metals including mercury, lead, manganese, and their compounds, and petrochemicals such as isoamyl alcohol, methanol, xylene, toluene, styrene, *n*-hexane, and ethylbenzene.[24]

- Fossil Fuel Air Pollution Harms Public Health

Fossil fuel combustion is a leading cause of deadly PM2.5 exposure.[25] Extended exposure to PM2.5 is responsible for 62% of all deaths from air pollution in 2019.[26] PM 2.5 is especially deadly[27] because its small size allows it to enter deep into the lungs and pass into the bloodstream,[28] making it a significant contributor to cardiovascular disease and mortality.[29] PM2.5 also increases heart disease, lung cancer, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), lower-respiratory infections, pneumonia, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and other serious conditions including gastrointestinal illness.[30,31] People with tuberculosis exposed to PM2.5 had increased replication of the disease.[32] PM2.5 impacts our most vulnerable populations, including minorities,[33] the elderly,[34] pregnant women[35] and children.[36] Increased Particulate Matter reduced the health-related quality of life among the elderly, increasing pain and discomfort, anxiety, and depression.[37]

Childhood exposure to PM2.5 is linked to asthma,[38] which is the leading cause of school absences[39] and the third leading cause of hospitalizations among children

O14-7 cont.

[20] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2727943/
[21] https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.add0285
[22] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6132565/
[23] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6908886/
[24] https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.add0285
[25] https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-021-23853-y
[26] https://www.stateofglobalair.org/health/pm#major-impacts
[27] https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm
[28] https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/JAHA.120.016890
[29] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/what-makes-air-unhealthy/particle-pollution
[30] https://www.stateofglobalair.org/health/pm
[31] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002063
[32] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935123004875
[33] https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/racial-ethnic-minorities-low-income-groups-u-s-air-pollution/
[34] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002944
[35] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935122003930
[36] https://parentingscience.com/the-effects-of-air-pollution-on-children
[37] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0147651323002944
[38] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412022002240
[39] https://aafa.org/asthma/asthma-facts

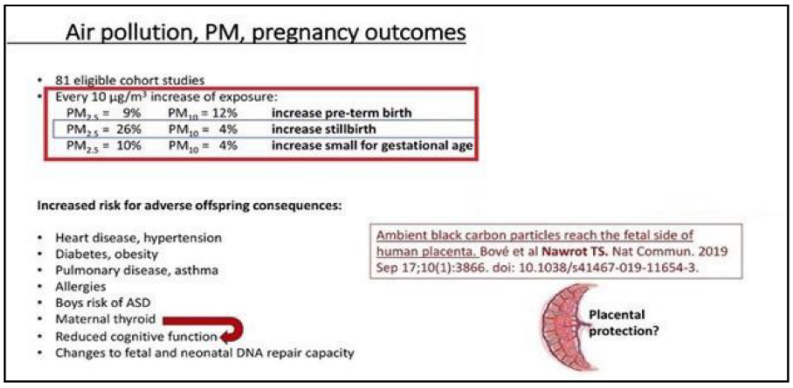
under 15.[40] Poor air quality increases the likelihood of asthma attacks, breathing difficulty,[41] increased emergency room visits,[42] and hospitalization.[43] Air pollution can also inflame the brain, central nervous system, and hearts in children.[44,45]

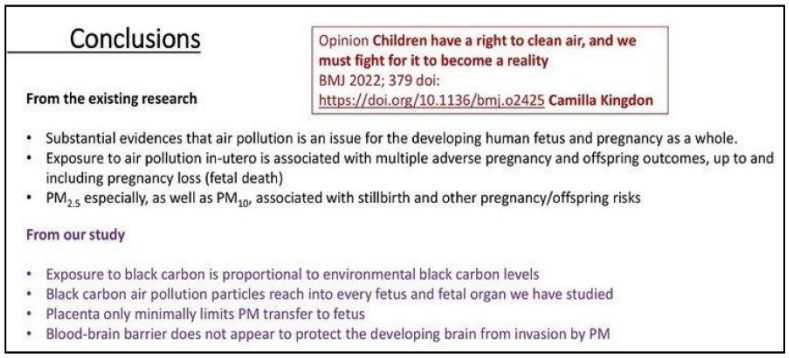
The health effects of air pollution start before a child is even born.[46] Pollutants can harm a fetus's brain, liver, lungs, and other organs because pollutants can travel to the tissues and organs of fetuses after being inhaled by pregnant women.[47,48] For example, black carbon[49] can enter the placenta, circulation system, and the organs[50] of the fetus via the mother's blood, which can affect the fetus's liver, lungs, and brain.[51] Exposure to air pollution during pregnancy and infancy[52] is linked to increased rates of stillbirth,[53] preterm birth,[54] low birth weight,[55] SIDS[56] (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and decreased development of the brain, among other serious long-term effects.[57] Exposure to air pollution, even at relatively low levels during pregnancy and childhood significantly harms children's health.[58]

O14-7 cont.

Below are two slides from Dr. Paul Fowler's extensive research and informative webinar[59] and presentation showing a 26% increase in stillbirths when air pollution is increased by 10 µg/m3.[60] The harm done by air pollution to unborn babies is clear.[61] We must reduce air pollution to protect children's health, development, growth, learning, communication abilities, and future.

[40] https://www.epa.gov/children/childrens-environmental-health-facts
[41] https://resphealth.org/clean-air/understanding-air-pollution/
[42] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2801735?resultClick=3
[43] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6546668/
[44] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7352229
[45] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35921508
[46] https://www.jpedhc.org/article/S0891-5245(21)00189-9/fulltext
[47] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/05/toxic-air-pollution-particles-found-in-lungs
[48] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32556259
[49] https://www.livescience.com/black-carbon-reaches-placenta.html
[50] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36719212/
[51] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(22)00200-5/fulltext
[52] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2767260
[53] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0269749121003328
[54] https://med.nyu.edu/pediatrics/divisions/environmental-pediatrics/air-pollution-preterm-births
[55] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22726801/
[56] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0045653520337139
[57] https://www.washington.edu/news/uw-link-between-air-pollution-and-child-brain-development/
[58] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/children-and-air-pollution
[59] https://youtu.be/40Ga9_StJO0
[60] https://www.healthandenvironment.org/assets/images/CHE%20Jan%202023%20Fowler.pdf
[61] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36208643/





O14-7 cont.

- Air Pollution is A Racial, Social, Environmental, and Climate Justice Issue

Air pollution from the burning of fossil fuels harms people of color disproportionately.[62] Due to Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) factors, Black and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by air pollution in the United States.[63] Annually, fossil fuel industries in the US release about 9 million tons of methane gas and other toxic chemicals into the atmosphere.[64] Black and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by air pollution in the United States.[65] Exposure to poor air quality can cause numerous health problems such as emphysema and asthma[66]. Increased rates of asthma can lead to significant health disparities and reduced quality of life.[67] Approximately 13.4% of Black children suffer from asthma as compared to only 7.3% of White children.[53]

[62] https://psci.princeton.edu/tips/2020/8/15/racial-disparities-and-climate-change
[63] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/disparities
[64] https://psci.princeton.edu/tips/2020/8/15/racial-disparities-and-climate-change
[65] https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/disparities
[66] https://www.catf.us/2017/11/study-african-american-health-impacts-oil-gas-pollution/
[67] https://aafa.org/asthma-allergy-research/our-research/asthma-disparities-burden-on-minorities/

7

In total, African Americans are 75% more likely than White people to live in "fence-line" communities (areas near commercial facilities that produce noise, odor, traffic, or emissions that directly affect the population).[67]

Please go to our Team 3: Clean Air Saves Lives page for more information.[68]

O14-7 cont.

7a. Ban Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers

Most gas-powered leaf blowers are 2-stroke engines that burn a mix of oil and gas. These engines not only put out a massive amount of pollution, but they also do not have a filter. The pollutants[69] from a single gas-powered leaf-blower are 300x more than a pickup truck with gas-powered lawn equipment using an estimated 800 million gallons of gasoline. This contributes to more air pollution in our air, and damaging ozone as these nitrous oxides contribute to the damage that occurs.

With and without a filter, the dangers of gas-powered leaf blowers are immense. Gas-powered leaf-blowers emit carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides, hydrocarbons and other pollutants[70] such as formaldehyde, benzine, fine particulate matter, and smog-forming chemicals. These pollutants are known to cause diseases that affect the heart and lungs, as well as cancer, dementia, and headaches[71]. The health effects[72] linked to gas-powered leaf blowers are asthma, cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, respiratory disease, and central nervous system disorders.

O14-8

Please go to the stop leaf blower section on our Team 3: Clean Air Saves Lives page for more information.[73]

7b. No Idling

Car exhaust is full of toxic chemicals like benzene and carbon monoxide. 1 minute of idling puts more carbon monoxide into the air than smoking 3 packs of cigarettes.[74] Please take action to reduce idling by parked vehicles, including purchasing only zero-emission vehicles for the city fleet. Idling burns over 3.8 million gallons of fuel every day in the US, adding 30 million tons of CO2 to the atmosphere![75] Link for more information on idling.[76]

The CAP must adopt a no-idling policy along with requiring the electrification of loading docks and other facilities and eliminate vehicle idling. Also provide education through signs, social media and radio to bring awareness. CleanEarth4Kids.org has No Idling signs with children's art available.

[68] https://cleanearth4kids.org/clean-air#gas
[69] https://sustainability.wustl.edu/rethinking-lawn-equipment-2/
[70] https://sustainability.wustl.edu/rethinking-lawn-equipment-2/
[71] https://www.quietcleanpdx.org/leaf-blowers-dangers-pollution/
[72] https://www.quietcleandc.com/two-stroke-engine-public-health-issues
[73] https://cleanearth4kids.org/clean-air#leaf
[74] http://enginesoff.com/pdfs/CASEO-Background-Report.pdf
[75] https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/idling_personal_vehicles.pdf
[76] https://cleanearth4kids.org/stop-idling

8

Please go to our Team 3: No Idling page for more information.[77]

7c. Stop Wood Burning

Burning wood emits carbon, along with toxic chemicals, lead and heavy metals. We ask the County of San Diego to take action to stop wood smoke. Please see our 6-minute video, created by Judith, on our Youth Board CleanEarth4Kids.org Stop Wood Smoke video created by our youth.

a. Work with the SD APCD (San Diego Air Pollution Control District) and surrounding cities to stop wood-burning fireplaces and stoves in new construction and renovations like the City of London.[78]
b. Implement programs and incentives to remove (not replace!) existing wood-burning fireplaces and stoves.
c. Work with SD APCD and all city, county, and state governments and agencies to stop recreational wood fires on all public lands like beaches and parks to protect clean air and our health.
d. Fund radio, print, TV and social media ads about the harms of wood smoke. Please promote the CleanEarth4Kids.org Stop Wood Smoke video created by our youth.[79]

O14-8 cont.

Wood smoke is a complex mixture of gases and fine particles, called particulate matter. PM2.5 is especially dangerous. These particles are 2.5 microns or smaller. By comparison, the average human hair is 50 microns wide. Researchers estimate that PM2.5 is responsible for almost 48,000 premature deaths in the US every year.[80] Particulate matter irritates the lungs and increases the risk of serious health outcomes including asthma, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and brain conditions like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and dementia.[81] Wood smoke also contains cancer-causing pollutants like benzene, formaldehyde, acrolein and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons or PAHs, along with carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and methane.[82] Burning 10 lbs. of wood in 1 hour creates the same cancer-causing PAHs as 6,000 packs of cigarettes.[83] That's like smoking a pack of cigarettes a day for 16 years…just by sitting next to a wood fire. Here is a link for information about wood smoke.[84] You can also contact Doctors & Scientists Against Wood Smoke Pollution.[85]

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SD APCD) 2021 Annual Air Quality Report and 2022 Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) show residential combustion

[77] https://cleanearth4kids.org/stop-idling
[78] https://www.theguardian.com/2023/feb/08/wood-burners-in-effect-banned-new-refurbished-homes-london
[79] https://vimeo.com/762477620
[80] https://www.lung.org/research/sota/health-risks
[81] https://woodsmokepollution.org/references.html
[82] https://www.verywellhealth.com/the-health-hazards-of-wood-burning-stoves-914956
[83] https://www.times-standard.com/2017/08/05/burning-firewood-is-an-airborne-public-health-hazard
[84] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-3-no-wood-smoke
[85] https://woodsmokepollution.org/index.html

(wood burning) is tied with construction as the main source of $PM_{2.5}$.[86,87] These reports show wood burning dumps almost 3.5 TONS of particulate matter into San Diego County air EVERY DAY. Data from the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) shows households with higher incomes are more likely to burn wood.[88] Wood burning is being done for recreation, not need.

Please see our CleanEarth4Kids.org Team 3: No Wood Smoke page for more information.[89]

7d. Stop Smoking

Ban public smoking like the City of Encinitas and others. Second and thirdhand smoke is toxic and emits lead.[90,91] Fund radio, print, TV and social media ads about the harms of second and thirdhand smoke. Also, ban smoking in multi-family housing.[92]

Please go to our Team 3: Smoking and Vaping Harms Your Health page for more information.[93]

O14-8 cont.

7e. Stop Leaded Aviation Gas (AVGAS)

CleanEarth4Kids.org asks the County of San Diego to stop the sale, use and storage of leaded aviation fuel at all County airports and work with local cities to do the same.

There is NO safe level of lead!

- Lead is Toxic

The WHO (World Health Organization),[94] CDC (Centers for Disease Control)[95] and the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics)[96] have all stated there is no safe level of lead, a toxic heavy metal.[97] Its adverse effects are particularly severe for children and unborn babies as it damages their brains and nervous systems.[98]

Exposure to lead lowers IQ and causes behavior problems, learning disabilities, and impaired impulse control.[99] Children's exposure to lead is linked to higher rates of

[86] https://www.sdapcd.org/content/dam/sdapcd/documents/community/annual-air-quality-reports
[87] https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/1814058/Item_E2_AttA_2022_RAQS.pdf
[88] https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=15431
[89] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-3-no-wood-smoke
[90] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040625/
[91] https://thirdhandsmoke.org/thirdhand-smoke-may-bring-lead-into-homes/
[92] https://cleanearth4kids.org/nosmoking#sample
[93] https://cleanearth4kids.org/nosmoking
[94] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health
[95] https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/faqs/lead-faqs.htm
[96] https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/lead-exposure/Pages/default.aspx
[97] https://www.osha.gov/toxic-metals
[98] https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/health-effects.htm
[99] https://www.luc.edu/healthyhomes/leadsafeillinois/leadfacts/rippleeffectsofchildhoodleadpoisoning/

suspension and detention along with lower reading and math test scores.[100,101] Childhood exposure to lead is also linked to higher crime rates.[102] According to the CDC, people with prolonged exposure to lead are at higher risk of high blood pressure, heart and kidney disease, and various forms of cancer.[103]

Most health impacts from lead exposure are lifelong and irreversible.[104] Lead exposure is also hazardous to adults, with 18% of all deaths in the US linked to lead exposure and is a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease.[105,106] Lead is the number one reason for fatal heart attacks in the US.[107]

- The Harm of Leaded Aviation Fuel on Communities

The EPA has issued its public endangerment finding on lead emissions from aircraft, stating it will "cause or contribute to lead air pollution."[108]

The impact of lead pollution is especially damaging to children living close to these airports as they are very likely to have significantly higher levels of lead in their blood.[109] In the US, over 5 million people, including over 360,000 children under the age of 5, live near at least one lead-emitting airport and face a severe risk of lead poisoning.[110] Communities of color are most likely to be close to these sources of lead, resulting in higher blood levels on average than white children.[111]

In the County of Santa Clara, children living within half a mile of their airport had lead levels nearly twice that of kids in Flint, Michigan at the height of their lead crisis.[112,113] Recognizing the danger, the County of Santa Clara has stopped the sale and storage of leaded fuel at their airport which has already significantly reduced lead emissions.[114]

- Stopping Leaded Aviation Fuel

Leaded aviation fuel is used by some piston-engine planes and helicopters in general aviation. According to the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration), an estimated 170,000 aircraft operating from over 20,000 airports across the US use leaded aviation fuel (AVGAS).[115] These aircraft are responsible for almost 70% of airborne

O14-8 cont.

[100] https://www.nber.org/papers/w23392
[101] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4387706/
[102] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0166046222000667
[103] https://columbiainsight.org/dealing-with-washingtons-legacy-of-pesticides/
[104] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health
[105] https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/15/17107924/lead-health-adults-heart-problems
[106] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30025-2/fulltext
[107] https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/15/17107924/lead-health-adults-heart-problems
[108] https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-10/420f23022_0.pdf
[109] https://news.sccgov.org/news-release/study-commissioned-county-santa-clara-finds-increased-lead-levels
[110] http://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P100YG4A.PDF?Dockey=P100YG4A.PDF
[111] https://news.sccgov.org/county-santa-clara-finds-increased-lead-levels-children-living-near
[112] https://news.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb956/files/documents/RHV-Airborne-Lead-Study-Report.pdf
[113] https://www.nrdc.org/stories/flint-water-crisis-everything-you-need-know#summary
[114] https://countyairports.sccgov.org/pilots/aviation-fuel
[115] http://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsId=14754

lead pollution, putting out around 500 tons of lead each year, and are the largest source of lead in US air.[116]

Unleaded fuel is now available. The sale and use of leaded aviation fuel must stop!

Please see our Team 5: #GetTheLeadOut page for more information.[117]

O14-8 cont.

8. Protect and Conserve Water

Set water use reduction goals and develop policies, guidelines and education programs to replace ornamental grass and other landscaping with native plants while transitioning to gray water reuse. The CAP must require greywater systems and stormwater capture and conservation for new residential and commercial construction.

Create bioretention swales in medians and other areas like Los Angeles to serve as micro-reservoirs for landscaping while filtering stormwater runoff.[118,119]

Establish other rainwater capture and storage infrastructure throughout the County including capture barrels at every residential property.

Under California law, water is a basic human right. San Diego must take action to end water shutoffs and subsidize access to water for lower-income residents.

Please see our Team 4: Water Is Life page for more information.[120]

O14-9

9. Transportation

The CAP must identify methods to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by encouraging the use of public and active transportation.

The County's Active Transportation Plan must:

- Collaborate with SANDAG to support and implement the Five Big Moves.[121]
- Develop plans to extensively expand bike lanes and sidewalks throughout the County, create car-free areas and implement electric shuttles in high-traffic areas.
- Construct pedestrian overpasses and other safe pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure.
- Provide free mass transit passes to students, seniors and residents of disadvantaged communities.

O14-10

[116] https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2022/epa-proposes-endangerment-finding-of-leaded-aviation-gasoline
[117] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-5-get-the-lead-out
[118] https://nacto.org/urban-street-stormwater-guide/green-stormwater-elements/bioretention-swale/
[119] https://dpw.lacounty.gov/WMD/STWQ/EastLA.aspx
[120] https://cleanearth4kids.org/clean-water
[121] https://www.sandag.org/regional-plan/5-big-moves

- Create a transportation stipend program for all County employees while charging for parking.
- Establish practical and user-friendly public transportation in the unincorporated areas for semi-rural and rural communities.
- Provide education and campaigns to encourage walking, biking, and taking public transit.

O14-10 cont.

Please see our Team 3: Transportation page for more information.[122]

10. No False Solutions

The CAP must clearly state the County of San Diego will not use or invest in false climate solutions like synthetic carbon capture (CCS, CCUS), dirty hydrogen, methane or biomass/biofuels. These types of greenwashed "solutions" only delay real climate action.

O14-11

Please see our Team 1: No False Climate Solutions page for more information.[123]

11. Stop Toxic Synthetic Pesticides

We ask the County of San Diego to create and implement education programs and assistance to help farmers transition to climate-resilient farms, stopping the use of synthetic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

99% of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers come from fossil fuels and the continued use of these petrochemicals is a direct threat to the climate and our world.[124]

Healthy soil is important for sequestering carbon.[125] But pesticides destroy the microbes that make healthy soil.

O14-12

By promoting sustainable farming practices that prioritize soil health, the City of Oceanside will contribute to the protection of human health, clean air, and water which will protect pollinators, and wildlife, preserve biodiversity and enhance our environment and climate.

- Pesticides Are Toxic

Pesticides are known to increase children's cancer risk and 95% of pesticides used miss their target.[126,127] There is a massive amount of scientific studies showing the damage done by the use of synthetic pesticides to the environment and human

[122] https://cleanearth4kids.org/transportation
[123] https://cleanearth4kids.org/false-climate-solutions
[124] https://www.ciel.org/reports/fossil-fertilizers/
[125] https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/healthysoils/
[126] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1438463919306212?via%3Dihub
[127] https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/pesticide-drift/

13

health.[128] Pesticides are poison, they are designed to kill. That is their purpose.

California studies show 13 agricultural pesticides elevated children's cancer up to 2.5 miles away from the application sites.[129] Only 5 are classified as Restricted Use by the EPA.[130] But 11 of the 13 are banned or not approved in other countries with 10 of them banned in at least 28 countries. The US uses toxic pesticides banned in many other countries.[131] The US only bans 21 pesticides while China bans 54 and the EU bans 195. (For a list of pesticides banned in other countries, please click here.)[132] Legal does not mean safe!

The proximity to agricultural pesticides is critical because pesticides can drift miles, harming children and families living near agricultural fields.[133,134] Pesticide drift settles on playgrounds, porches, laundry, toys, pools, furniture, gardens, and lawns where people and children live, learn, and play.[135] This exposes people, pollinators, and wildlife to danger from what they touch, breathe, and eat.

These toxic pesticides also contaminate our water. The National Water Quality Assessment (NWQA) shows agricultural runoff as the main cause of pollution in rivers and streams.[136,137] As pesticides travel through soil and bedrock cracks, they contaminate groundwater systems which provide 70% of the water used for public and private water supplies, irrigation, and industry.[138] Aquatic organisms also absorb pesticides through their skin, breathing, and mouths.[139] Long-term exposure has many negative consequences for aquatic life, such as mortality, reproductive failure, eggshell thinning, suppression of the immune system, and other fish health complications such as excessive slime on fish scales and gills, cancers, tumors and lesions.[140]

For more information on toxic pesticides, please see our Team 5: Stop Toxic Pesticides page.[141]

O14-12 cont.

- Organic, Regenerative Farming, Permaculture and Agroecology

Organic and regenerative farming practices do not use synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or GMOs. Methods such as cover crops, manure, crop rotation, and natural pest controls like neem oil are used to repel pests and maintain soil health

[128] https://www.dw.com/en/pesticide-atlas-2022
[129] https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/2021/04/05/childhood-brain-tumors-linked-to-mothers-exposure-to-pesticides/
[130] https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-11/RUP-Report-10-31-2022.pdf
[131] https://biologicaldiversity.org/united-states-uses-85-pesticides-outlawed-in-other-countries-2019-06-06/
[132] https://pan-international.org/pan-international-consolidated-list-of-banned-pesticides/
[133] https://europepmc.org/article/AGR/IND20460440
[134] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11097803/
[135] https://www.epa.gov/reducing-pesticide-drift/introduction-pesticide-drift
[136] https://www.usgs.gov/mission-areas/water-resources/science/national-water-quality-assessment-nawqa
[137] https://www.epa.gov/nps/nonpoint-source-agriculture
[138] https://www.uky.edu/Ag/Entomology/PSEP/6environment.html
[139] https://biointerfaceresearch.com.pdf
[140] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2215153222001003
[141] https://cleanearth4kids.org/stop-pesticides

which is a natural carbon sink.[142,143] They focus on biodiversity, reduced tilling and planting a wide variety of crops to better close the carbon cycle.[144]

Permaculture and agroecology work with nature instead of against it, combining landscapes, plants, animals, and humans in a symbiotic relationship.[145][146]

Please see our Team 5: Regenerative Farming, Permaculture, Agroecology, Organics & Healthy Soil page for more information.[147]

O14-12 cont.

12. Community Gardens

Please create an expansive community garden program that will decrease heat islands, and increase carbon sequestration while reducing food insecurity.

13. Create Pocket Forests

Identify small areas of 6 parking spaces or more and small vacant land areas for pocket forests. Engage with school districts throughout the county to plant a pocket forest on each school's grounds.

Pocket forests are small areas of native trees and plants that restore nature to the urban environment.[148] This method was adopted by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawake, the creator of Tiny Forests.[149] The Miyawake method emulates an area's native ecosystem through a dense-planting method of only native species.[150]

These pockets forests provide vital habitats for native wildlife, attract important pollinators, provide an equitable urban landscape;[151] improve water infiltration of the soil, decrease stormwater runoff, protect against erosion,[152] provide educational opportunities to the community and absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide.[153]

O14-13

14. Protect Natural Habitat, Wetlands, Lagoons and Waterways

The CAP must support the establishment of local natural habitat lands for GHG sequestration and to conserve biodiversity. CleanEarth4Kids.org supports the Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework and asks the regional Multiple Species Conservation Plans (MSCP) to be incorporated into the CAP.

[142] https://www.sare.org/resources/transitioning-to-organic-production/#:~:text=More%
[143] https://regenerationinternational.org/2017/02/24/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/
[144] https://regenerationinternational.org/2017/02/24/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/
[145] https://www.nomos.net/post/what-is-permaculture-farming-a-simplified-guide
[146] https://www.agroecologyfund.org/what-is-agroecology
[147] https://cleanearth4kids.org/farming-regenerative
[148] https://www.americanforests.org/article/picking-pocket-forests/
[149] https://www.pocketforests.ie/new-page
[150] https://us.iahv.org/portfolio/greenpocketforests/
[151] https://a25.asmdc.org/20221206-assemblymember-kalra-introduces-bill-promote-urban-greening
[152] https://www.americanforests.org/article/picking-pocket-forests/
[153] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/tiny-urban-forests-miyawaki-biodiversity-carbon-capture/

The CAP must address blue carbon storage by planting kelp and other seagrasses to sequester carbon while protecting coastal areas from pollution and sea level rise. Identify ecologically sound methods to protect beaches, cliffs, coastal roads and the LOSSAN train corridor from erosion.

O14-13 cont.

15. Ban Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf

CleanEarth4Kids.org asks the County of San Diego to ban all installations of artificial grass/synthetic turf. With the signing of SB 676 by Governor Newsom on October 8th, you have the authority to stop the use of this toxic plastic carpet.[154] The City of Millbrae has already banned it.[155]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Plastic Pollution

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is plastic, made from resins like polyethylene and nylon. PFAS are used in the extrusion of plastic yarn for the "grass" blades.[156] No synthetic grass/artificial turf manufacturer can state they are free of PFAS. PFAS, PAHS, lead, and other toxic chemicals have been found in synthetic grass/artificial turf.[157]

O14-14

The installation and use of synthetic grass/artificial turf is the intentional installation and use of microplastics[158] which does serious harm to the environment[159] and human health.[160] Recent research[161] has found microplastics in placentas, infant feces, breastmilk, and even infant formula. Other studies have shown microplastics changing lung and liver cells.[162] Microplastics were banned in United States cosmetics[163] in 2015, but the ban on microplastics should apply to all areas of life to reduce these health risks.

Plastics don't break down in the environment, simply breaking down into microplastics. Wildlife can mistake microplastics for food and marine animals have been found to consume microplastics accidentally.[164] Microplastics attract and carry pollutants in the water and also release toxic chemicals.[165,166] Lab studies have shown that microplastics may impact the developmental stages of animals, causing reproductive issues and their ability to fight disease.[167] Furthermore, since humans

[154] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB676
[155] https://www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/276/Prohibition-of-Artificial-Turf-Synthetic
[156] https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6434596-Kulikov2005.html
[157] https://theintercept.com/2019/10/08/pfas-chemicals-artificial-turf-soccer/
[158] https://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/good-environmental-status/descriptor-10/pdf/microplastics_
[159] https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/plastic-planet-how-tiny-plastic-particles-are-polluting-
[160] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/dec/08/microplastics-damage-human-cells-study-
[161] https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220921/Microplastics-detected-in-placentas-infant-feces-breast
[162] https://www.onegreenplanet.org/environment/microplastics-are-disrupting-metabolism-of-lung-and-liver
[163] https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetics-laws-regulations/microbead-free-waters-act-faqs
[164] https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/what-marine-debris/microplastics
[165] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7924819
[166] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42452-019-1352-0
[167] https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/ftox.2022.748912/full

consume fish and other marine animals, the impacts of microplastics are passed on to humans through the food chain.

The plastic life cycle is incredibly toxic. Research shows it causes premature birth, low birth weight, decreased fertility, asthma, childhood leukemia, lymphoma, brain cancer, breast cancer, mesothelioma, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, neuropathy, and lung cancer.[168]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf Hurts the Climate

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is plastic and plastic emits methane, a powerful greenhouse gas (GHG).[169] Plastics start as fossil fuels and emit greenhouse gasses in every stage of their lifecycle, from the extraction of oil/gas to the trash pile.[170] Plastics have a huge carbon imprint.[171] Research showed the emissions from plastics in 2019 were nearly 1.8 billion metric tons of greenhouse gasses, and that number is projected to continue growing.[172]

O14-14 cont.

Dr. Sarah-Jeanne Royer of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in California wrote a letter in opposition to synthetic grass/artificial turf, citing methane as a major concern.[173] Dr. Royer and her colleagues found that polyethylene, used to make synthetic turf/artificial grass, releases more methane than any other plastic.[174]

During the breakdown of polyethylene, the release of methane gas accelerates and the surface area of the plastic increases, reacting more with the sunlight and releasing more methane.[175] As synthetic grass/artificial turf is commonly made of polyethylene, these fields constantly release methane as it interacts with the sun and everyday use. Over a 20-year period, methane is 80x more potent at warming than carbon dioxide and is responsible for 25% of global warming.[176]

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Not Recycled

Replaced every 7-10 years, the average artificial grass/synthetic turf soccer field produces 40,000 lbs of plastic carpeting and 400,000 lbs of infill of waste.[177]

Used artificial grass/synthetic turf is not recycled. The plastic carpet and infill are often dumped or sent to landfills as there are no recycling facilities for synthetic turf

[168] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/plastics-cause-issues-from-cancer-to-birth-defects
[169] https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/synthetic-turf-will-contribute-greenhouse-gas-problems/
[170] https://www.ciel.org/reports/plastic-health-the-hidden-costs-of-a-plastic-planet-may-2019/
[171] https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/04/190415144004.htm
[172] https://www.oecd.org/environment/plastics/increased-plastic-leakage-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions.htm
[173] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O9NHwhVtY0ygHCcZDHhufkfcRdGFA35k/view
[174] https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-45043989
[175] https://www.surfrider.org/new-study-shows-plastic-as-source-of-greenhouse-gases-potentially-contribut
[176] https://ecology.wa.gov/Blog/Posts/February-2023/The-trash-climate-connection-what-you-need-to-know
[177] https://www.beyondplastics.org/fact-sheets/synthetic-turf

in the US.[178,179] Reuse is not recycling[180] and so-called "chemical recycling" is just greenwashing for incineration![181] Burning is not recycling!

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is HOT

Synthetic grass/artificial turf is 40°-70° hotter than surrounding air temperatures and has burned hands and feet![182] A study by Brigham Young found the surface temperature of synthetic grass/artificial turf was 37° higher than asphalt and 86.5° hotter than natural grass.[183] A study found that in 90° weather, the surface temperature of a natural grass field was about 98° while a synthetic grass/artificial turf field was over 160°.[184] Shoes have melted from the heat on synthetic grass/artificial turf with players and coaches getting blisters on the bottom of their feet through their shoes![185] First-degree burns occur at 118° with blistering and second-degree burns at 131°![186] Several synthetic grass/artificial turf fields in the Los Angeles Unified School District are currently closed due to high heat and melting surfaces.[187]

O14-14 cont.

- Synthetic Grass/Artificial Turf is Dangerous to Athletes

Playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf can cause more injuries. According to an NFL Players Association (NFLPA) study, playing and practicing on synthetic grass/artificial turf increases the chance of a lower extremity injury with a 69% higher rate of non-contact foot/ankle injuries than on natural grass![188] The NFLPA has called for all NFL fields to be natural grass![189]

A study of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) athletes found playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf greatly increased the chance of knee ligament injuries while another study of high school athletes found they were 58% more likely to sustain an injury playing on synthetic grass/artificial turf than natural grass![190,191]

The United States Men's Professional Soccer Team and other national teams only play on natural grass in the World Cup, and the United States Women's Soccer Team sued FIFA to not play on synthetic grass/artificial turf due to the increased risk of

[178] https://www.theatlantic.com/science/artificial-turf-fields-are-piling-no-recycling-fix/603874/
[179] https://www.msn.com/how-pennsylvania-became-a-dumping-ground-for-discarded-artificial-turf
[180] https://peer.org/artificial-turfs-big-lie-old-fields-not-recycled/
[181] https://www.nrdc.org/stories/chemical-recycling-isnt-actually-recycling
[182] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/heat-levels-synthetic-turf/
[183] https://aces.nmsu.edu/programs/turf/documents/brigham-young-study.pdf
[184] https://www.center4research.org/injuries-related-to-artificial-turf/
[185] https://ftw.usatoday.com/2015/08/its-so-hot-in-texas-turf-is-melting-cleats
[186] https://www.nist.gov/el/fire-research-division-73300/firegov-fire-service/fire-dynamics
[187] https://www.latimes.com/sports/highschool/story/2022-08-17/synthetic-l-a-unified-out-of-commission
[188] https://nflpa.com/posts/only-natural-grass-can-level-the-nfls-playing-field
[189] https://apnews.com/article/9b34d4402f2f82ae60708605f65aa560
[190] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30995074/
[191] https://www.uhhospitals.org/articles-and-news/articles/2019/08/artificial-turf-vs-natural-grass

injury.[192] Soccer legend Lionel Messi will only play on real grass.[193]

- Natural Grass is Best

We ask the County of San Diego to follow organic land management practices, especially for managing playing fields. Training is available online through the University of California, Riverside and other locations.[194] High-use, organically managed, natural grass fields have been in use in many areas including Irvine, CA.[195,196]

Natural grass is the healthiest choice for playing fields and parks.[197] Natural grass fields are more cost-effective than synthetic grass/artificial turf fields which have higher maintenance and long-term costs.[198,199] Natural grass fields are also cheaper to install than synthetic grass/artificial turf.[200] With proper care and maintenance, a natural grass field can accommodate any amount of play as demonstrated by Marblehead, MA with 20 acres of organically managed fields for over 15 years.[201]

Please see our Team 5: Stop Synthetic Turf page for more information.[202]

O14-14 cont.

16. Zero Waste and Ban Single-Use Plastics

CleanEarth4Kids.org supports the development of composting/anaerobic digestion facilities to divert the majority of compostable waste from landfills. The CAP must also provide plans to reduce other waste and develop a circular economy by encouraging and incentivizing the elimination of single-use products while reducing, reusing and repurposing other items.

Please see our Team 6: Stop Plastics & Waste page for more information.[203]

Take Climate Action NOW: There Is No Time To Waste

As shown in the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN/IPCC) report[204] released March 20th 2023, our climate situation is at the point of no return. Even if we start today with immediate and strong action, we only have a very moderate chance of limiting global warming to the 1.5°C threshold by the world scientific community. We are in a climate emergency!

O14-15

[192] https://www.npr.org/353312770/soccer-players-sue-over-proposed-turf-field-for-womens-world-cup
[193] https://www.sbnation.com/soccer/lionel-messi-inter-miami-mls-turf
[194] https://cpe.rutgers.edu/landscape/natural-turf-certificate
[195] https://www.nontoxiccommunities.com/organic-athletic-fields.html
[196] https://youtu.be/o3P1T3fgy6I
[197] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/health-benefits-of-natural-turf
[198] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/s/Natural_Grass_Athletic_Fields_Ppoint_Final.ppt
[199] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/maintenance-grass-vs-synthetic-turf
[200] https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/cost-grass-vs-synthetic-turf
[201] https://www.turi.org/content/NaturalGrassPlayingFieldCaseStudyMarbleheadMAJune202019.pdf
[202] https://cleanearth4kids.org/team-5-synthetic-turf-toxic-chemicals
[203] https://cleanearth4kids.org/plastic-pollution
[204] https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

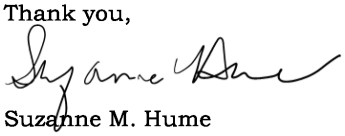
We already see the effects of climate change[205] as predicted by scientists: droughts, heat waves, extreme weather, raging wildfires, loss of sea ice, sea level rise, etc.

If we do not greatly reduce greenhouse gases now, global temperature will continue to rise and these impacts will also increase and intensify. This is not a future problem, we are all being harmed right now.

The County of San Diego must implement a strong and enforceable CAP now.

O14-15 cont.

Thank you,



Suzanne M. Hume
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CleanEarth4Kids.org works to protect children's health & future, public health, and the health and safety of communities, workers, and indigenous peoples globally and reminds all that clean air, water, a livable future, and access to nature are human rights. Streams, rivers, oceans, public lands, forests, trees, wildlife, ecosystems, climate, soils, and organic gardens must be protected. Access to healthy safe food, playgrounds, schools, homes, communities, cities and public lands- without toxic pesticides, chemicals, plastics, lead, heavy metals and pollution- is essential for life.

At the heart of CleanEarth4Kids.org: environmental protection, children's health and future, public health, environmental, racial, social and climate justice, education and JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion). CleanEarth4Kids.org works to stop toxic chemicals, PFAS, pesticides, lead and heavy metals, plastics and microplastics, toxic toys and products, synthetic turf, PIP (Pour In Place Playgrounds), fossil fuels, pollution, environmental destruction, degradation and injustice and works to uphold human rights and justice.

[205] https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/

Letter O14 CleanEarth4Kids

Suzanne M. Hume
January 5, 2024

Comment O14-1
The comment states the beneficial effects of implementing a strong and comprehensive CAP Update. The comment requests that the County make the CAP Update a standalone document for fast implementation and to provide an analysis with detailed action metrics, targets, and dates for the GHG reduction plans.

Response O14-1
With regards to the request to implement the CAP Update as a standalone document, please see Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a discussion of the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used in the CAP Update to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Comment O14-2
The comment provides a summary of detailed comments provided below.

Response O14-2
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O14-3
The comment provides recommendations for climate safety investment.

Response O14-3
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a). The comment will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update.

Comment O14-4
The comment requests that the County prioritize building electrification and provides links for various resources related to the adverse effects of natural gas.

Response O14-4
The County has received and reviewed the resources documents provided. The request to prioritize building electrification is noted. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explain that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030

and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Comment O14-5
The comment requests more details (e.g., metrics and dates) on how to achieve 100 percent clean energy by 2030 and moving the 100 percent clean energy goal to 2025. The comment requests that all County properties, housing policies, funding, and contracts require all-electric buildings. The comment also advises the County to coordinate with San Diego Community Power to install renewable energy facilities on all County parking lots and buildings.

Response O14-5
The County acknowledges the information provided regarding electrification and renewable energy. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including the quantified GHG reduction potential and measurable performance outcomes for 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation.

Comment O14-6
The comment advises the County to develop a Climate and Environmental Dashboard.

Response O14-6
The County appreciates the suggestion to create a dashboard to increase education and awareness of climate issues in the region. The County currently maintains a website (http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/sustainability/cap) to provide education and awareness of the County's implementation of the Climate Action Plan. Within this site, the County's Climate Action Plan Dashboard currently shows how the 2018 Climate Action Plan's 26 quantifiable, achievable, and enforceable measures are performing, and is available at: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/dashboard.html. This website will be updated to reflect CAP Update implementation progress as part of the CAP Update Implementation and Monitoring Program.

Comment O14-7
The comment requests a Clean Air section to be added to the CAP Update and provides links for various resources related to the adverse effects of air pollution.

Response O14-7
The County has received and reviewed the reference documents provided. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for a discussion related to co-benefits of the CAP Update measures and actions, including air pollution reductions. The comment will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update.

Comment O14-8
The comment requests that the County ban gas-powered leaf blowers, idling, wood burning, smoking, and leaded aviation gas.

Response O14-8
Regarding gas-powered leaf blowers, the CAP Update includes Action T-1.2, which would "Amend Board policy to require 100% of landscaping equipment used on County property to be zero-emissions by 2030," and Action T-2.1, which, in part, would, "Develop and adopt a landscaping equipment ordinance to require the use of zero emission landscaping equipment by 2030…"

Regarding vehicle idling and electrification of loading docks and other facilities, the CAP Update includes the following actions:

- T-1.1.b: Adopt a County Operations anti-idling policy to reduce emissions from vehicle idling, and
- T-3.1: Increase the use of electric and other zero-emission vehicles in the unincorporated area by:
    - Installing 2,040 publicly available electric vehicle charging stations by 2028.
    - Requiring the electrification of loading docks and idling reduction in new commercial and industrial development by 2030.
    - Amending the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CalGreen or similar electric vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for ZEVs for new multi-family residential and non-residential construction.
    - Developing a program by 2026 to incentivize EV purchases and school bus electrification.

The commenter's suggestions regarding wood burning, smoking, and leaded aviation fuel will be provided to the Board for consideration. Aviation fuel standards are outside the County's jurisdiction. See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-9
The comment requests several measures to be added to the CAP Update to protect and conserve water.

Response O14-9
The CAP Update includes several actions related to water use reduction, replacing ornamental grass and other landscaping with native plants, reusing graywater, and capturing stormwater and rainwater, as follows:

- W-1.1: Implement the County's Water Efficiency Plan to require water-efficiency measures in new and existing County buildings/operations to reduce potable water use intensity by 28% by 2030.
- W-1.2: Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar water efficiency requirements and reduced outdoor water use for landscaping requirements for new development to reduce potable water consumption from new development by 17% in the unincorporated area.
- W-2.2: Amend the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances by 2026 to require (Tier 2) CALGreen or similar water efficiency requirements for existing development projects with qualifying improvements.
- W-2.3: Update the Green Building Incentive program by 2026 to include incentives for water efficiency, conservation, and reuse improvements for new and existing development to reduce potable water consumption in the unincorporated area.
- W-2.3.a: Collaborate across County departments to streamline and simplify graywater capture permitting process to reduce potable water use in the unincorporated area.
- W-2.3.b: Develop and distribute materials to assist renters with implementing water efficiency and conservation improvements.
- W-2.4: Implement the Waterscape Rebate Program to incentivize water efficiency and conservation to reduce outdoor water consumption in the unincorporated area.
- W-3.1: Increase wastewater treatment efficiency through the East County Advanced Water Purification Program to produce 12,900 acre-feet of water each year by 2030.

See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-10
The comment requests that the County identify methods to reduce VMT and provides recommendations for the County's Active Transportation Plan.

Response O14-10
The CAP Update includes several actions to reduce on-road transportation GHG emissions by reducing VMT, as follows (including implementation of the County's Active Transportation Plan):

- T-4.1: Expand County Benefit Program by 2026 to provide County employees with tax-free transportation benefits, alternative work schedules, and expand part-time or full-time teleworking options to reduce vehicle miles traveled from employee commutes by 40% in 2030 and 55% in 2045.
- T-4.1.a: Provide educational programs and campaigns to encourage County staff to walk, bike, and take transit.

- T-4.2: Develop a rebate program by 2026 for County employees to purchase electric vehicles, bicycles, and scooters for commute use.
- T-5.1: Implement the County's Active Transportation Plan to install 345 miles of sidewalk and 315 miles of bikeways by 2030 to encourage alternative modes of transportation in the unincorporated area.
- T-5.1.a: Develop educational materials to encourage residents and businesses to use and provide access to alternative modes of transportation.
- T-5.2: Develop a countywide Safe Routes to Schools program to reduce vehicle miles traveled to schools by 1.2% by 2030.
- T-6.1: Develop a program to provide free transit passes and/or free trips in the unincorporated area to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the unincorporated area by 1.2% by 2030.
- T-6.2: Increase access to Transit Priority Areas by 5% in the unincorporated area and implement transit-supportive roadway treatments such as traffic signal communication and curb extensions along County-maintained roadways to optimize traffic flow for transit and pedestrians by 2030.
- T-6.2.a: Adopt a Transportation Demand Management ordinance to include pre-approved options for new development to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area.
- T-6.2.b: Evaluate options for increasing transit service to unincorporated communities.
- T-6.3: Increase access to first/last mile transportation services and connections (e.g., neighborhood electric vehicles, microtransit, bike/scooter-share) to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 7% within the unincorporated area by 2030.

See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-11
The comment requests that the CAP Update not include "false climate solutions," such as synthetic carbon capture, "dirty" hydrogen, methane, or biomass/biofuels.

Response O14-11
The CAP Update does not include measures or actions that use or invest in synthetic carbon capture, methane, biomass, or biofuels. CAP Action T-3.1.a has been revised to clarify that this effort would focus on clean hydrogen sources.

Comment O14-12
The comment requests that the County create and implement education programs and provide assistance to farmers to stop the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. The comment also summarizes the adverse effects of the use of synthetic pesticides.

Response O14-12
The CAP Update includes the following action to reduce GHG emissions from the use of synthetic fertilizers:

- A-4.1d: Evaluate options to incentivize the voluntary reduction of the use of synthetic fertilizers in the unincorporated area.

The CAP Update also includes the following actions to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land:

- A-4.1: Develop a Climate Smart Land Stewardship Program by 2026 to increase carbon sequestration on 3,000 acres by 2030 and 36,214 acres by 2045.
- A-4.1.a: Support the local food system through development of a food sourcing policy that prioritizes contracts with local, equitable, and sustainable food suppliers in County operations.
- A-3.1: Implement the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program to preserve 6,058 acres of agricultural land by 2030 and 400 acres per year thereafter.

See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-13
The comment suggests creation of an expansive community garden program and creation of "pocket forests." The commenter also requests that the CAP Update protect natural habitat, wetlands, lagoons, and waterways and to address blue carbon storage.

Response O14-13
Refer to Response O14-12 regarding CAP Update actions that expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural lands. Regarding the creation of "pocket forests" and establishment of "local natural habitat lands," the CAP Update includes several actions to reduce GHG emissions through preservation of natural lands and tree planting:

- A-1.1: Acquire 11,000 acres of conservation lands by 2030 and 1,000 acres per year thereafter to preserve land in perpetuity.
- A-1.2: Develop a Habitat Restoration Resource Management Framework for County-owned land by 2030 and restore 80 acres per year thereafter to increase carbon storage.
- A-1.2.a: Partner with tribal governments to incorporate tribal ecological knowledge and apply indigenous land management practices to contribute toward habitat restoration efforts on County land.
- A-2.1: Expand the County's existing tree planting initiative and implement an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program to plant 70,560 trees by 2030 and 6,650 trees per year thereafter on County property and in the unincorporated area.

- A-2.1.a: Develop a program to preserve native trees in the unincorporated area.
- A-2.1.b: Educate the public on the benefits and maintenance of native, fire-resistant, and drought-tolerant tree plantings.
- A-2.2: Implement the County's Landscaping Ordinance to require tree planting in new single family residential development in the unincorporated area.

The commenter's suggestions regarding blue carbon storage and methods to protect beaches, cliffs, coastal roads, and the LOSSAN train corridor erosion apply to coastal areas and not to the unincorporated county. See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-14
The comment requests the County to ban synthetic grass, artificial turf, and single-use plastics.

Response O14-14
The suggestion to ban synthetic grass, artificial turf, and single-use plastics are noted and will be provided to the Board for consideration. Note that the CAP Update includes Action W-2.4, which would "Implement the Waterscape Rebate Program to incentivize water efficiency and conservation to reduce outdoor water consumption in the unincorporated area." Artificial turf is not eligible for incentives under this program.

See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," describes the analytical and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update.

Comment O14-15
The comment expresses the need to take immediate actions to address climate change.

Response O14-15
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter O15

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County of San Diego
Attn: Meghan Kelly
1600 Pacific Coast Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Delivered by e-Mail

January 5, 2024

RE: Draft Climate Action Plan

Dear Ms. Kelly and Project Team,

At San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E), we would like to extend our compliments and congratulations to the County for your efforts developing the Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP). The County of San Diego has led the region, state and nation in many critical areas, and this body of work highlights the County's continued leadership position. Thank you for allowing SDG&E to opine and highlight areas of support and collaboration. We look forward to continuing to work with you as the draft becomes a final plan. Please see below for our detailed comments related to the CAP.

Built Environment & Transportation

The transportation sector continues to be the largest contributor of GHGs in our region, which is why SDG&E is a proud partner in the Accelerate to Zero (A2Z) Emissions Collaborative, which has developed and is working to implement a Regional EV and Transportation Electrification Strategy. To demonstrate our commitment to this effort, our SDG&E teams continue to create innovative clean transportation programs to encourage and enable the transition to driving electric. O15-1

Through our "Power Your Drive" program, we have already installed over 3,500 chargers at 308 locations and are working towards our next goals of installing charging infrastructure to support approximately 3,000 medium- and heavy-duty EVs at 300 sites, and at or near apartments and condominium complexes at about 100 locations. The Governor's executive order requiring sales of all new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035 will further accelerate the transition to driving electric and makes current investments into EV charging infrastructure even more critical.

How SDG&E can support the County CAP's Built Environment & Transportation actions:

- Position SDG&E experts with County personnel to find solutions on how best to electrify County vehicles/fleets with both decarbonization and fiscal goals in mind.
- Share research and development information on efforts and programs such as "Vehicle to Grid" and "Vehicle to Everything" solutions.

- Gather feedback from the County on priority locations for EV infrastructure investments.
- Provide recommendations on how the County can continue to streamline permitting for transportation electrification infrastructure.

Energy

SDG&E is committed to achieving net zero GHG emissions by 2045 and in 2022 we released "The Path to Net Zero: A Decarbonization Roadmap for California" to demonstrate how we plan to accomplish this goal. While other studies have been published on how to decarbonize California's economy through electrification of sectors such as transportation and buildings, SDG&E's study also incorporates for the first time the utility industry standard for reliability using industry-specific planning tools to chart what we believe to be an achievable approach.

The industry standard considers an electric system to be reliable if it experiences only one power outage every ten years due to the probability of energy demand exceeding supply. Some key takeaways and learnings for our region from the study are as follows:

- California is estimated to need to decarbonize at 4.5 times the pace over the past decade to reach its carbon neutrality goal and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.

O15-1 cont.

- Electric generation capacity is estimated to need to increase to about four times the capacity that existed in 2020, in order to support transportation and building electrification. Between 2020 and 2045, electric consumption is expected to increase by 96%.

- To keep electric service reliable, California will need to complement its growing portfolio of intermittent solar and wind generation with a mix of clean, firm and flexible resources that can be dispatched at any time to meet needs. Installing 40 GW of new battery storage, as well as 20 GW of dispatchable generation from 100% clean hydrogen combustion by 2045 is projected as necessary to meet this goal. According to the California Independent System Operator, the statewide grid has interconnected about 2,600 MW of energy storage as of January 2022, but no electric generation from 100% clean hydrogen combustion.

- It is estimated that by 2045, there will be demand for 6.5 million metric tons of clean hydrogen across the economy, 80% of which is projected to be used to enhance the reliability of the electric supply.

- The implementation of the Roadmap requires regulatory and political support from four fronts to: 1) prioritize electric sector reliability; 2) maintain affordability and enhance equity; 3) incentivize innovation and adaptability; 4) and enable the deployment of decarbonization infrastructure

We understand the enormity of the task ahead, which is why we have already begun our transition. In 2023, SDG&E completed and activated the Fallbrook Battery Energy Storage Project that includes 40 MW or 160 MWh of battery energy storage for our local grid. Our Borrego Springs Green Hydrogen project will pilot hydrogen as long duration energy storage, which is a key aspect for grid reliability during the transition away from carbon intense fuel sources. Both facilities allow excess renewable energy, typically solar and wind, to be stored for use when needed by the grid later in the day. SDG&E has appropriately 335 MW of utility-owned energy storage being commissioned or that is commercially operational. An additional ~48 MW are scheduled to come online in 2024, for a total of ~383 MW by year-end 2025.

How SDG&E can support the County CAP's Energy actions:

- Conduct workshops between SDG&E experts and County staff on Reach Codes to support electrification.
- Create working group between SDG&E and the County to determine the necessity of new customer programs or changes to existing programs.
- Provide feedback on the County's permitting processes to increase "electrification readiness" for commercial and residential customers/constituencies.
- Energy information sharing and updates on SDG&E's path to decarbonization, how it impacts County constituents and where there are opportunities for the County's accounts.
- Work with the County to identify priority locations for new energy storage projects, including through the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)'s Microgrid Incentive Program.

Agriculture & Conservation

In 2021, SDG&E began its "Sustainable Tree" program with the goal of providing or planting a combined total of 10,000 trees annually to support local biodiversity and promote environmental stewardship. Although this program is available to both residents and local governments throughout SDG&E's service territory, partnering with local governments can be more impactful because of their ability to identify beneficial locations for tree planting in urban areas under their jurisdiction. Our strong collaboration with the County allowed us to donate 2,000 trees for placement on County parks and land. By building partnerships such these, SDG&E and the County can help each other reach our shared goals of increasing tree canopy and reducing GHGs throughout our region.

O15-1 cont.

How SDG&E can support the County CAP's Agriculture & Conservation actions:

- Work with Department of Parks and Recreation to identify tree species suitable for planting near SDG&E infrastructure.
- Provide expertise on the appropriate trees to County departments through our "Sustainable Tree" program.
- Partner with the County to promote SDG&E's "tree rebate" program for residents in underserved communities.

SDG&E's Sustainability Goals

We've built our business model on encouraging climate reducing technologies – and this body of work is demonstrated in SDG&E's first-ever company-wide sustainability strategy, *Building A Better Future: SDG&E's Commitment to Sustainability*. Through this sustainability plan, we have developed a series of actionable and long-term goals aligned with California's ambitious climate agenda, some of which have been discussed above. The plan calls for regional cooperation and partnerships and will likely evolve over time to reflect stakeholder feedback, regulatory changes and technological breakthroughs. We have tried to build on our strengths, focusing on the areas of environmental stewardship, clean transportation, grid modernization, community engagement, and company operations to help support economy-wide carbon neutrality. The full report and subsequent strategy and progress updates are available at sdge.com/sustainability.

In closing, we recognize the urgency to address climate change and its impacts, and we fully support the County's clean energy goals and this CAP. Our desire is that the County and all jurisdictions will look to SDG&E as a dedicated partner in the implementation of our sustainability strategies. Collectively, we can work together on solutions that result in meaningful GHG reductions.

Best Regards,



Dallin Young
Public Affairs Manager
San Diego Gas & Electric

County CCs:
Chair Nora Vargas
Vice Chair Terra Lawson Remer
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe
Supervisor Jim Desmond

SDG&E CCs:
Brittany Syz, Director of Regional Public Affairs

Letter O15 San Diego Gas & Electric Company

Dallin Young, Public Affairs Manager
January 5, 2024

Comment O15-1
The comment provides background information about San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) and expresses support for the CAP Update. The comment also provides information about how SDG&E supports the CAP Update measures.

Response O15-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

NOLEN COMMUNITIES

Letter O16

Friday, January 5, 2024

Ms. Meghan Kelly
County of San Diego PDS
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

RE: Comments on the San Diego County Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) (EIR # PDS2020-ER-20-00-002; SCH # 2020120204)

Dear Ms. Kelly;

Nolen Communities, LLC (Nolen) is pleased to provide the following comments on the County of San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the CAP Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) (EIR # PDS2020-ER-20-00-002; SCH #2020120204).

Nolen appreciates the tremendous amount of work and time County staff and your consultant team has spent preparing the CAP and Draft SEIR. We understand the importance of a certified CAP, especially for General Plan compliant projects to proceed with a legally defensible, CEQA analysis. Nolen realizes the County is operating under court-imposed requirements – which Nolen has not been able to review – resulting from litigation over previous attempts to develop a compliant Climate Action Plan. And we recognize a certified CAP is an effective mechanism to provide certainty for privately-initiated land development projects to demonstrate a less than significant CEQA impact, while ensuring the public that the region's greenhouse gas emissions (CO_2e) profile will achieve state-mandated reductions. We support efforts to reduce CO_2e emissions and adopt a certified CAP.

Our comments are therefore focused on the County's multiple, ongoing planning and policy initiatives – several of which we have commented on previously. These include the Sustainable Land Use Framework/Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA), the Phase 2 VMT Mitigation Program (VMT Fee), the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO), Communities Benefits Agreements (CBA), and the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (HEU) Implementation Plan. In short, Nolen believes the County's piece-meal approach to these cumulative efforts does not provide the public with a clear understanding of how the County will meet state-mandated requirements under the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), rendering the Climate Action Plan, as well as other programs, plans policies and initiatives, flawed.

Rather than combining these efforts to ensure consistency, avoid piecemealing, and provide the public and stakeholders a cumulative understanding of how these connected programs relate, the County has insisted on separate schedules with separate scopes of work while promising they are being coordinated in the background. This approach is not in the public's interest; the County must publicly align these plans to ensure they are cumulatively analyzed based on reasonably foreseeable outcomes to understand how the County will legally achieve its RHNA obligation, as well as state-mandated greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

O16-1

NOLEN COMMUNITIES

A. CEQA PIECEMEALING CONCERNS

Preliminarily, our comments are intended highlight ongoing County processes and the potential for undisclosed cumulative impacts that could result from the many piecemeal efforts the County is currently considering. These efforts largely aim to achieve common goals – meeting housing production obligations in the midst of a state-wide housing crisis while achieving climate goals such as reducing CO2e emissions and vehicle miles traveled, all while furthering the County's adopted, Smart Growth-informed General Plan and the Community Development Model embodied therein. However, without considering these together, the County risks frustrating achieving any of these goals.

As described above, the County is involved in multiple ongoing efforts that are interrelated and have reasonably foreseeable combined effects. These planning, program and policy initiatives are summarized below.

1. Climate Action Plan (CAP) – the subject of the current Draft SEIR, the CAP is a required mitigation measure (CC-1.2) of the County's 2011 General Plan Update Program EIR (SCH #2002111067). The underlying purpose of the CAP is to "reduce GHG emissions that could be generated by development under the General Plan, and to reduce those emissions consistent with state legislative requirements…" Along with the development of a certified CAP, the County is also proposing a CAP Checklist and an update to the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance that would provide a pathway for projects to demonstrate CEQA compliance through the adoption of a new threshold of significance. The practical effect of the CAP and new significance threshold is to provide a level of certainty regarding mitigation requirements for projects to demonstrate less-than-significant effects on greenhouse gas emissions, which theoretically will support the development of privately-initiated land development projects, specifically, General-Plan compliant projects. The CAP Checklist is likely to increase development costs of housing by imposing requirements that exceed existing building code mandates. Further, due to the County's underlying geography, without an effectively mitigation strategy for VMT impacts, such projects still face significant hurdles. The County's schedule is Fall 2024 to adopt the CAP, CAP Checklist and new Thresholds for Determining Significance.

2. Sustainable Land Use Framework/Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) – the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed County staff to consider ways to reduce barriers to housing in four communities – Buena Creek, Spring Valley, Winter Gardens/South Lakeside, and Campo Road/Casa de Oro. As part of this effort, the County is preparing a Programmatic EIR to cover potential impacts related to increased density/intensity of development in these areas. The practical effect is intended to facilitate the conditions precedent to spur the production of housing in these communities; however, based on the existing conditions in most of these areas, including the fractured ownership, parcelization, and existing uses or other constraints, very few if any substantive development should be anticipated. Further, by creating a limited number of eligible properties for development, residual land values in these areas are likely to increase, raising project costs. Lastly, three of these communities are largely VMT inefficient and include very few, if any, viable housing/redevelopment sites under the County's 6th Cycle HEU. The County's schedule for this program is late 2024.

O16-2

3. **Phase 2 VMT Mitigation Program** – the County is considering a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Mitigation Fee program that would provide for a programmatic approach for reducing project's transportation effects under SB743. The practical effect of the VMT Fee is to enable privately-initiated land-development projects to mitigate VMT impacts in portions of the unincorporated County where no other mitigation exists for exceeding the regional per capita average VMT; however, the preliminary estimates of $10,000-$19,000 per VMT would effectively serve as a "project killer" for most, if not all, such projects – even General Plan compliant projects. Nolen understands the schedule for this program is 2025.

4. **Housing Element Update Implementation Plan** – as part of the Couty's 6th Cycle HEU, the County adopted a comprehensive suite of programs to implement the policies contained therein. The County committed to completed several of these programs within the first two years of the Planning Period (2021-2029); however, many of these remain incomplete or have yet to begin. Those programs include the following:

   a. *3.1.1.B - By-Right Approval for Projects with 20% Affordable Units*
   b. *3.1.1.C - Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Achieve Maximum Density*
   c. *3.1.1.E - Low to Moderate Inclusionary Ordinance*
   d. *3.1.1.F - Objective Design Standards*
   e. *3.1.1.J – Lot Consolidation*
   f. *3.1.1.K - Expand Eligibility of Checklist Exemptions*
   g. *3.1.1.L - Coordination and Outreach with Developers, Builders, and Owners*
   h. *3.1.1.M - Addressing VMT Constraints.*
   i. *3.1.1.N - Small Lot Subdivision Program*
   j. *3.1.1.O - Feasibility Analysis and Expanded By-right Approval Program*
   k. *3.1.3.A - Zoning Ordinance Cleanups*

   In addition, the following "ongoing" programs remain in development or have not started to our knowledge.

   l. *3.1.1.D - Diversity of Land Use Designation and Building Type*
   m. *3.2.2.A - Expedited Permit Processing – Affordable Housing Projects*

   The schedule for items (a) through (k) above was 2023; however, several if not the majority of these programs remain incomplete. The effect of these programs should be to facilitate the production of housing, including Affordable housing, by making the entitlement process more streamlined; however, until all these programs and initiatives have been implemented, they are not supporting the County's effort to meet its RHNA obligations.

O16-2 cont.

5. **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO)** – the County is considering a program that would mandate a minimum required obligation for new residential housing projects to set aside specific amounts of subsidized affordable housing for very-low, low- or moderate-income households. Such a program would provide for the development of subsidized affordable housing to meet the County's very-low-, low- and moderate-income housing goals under the RHNA and the County's 6th Cycle Housing Element. The practical effect of the IHO is to increase development costs for residential projects by requiring these projects set aside affordable housing or pay an in-lieu fee. The County's own fiscal analysis determined the costs of this program were greater than the benefits afforded under Density Bonus, thus, it is reasonably foreseeable that the IHO will reduce the feasibility of new home production.

   In addition, the proposed IHO has an excessive number of permutations (up to 1,872) which leads to an unstable Project Description. It is our understanding the Economic Analysis prepared by AECOM to support the range of in-lieu fees under the IHO does NOT include any of the CAP Checklist requirements. We understand the County is preparing to bring the IHO forward for consideration in Spring 2024.

6. **Community Benefit Agreements** – the County is developing requirements for certain types of projects that require a statement of overriding considerations to provide "Community Benefits Agreements" (CBA). It is our understanding that such agreements are being "highly encouraged" by staff prior to any public hearing on commercial/utility scale renewable energy projects, but that any project required to prepare an EIR and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations may be subject to providing supplemental community benefits at the sole discretion of the Board of Supervisors. The practical effect of CBA's is to increase risk and costs for any project with significant and unavoidable impacts.

O16-2 cont.

Individually, these programs, policies, initiatives and plans are likely to change the existing setting and regulatory environment under which privately initiated development projects are proposed and processed. Collectively, it is nearly impossible to understand the many potential outcomes of these plans, programs, policies and initiatives. However, t is reasonably foreseeable that at least four of these programs (the CAP, VMT Fee, IHO and CBAs) will increase development costs and frustrate compliance with the County's RHNA obligations. They may increase costs and risks so significantly that they render development infeasible, forcing builders to move investment out of San Diego, further reducing the already limited housing stock in the County. Or they may conflict in such ways or cause so much uncertainty so as to further delay project processing schedules, which are already a major impediment towards housing production. What is certain is that, without a unified approach, the public is severely deprived of the opportunity to provide meaningful input and understand the cumulative environmental impacts of these programs due to the County's piecemeal approach. The Draft SEIR must be revised to consider these cumulative programs, policies and initiatives.

NOLEN COMMUNITIES

B. FAILURE TO ENSURE HOUSING ELEMENT AND RHNA COMPLIANCE

Nolen believes the County is incorrectly taking credit for a significant number of new homes as very-low-, low-, and moderate-income without deed restrictions. While such an approach may have sufficed under previous housing elements, we understand and believe that the County may only reasonably rely upon deed-restricted units to demonstrate compliance with the very-low, low-, and moderate-income obligations under the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update based on direction from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Therefore, while the County's General Plan Annual Progress Reports purport to show the County is on track to comply with its RHNA obligations, we believe the County is falling far short of these requirements.

The Couty's General Plan – the foundation upon which the CAP is required and the CAP Draft Supplemental EIR relies – was amended in 2021 (GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT: HOUSING, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENTS 20-002; 19-GPA-001; AND 17-GPA-004) when the Housing Element Update was certified, along with a new Environmental Justice element and a revised Safety Element. These General Plan Elements were prepared under addenda (PDS2021-ER-21-00-001 and PDS2021-ER-21-00-002) to the County's General Plan Update EIR. Under CEQA, this represents a change in the regulatory environment which the CAP Draft SEIR must analyze, regardless of when the CAP NOP was issued. However, the CAP Draft SEIR only analyzes the CAP's consistency with the new Environmental Justice Element and does not discuss the Housing Element Update (or Safety Element).

O16-3

Because the CAP is reasonably foreseeable to increase development costs due to the requirements of the CAP Checklist, and because that cost information has not been provided, as explained below, the CAP could further frustrate compliance with the County's obligations under RHNA. Therefore, the CAP must demonstrate consistency with the RHNA and the following Housing Element policies:

> H-1.1 Sites Inventory for Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Maintain an inventory of residential sites that can accommodate the RHNA throughout the Housing Element planning period, tracking the no-net-loss of sites, pursuant to state law.
>
> H-1.2 Development Intensity Relative to Permitted Density. Encourage a development intensity of at least 80 percent of the maximum permitted gross density for sites designated at 15 to 30 dwelling units per acre in development projects.
>
> H-1.6 Land for All Housing Types Provided in Villages. Provide opportunities for a variety of housing types, including small-lot single-family, duplex, triplex, and other multi-family building types in Villages.
>
> H-1.7 Mix of Residential Development Types in Villages. Support the design of large-scale residential developments (generally greater than 200 dwelling units) in Villages that include a range of housing types, lot sizes, and building sizes.
>
> H-1.8 Variety of Lot Sizes in Large-Scale Residential Developments. Promote large-scale residential development in Semi-Rural areas that includes a range of lot sizes to improve housing choice.
>
> H-2.1 Development that Respects Community Character. Require that development in existing residential neighborhoods be well designed so as not to degrade or detract from the character of surrounding development consistent with the Land Use Element. (See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.)

H-2.2 Projects with Open Space Amenities in Villages. Require new multi-family projects in Villages to be well-designed and include amenities and common open space areas that enhance overall quality of life

H-3.4 Housing for Moderate-Income Families in Villages. Facilitate the production of housing for moderate-income families in Villages by permitting developments that offer affordable housing to incorporate other compatible housing types within areas zoned for single-family residential development

GOAL H-5 Constraints on Housing Development. Governmental policies or regulations that do not unnecessarily constrain the development, improvement, or conservation of market-rate or affordable housing

H-5.4 Flexibility in Regulations. Modify regulations, as appropriate, to streamline regulatory processes, remove unnecessary obstacles to planned densities, and provide flexibility so that development can respond to the unique characteristics of town center areas

GOAL H-6 Delivery of Housing Services. An institutional framework that effectively delivers housing services and programs to implement the goals, policies, and programs of this Housing Element.

H-6.1 Coordinated Delivery of Programs. Coordinate delivery of housing programs and services among various County departments and regional organizations

O16-3 cont.

C. CONSISTENCY WITH PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The CAP Draft Supplemental EIR includes a Project Objective to:

- Accomplish the foregoing objectives in a manner that ***minimizes undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners***, and that avoids regulatory takings under the federal and state constitutions. (emphasis added)

During an initial outreach meeting on November 2, 2023 the County stated that staff and their consultant team are working on a fiscal study analyzing the costs of the measures contained in the CAP. To date, this study and those costs have not been made available.

Without understanding the costs of the measures contained in the CAP, in particular those related to measures in the CAP Checklist for privately-initiated development projects, the County has not provided substantial evidence the project meets this Project Objective. It has not provided the public and stakeholders with a complete picture of the proposed project and confirmed that the project will "minimize undue and unnecessary economic impacts on business and property owners". The County must, at a minimum, extend the comment period until those the fiscal study is made available to provide the public an opportunity to exercise meaningful public review to ensure the Project Objectives are achieved. Even if the County later provides this information, and claims that the fiscal analysis provides substantial evidence that the CAP achieves this Project Objective, the County must provide for public review and accept comments based on that new information.

O16-4

D. CAP CHECKLIST MISSING SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE METRICS

The CAP Checklist includes no less than six measures which require the County to develop a program or ordinance to achieve claimed reductions. Those measures include (for privately-initiated development projects):

(1) Electrifying Loading Docks,
(2) Installing Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure,
(4) Reducing Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips,
(5) Electrifying Buildings and Appliances,
(6) Increasing Renewable Energy and
(7) Increasing Water Efficiency.

O16-5

While the County includes references to other Code requirements, notably compliance with existing, voluntary CALGreen measures, the CAP does not include specific performance metrics to ensure the County's future measures will achieve the same emissions reductions. The County should consider language to ensure that the minimum emissions reductions from these measures are achieved.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our feedback on the Climate Action Plan and Draft Supplemental EIR. We look forward to reviewing the County's responses to these comments and are available to review and discuss any questions these comments may raise.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sean Kilkenny, Partner
Nolen Communities, LLC

Letter O16 Nolen Communities, LLC

Sean Kilkenny, Partner
January 5, 2024

Comment O16-1
The comment is an introductory statement. The comment also states that the County must align the CAP Update with other County ongoing planning and policy initiatives to ensure consistency, avoid piecemealing, and provide the public and stakeholders a cumulative understanding of how the County's connected programs relate.

Response O16-1
The County appreciates the commenter's perspective regarding the need to align its plans and policy initiatives. The CAP Update has been prepared as mitigation for the GHG emissions associated with implementation of the General Plan. See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a description of the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan and other County plans and initiatives intended to help reduce GHG emissions. Section 9.1.1.1 also includes a discussion about other programs that the County is developing and implementing to reduce VMT and, by extension, GHG emissions.

Comment O16-2
The comment expresses concern about CEQA piecemealing and advises the County to incorporate ongoing plans and initiatives that are interrelated into the CAP Update cumulative analysis.

Response O16-2
The proposed project for CEQA purposes is the CAP Update. As described in Response O16-1, and noted by the commenter, the CAP Update has been prepared as mitigation for the GHG impacts associated with General Plan implementation, as identified in the 2011 GPU PEIR. Because implementation of the CAP Update could result in environmental impacts associated with implementation of adopted Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 from the 2011 GPU PEIR, this SEIR has been prepared as a Supplemental EIR to the GPU PEIR. The other plans, programs, and policy initiatives summarized by the commenter are separate, complementary mechanisms the County is employing for guiding development in the unincorporated county. These plans and initiatives are not a part of the project considered in this SEIR, which is the CAP Update, and have independent utility. Simply because these programs, policies, initiatives, and plans are not considered part of a single "project" for CEQA purposes does not mean that the County cannot consider them collectively in an effort to promote sustainable development in the unincorporated county. Please see also Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a description of the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan. See also Sections 2.1 through 2.15 of this SEIR for a discussion of the cumulative impacts of CAP Update implementation in conjunction with other reasonably foreseeable programs.

Comment O16-3
The comment states that the CAP Update fails to comply with Housing Element and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

Response O16-3
As noted in Response O16-2 above, the CAP Update has been prepared in response to a requirement established by adopted 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure CC-1.2. See also Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for a description of the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan.

The CAP Update proposes no new development in the unincorporated county and would not directly limit the County's ability to meet its RHNA obligations. To the contrary, having a CAP that qualifies as a qualified GHG reduction plan pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 would serve to streamline the GHG analysis of projects consistent with the General Plan and, by extension, the County's RHNA sites.

Regarding the commenter's assertion that implementation of the CAP Update would increase development costs and therefore "frustrate" the County's ability to meet its housing needs obligations, the County has prepared two additional reports regarding implementation costs in addition to the information on costs presented in the CAP Update. The first is the *Implementation Cost Analysis* that identifies the total costs to the County of San Diego to implement the CAP Update GHG reduction measures over the first 5 fiscal years (FYs) of implementation (FY2025/26 to FY2029/30). The *Implementation Cost Analysis* is available in Appendix 10 of the CAP Update. The second cost report, *The Cost Effectiveness and Disproportionate Cost Analysis*, evaluates the effectiveness of CAP Update actions from a cost-benefit perspective and to address equity in CAP Update implementation, examines how some populations and local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from CAP Update implementation. This report will be available prior to CAP Update approval here: www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan/seir.
Comment O16-4

The comment states that achievement of the project objective to achieve the other CAP objectives in a "manner that minimizes undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners" cannot be confirmed without the fiscal study. The comment requests the review period to be extended until the fiscal study is available for public review.

Response O16-4
Objectives are established as part of a CEQA project description. Objectives describe the underlying goals of the project and are used to develop and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project. CEQA does not require that the project provide evidence that it will achieve the established objectives and public disclosure and review of such evidence is not a necessary component of the CEQA process. Extension of the comment period for this SEIR is not required in response to this comment.

Importantly, initial programs would be incentive-based and voluntary. Future regulatory-based code updates would be required to demonstrate program-specific cost

effectiveness at the time of development as part of the approval process under the California Energy Commission for a local jurisdiction to adopt a reach code that goes beyond statewide standards. These programs would be brought to the Board as a separate discretionary action and would be subject to applicable noticing requirements at that time. The County anticipates that undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners would be minimized through this process.

Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the reports the County has prepared to address the costs of implementing the CAP Update, including the estimated costs to residential and nonresidential development. As described in Section 9.1.1, two cost reports have been prepared in addition to the information on the relative cost of actions presented in the CAP Update. These include the Implementation Cost Analysis, which identifies the total costs to the County to implement the CAP Update GHG reduction measures over the first 5 fiscal years (FYs) of implementation (FY2025/26 to FY2029/30). The *Implementation Cost Analysis* is available in Appendix 10 of the CAP Update. The second cost report, *The Cost Effectiveness and Disproportionate Cost Analysis*, evaluates the effectiveness of CAP Update actions from a cost-benefit perspective and to address equity in CAP Update implementation, examines how some populations and local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from CAP Update implementation. This report will be available prior to CAP Update approval here: www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan/seir. The County developed these cost reports to inform its budget as part of the Operations Plan, which consists of a budget to be approved by the Board for the first year and a second year for operational planning. The County cannot reasonably allocate the entire amount of estimated funds for the County to implement the CAP Update in one year. The budget process is a public process where the commenter and others can provide input at the appropriate time. The CAP Update also identifies the following details for each action as part of the CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program (Table 13): the implementation enforcement mechanism, County department with lead and supporting responsibilities for implementation, relative cost (using a qualitative, ordinal ranking of low, medium, or high), and potential funding sources for implementation. The County will seek available funding sources each year to support implementation and will request funds from the Board during implementation that will, in part, be guided by these cost reports.

The CAP Update, therefore, provides the program-level evidence that the CAP can be implemented and achieve the stated project objectives in a manner that minimizes undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners. Fiscal analysis reports are not required to prepare a reasonable implementation plan for the CAP Update.

Comment O16-5

The comment asserts that the CAP Update "does not include specific performance metrics to ensure the County's future measures will achieve the same emissions reductions" as the consistency requirements for privately initiated projects in the CAP Consistency Checklist and comments that the County should consider language to ensure that the minimum emissions reductions from these measures are achieved.

Response O16-5

The CAP Consistency Checklist identifies a set of CAP consistency requirements for privately initiated projects (Table 1). For each CAP consistency requirement, the supporting CAP measure and action are identified. Specific implementation metrics (referred to as “outcomes”) and estimated GHG emissions reduction potential for these CAP measures and actions are identified in Part 3 of the CAP Update (Table 7, pages 57–64). Projects that incorporate CAP consistency requirements will contribute to achieving the GHG emissions reduction potential and implementation outcomes identified in the CAP Update.

San Diego Regional Chamber

402 West Broadway, Suite
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Letter O17

January 5, 2023

Meghan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan
Planning Development Services, County of San Diego
5510 Overland Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123

Re: Draft 2024 Climate Action Plan

Dear Climate Action Plan Team,

On behalf of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), I am writing to outline the Chamber's positions on the County of San Diego's 2024 Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP). Thank you for your continued active engagement with stakeholders such as the Chamber as we work to make the San Diego Region the best place to live and work. We are particularly pleased with the thoughtful organization of workshops by Planning and Development Services (PDS) and look forward to continued collaboration.

The Chamber developed a review framework for climate action planning in Spring of 2023 that guides our support and potential opposition of such documents and policies. Our framework includes: general support of efforts to identify funding for creating incentive or trade-in programs, encouragement of collaborative efforts with private sector and industry expertise, the necessity that policies are only mandated when proven to be economically feasible, urging municipal exploration and demonstration before mandating these changes if there is no private sector demonstration, and requirement of a real cost-benefit analysis on the impacts to job creators and industry. Upon review, we found that many of these requests have been fulfilled by PDS within the draft and we thank you for this collaboration.

The Draft CAP, in many ways, parallels state-level benchmarks which will ease collaboration between the County, State, and other local jurisdictions. The Chamber generally supports alignment with state codes and guidance but would encourage caution about some of the voluntary measures allowed under the state code, since some of these are difficult to achieve for many in the business community. Specifically, the Chamber supports these specific goals, including supporting active transportation and transportation alternatives, increased building efficiency standards for County operations facilities, commitment to increased solid waste diversion including the increase of availability of sustainable solid waste facilities, in addition to the necessary increase stormwater collection, water pumping efficiency, and wastewater treatment.

O17-1

The Chamber believes the following items are in alignment with our shared goals:
T-2: Increase the use of low-carbon and zero-emission landscaping and off-road construction equipment in the unincorporated area.
T-3: Install electric vehicle charging stations (where feasible and reasonable) and provide incentives for zero-emissions vehicles in the unincorporated area.
T-6: Support increased transit availability to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area.
E-1: Develop policies and programs to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and electrification in County Operations
E-3: Develop policies and programs to increase renewable energy use, generation, and storage in the unincorporated area.

SW-1: Achieve zero waste in County operations.
SW-3: Improve waste management practices at County-owned solid waste facilities to reduce emissions.
SW-4: Improve waste management practices in the unincorporated area to reduce emissions and increase waste diversion.
W-1: Develop policies and programs to increase water efficiency, retention, recycling, and reuse to reduce potable water consumption in County operations.
W-3: Develop programs to increase stormwater and wastewater treatment efficiency to reduce imported potable water use in the unincorporated area.
A-2: Develop a tree planting program that expands canopy across the unincorporated area and prioritizes underserved communities.

O17-1 cont.

The Chamber would also suggest caution with the stated goal of electrification mandates for new construction. A recent 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision, reaffirmed by the full circuit earlier this week, upholds the previous decision to deny the City of Berkeley's electrification ordinance. While the Chamber supports the reduction in use of GHG causing fuels, some natural gas is needed for many business operations, in addition to equipment to serve larger residential, commercial and industrial buildings. Between our life sciences companies, restaurant entrepreneurs and other business operators, including those creating jobs and generating taxes in the County unincorporated areas, it's important that any effort to increase electrification both be consistent with the law, as well as reasonable and feasible for business operations.

Additionally, the County of San Diego outlines the urgency of the decarbonization of County buildings and operations over requirements for private homes and businesses, which the Chamber wholeheartedly supports. While embracing the ambitious goals set forth, we believe it is crucial to ensure a pragmatic and achievable approach that aligns with the economic realities faced by our local businesses. Therefore, it is necessary that the County commit to continued partnership with industry leaders and businesses throughout the implementation process upon adoption, including the development of implementation measures to ensure that they are practical, feasible and do not work at counter purposes with the goals that we share, including ensuring a balance of jobs and housing that can help reduce vehicle trips and GHG.

O17-2

The Chamber is committed to continued engagement with the County on the Draft 2024 Climate Action Plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lauren Cazares, Policy Advisor, at LCazares@sdchamber.org.

Sincerely,



Jerry Sanders
President & CEO
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

CC:
Hon. Nora Vargas, Chair, County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Terra Lawson-Remer, Vice Chair, County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Joel Anderson, County Supervisor
Hon. Monica Montgomery Steppe, County Supervisor
Hon. Jim Desmond, County Supervisor
Ariel Hamburger, Land Use/Environmental Planner
Claire Moss, Land Use/Environmental Planner

Letter O17 San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

Jerry Sanders, President and CEO
January 5, 2024

Comment O17-1
The comment includes an introductory statement. The comment expresses support for the CAP Update and outlines the CAP Update measures that align with the Chamber's goals.

Response O17-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O17-2
The comment expresses concern about the electrification mandates for new construction and cited a recent Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision to deny the City of Berkeley's electrification ordinance. The comment also expresses support for the County's urgency of decarbonization of County buildings and operations.

Response O17-2
The County appreciates the support for the decarbonization of County buildings and operations. Refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," explaining that the CAP Update has adequately identified measures and actions that would exceed the 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and make substantial progress toward the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

Letter O18

From: Katie Pettit
To: CAP
Cc: Josh Chatten-Brown
Subject: [External] SEIR public comment: Sierra Club's Comments on the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report
Date: Friday, January 5, 2024 3:08:17 PM
Attachments: 2024-01-05 CBLG CAP Letter.pdf

Ms Kelly:

On behalf of the Sierra Club, please see the attached comments on the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report. O18-1

Please confirm receipt of this email and the attached comments. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Katie Pettit

--

Kathryn Pettit
Associate

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January 5, 2024

Via email to CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov

County of San Diego
ATTN: Meghan Kelly
Climate Action Plan SEIR
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Re: Sierra Club's Comments on the County of San Diego Climate Action Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report

Dear Ms. Kelly:

On behalf of the San Diego Sierra Club Chapter, we provide the below comments on the County of San Diego's ("County") October 2023 Draft Climate Action Plan ("CAP") and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report ("SEIR").

We appreciate all of the staff who worked to draft the CAP and SEIR, which has certainly improved from the previous iteration. However, we were disappointed with the CAP and SEIR's continued legal deficiencies.

The Sierra Club hopes to avoid both further delay in implementation of the CAP and additional litigation regarding the environmental review performed on the CAP. The Sierra Club seeks good faith analysis and compliance with the Court of Appeal's opinion and CEQA. Unfortunately, the CAP and SEIR do not contain a good faith analysis of the smart growth alternatives. We detail these deficiencies and necessary revisions below, and request good faith responses and revisions to the CAP and SEIR.

O18-2

I. The County's Analysis Is Inadequate Due to Its Repeated Contention that the CAP Is Not A Land Use Plan, A Claim Which the Court of Appeal Previously Rejected

The County continues to insist that the CAP cannot include any land use measures, despite the Court of Appeals' requirement that the County consider land use measures to curb GHG emissions. The County claims, "Because the CAP mitigates for the General Plan, **it cannot and does not make land use changes** (although some of those changes are analyzed as Alternatives and can be directed by the Board along with CAP approval)." (SEIR, p. 102, emphasis added.)

O18-3

Regarding the Smart Growth Alternatives, the County further claims "these alternatives extend **beyond the scope of the CAP Update**, which is a program of measures and actions to address GHG emissions from development under the adopted General Plan and government operations." (SEIR, p. 5-2, emphasis added.)

The County already tried this argument before the Court of Appeal, when "the County contend[ed] that implementing a smart-growth alternative would be inconsistent with project objectives, one of which is to reduce GHG emissions from buildout of the General Plan, not an amended General Plan. (*Golden Door Properties, LLC* v. County of San Diego (2020) 50 Cal.App.5th 467, 548 ("Golden Door").)

The Court was unpersuaded, noting "a smart growth alternative is consistent with achieving Project objectives." (Id. at p. 107.) The Court explained:

> Further, the GPU 'includes specific goals and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions including growing in a compact and efficient manner, using energy more efficiently, harnessing renewable energy to power buildings, improving waste recycling, and improving access to sustainable transportation.' The CAP, which is based on buildout under the GPU, recognizes that '[g]iven that the largest source of emissions in the unincorporated county is the On-Road Transportation sector, the CAP proposes several measures . . . to reduce the number and length of vehicle trips.' Thus, **there is no conflict** among (1) buildout under the GPU, (2) the CAP, and (3) an alternative that would encourage smart growth and associated reduced VMT.
>
> At oral argument, **the County also asserted that the CAP is 'not a land use plan, but an emissions reduction plan'** and, therefore, project alternatives should also be focused on emission reduction, not land development as in a smart growth plan. This argument is untenable, however, because the County overstates the purported distinction between land use and GHG emissions. GHG emission reduction targeted by Assem. Bill No. 32 and other legislation is concerned with human activities contributing to climate change. To state the obvious, the amount of GHG emissions from agricultural land and open space will be vastly different if that same land contains 14,000 homes, roads, and infrastructure. Land use often drives GHG emission levels. Therefore, a smart growth land use alternative is reasonably related to GHG emission reduction.

(*Golden Door, supra,* 50 Cal.App.5th at 549, emphasis added.)

Yet, again the County claims that "**the CAP Update is not a land use plan**—it imposes measures and actions on the adopted General Plan land use plan." (SEIR, p. 5-25, emphasis

O18-3 cont.

added.) As discussed in Section VI, the County fails to conduct an adequate analysis of the smart growth alternative, partly based on this incorrect assertion. The SEIR claims it "**is speculative to consider the relative impacts of land use plans, for which the CAP Update does not control and are not the subject of the CAP Update**. …Therefore, the potential for environmental effects would be substantially similar to the proposed CAP Update and these resources are not discussed in detail below." (Ibid, emphasis added.)

The Court of Appeal already ruled that there "is no conflict" among the General Plan buildout, the CAP, and an alternative that would encourage smart growth and associated reduced VMT. Yet, the CAP continues to mislead the public and decisionmakers by making these very same claims.

Additionally, per policy guidelines from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, the CAP Update should be "'shaped by community input and center environmental justice.'" (CAP, App'x 1, p. 1.) In an effort to comply with these guidelines, the County sought input from the public and key stakeholders. (*Id.*) Poll participants repeatedly emphasized the need for land use measures as a means to achieve a net-zero emissions future. (*See, e.g.*, *id.* at pp. 49, 58.) Despite clear public interest in land use measures as emissions reduction mechanisms, the CAP Update remains entirely absent of *any* land use measure. In neglecting to incorporate such a measure, the CAP Update neglects to consider both the Court of Appeals' *Golden Door* ruling and the community input received during the polling process.

O18-3 cont.

Many other local governments included land use measures within their CAPs, demonstrating that it is both sensible and feasible to do so, despite the County's contention to the contrary. The Los Angeles County CAP includes a strategy to "Increase Densities and Diversity of Land Use Near Transit." (LA CAP Draft, Mar. 2023, pp. 3-29–3-30.) The following implementing actions are all associated with this strategy: (1) "incentivize residential and community-serving uses to be developed in high quality transit areas," (2) "develop land use tools that will increase the production of a diversity of housing types," and (3) "develop community plans that will increase the percentage of residence who could live and work within the same community, and that could decrease VMT." (*Id.*) The San Francisco City and County CAP contains an entire category of strategies dedicated to transportation and land use. (SF CAP, 2021, pp. 82–93.) One measure, TLU.6, specifically includes actions to (1) "facilitate the development of neighborhoods where people live within an easy walk or roll of their daily needs" by creating a City working group for planning and designing, (2) "examine rezoning to allow for multi-family housing," and (3) "increase the types of home-based businesses allowed." (*Id.* at 90.)

These examples rebut the CAP's claims that it "cannot" include any measure that affect land use. The County offers no authority for the premise that a mitigation measure cannot effectuate VMT reductions through land use changes, especially where the SEIR is the forum to study potential

impacts. This is especially true given that the County plans to rely on the CAP as a GHG reduction plan under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5.

The CAP itself claims, "Housing location and type (e.g., detached single family housing, townhome, apartment, condominium) have a significant impact on reducing GHG emissions and creating complete communities…**CAP implementation will streamline housing production** in sustainable locations." (CAP p. 11, emphasis added.) As discussed below, the claim that the General Plan promotes sustainable development is also not accurate.

Even further, the SEIR "incorporates by reference the prior alternatives analysis in the 2011 GPU PEIR, which are additional land use alternatives aimed at achieving smart growth":

- The Hybrid Map Alternative that would increase the acreage of the rural land use designations;
- The Draft Land Use Map Alternative that would "result in significantly less acres of semi-rural residential and significantly more acres of rural lands designations" and "accommodate less growth and development in the unincorporated county;" and
- The Environmentally Superior Map Alternative that "is more aggressive in restricting growth in portions of the semi-rural residential and the rural lands designations."

(SEIR, p. 5-32 to 5-33.)

The General Plan already studied reductions to its projected growth. The SEIR's repeated claims that it simply cannot study and implement a Smart Growth Alternative – even General Plan edits or overlays – absent years of additional planning are incorrect and inaccurately preclude a Smart Growth Alternative from being identified as feasible.

The CAP and SEIR must be revised to accurately reflect the Court's ruling, remove the above noted false allegations, and provide a revised analysis that does not rely on the improper assertion that the CAP cannot make changes to land use.

O18-3 cont.

II. The CAP Should Incorporate Measures to Meaningfully Reduce VMT

The Court of Appeal emphasized the importance of smart growth and reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), noting that a majority of emissions in the unincorporated county come from the transportation sector. (*Golden Door*, *supra*, at 549.)

O18-4

On-road transportation emissions still account for nearly half of all County-wide emissions—the "largest contributor of all GHG emissions in the CAP emissions inventory." (CAP, p. 48.) Despite their outsized impact, the CAP makes a minimal effort to reduce VMT. The three CAP measures that reference VMT, none of which address the Court of Appeal's findings related to

land-use based VMT reduction goals, collectively only account **for 4.36%** of the CAP's projected emission reductions.[1]

A reduction in VMT around the County, tied to increased local proximity to jobs and services, would greatly reduce overall GHG emissions. The CAP would be much more effective at reducing VMT and related emissions if it *also* utilized land-use based measures, such as zoning overlays and measures prioritizing mixed-use development.

The SEIR offers General Plan Goal and Policy edits as project alternatives and identifies opportunities for enhancing smart growth principles within the General Plan. (SEIR, p. 5-31.) As an initial matter, Sierra Club supports the adoption of these edits, subject to the revisions that are detailed in the letter by Endangered Habitats League.

Only one suggested amendment focuses on VMT reductions directly. (SEIR, p. 5-36 [Policy LU-5.1].) The policy update would emphasize VMT reductions for new development, compensatory strategies for existing development, and increased reliance on electric vehicles where VMT cannot be reduced. (*Id.*) As EHL identified, there should not be a reliance on electric vehicles to reduce VMT.

O18-4 cont.

Other potential policy amendments include: the imposition of requirements beyond those necessitated by CEQA for certain General Plan Amendments;[2] the consideration of zoning standards that prioritize mixed use development in viable areas;[3] and the development of a program to retrofit existing buildings to reduce associated GHG emissions.[4] Notably, these are merely *suggested* amendments, and the SEIR states any such amendments would require further CEQA review should the County elect to pursue this alternative. (SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-32.)

Yet, the SEIR is exactly the forum for these amendments to be reviewed. Sierra Club further emphasizes that the identified General Plan edits are all feasible measures that should have been incorporated into the CAP.

Instead, the CAP continues to make inaccurate claims that undermine the identified potential edits, including that the CAP cannot incorporate these proposed edits. This runs contrary to the Court of Appeal's ruling. And it is especially not true for more limited changes, such as limits to future proposed upzoning beyond the General Plan land use designations in high VMT and high fire areas through General Plan Amendments.

[1] CAP Measure T-4 through T-6. (CAP Draft, Oct. 2023, p. 53-56.)
[2] Policy LU-19.1, SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-40.
[3] Policy LU-11.12, SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-39.
[4] Policy COS-15.7, SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-42.

Los Angeles County recently enacted an amendment to its General Plan that prohibits new subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The County utilized a Negative Declaration and was able to study and implement the GPA swiftly.[5]

Several of the amendments are feasible mitigation measures that should be included in the CAP now, not considered briefly and then deferred for potential further review. Of particular importance is the amendment focused on VMT reductions: VMT reduction is paramount to GHG emissions reductions overall, as noted by the Court of Appeals, and a substantive measure modeled off of the suggested amendment would significantly further the CAP's goals.

Finally, the CAP's refusal to include meaningful VMT reductions conflicts with the State's 2022 Scoping Plan, which the CAP repeatedly references and utilizes. The 2022 Scoping Plan relies on "VMT per capita reduced **25% below 2019 levels by 2030**, and 30% below 2019 levels by 2045" to meet State targets. (CAP, Appendix 5, *County of San Diego CAP Update: GHG Reduction Targets and Gap Analysis*, p. 4.)

O18-4 cont.

III. The SEIR Provides an Inaccurate Portrayal of Takings and SB 330 Limits

The SEIR seems particularly concerned about liability for regulatory takings related to restrictions on development, repeatedly noting that it intends to accomplish its objectives in a manner that avoids such takings. (*See, e.g.*, SEIR, p. 4, 1-4, 5-3, 5-6, & 5-37.) The SEIR implies that utilizing land use measures, such as zoning amendments, will result in liability for takings.

However, this concern is misplaced. A property owner does not have a general right to a certain density zoning on their property. (*Avco Community Developers, Inc. v. South Coast Regional Com.*, 17 Cal. 3d 785 (1976) [no vested right in existing or anticipated zoning]; *Consaul v. City of San Diego* (1992) 6 Cal.App.4th 1781, 1785); *Lakeview Dev. Corp. v. City of S. Lake Tahoe*, 915 F.2d 1290, 1295 (9th Cir.1990) ["it is well established that there is no federal Constitutional right to be free from changes in the land use laws," finding that even if the special use permit met the *Avco* vested rights requirements, the developer did not subsequently develop in time.])

O18-5

Rezoning based on the adoption of a general plan does not result in a taking, because diminution in market value alone does not amount to "damages" requiring compensation. (*HFH, Ltd. v. Superior Court* (1975) 15 Cal.3d 508, 516–18.)

The California Supreme Court explained:

> Plaintiffs are apparently attempting to recover profits they might have earned if they had been successful in getting their land rezoned to permit subdivision into

[5] L.A. Cnty. Dep't Reg'l Planning, *Hearing on the General Plan Safety Element Update* (Apr. 5, 2022), https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/167379.pdf.

> small residential lots, but landowners have no vested right in existing or anticipated zoning ordinances. (*Anderson v. City Council* [1964] 229 Cal.App.2d 79, 88-90.) A purchaser of land merely acquires a right to continue a use instituted before the enactment of a more restrictive zoning. Public entities are not bound to reimburse individuals for losses due to changes in zoning, for within the limits of the police power, some uncompensated hardships must be borne by individuals as the price of living in a modern enlightened and progressive community.' (Metro Realty v. County of El Dorado [1963] 222 Cal.App.2d 508. . . .)" (247 Cal.App.2d at pp. 602-603; italics added.)

(*HFH, Ltd. v. Superior Court of Los Angeles County* (1975) 15 Cal.3d 508, 516.)

A regulatory taking occurs where a land use regulation goes too far, which is evaluated based on the economic impact of the regulation and the extent to which the regulation has interfered with the property owner's "investment-backed expectations" (*Penn Cent. Transp. Co. v. City of New York* (1978) 438 U.S. 104, 124), or "the owner of real property has been called upon to sacrifice *all* economically beneficial uses" of his property (*Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council* (1992) 505 U.S. 1003, 1019, emphasis added.)

Accordingly, liability would not arise for a taking from limits to future proposed General Plan Amendments or subdivisions, the proposal of zoning overlays, or other land use measures under the CAP, unless the zoning amendment stripped a property of *all* economic value.

O18-5 cont.

The SEIR's new misplaced concerns are particularly problematic where the County appears poised to wield unfounded takings concerns to absolve itself from necessary actions. For example, the SEIR has now added the following project objective: "Accomplish the foregoing objectives in a manner that minimizes undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners, and that avoids regulatory takings under the federal and state constitutions." (SEIR, p. 5-3.)

The SEIR further proposes the following edit to an *existing* General Plan policy that seeks reductions in vehicle trips: "develop and implement strategies for providing economic compensation to private landowners where the County restricts or **limits** the amount of development pursuant to their existing General Plan and zoning designation in order to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions consistent with State law and County General Plan policy." (SEIR, p. 5-36 emphasis added.)

Yet, Property Owners have no vested interest in the current zoning, or a future approval of a subdivision, except to where the County completely deprives all economic use of the land or the owner meets the high standard set out in *Avco*. The County is well within its rights to revise or

reduce allowable development through land use, especially to comply with State mandates related to high VMT and fire zones.

The Sierra Club is concerned that the new focus on "potential" takings indicates the County will avoid effectuating important and direly needed land use changes based on unfounded concerns. The Sierra Club urges the CAP to remove the overly vague and unfounded references to takings, or to provide additional detail to ensure an accurate representation of the concern.

The SEIR also states that Senate Bill 330 would "prevent the County from reducing residential capacity on a site zoned for housing without identifying replacement capacity" within the context of smart growth alternatives (SEIR, p. 5-22.) This is not an entirely accurate picture.

First, section 65300, subdivision (f)(4), states that "[t]his section shall not apply to a housing development project within a very high fire hazard severity zone." Further, this limit is applied only to "affected counties." Affected county is defined as "a census designated place, based on the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, that is wholly located within the boundaries of an urbanized area, as designated by the United States Census Bureau." SB 330 further specifies that "The Department of Housing and Community Development shall determine those cities and counties in this state that are affected cities and affected counties." (Gov. Code Section 66300(a)(2).)

O18-5 cont.

There are large portions of the County where the limitations do not apply, most of which are within the urban boundary and would not be proposed for downzoning. (See **Exhibit A** [highlights over San Diego County "affected counties"]. In fact, less than 20% of the County's Census Designated Places ("CDPs") are subject to SB 330.[6]

Thus, it is misleading to claim that SB 330 precludes any of the smart growth alternatives, especially the VMT and High Fire Zone Overlay alternative.

The County must revise the SEIR accordingly – especially the alternative analysis – including any analysis that relied on the premise that SB 330 applies to the entire County.

[6] See maps of all CDPs: https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/2012/reference-maps/st06_ca/ec2012-0500000us06073m-san-diego.pdf; https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC_RefMap/ua/ua78661_san_diego_ca/DC10UA78661.pdf; County-wide CDPs include Vista, La Presa, Fallbrook, Winter Gardens, Lakeside, Rancho San Diego, Ramona, Casa de Oro-Mount Helix, Bostonia, Alpine, Bonita, Camp Pendleton South, Valley Center, San Diego Country Estates, Camp Pendleton North, Eucalyptus Hills, Jamul, Lake San Marcos, Bonsall, Harbison Canyon, Granite Hills, Hidden Meadows, Campo, Crest, Rancho Santa Fe, Rainbow, Borrego Springs, Fairbanks Ranch, Descanso, Pine Valley, Spring Valley, Julian, Potrero, Boulevard, Jacumba, Mount Laguna.

IV. References to the County's Implicit Approval of Offsets Should Be Removed

A. Carbon Offsets are Problematic and Ineffective

Carbon offsets have long been criticized, both domestically and abroad, for their inefficiency and general inadequacy. In fact, the U.N. recently failed to establish rules governing a global carbon offset trading framework, because the deal was ultimately blocked by critical Member States who cited a lack of stringent standards and overreliance on discretionary decision making within the oversight body.[7] These concerns highlight some of the preeminent issues with carbon offsets: they are often too lenient and generally unenforceable. Additionally, carbon offset programs displace indigenous people globally and encourage land grabs, resulting in harm well beyond the failure to adequately offset emissions.[8] Carbon offsets are ineffective from an economic perspective too: those involved in the offset market could potentially lose billions of dollars given new science showing that the offsets have "no environmental worth and have become stranded assets."[9] This hit to the offset market came on the heels of scientific research indicating that the use of previously-purchased offsets could make global heating *worse* if actually used. (Ibid.) O18-6

In another case, a team of researchers and economists found that nearly twenty large forest-based offset projects had produced "millions of carbon credits based on calculations that greatly inflated their conservation impact," meaning the programs only fractionally offset their impact, if at all. (Ibid.) Carbon offsets are exceedingly difficult to calculate accurately, and this often results in the overestimation of the benefit derived.

In fact, research has demonstrated that over ninety percent of rainforest-based offset credits certified by the world's largest certifier, Verra, are merely "phantom credits," or those that result in *no* actual reduction in carbon emissions.[10] Forest-based programs are uniquely positioned to

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[7] Jake Spring, et al., *COP28 Kicks Carbon Trading Down the Road as EU Blocks Deal*, REUTERS (Dec. 13, 2023), https://www.reuters.com/markets/carbon/cop28-kicks-carbon-trading-down-road-eu-blocks-deal-2023-12-13/.

[8] Ashley Dawson & Fiore Longo, *Carbon-Trading Plans are Thinly Veiled Land Grabs that Displace People Globally*, TRUTHOUT (Dec. 8, 2023), https://truthout.org/articles/carbon-trading-plans-are-thinly-veiled-land-grabs-that-displace-people-globally/.

[9] Patrick Greenfield, *Carbon Credit Speculators Could Lose Billions as Offsets Deemed Worthless*, THE GUARDIAN (Aug. 24, 2023), https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/aug/24/carbon-credit-speculators-could-lose-billions-as-offsets-deemed-worthless-aoe.

[10] Patrick Greenfield, *Revealed: More than 90% of Rainforest Carbon Offsets by Biggest Certifier Are Worthless, Analysis Shows*, THE GUARDIAN (Jan. 18, 2023),

be ineffective, because they are increasingly vulnerable to wildfires and any fire would release all the carbon being stored and "offset."[11] Carbon offset programs further require the assumption that the offset project protects a resource that would have otherwise been demolished without that protection.[12] However, even if you protect one natural area as an offset program, that does not prevent anyone from demolishing other natural areas nearby. (Ibid.) Organizations with the disposition to exploit the resource will simply turn their sights to another area to demolish instead, and the result is that nothing is actually being protected, let alone offset.

Given the unreliability of offset programs, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission has issued guidance for potential whistleblowers, who are asked to be on the lookout for manipulative trading, ghost credits, double counting of credits, fraudulent representations about the underlying credit, and manipulation of tokenized carbon markets.[13] The use of carbon offset programs has an uncertain future given the increasing mistrust of the certification process, as well as the economic, environmental, and human rights concerns with the industry. Relying on such programs, particularly those that may allow for international offsets, results in minimal—and often incalculable—benefit and increases the risk of exacerbating the same harms the programs seek to offset.

O18-6 cont.

In a May 2019 Harvard Kennedy School Working Paper entitled "California Compliance Offsets: Problematic Protocols and Buyer Behavior," the author analyzed California's compliance offset market and questioned "whether carbon offset policy can guarantee the production of legitimate offsets— those that represent additional, permanent, enforceable, real, quantifiable, and verifiable greenhouse gas emissions reductions."[14]

The paper analyzed four compliance offset protocols that have supplied more than 145 million offsets to the California Compliance Market and found that all four have the potential to generate illegitimate offsets. The analysis concluded that "US Forest Projects Protocol is both the most

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https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/18/revealed-forest-carbon-offsets-biggest-provider-worthless-verra-aoe; Dawson & Longo, *supra* note 6.

[11] Sarah Kuta, *What Does Carbon Offset Actually Mean for U.S. Forests?*, COLO. ARTS & SCIENCES MAG. (Sept. 6, 2023), https://www.colorado.edu/asmagazine/2023/09/06/what-does-carbon-offset-actually-mean-us-forests.

[12] Heidi Blake, *The Great Cash-For-Carbon Hustle*, THE NEW YORKER (Oct. 16, 2023), https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/10/23/the-great-cash-for-carbon-hustle.

[13] COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION, CFTC Whistleblower Alert: Blow the Whistle on Fraud or Market Manipulation in the Carbon Markets, https://www.whistleblower.gov/system/files/2023/06/1687294118/06.20.23%20Carbon%20Markets%20WBO%20Alert.pdf (last visited Dec. 22, 2023).

[14] https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/mrcbg/files/120_final.pdf

productive and most problematic; so far, it has produced more than 115.6 million illegitimate offsets, 79% of California's total compliance offset supply." (Ibid.)

Other analyses and researchers have further identified significant concerns with out-of-jurisdiction carbon offsetting.[15]

Finally, in June 2019, the University of California San Diego and Scripps Institute of Oceanography prepared a white paper entitled "Carbon Offsets in San Diego County: An Analysis of Carbon Offset Policy Effectiveness, Best Practices, and Local Viability in the San Diego County Region" (hereinafter, "Carbon Offsets in San Diego County").[16] This paper identified many of the problems with out-of-jurisdiction carbon offsets.

O18-6 cont.

B. The CAP & SEIR Should Not Express Approval of the Use of Offsets

The Court of Appeal took issue with the County's previous attempt to create a framework for offsets, noting that there were no objective standards to determine whether "offsets originating in foreign countries were permanent, verifiable, enforceable, and additional." (*Golden Door 2020*, *supra*, at 521.) Further, the County's original framework for its offset program allowed a "project applicant to offset 100 percent of its GHG emissions through offset projects originating outside of California." (*Id.* at 562.) This framework, M-GHG-1, was intended to mitigate GHG emissions related to General Plan Amendment (GPA) projects. (*Id.* at 495.) In response to these critiques, the County removed the offset program from the newest drafts of both the SEIR and the CAP.

O18-7

However, the CAP unnecessarily and vaguely allows for individual GPAs to utilize offset measures without addressing the issues raised by the Court of Appeal. The SEIR states: "projects can still use carbon offsets if appropriate." (SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-8.)

There have been GPA projects since the *Golden Door* ruling that still proceeded to propose offsets that violate CEQA, similar to M-GHG-1. Thus, this will be an ongoing issue.

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[15] https://www.fs.usda.gov/pnw/sciencef/scifi155.pdf [Do Carbon Offsets Work? The Role Of Forest Management In Greenhouse Gas Mitigation];
https://law.stanford.edu/publications/managing-uncertainty-in-carbon-offsets-insights-from-californias-standardized-approach/ [Managing Uncertainty in Carbon Offsets: Insights from California's Standardized Approach];
https://mediamanager.sei.org/documents/Publications/SEI-Report-WWF-ComparisonCarbonOffset-08.pdf [Making Sense of the Voluntary Carbon Market A Comparison of Carbon Offset Standards].

[16] https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2t48k6m7.

Given the major concerns with carbon offsets, made even more clear by the recent studies and investigations referenced above, the CAP should not indicate an approval of the use of carbon offsets for GPAs without studying and establishing appropriate protocols, including the concerns detailed in *Golden Door*.

The SEIR later strikes down the no project alternative as infeasible on the grounds that "impacts would be assessed on a project-by-project basis, without the CAP Update in place, it may be more difficult for the County to achieve compliance and could result in inconsistencies with legislative requirements." (SEIR, Oct. 2023, p. 5-11.) It remains unclear why the County is hesitant to assess impacts on a project-by-project basis in this context, but is willing to allow GPAs to proceed with their own individual impact analyses and offset programs without providing guidelines. Surely, allowing individual projects to create their own project-by-project offset programs will result in the same inconsistencies the County is trying to avoid.

O18-7 cont.

As detailed in Sierra Club's December 28, 2023 comment letter on the CAP, the County should not continue to approve GPAs in high VMT areas with significant GHG impacts. However, should the County choose to consider a GPA, it must require carbon neutrality to preclude undermining its CAP. Therefore, the CAP must require carbon neutrality for any GPA projects. Further, if the CAP and County plan to allow for GPAs to use off-site GHG mitigation, the County must establish appropriate protocols, and ensure the any off-site GHG mitigation occurs within the County through a County administered in-County GHG mitigation program.

C. The Use of Non-Local Offsets Risks an Adverse Ruling

In 2018, the County removed the word "local" from General Plan Goal COS-20 and replaced it with "community-wide (i.e., unincorporated County) and County." (Golden Door Properties LLC v. County of San Diego, No. 37-2018-00013324-CU-TT-CTL (Cal.Super. Dec. 24, 2018), at 12 [hereinafter Golden Door 2018.) The trial court noted that this change maintained the spirit of local reductions, because it still emphasized that such reductions would occur within the County. (Id.)

O18-8

The court then concluded that M-GHG-1 and any efforts to outsource offsets were inconsistent with the County's General Plan. (Id.) Because it already found M-GHG-1 to be noncompliant with CEQA, the Court of Appeal declined to reach a decision on whether GPAs' authorization of out-of-County offsets would be inconsistent with the General Plan. *(Golden Door*, supra at 503.) The Court of Appeal's finding that the CAP as a whole did not violate the General Plan did not address this issue.

Because the Court of Appeal did not rule on the issue, it remains legally unsettled whether GPAs may utilize non-County offsets to mitigate the emissions from individual projects. However, the language from the trial court was very clear: the General Plan emphasizes local, county-based

reductions. (*Golden Door 2018*, supra at 12.) Diverging from that priority is inconsistent with the trial court's guidance and risks an adverse ruling. O18-8 cont.

V. The CAP Fails to Provide a Cumulative Impacts Analysis that Complies with the Court of Appeal Ruling

As noted earlier, the SEIR still indicates an approval of the use of offset measures for GPAs, without directly addressing the concerns raised by *Golden Door*. Further, the CAP does little to limit GPAs, fully mitigate GHG emissions from GPAs, or even identify future measures that GPAs must adhere to – carbon neutrality, among other measures – to prevent contravention of the CAP's targets.

The Court ordered an analysis of potentially significant cumulative impacts from GPAs.[17] The Court of Appeal found:

> Here, the 21 in-process GPAs, if constructed, would collectively add nearly 14,000 dwelling units in the unincorporated County. The EIRs for just five of these disclose they will collectively produce 139,485 MTCO2e in construction-related GHG emissions alone. However, the SEIR does not analyze these cumulative impacts— except by stating that in-process GPAs will mitigate to zero above the CAP under M-GHG-1 …. if a potential cumulative impact is insignificant, the lead agency is not required to conduct "a full cumulative impacts analysis," but must **explain the basis for the finding of insignificance**. (SF Baykeeper, supra, 242 Cal.App.4th at p. 222.)

O18-9

(*Golden Door, supra,* 50 Cal.App.5th at 529-530, emphasis added.)

Yet, the CAP SEIR concludes:

> Operation of the in-process GPAs would result in mobile-source GHG emissions associated with vehicle trips to and from the project sites (i.e., project-generated VMT), landscaping equipment, electricity consumption, water consumption, and the generation of wastewater and solid waste. The in-process GPAs would be subject to CEQA review. During the CEQA review process, **potential impacts would be identified**, **and mitigation measures would be developed** to minimize or avoid potential impacts to the extent feasible. Given the nature of the in-

[17] Notably, the CAP simply assumes those GPAs are now part of the inventory, on the grounds that they were approved before the CAP analysis, without providing evidence why that means the GPAs are thus included in the inventory, as the CAP's inventory relied on SANDAG projections that did not include those GPAs.

> process GPAs …**it is likely that impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level through implementation of measures, such as utilizing alternative fueled equipment and vehicles,** utilizing advanced engine controls equipment, and replacing natural gas infrastructure with electricity. Therefore, the CAP Update, in combination with the in-process GPAs, **would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution** to an existing cumulative impact related to GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. The cumulative impact would be less than significant."

O18-9 cont.

(SEIR, p. 4-25, emphasis added.)

The SEIR offers no evidence to support this conclusion, much less substantial evidence.

Rather, as detailed in this letter, the evidence shows the GPAs result in substantial and significant GHG emissions that derail the CAP's objectives. The SEIR must disclose that GPAs result in significant impacts to GHG emissions and incorporate measures to mitigate this impact.

VI. The CAP Offers a Conclusory and Inaccurate Alternatives Analysis

Sierra Club challenged the previous CAP for its failure to include a Smart Growth Alternative. The Court of Appeal found that "a project alternative based on reducing GHG emissions by implementing smart growth policies affecting GPAs is broadly consistent with CAP objectives."

The CAP presents smart growth alternatives, which it claims complies with the court rulings and writ of mandate. Yet, instead of providing a good faith alternatives analysis, the CAP provides several straw man alternatives, and simultaneously undermines these alternatives based on unfounded claims.[18]

O18-10

The CAP downplays the potential VMT reductions from the smart growth alternatives, claiming, "Note, however, that the efficacy of alternatives focused on incentives and disincentives for future development is limited because most forecast VMT in the unincorporated county is associated with existing development." (SEIR, p. 5-19.)

Sierra Club worked extensively with the County to develop the "Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative." The SEIR concludes that the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative is not efficient because the vast majority of future year VMT in the unincorporated areas "would be attributed to existing land uses." (SEIR p. 5-25 to 5-26). This is misleading. First, the VMT reductions associated with this alternative are likely higher, as the SEIR only assumed *half* the

[18] Further, the CAP erroneously included the Village Support Areas Alternative as a "Smart Growth Alternative" which Sierra Club strenuously objects to.

County's growth would occur in the designated smart growth areas, whereas in contrast, the SEIR assumed that "all unincorporated County household growth" would occur in the Villages and Village Support Areas Alternative. (County of San Diego Climate Action Plan SEIR VMT Assessment, p. 1.)

Regardless, even assuming the SEIR's calculations are correct, the SEIR concludes:

> If implemented, this alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 6.6 percent in 2035 and 3.0 percent in 2050. However, when viewed in conjunction with existing development, the magnitude of overall VMT reduction is relatively small because the vast majority of unincorporated county VMT under future year alternatives can be attributed to existing land uses. Overall, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative would result in a 0.53 percent reduction in unincorporated county VMT for 2035 and a 0.41 percent reduction in unincorporated county VMT for 2050… Therefore, this alternative **is not expected to meaningfully reduce VMT** or GHG emissions in the unincorporated county.

(SEIR, p. 5-26 to 5-27.) The SEIR claims this is negligible. Yet, the County's own consultants also disagree with this conclusion. Fehr & Peers concluded, "The Fire Safe and VMT Efficient alternative results in a 0.53% reduction in unincorporated County VMT for 2035 and a 0.41% reduction in unincorporated County VMT for 2050…. These changes **appear very small; however,** it is important to consider that in the base year (2016) the unincorporated County already generates approximately 8.8 million VMT." (p. 11.)

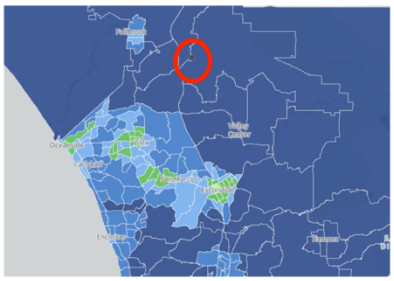
O18-10 cont.

Fehr & Peer again underscored that these percentages are impactful changes in calculating VMT from the CAP's list of in-process GPAs: "The General Plan Amendments scenario results in a 0.84% increase in unincorporated County VMT for 2035 and a 0.76% increase in unincorporated County VMT for 2050." Noting that while these changes "**appear very small,**" Fehr & Peers underscored that these few GPAs result in a 10.3% increase in VMT growth from new development. (*County of San Diego In-Process General Plan Amendments VMT Assessment,* pp. 4-5.)

A review of the projected VMT increases from proposed County projects in VMT inefficient areas shows that the CAP's finding that the "this alternative is not expected to meaningfully reduce VMT" is flawed. [19]

[19] Further, the Harmony Grove Village South is listed as one of the GPA In-Process Projects. (SEIR, p. 4-43.) The Attorney General specifically warned as amicus curie in *Golden Door* that Harmony Grove Village South "will increase VMT by 11.5 million miles annually." (*Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego* (2020) 50 Cal.App.5th 467, 539.)

The Preserve at Riverbend, a proposed GPA that will place 1,330 units along Pala Road, is listed in the CAP. (p. 4-43.) This project will add 19,126 average daily trips to a rural area that **is 220%** of the regional average VMT.[20] The approval of one GPA project eradicates a substantial amount of time and resources spent under the CAP.



(SANDAG SB 743 Screening Map, Proposed Project circled in red.)

Altogether, the pending GPAs would add nearly 28 million VMT/year. (SEIR, Appendix 2.) The total projected GHG Emissions from In-Process GPAs result in an increase in 37,310 MTCO2e annually. (SEIR, p. 4-44.) This **more than wipes out the CAP's entire projected emission reductions** from the three VMT-related CAP measures.

Another previously approved County GPA project reported its operational emissions would result in an addition of **536,019 metric tons** to the County's GHG inventory over its lifespan.[21] In contrast, the CAP aims to achieve 740,914 metric tons of GHG reductions by 2030. One single GPA Project in a VMT inefficient area can eliminate almost 75% of the CAP's targeted GHG reductions.

The County cannot rely on the fact it has already high VMT to claim that the Smart Growth Alternatives will not ensure lower GHG reductions. Nor can that condone digging the hole deeper. To do so is misleading, fails to prevent an accurate analysis of the alternatives, and precludes selection of the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative or Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative ("SCS") as the true environmentally superior alternative.

O18-10 cont.

[20] https://preprod.sandiegocounty.gov/bin/documents.document/LUEG/0900f48e80e29ccc
[21] https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/OV14Amendment/PR/H.%20%20Greenhouse%20Gas%20Emission%20Letter%20Report_(12.18.19).pdf, page 32 [Table 13] Emissions (2028)].

We take this opportunity to note that the General Plan allows for development of up to an additional 60,000 units. The CAP inventory utilizes DS39, which projects development of one-third of these units – 20,000 – which it substantiates with market reports. If the CAP utilizes lower growth projections (DS 39), and compares the Smart Growth Alternatives against DS39,
11 rather than against the General Plan allowed growth (that does not take into account GPAs, which amounted to 14,000 units at the time of the last CAP), **then the CAP must place limits on the number of units that can utilize the CAP for streamlining and must require a CAP update when the number of units (General Plan consistent and GPAs) surpass its projections.** O18-11

We request the CAP correct the other below misleading claims and revise the analysis accordingly.

- The SEIR notes the removal of the Road User Charge for the SCS Alternative, concluding that "this scenario does not represent reasonably foreseeable land use, transportation policy/network, and VMT under the County's adopted General Plan." (SEIR, p.5-31.)

SANDAG's Amendment to the 2021 Regional Plan reported that the removal of the Road User Charge will only "result in an approximately **2 percent increase in VMT** for horizon years 2035 and 2050 compared to what was estimated for the approved Plan."[22] O18-12

The SEIR's appendix admits that the SCS Alternative would result in a **-95.0% change in VMT growth** for new development. (Climate Action Plan SEIR VMT Assessment, p. 11.)

Please update the SEIR Alternatives Analysis discussion to reflect that the SCS Alternative is feasible. While the Board of Supervisors does not have to select this alternative, the SEIR cannot preclude its selection by claiming it is not feasible.

- The SEIR claims that Village Support Areas will result in VMT reductions, including more VMT reductions than the VMT and Fire Alternative. (p. 5-28.) O18-13

13 It is unclear how the SEIR found that the Village Support Areas result in VMT reductions. The Alpine Community Plan Update admitted that increasing density in Alpine, which is one of the

[22] https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/regional-plan/2021-regional-plan/amendment-to-2021-regional-plan/seir-amendment-2021-regional-plan-section-5-cumulative-impact-analysis.pdf

General Plan "villages," will **increase** emissions beyond the 2030 General Plan by 35,454 MTCO2.[23] Please explain this discrepancy.

13 cont The Village Support Areas would propose densification of areas even outside of the County's designated "villages," and includes unequivocally high VMT areas like Jacumba, Julian, Pauma, Ramona, and Lake Morena. (SEIR, p. 5-69.) The Village Support Area must be removed as a Smart Growth Alternative. Otherwise, the CAP misleads the public and decisionmakers.

O18-13 cont.

- The CAP claims that limits on GPAs is not feasible because the County cannot prohibit future Board of Supervisors from revising or amending the General Plan. (SEIR, p. 5-7.)

14 This is only true to the extent that the County is prevented from revising the policy in the future. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recently voted to approve a general plan amendment which would prohibit new subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, unless the subdivision would be surrounded by pre-existing development.[24] Thus, the County can certainly place limits on GPAs, especially where they present real risks to the community.

O18-14

- The CAP claims that the General Plan itself is "smart growth" (SEIR p. 5-19.)[25]

15 While the General Plan included some positive principles, especially for its time over ten years ago, this claim runs counter to the Senate Bill 743 screening maps, which demonstrate that the General Plan currently allows land uses and densification in areas that are not VMT efficient. (**Exhibit B** [SANDAG SB 743 Maps].) The SANDAG Sustainable Communities Strategy ("SCS") underscores this as well, as the SCS focuses growth in far different areas from the General Plan.[26]

In fact, the CAP admits that several areas of the County feature "remote travel destinations and few areas served by public transportation particularly in semi-rural and rural communities." (p.

O18-15

[23] https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/AlpineCommunityPlanUpdate/DSEIR/2.6_Greenhouse%20Gases.pdf, p. 2.6-25.
[24] L.A. Cnty. Dep't Reg'l Planning, *Hearing on the General Plan Safety Element Update* (Apr. 5, 2022), https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/167379.pdf.
[25] Similarly, it is misleading for the CAP to claim that focusing growth in the County's "rural villages" will reduce GHG emissions. (CAP, p. 11.) This is only true in the villages on the very western edge of the County, that are considered VMT efficient.
[26] https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/regional-plan/sustainable-growth-and-development/2021-regional-plan-appendix-f-2021-12-01.pdf, p. F-18.

48.) Thus, designated rural "villages" in themselves are not necessarily sustainable areas to increase development.[27] O18-15 cont.

VII. The CAP's Measures Fail to Demonstrate The Plan Will Achieve the Reduction Targets

While Sierra Club applauds several of the CAP's targets and measures, it is concerned with the aspirational nature of the CAP. Sierra Club urges the CAP to incorporate further details to demonstrate that the proposed programs are feasible, and will actually deliver the promised GHG reductions.

A. The CAP Requires an Implementation Plan Containing Feasible Measures with Mandatory Performance Standards

Measures are aspirational and not enforceable where they do not actually amount to meaningful requirements with set benchmarks for compliance. Many of the measures in the San Diego CAP merely require "promotion," "evaluation," or "support," without identifying objective or mandatory metrics. O18-16

Some examples of transportation measures that lack enforceable standards, include T-1.1a, T-1.1b, T-3.1a, T-3.1b, T-3.1c. Some examples of transportation measures that lack sufficient detail to ensure feasibility include T-2.1[EV program] and T-3.1 [program].

Please incorporate more details for deferred plans to enact programs, and incorporate objective targets.

The CAP should require the hiring of a full time CAP coordinator, to ensure accountability, as well as consistent and timely implementation of the CAP. The cities of San Diego, Chula Vista, Carlsbad, Encinitas, and Del Mar maintain full-time staff dedicated to CAP implementation and related efforts.

At this juncture, it also does not appear that the County has dedicated funding to the CAP. (See CAP, p. 116.) The County must at least require a certain percentage from its budget be dedicated to CAP implementation while it seeks additional State and federal funding. If zero funding has

[27] The County's own AECOM Housing Projects Report demonstrates that several of the rural village have a very low ratio of jobs per housing unit. (Report, p. 33 ["Table 19: Jobs/Housing Unit Ratio by CPA: 2010-2020"], p. 36 [Table 21: Final Employment Growth Estimate and Jobs/Housing Unit Ratio by CPA: 2020-2050].) Therefore, most people will be commuting to the City of San Diego for work.

been secured or committed to the CAP, it is dubious whether the CAP's various measures and programs are feasible.

Finally, the CAP's measures must be additional. Measures are "additional" where they exceed preexisting obligations imposed either at the State level or regional level (i.e., programs a County has already agreed to undertake). Numerous CAP measures appear to require the City to implement preexisting plans or programs: A-2.2, A-3.1, T-1.1, T-5.1, E-1.1, W-1.1, W-2.4. Please explain how these measures are additional.

The CAP is a mitigation measure for the County's General Plan. An agency must implement promised mitigation measures, and where it fails to do so the public may enforce the mitigation measure under CEQA. (*Sierra Club v. County of San Diego* (2014) 231 Cal.App.4th 1152, 1166.) "Mitigating conditions are not mere expressions of hope." (*Lincoln Place Tenants Assn. v. City of Los Angeles* (2005) 130 Cal.App.4th 1491, 1508). Mitigation measures must be fully enforceable to ensure that they "will actually be implemented as a condition of development, and not merely adopted and then neglected or disregarded."

O18-16 cont.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 establishes the required criteria for tiering and streamlining the analysis of GHG emissions. Of particular relevance, Section 15183.5 instructs that qualified plans should:

> (D) Specify measures or a group of measures, **including performance standards, that substantial evidence demonstrates**, if implemented on a project-by-project basis, would collectively achieve the specified emissions level; and
> (E) Establish a mechanism to monitor the plan's progress toward achieving the level and to require amendment if the plan is not achieving specified levels.

(Section 15183.5, subd. (b)(1)(D)-(E), emphasis added.)

The Natural Resources Agency adopted CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 to address concerns that agencies preparing CAPs might "erroneously rely on a plan with purely aspirational intent to determine that a later project's cumulative impact is less than significant pursuant to section 15064(h)(3)." (**Exhibit C**, [Natural Resources Agency Final Statement of Reasons for Amendments to CEQA Guidelines]). The Natural Resources Agency noted the criteria in Section 15183.5(b)(1) are intended to ensure CAPs avoid or substantially lessen a cumulative problem as required by Section 15064(h)(3), stating "Criteria (D) and (E) **are necessary** to demonstrate that the plan **will actually avoid** or substantially lessen the cumulative effects of those emissions."

The State has underscored the importance of the emission reduction measures, explaining: "The heart of a CAP is the suite of reduction measures that will ensure that the plan achieves the

selected reduction targets in a transparent and replicable manner."[28]

Further, *Communities for a Better Environment v. City of Richmond* (2010) 184 Cal. App. 4th 70 provides guidance on the level of detail needed in a GHG reduction plan. The Court of Appeal found a city's GHG reduction plan inadequate given its reliance on mitigation measures that are "nonexclusive, undefined, untested and of unknown efficacy." (Id. at 93). The Court found that to be adequate, the plan should include measures that are "known to be feasible," "coupled with specific and mandatory performance standards." (Id. at 94, emphasis added). O18-16 cont.

B. The CAP Must Strengthen Its Consistency Checklist

The CAP will apply a "Consistency Checklist" to all projects seeking to rely on the CAP's GHG analysis and mitigation. General Plan consistent projects will no longer need to independently analyze their GHG emission impacts. The CAP Consistency Checklist requires major revisions.

Several of the requirements are contingent on future Board actions in many years, far too off into the future. (CAP, p. 597.)

Of only nine requirements for privately-initiated projects, two are not yet effective and will not be effective until at least five years from now. For example, the requirement to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips (Item #4) will not be effective **IF** and until the TDM ordinance has been implemented. O18-17

The TDM ordinance does not need to be implemented until 2028. (CAP p. 597). In the meantime, several projects will be approved with any individual GHG mitigation. The Checklist states: "This requirement does not apply to projects unless the TDM Ordinance has been adopted and has gone into effect."

Further, another requirement (Item #1) that projects electrify their loading docks also fails to be effective until the County amends an ordinance. The ordinance does not need to be amended until 2030. (CAP, Appendix 8.) The Checklist likewise states: "This requirement does not apply to projects unless the Code of Regulatory Ordinances has been amended and the amendments have gone into effect."

For Item #8, "Increase Tree Preservation," the Checklist merely states: "If the County's program to preserve native trees is in effect, the project must comply.

[28] https://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_C8_final.pdf, p. 229.

Item #9, "Increase Tree Planting," only requires adherence to an *existing* ordinance, and only applies to single family residential uses: "Single family residential: The project must comply with the tree planting requirements of the County's Landscaping Ordinance."

The remaining items essentially only require adherence to Tier 2 standards of the CAL Green Code.[29] The Checklist, in its current form, represents an incredible missed opportunity for the County to ensure meaningful on-site GHG mitigation.

Thus, the CAP Consistency Checklist requires the following revisions:

- Require more individual level actions of projects, including suggestions in the Sierra Club letter on the Notice of Preparation and on the Draft CAP.
    - Parking de-coupling.
    - Transit, carpool, and vanpool subsidies.
    - Prohibitions or limits on natural gas fireplaces and hearths.
    - Clustering design that reduces VMT and preserves habitat.
    - Provision of on-site mixed uses that reduce the need to drive, where appropriate.
    - Provision of bicycle storage lockers, racks, or other bicycle storage facilities for residents/employees.
    - Placement of conservation or agricultural easements at a 2:1 ratio where a Project results in conversion of natural habitat or agricultural lands.
    - Measures to reduce GHG emissions from heavy-construction equipment.
    - Prohibit gas-powered landscaping equipment.

- Require a financial contribution from projects in high VMT areas to provide funding for the CAP's measures.

- Move up the timelines for implementation of the programs and ordinances, require intermediary actions or fees to prevent contravention of the CAP's targets, or incorporate the high level requirements from the ordinances now.

O18-17 cont.

[29] For County-initiated projects, the applicant must only meet three criteria, all which are vague. One merely requires that the applicant "incorporate applicable measures" from the County's Water Plan. (CAP p. 601). Another requires electric/zero-emission vehicles and equipment for construction, but provides no minimum for how *many* of the vehicles/pieces of equipment need to be electric. (CAP p. 600).

VIII. Conclusion

On behalf of Sierra Club, we sincerely hope that the County will incorporate the above described comments to ensure a legally adequate CAP and SEIR. O18-18

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Pettit
Josh Chatten-Brown
Isabella Coye

Exhibit A

Affected Counties - 2023 Update

Per Government Code 66300, includes all census designated places located wholly within the boundaries of an urbanized area

Name	Urban Area	County
Acalanes Ridge CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Airport CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Alamo CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Alondra Park CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Alto CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Marin County
Alum Rock CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Arden-Arcade CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Ashland CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Alameda County
August CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County
Avocado Heights CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Bear Creek CDP	Merced	Merced County
Bermuda Dunes CDP	Indio--Palm Desert--Palm Springs	Riverside County
Blacklake CDP	Nipomo	San Luis Obispo County
Bloomington CDP	Riverside--San Bernardino	San Bernardino County
Bonita CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
Boronda CDP	Salinas	Monterey County
Bostonia CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
Boyes Hot Springs CDP	Sonoma	Sonoma County
Bret Harte CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Broadmoor CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	San Mateo County
Burbank CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Bystrom CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Calwa CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
Cambrian Park CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Camino Tassajara CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Carmichael CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Casa Conejo CDP	Thousand Oaks	Ventura County
Casa de Oro-Mount Helix CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
Castle Hill CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Channel Islands Beach CDP	Oxnard--San Buenaventura (Ventura)	Ventura County
Charter Oak CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Cherryland CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Alameda County
Citrus CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Clyde CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Contra Costa Centre CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Coronita CDP	Riverside--San Bernardino	Riverside County
Cottonwood CDP	Bakersfield	Kern County
Country Club CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County

Cowan CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Crockett CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Contra Costa County
Del Aire CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Desert Palms CDP	Indio--Palm Desert--Palm Springs	Riverside County
Desert View Highlands CDP	Palmdale--Lancaster	Los Angeles County
Diablo CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
East Los Angeles CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
East Pasadena CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
East Rancho Dominguez CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
East San Gabriel CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
East Tulare Villa CDP	Tulare	Tulare County
East Whittier CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Edmundson Acres CDP	Arvin	Kern County
Eldridge CDP	Sonoma	Sonoma County
El Rio CDP	Oxnard--San Buenaventura (Ventura)	Ventura County
El Verano CDP	Sonoma	Sonoma County
Emerald Lake Hills CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	San Mateo County
Empire CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Fetters Hot Springs-Agua Caliente CDP	Sonoma	Sonoma County
Fields Landing CDP	Eureka	Humboldt County
Florence-Graham CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Foothill Farms CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Fort Washington CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
French Camp CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County
Fruitdale CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Fruitridge Pocket CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Granite Hills CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
Greenacres CDP	Bakersfield	Kern County
Home Garden CDP	Hanford	Kings County
Kennedy CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County
Kensington CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Contra Costa County
La Crescenta-Montrose CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Ladera CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Ladera Heights CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Ladera Ranch CDP	Mission Viejo--Lake Forest--Laguna Niguel	Orange County
Lake San Marcos CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
La Riviera CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Lemon Hill CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Lennox CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Lincoln Village CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County
Linnell Camp CDP	Visalia	Tulare County
Live Oak CDP	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz County
McClellan Park CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Malaga CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
Marina del Rey CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Marin City CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Marin County
Mayfair CDP	Fresno	Fresno County

Mayflower Village CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Mexican Colony CDP	Shafter	Kern County
Midway City CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Orange County
Mission Hills CDP	Lompoc	Santa Barbara County
Montalvin Manor CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Contra Costa County
Mountain View CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
North El Monte CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
North Fair Oaks CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	San Mateo County
North Gate CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
North Highlands CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
North Tustin CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Orange County
Oak Park CDP	Thousand Oaks	Ventura County
Old Fig Garden CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
Orangevale CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Pacheco CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Paradise Park CDP	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz County
Parklawn CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Parkway CDP	Sacramento	Sacramento County
Pasatiempo CDP	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz County
Quartz Hill CDP	Palmdale--Lancaster	Los Angeles County
Rancho Santa Fe CDP	San Diego	San Diego County
Rollingwood CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Contra Costa County
Rose Hills CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Rossmoor CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Orange County
Rouse CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
Salida CDP	Modesto	Stanislaus County
San Pasqual CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Saranap CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Saticoy CDP	Oxnard--San Buenaventura (Ventura)	Ventura County
Shell Ridge CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Smith Corner CDP	Shafter	Kern County
Soda Bay CDP	Clearlake Riviera	Lake County
Soquel CDP	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz County
South Monrovia Island CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
South San Gabriel CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
South San Jose Hills CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
South Whittier CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Spreckels CDP	Salinas	Monterey County
Stanford CDP	San Jose	Santa Clara County
Sunnyside CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
Taft Heights CDP	Taft	Kern County
Taft Mosswood CDP	Stockton	San Joaquin County
Tara Hills CDP	San Francisco--Oakland	Contra Costa County
Tarpey Village CDP	Fresno	Fresno County
Tooleville CDP	Exeter	Tulare County
Valinda CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
View Park-Windsor Hills CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County

Vincent CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Vine Hill CDP	Concord--Walnut Creek	Contra Costa County
Walnut Park CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
West Athens CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
West Carson CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Westmont CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
West Puente Valley CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
West Rancho Dominguez CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
West Whittier-Los Nietos CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Willowbrook CDP	Los Angeles--Long Beach--Anaheim	Los Angeles County
Winterhaven CDP	Yuma, AZ--CA Urban Area	Imperial County
Winter Gardens CDP	San Diego	San Diego County

Exhibit B

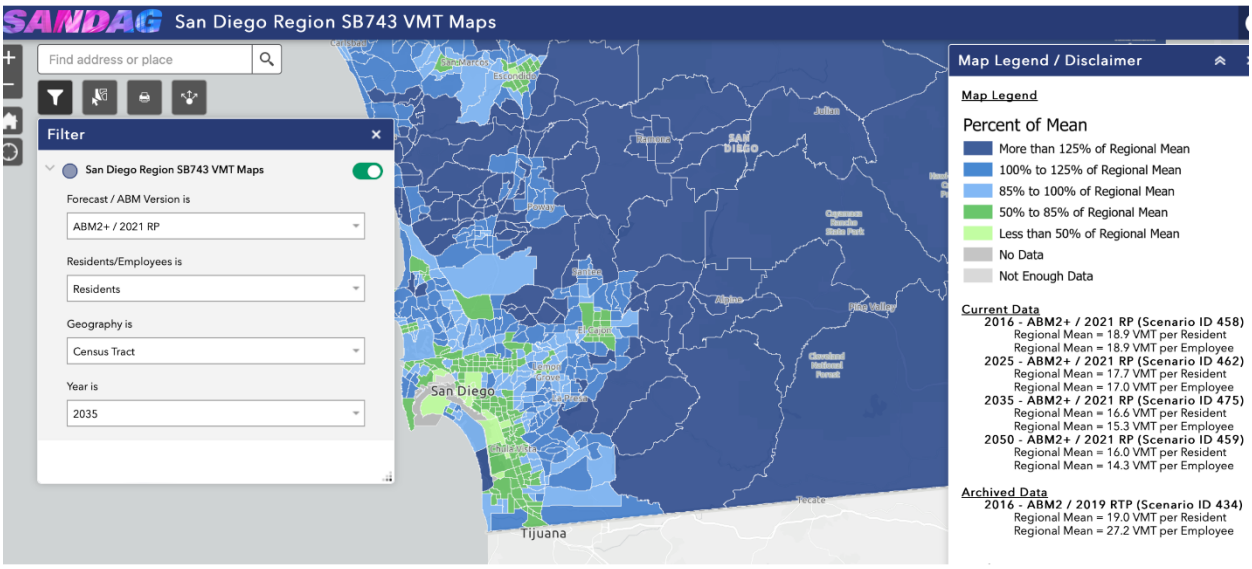

SANDAG San Diego Region SB743 VMT Maps
Find address or place
Filter
San Diego Region SB743 VMT Maps
Forecast / ABM Version is
ABM2+ / 2021 RP
Residents/Employees is
Residents
Geography is
Census Tract
Year is
2035
San Diego
Tijuana
Map Legend / Disclaimer
Map Legend
Percent of Mean
More than 125% of Regional Mean
100% to 125% of Regional Mean
85% to 100% of Regional Mean
50% to 85% of Regional Mean
Less than 50% of Regional Mean
No Data
Not Enough Data
Current Data
2016 - ABM2+ / 2021 RP (Scenario ID 458)
Regional Mean = 18.9 VMT per Resident
Regional Mean = 18.9 VMT per Employee
2025 - ABM2+ / 2021 RP (Scenario ID 462)
Regional Mean = 17.7 VMT per Resident
Regional Mean = 17.0 VMT per Employee
2035 - ABM2+ / 2021 RP (Scenario ID 475)
Regional Mean = 16.6 VMT per Resident
Regional Mean = 15.3 VMT per Employee
2050 - ABM2+ / 2021 RP (Scenario ID 459)
Regional Mean = 16.0 VMT per Resident
Regional Mean = 14.3 VMT per Employee
Archived Data
2016 - ABM2 / 2019 RTP (Scenario ID 434)
Regional Mean = 19.0 VMT per Resident
Regional Mean = 27.2 VMT per Employee

Exhibit C

CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY



FINAL STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR REGULATORY ACTION

Amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines Addressing Analysis and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Pursuant to SB97

December 2009

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CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
FINAL STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR REGULATORY ACTION

December 2009

INTRODUCTION

The California Natural Resources Agency ("the Resources Agency") has adopted certain amendments and additions to certain guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000 *et seq.*) ("CEQA"). Specifically, these amendments implement the Legislature's directive in Public Resources Code section 21083.05 (enacted as part of SB97 (Chapter 185, Statutes 2007)). That section directs the Resources Agency to "certify and adopt guidelines prepared and developed by the Office of Planning and Research" "for the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or the effects of greenhouse gas emissions[.]" (Pub. Resources Code, § 21083.05(a)-(b).)

CEQA generally requires public agencies to review the environmental impacts of proposed projects, and, if those impacts may be significant, to consider feasible alternatives and mitigation measures that would substantially reduce significant adverse environmental effects. Section 21083 of the Public Resources Code requires the adoption of guidelines to provide public agencies and members of the public with guidance about the procedures and criteria for implementing CEQA. The guidelines required by section 21083 of the Public Resources Code are promulgated in the California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15000-15387 (the "Guidelines" or "State CEQA Guidelines"). Public agencies, project proponents, and third parties who wish to enforce the requirements of CEQA, rely on the Guidelines to provide a comprehensive guide on compliance with CEQA. Subdivision (f) of section 21083 requires the Resources Agency, in consultation with the Office of Planning and Research ("OPR"), to certify, adopt and amend the Guidelines at least once every two years.

Section 21083.05, as noted above, requires the promulgation of Guidelines specifically addressing analysis and mitigation of the effects of greenhouse gas emissions. The Resources Agency has adopted the following changes to the Guidelines ("Amendments") to implement that directive:

Add sections: 15064.4, 15183.5 and 15364.5.

Amend sections: 15064, 15064.7, 15065, 15086, 15093, 15125, 15126.2, 15126.4, 15130, 15150, 15183, Appendix F and Appendix G.

In addition to guidelines implementing SB97, some of the amendments listed above are non-substantive corrections.

The Resources Agency considered reasonable alternatives to the Amendments. The Resources Agency has determined that no reasonable alternative would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed or would be as effective as, and less burdensome to affected private persons than, the Amendments. This conclusion is based on the Resources Agency's determination that the Amendments are necessary to implement the Legislature's directive in SB97 and to update the Guidelines to reflect recent case law. Thus, the Amendments add no additional substantive requirements; rather, the Guidelines merely assist lead agencies in complying with CEQA's existing requirements. The Resources Agency rejected the no action alternative because it would not respond to the Legislature's directive in SB97. There are no alternatives available that would lessen any adverse impacts on small businesses, as any impacts are due to existing requirements of CEQA and not the Amendments.

The Resources Agency also initially determined that the Amendments would not have a significant adverse economic impact on business. The Resources Agency has determined that this action would have no impacts on project proponents. However, the Resources Agency is aware that certain of the statutory changes enacted by the Legislature and judicial decisions, described in greater detail below, that are reflected in the Amendments could have an economic impact on project proponents, including businesses. Among other things, project proponents could incur additional costs in assisting lead agencies to comply with CEQA's requirement for analysis of greenhouse gas emissions. However, the Amendments to the Guidelines merely reflect these legislative and judicial requirements, and the Resources Agency knows of no less costly alternative. The Amendments clarify and update the Guidelines to be consistent with legislative enactments that have modified CEQA, and recent case law interpreting it, but does not impose any new requirements. Therefore, the Amendments would not have a significant, adverse economic impact on business.

Some comments were submitted during the public comment period and during the public hearings on the Proposed Amendments suggesting that the adverse economic impacts could result. For example, some suggested that the addition of forestry resources to the Appendix G checklist may increase the regulatory burden on the agricultural industry. Others suggested that application of the Guidelines to renewable energy projects or those implementing AB32 may be counterproductive. Despite those suggestions, no evidence was presented to the Resources Agency supporting those claims. Moreover, those comments did not provide any rationale challenging the Resources Agency's position that the Proposed Amendments implement existing requirements. Therefore, having considered all of the comments submitted on the Proposed Amendments, the Resources Agency concludes that its initial determination that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse economic impact remains correct.

The Amendments do not duplicate or conflict with any federal statutes or regulations. CEQA is similar in some respects to the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), 42 U.S.C. sections 4321-4343. Federal agencies are subject to NEPA, which

requires environmental review of federal actions. State and local agencies are subject to CEQA, which requires environmental review before state and local agencies may approve or decide to undertake discretionary actions and projects in California. Although both NEPA and CEQA require an analysis of environmental impacts, the substantive and procedural requirements of the two statutes differ. Most significantly, CEQA requirements for feasible mitigation of environmental impacts exceed NEPA's mitigation provisions. A state or local agency must complete a CEQA review even for those projects for which NEPA review is also applicable, although Guidelines sections 15220-15229 allow state, local and federal agencies to coordinate review when projects are subject to both CEQA and NEPA. Because state and local agencies are subject to CEQA unless exemptions apply, and because CEQA and NEPA are not identical, guidelines for CEQA are necessary to interpret and make specific provisions of SB97 and do not duplicate the Code of Federal Regulations.

FINAL STATEMENT OF REASONS

The Administrative Procedure Act requires that an agency prepare a final statement of reasons supporting its proposed regulation. The final statement of reasons updates the information contained in the initial statement of reasons, contains final determinations as to the economic impact of the regulations, and provides summaries and responses to all comments regarding the proposed action. The initial statement of reasons, as updated and revised, are contained in full in this final statement of reasons. The summaries and responses to comments are included in the Natural Resources Agency's file of this rulemaking proceeding.

Below is a brief background on the science relating to the effects of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the various initiatives that California is implementing to reduce those emissions. Following that background, OPR's public engagement process and the Natural Resources Agency's rulemaking process is briefly described. Next, this Final Statement of Reasons explains the purpose and necessity of each proposed change to the Guidelines. Finally, Thematic Responses, addressing the major themes that were raised in public comments, are provided.

BACKGROUND ON THE EFFECTS OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CALIFORNIA'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE THOSE EMISSIONS

This section provides a brief background on the potential effects of greenhouse gas emissions and California's efforts to reduce those emissions.

<u>What Are Greenhouse Gases?</u>

Certain gases in Earth's atmosphere naturally trap solar energy to maintain global average temperatures within a range suitable for terrestrial life. Those gases – which primarily include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons,

Pages Intentionally Omitted

SECTION 15183.5. TIERING AND STREAMLINING THE ANALYSIS OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Specific Purposes of the Amendment

In adopting SB375, the Legislature found that "[n]ew provisions of CEQA should be enacted so that the statute encourages … local governments to make land use decisions that will help the state achieve its climate goals under AB 32[.]" (Statutes 2008, Ch. 728, § 1(f).) ARB's Scoping Plan similarly recognizes the important role that local governments play in reducing the State's GHG emissions. (ARB, Scoping Plan, at p. 26.) In particular, local government "[d]ecisions on how land is used will have large impacts on the GHG emissions that will result from the transportation, housing, industry, forestry, water, agriculture, electricity, and natural gas sectors." (*Ibid.*) Decision-making on urban growth and land use planning begins with local general plans. (Gov. Code, § 65030.1 ("The Legislature … finds that decisions involving the future growth of the state, most of which are made and will continue to be made at the local level, should be guided by an effective planning process, including the local general plan, and should proceed within the framework of officially approved statewide goals and policies directed to land use, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, and other related physical, social and economic development factors").)

GHG emissions may be best analyzed and mitigated at a programmatic level. "For local government lead agencies, adoption of general plan policies and certification of general plan EIRs that analyze broad jurisdiction-wide impacts of GHG emissions can be part of an effective strategy for addressing cumulative impacts and for streamlining later project-specific CEQA reviews." (OPR, Technical Advisory: CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change Through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review, June 19, 2008, at p. 8.) Other lead agencies may also address GHG emissions programmatically in long range development plans, facilities master plans, and other long-range planning documents.

This emphasis on long-range planning is consistent with state policy expressed in CEQA. The Legislature has clearly stated its preference that lead agencies tier environmental documents wherever feasible. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21093(b).) Specifically:

> The Legislature finds and declares that tiering of environmental impact reports will promote construction of needed housing and other development projects by (1) streamlining regulatory procedures, (2) avoiding repetitive discussions of the same issues in successive environmental impact reports, and (3) ensuring that environmental impact reports prepared for later projects which are consistent with a previously approved policy, plan, program, or ordinance concentrate upon environmental effects which may be mitigated or avoided in connection with the decision on each later project. The Legislature further finds and

> declares that tiering is appropriate when it helps a public agency to focus upon the issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review and in order to exclude duplicative analysis of environmental effects examined in previous environmental impact reports.

(Pub. Resources Code, § 21093(a).) The Amendments, therefore, include the addition of a new section 15183.5 to address both tiering and streamlining of GHG analyses, as well as the proper use of GHG reduction plans in CEQA analyses. Explanation of the rationale of each new subdivision is provided below.

Existing Methods of Streamlining and Tiering

Because GHG emissions raise a cumulative concern, analysis of such emissions in a long-range planning document lends itself to tiering and use in later project-specific environmental review. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21093.) The Legislature has created several tiering and streamlining methods, reflected in various provisions of the existing State CEQA Guidelines, that can reduce duplication in the analysis of GHG emissions. Subdivision (a) clarifies that existing provisions in the State CEQA Guidelines regarding tiering and streamlining may be applied to the analysis of GHG emissions.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plans

Many jurisdictions are beginning to address GHG emissions reductions in "climate action plans" and "gas emissions reduction plans." (OPR, Book of Lists, at pp. 92-100; see also, Scoping Plan, Appendix C, at p. C-49.) ARB's Scoping Plan specifically encourages local governments to develop such plans, and has created a local government operations protocol to assist in that effort. (Scoping Plan, at p. 26.) A community-wide emissions protocol is also under development.

Some comments raised during OPR's public involvement process expressed concern that due to a lack of legislative criteria for such plans, existing provisions in the CEQA Guidelines regarding cumulative impacts may be misused. (See, e.g., Letter from Center for Biological Diversity, et al., to OPR, February 2, 2009, at p. 2.) For example, without specific guidance, a lead agency could erroneously rely on a plan with purely aspirational intent to determine that a later project's cumulative impact is less than significant pursuant to section 15064(h)(3). The proposed subdivision (b) provides criteria to assist lead agencies in determining whether an existing greenhouse gas reduction plan is an appropriate document to use in a cumulative impacts analysis under CEQA.

The existing CEQA Guidelines allow lead agencies to rely on plans for cumulative analysis where the plan has been adopted in a public review process and contains specific requirements to avoid or substantially lessen a cumulative problem. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15064(h)(3).) The criteria set out in proposed subdivision (b)(1) are designed to ensure that a greenhouse gas reduction plan would satisfy the

requirements described in sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d), for the reasons described below.

Criteria (A) and (C) are necessary to define the scope of GHG emissions within the defined geographic area and the incremental contribution of activities that will occur within that area to those emissions. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15064(h)(3) (plan addresses cumulative impacts "within the geographic area in which the project is located").) Criterion (B) establishes a benchmark to assist the lead agency in determining whether the plan provisions will avoid or substantially lessen cumulative effects of the area's GHG emissions. (*Ibid.* (plan "provides specific requirements that will avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem").) Criteria (D) and (E) are necessary to demonstrate that the plan will actually avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative effects of those emissions. (*Ibid.*) Finally, criterion (F) reflects the requirement in sections 15064(h)(3) and 15130(d) that the plan be adopted through a public review process, as well as case law requiring that mitigation plans themselves undergo environmental review. (*California Native Plant Society v. County of El Dorado* (2009) 170 Cal. App. 4th 1026, 1053 (mitigation "programs may offer the best solution to environmental planning challenges, by providing some certainty to developers while adequately protecting the environment" but "in order to provide a lawful substitute for the 'traditional' method of mitigating CEQA impacts, that is, a project-by-project analysis, the fee program must be evaluated under CEQA").) Notably, the criteria provided in subdivision (b) are largely consistent with the elements that ARB recommends be included in a greenhouse gas reduction plan. (ARB, Scoping Plan, Appendix C, at p. C-49.)

Subdivision (b)(2) describes the uses and limitations of plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in a cumulative impacts analysis for later projects. Specifically, it provides a safeguard to ensure that the later activity was actually addressed in the plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and that any applicable requirements of the plan are incorporated into the later project. This requirement is similar the requirement in case law that a lead agency determine that a particular threshold appropriately addresses the impact of concern. (*Protect the Historic Amador Waterways*, *supra*, 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109 ("in preparing an EIR, the agency must consider and resolve every fair argument that can be made about the possible significant environmental effects of a project, irrespective of whether an established threshold of significance has been met with respect to any given effect").) Finally, subdivision (b)(2) makes specific the requirement that, while the existence of an applicable plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions may create a presumption that compliance with that plan will reduce the incremental contribution of later activities to a less than cumulatively considerable level, the existence of substantial evidence supporting a fair argument to the contrary may still require preparation of an EIR.

Special Situations

Letter O18 Chatten-Brown Law Group on behalf of Sierra Club

Kathryn Pettit, Josh Chatten-Brown, and Isabella Coye
January 5, 2024

Comment O18-1
The comment consists of the email transmittal of the formal letter that follows. No comments on the scope or content of the Draft SEIR are provided.

Response O18-1
The comment serves as an opening remark and does not raise significant environmental issues related to the Draft SEIR, and no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O18-2
The comment introduces the detailed comments submitted by the Chatten-Brown Law Group on behalf of the San Diego Sierra Club Chapter. The comment establishes that "Sierra Club hopes to avoid both further delay in implementation of the CAP and additional litigation." The comment states that "the CAP and SEIR do not contain a good faith analysis of the smart growth alternatives."

Response O18-2
As demonstrated in the responses provided below (specifically Responses O18-5, O18-10, O18-12, O18-13, O18-14, and O18-15), the Draft SEIR provides an accurate and honest analysis of smart growth alternatives developed through robust stakeholder outreach that complies with the Court of Appeal's decision and CEQA. Both the Draft SEIR and these responses to comments have been prepared in good faith. Please see Section 9.1.1.2, Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR for an explanation of the approach to the development and analysis of the smart growth alternatives.

Comment O18-3
The comment asserts that the Draft SEIR analysis is "inadequate due to its repeated contention that the CAP Update is not a land use plan." The comment states that the Court of Appeal rejected this claim.

Response O18-3
The comment offers several arguments to support the contention that the CAP Update should include modification of the land use map in the adopted General Plan. These topics are addressed below.

Relationship to the Adopted General Plan

In describing the inconsistencies between the Court of Appeal's decision and the County's approach, the commenter interchanges terms that are not synonymous and, in the County's opinion, misinterprets the direction provided by the Court of Appeal. "Land use measures" are understood to refer to measures in the CAP Update (which would be supported by a series of actions) that would recommend changes in land use patterns,

the implementation of which would necessarily occur through changes in the adopted 2011 General Plan land use map. Such measures are permissible in a CAP, consistent with what has been done in other jurisdictions, as noted by the commenter. However, actual "land use changes," by contrast, would result in changes to the land use map in the adopted 2011 General Plan that alter the allowed uses and/or permitted densities within the unincorporated county and the assumptions upon which subsequent planning decisions are based. By extension, while the County does not disagree that measures proposing changes in the distribution of land use are permissible in a CAP, the proposed CAP Update does not include any quantified land use measures or actions because they are not needed to achieve the established targets. Additionally, changing the 2011 General Plan, which is being mitigated by this CAP Update, would change the underlying project being studied in the SEIR (which obstructs the stable project description required by CEQA needed for public participation and sufficient analysis). Please see also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," regarding the methodology for development of the CAP Update GHG reduction targets and the measures and actions to achieve these targets.

Thus, although the County acknowledges the relationship between land use and GHG emissions, the CAP Update is not a land use plan. As articulated in the Draft SEIR, large-scale changes to the land use designations in the adopted 2011 General Plan would require substantial additional study, public outreach, and coordination to understand and balance the ramifications of those changes. Changes of this magnitude are better suited to a comprehensive planning process, which considers the balance of General Plan principles including housing needs, economic, social and health factors, environmental outcomes, community services, and infrastructure, not as part of the CAP Update in which the sole goal is to reduce GHG emissions as required by General Plan Policy COS-20.1 and GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure CC-1.2. The County believes that instituting land use changes through the CAP Update, which is intended to mitigate the GHG impacts of implementation of the General Plan, would not be a good faith application of its discretion because doing so would circumvent the General Plan update process, including associated community outreach. Changes to the County's fundamental planning document require efforts that go beyond the scope of developing a GHG reduction program, which is intended to mitigate the effects of GHG emissions from the General Plan. See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," for further discussion of this relationship.

Smart Growth Alternatives

The Court of Appeal did find, as noted in the comment, that the evaluation of smart growth alternatives could be consistent with the project objectives and would offer an informative means of comparing land use map configurations that could reduce GHG emissions through VMT reductions. The County agrees and has provided an analysis of each smart growth alternative's consistency with the project objectives and, as required by CEQA, an evaluation of the impacts of these alternatives in comparison to the adopted land use map, which would not change with implementation of the proposed project. In compliance with the Appellate Decision, and in acknowledgement of the relationship of land use and GHG emissions, the Draft SEIR includes analysis of four smart growth alternatives with

the potential to reduce VMT and associated GHG emissions. The evaluation compares implementation of the smart growth alternatives and CAP Update with implementation of the Adopted General Plan and CAP Update.

Implementation of the smart growth alternatives extends beyond the scope of the CAP Update because it requires planning actions to modify the underlying land use context in addition to implementing the proposed CAP measures and actions. The evaluation of relative environmental impacts from implementing the smart growth alternatives appropriately focuses on those resource areas germane to evaluation of the CAP Update. The Draft SEIR also explains that potential impacts to environmental resources, such as aesthetics and agriculture, from implementation of smart growth alternatives would need to be assessed under subsequent CEQA analysis addressing amendments to the land use plan for the General Plan.

Public Comments

While all public comments cannot be explicitly incorporated into the CAP Update, the CAP Update was developed through extensive outreach, as described in CAP Update Chapter 2, “Community Engagement and Outreach.” Equitable stakeholder engagement has guided the CAP Update process to produce a community-informed CAP that reduces GHG emissions. The CAP Update process followed the parameters set by the Board in developing the CAP. The County is not obligated to entertain or include public input that is outside the project at hand.

Separately, the development of alternatives was also shaped and informed by public participation and outreach, including numerous meetings to develop the CAP Update and smart growth alternatives with Sierra Club and others. As described in Section 5.5.1.1, “Summary of Outreach Related to Smart Growth Alternatives,” the County considered all input on potential land use strategies and developed a reasonable range of smart growth alternatives for evaluation in this SEIR (Draft SEIR page 5-22). Two of these smart growth alternatives, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative and the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative, were recommended for inclusion by petitioners, for which Sierra Club was heavily involved.

Precedent in Other CAPs

As noted above, and discussed by the commenter, other local government CAPs have elected to include “land use measures” as part of their overall strategy to reduce GHG emissions. However, the County does not interpret the function of the measures in the same way as the commenter. In the examples provided by the commenter, these land use measures do not account for GHG emissions reductions that result from new changes to land use that would result from CAP implementation. The City and County of San Francisco CAP does not appear to include any GHG reductions from land use measures in the GHG reduction calculations and Appendix B of the LA County CAP notes “The 2045 CAP does not result in any new changes to land use or transportation infrastructure than what was already analyzed in these existing plans and their CEQA documents” (see page B-18). As articulated throughout this SEIR, the CAP Update similarly acknowledges the

role that land use changes could have in GHG reduction but does not assume GHG reductions from these separate programs.

Summary

The County does not deny the important connection between land use and GHG emissions, nor does it claim that measures recommending land use changes cannot be included in a CAP. Furthermore, the Draft SEIR does not claim that smart growth alternatives cannot be studied. Pursuant to the Appellate Decision, such alternatives are included in Chapter 5 of the Draft SEIR. This discussion does not indicate that the smart growth alternatives are infeasible due to the need for additional planning. In fact, the discussion identifies five well-considered tools that could be used to implement the alternatives and a detailed discussion of the subsequent process. Zoning overlays were identified as the main means of implementation due to the relative ease and quickness with which the County could adopt them. Refer to Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for a further discussion of smart growth alternative identification and evaluation.

The CAP Update and Draft SEIR accurately reflect the Appellate Decision and do not include any false allegations. No revisions have been made to either document in response to this comment.

Comment O18-4
The comment addresses GHG emissions in the built environment and transportation sector of the CAP Update and asserts that the CAP would be more effective at reducing VMT and related emissions if it included land use–based measures. The comment also recommends that the County adopt the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits proposed in the alternatives analysis with the changes detailed in the letter submitted by the Endangered Habitats League. The comment further claims that these edits should have been incorporated into the CAP Update rather than being considered briefly and deferred for potential further review.

Response O18-4
As explained in Chapter 5, "Alternatives," of this SEIR, although the majority of GHG emissions are a result of VMT, the majority of the forecast emissions are associated with existing development—not future growth. As a result, changing land use and development patterns has a limited influence on projected GHG emissions. Please see Response O18-3 regarding the lack of inclusion of land use measures in the CAP Update. See also Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," regarding the need for and approach to analyzing smart growth alternatives in this SEIR that address mechanisms for reducing VMT, and by extension GHG emissions, through land uses changes, and Response O14-10 for a list of CAP Update actions that reduce GHG emissions by reducing VMT.

Comment O18-5
The comment indicates that the SEIR overemphasizes the potential for takings and conflict with SB 330 that could arise from the adoption and implementation of the

alternatives evaluated in Section 5.5, “Smart Growth Alternatives,” of the Draft SEIR. The comment cites case law related to adoption of a general plan to emphasize that changes to zoning and land use designations may not result in legal “taking” if all economic value is not stripped from the property. The comment identifies several locations in the Draft SEIR that mention regulatory takings and compensation, including project objectives and description of smart growth alternatives, and suggests that the County has misrepresented legal considerations to “absolve itself from necessary actions.”

Response O18-5

The CAP Update and SEIR were prepared by the County’s Department of Planning & Development Services in alignment with its adopted mission statement to “balance community, economic, and environmental interests to ensure the highest quality of life for the public of San Diego County.” The County established a suite of seven objectives for the CAP Update. Six of these objectives relate to specific GHG reduction targets, goals, metrics, and implementation; General Plan consistency; and environmental justice and equity. The final objective is to “accomplish the foregoing objectives in a manner that minimizes undue and unnecessary economic impacts on businesses and property owners, and that avoids regulatory takings under the federal and state constitutions.” The County has the discretion to determine objectives for the CAP Update. An objective that avoids regulatory takings is a natural extension of the Board’s direction to prepare a legally defensible CAP and the County’s obligation to balance community interests. Furthermore, as explained in Section 1.2, “Project Objectives,” of the Draft SEIR, “Alternatives are developed so they can potentially meet most project objectives while reducing significant effects” (Draft SEIR page 1-3). The County could, therefore, carry forward an alternative that does not meet a project objective if justified by reductions in significant impacts on the environment that would result from the project as proposed.

The comment cites five pages in the Draft SEIR as examples of the County “repeatedly noting that it intends to accomplish its objectives in a manner that avoids such takings.” The cited pages are the repeated list of the project objectives in the “Summary” (page 4), “Project Description” (page 1-4), and “Alternatives” (page 5-3) chapters. The other two mentions of the notion of takings are in providing reasons for rejection of the “Prohibition on Growth in Unincorporated County Alternative” in Section 5.3, “Alternatives Considered but Rejected,” (page 5-6) and in Policy LU-5.6, which provides a policy to develop a mechanism to avoid regulatory takings where development is restricted to achieve GHG emissions targets as one of 45 policies and goals in the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative.

The comment “urges the CAP to remove the overly vague and unfounded references to takings”; however, neither “takings” nor SB 330 are mentioned in the CAP Update. The concept of legal takings and the restrictions of SB 330 are appropriately described in the Draft SEIR as one of many real factors that must be considered when implementing land use changes or restrictions.

No part of the alternatives analysis relies on the premise that SB 330 applies to the entire county. SB 330 is mentioned once in Chapter 5, Alternatives,” of the Draft SEIR. In Section 5.5.2, “Implementation of Smart Growth Strategies,” SB 330 is listed as an

example of a state law intended to facilitate housing streamlining and development. To address the concern raised in the comment that this single mention of SB 330 provides an inaccurate picture of SB 330 implementation, the first paragraph In Section 5.5.2, "Implementation of Smart Growth Strategies," of the Draft SEIR (page 5-22) is revised as follows:

> Implementation of smart growth alternatives that result in changes to the adopted General Plan land use map would require subsequent planning by County staff to develop tools to modify the application of the adopted General Plan. State laws facilitating housing streamlining and development (including Senate Bill 330, known as the Housing Crisis Act) also prevent the County from reducing residential capacity on a site zoned for housing in certain areas of the county without identifying replacement capacity. In addition, it is difficult to downzone higher density housing element sites identified and approved by the state as feasible sites for lower-income development. Government Code Section 65863 requires that cities and counties ensure that their general plans provide for regional housing needs. In addition, cities and counties are required to have no "net loss" of lower and moderate-income dwelling units. The County cannot take action that would reduce identified affordable housing sites for these income categories.

The Draft SEIR does not "claim that SB 330 precludes any of the smart growth alternatives," and no discussion of the individual merits of the alternatives in the Draft SEIR mentions SB 330.

The County has carefully considered the interests and concerns of multiple parties in preparation of the CAP Update. The Draft SEIR appropriately acknowledges the multiple factors that should be considered when implementing an alternative land use framework. The discussion in the Draft SEIR has been revised to refine reference to SB 330. These clarifications do not substantially modify the discussion in the Draft SEIR and do not alter the impact analysis or conclusions. Thus, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required.

To illustrate the applicability of SB 330 in the unincorporated county, the County included a mapping layer that identified the portions of the county that are subject to SB 330 as part of the early community outreach efforts described in the Draft SEIR (pages 5-20 and 5-21). These outreach efforts included Sierra Club representatives. These maps were used to illustrate the land use concerns raised by all stakeholders that wanted to engage in development of the smart growth alternatives. In total, the County created over 80 maps requested by Sierra Club and all other stakeholders (e.g., environmental groups, Community Planning/Sponsor Groups, land development groups, building industry representatives, and individuals). These maps informed subsequent meetings to develop smart growth alternatives that were included in the Draft SEIR. (Refer to https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan/sgamaps.html.)

Comment O18-6
The comment expresses concern and presents research findings about carbon offsets, stating they are problematic and ineffective.

Response O18-6
The County acknowledges the information presented in the comment. The comment does not pertain to the analyses or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. As explained further in Response O18-7, below, the CAP Update does not include an offset program.

Comment O18-7
The comment notes that the Draft SEIR and CAP do not include an offset program, but states that the County's acknowledgement that future projects would be required to implement project-specific mitigation, which may include off-site mitigation including carbon offsets, amounts to an implicit endorsement of such measures. The comment reiterates previously made assertions that the CAP Update must require carbon neutrality for any GPA projects and that the County should establish an in-county GHG mitigation program if off-site mitigation could be used for future GPA projects that are not consistent with the proposed CAP Update.

Response O18-7
The Draft SEIR addresses the potential environmental impacts of implementing the CAP Update, which would allow for streamlined GHG analyses for projects consistent with the adopted General Plan. The analysis does acknowledge that, factually, there is a potential for future project applications that include amendments to the General Plan to be presented to the County. The analysis also explains that any such projects would not be able to rely on the CAP Update to mitigate their GHG impacts or provide any streamlining benefits.

The Draft SEIR includes a discussion of the cumulative effects on in-process GPAs in Chapter 4, "Other CEQA Sections." Page 4-7 of the Draft SEIR provides the following detailed explanation of the relationship between the CAP Update, the General Plan, and potential GPAs.

> As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," of this SEIR, the CAP Update is being prepared to serve as mitigation to reduce GHG emissions resulting from anticipated buildout of the General Plan. To the extent a project is consistent with land use allowed under the General Plan, GHG emissions are addressed with CAP Update GHG reduction measures. Because the CAP Update is a requirement of the approved General Plan, it only addresses development consistent with the General Plan. The CAP's GHG projections, therefore, do not include in-process GPA projects for which the County has received applications, but that are in some stage of processing (e.g., staff is determining what its recommendation of approval will be and what conditions are required, and/or the decision-maker is determining whether it will approve, modify, or deny the project). Thus, if a project's land use is consistent with the General Plan (as amended as of December 10, 2020), then its GHG emissions are already accounted for in the CAP's projections. When a project is within the scope of the General Plan, the proposed project will help the County

achieve its share of GHG reduction targets by implementing CAP Update reduction measures through the CAP Consistency Review Checklist.

When a proposed project is outside the scope of the General Plan buildout, requiring a General Plan amendment, that project must use different means to demonstrate that the project does not obstruct the County's ability to achieve its share of GHG reduction targets and have a significant impact on GHG emissions. In the 2018 CAP and SEIR, the GPAs had to demonstrate net zero GHG emissions, otherwise they would add GHG emissions beyond what would be allowable to meet GHG reduction targets. To address that problem, the 2018 SEIR allowed GPAs to use M-GHG-1 to mitigate GHG emissions by purchasing carbon offsets outside the unincorporated county.

This SEIR no longer relies on M-GHG-1, or anything equivalent, to mitigate the GHG impacts of GPAs. This SEIR contains no offsets or other mitigation measures facilitating GPAs. Rather, each in-process GPA would undergo its own project-level analysis of GHG impacts pursuant to CEQA and would develop its own threshold of significance and mitigation pathways for reducing that project's impact on GHG emissions. These in-process GPAs and future GPA applications are inconsistent with the CAP Update if they are inconsistent with the density or intensity allowed in the General Plan. They cannot use the CAP Update to streamline their GHG analysis. Therefore, depending on the in-process GPA, they could result in a potentially significant GHG impact and would be required to mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

As explained further in Response O4-34, the CAP Update neither "allows" nor prohibits the use of off-site carbon offsets to reduce GHG emissions from future GPA projects. Rather, consistent with the Appellate Decision, it acknowledges that there could be appropriate use of offsets, which are not disallowed under CEQA, in project-level mitigation.

The comment also attempts to draw a parallel between the potential for this future assessment of GHG emissions to occur outside the reasonable parameters of the CAP Update and the No-Project Alternative. Importantly, the Draft SEIR does not "strike down" the No-Project Alternative as infeasible because impacts would be addressed on a project-by-project basis. The cited text on page 5-11 of Chapter 5, "Alternatives," provides a comparison to the effects of the CAP Update; feasibility is not discussed. As summarized in Section 5.7, "Environmentally Superior Alternative," the No-Project Alternative "may not be environmentally superior to the CAP Update" because it "would not meet any of the project objectives" and is anticipated to "result in greater GHG emissions" (Draft SEIR page 5-34).

No revisions to the Draft SEIR have been made in response to this comment. However, the commenter's recommendation that "the County should not continue to approve GPAs in high VMT areas with significant GHG impacts," the proposed requirement for GPAs to be carbon neutral, and the idea of developing a countywide program for any off-site GHG mitigation will be passed on to the decision-makers for consideration when any such GPA

project is heard before the Planning Commission or Board. Please also see Response O4-34, regarding Sierra Club's request to develop an off-site GHG mitigation program for use by future GPAs, which provides a pathway for GPAs that this CAP Update does not propose.

Comment O18-8
The comment summarizes prior rulings related to offsets and General Plan consistency and conveys an understanding that GPAs may not be able to legally use out-of-county GHG offsets.

Response O18-8
The County notes the position presented in the comment that the General Plan emphasizes local, county-based reductions. The CAP Update includes actions to reduce emissions within the county and from government operations. No offsets are proposed. There is no pathway for GPAs in the CAP Update. County decision-makers would consider General Plan consistency and legal precedent when considering the merits of future GPA projects that may be proposed in the future.

Comment O18-9
The comment states that the CAP Update fails to provide a cumulative impacts analysis that complies with the Appellate Decision.

Response O18-9
As an initial matter, the Appellate Decision did not require that the CAP Update include a cumulative analysis of in-process GPAs. In fact, the Court of Appeal explains that 2018 SEIR mitigation measure "M-GHG-1 is not one of the CAP's GHG reduction measures" and explains that this is appropriate and consistent with the County's General Plan "because the CAP analyzes GHG emissions resulting from buildout under the GPU" (Appellate Decision page 30).

Furthermore, the CAP does not "simply assume" that the 21 GPAs that were in-process at the time the 2018 SEIR was prepared are now part of the inventory. For example, two GPAs evaluated in the 2018 SEIR, Newland Sierra and Lilac Hills Ranch, were rescinded and denied, respectively, by the Board. These projects are not in the inventory or any other assumption in the CAP Update. The baseline and population assumptions used in the CAP Update are described in detail in Appendix 3, "Unincorporated County of San Diego 2019 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Projections," of the CAP Update. This data provides substantial evidence to support the buildout assumptions used in development of the CAP Update. Contrary to statements made in the comment, the County has not assumed any GPAs are part of an inventory or forecasts without evidence.

Court-Ordered Analysis of Potentially Significant Cumulative Impacts from GPAs

Related specifically to the 2018 SEIR's cumulative analysis, Section III of the Appellate Decision includes a discussion of in-process GPAs. Here, the Appellate Decision finds that the 21 GPA projects that were in-process at the time the 2018 SEIR's preparation were "closely related because the CAP and SEIR address GHG emissions reduction in

the unincorporated County and from County operations, and the GPAs will create GHG emissions in this same geographic area," and that the in-process GPA projects were reasonably foreseeable based on the initiation of project-level review (Appellate Decision page 77).

The 2018 SEIR identified these projects as reasonably foreseeable in the GHG impact analysis. The analysis in the 2018 SEIR states that the CAP "would not generate a substantial amount of GHG emissions that may have a significant impact" but acknowledges that "emissions from reasonably foreseeable cumulative projects (i.e., in-process GPAs) and GPAs submitted for processing to the County in the future if approved, would increase forecasted emissions" (2018 SEIR page 2.7-36). The 2018 SEIR also outlined a mitigation measure (M-GHG-1) that could be imposed upon future GPA projects that would increase density relative to the CAP and an approach for evaluating GPA consistency with the CAP.

The Appellate Decision concludes that the 2018 SEIR's cumulative impacts analysis should have assumed that implementation of M-GHG-1 would exacerbate other cumulative impacts, concurring with the prior Court's decision that "cumulative impacts from adding 14,000 dwellings and related infrastructure in projects utilizing M-GHG-1 (and, therefore, using offsite carbon offsets to mitigate their in-County GHG emissions) would likely include impacts to air quality, energy, and vehicle miles traveled, among others" (Appellate Decision page 37). The Appellate Decision summarizes project-level mitigation proposed in available project-specific EIRs for in-process GPA projects that included offsets, albeit independent of the CAP, as evidence that the "County knew or reasonably should have known that these GPAs would almost certainly be purchasing out-of-County credits to offset in-County GHG emissions." Accordingly, the court ruled that the SEIR should have considered "whether these GPAs and others like them would lead to significant cumulative impacts in combination with the Project" (Appellate Decision page 82).

Contrary to statements made in the comment, the Appellate Decision does not require that the CAP Update (or SEIR) limit GPA projects, fully mitigate GHG emissions from GPAs, or even identify future measures that GPAs must adhere to.

Cumulative Analysis in the Draft SEIR

As explained above (see Response O18-7), the CAP Update reflects the General Plan (as amended as of December 10, 2020) in the baseline inventory used to develop emissions projections. Chapter 2 of the Draft SEIR (pages 2-8 through 2-10) includes subsequent cumulative impact analyses that evaluate "whether the proposed CAP Update could result in new significant cumulative impacts or an increase in the severity of the cumulative impacts that were identified in the 2011 GPU PEIR." In addition, the Draft SEIR includes Section 4.4, "Cumulative Effects of In-process General Plan Amendments," which addresses the Appellate Decision in *Golden Door Properties, LLC, v. County of San Diego*, 50 *Cal.App.5th, 467* (Golden Door) with regard to the cumulative effects of in-process GPAs (defined as projects proposed in the unincorporated county that would require amendments to the General Plan that are in-process but have not yet

been approved). This section includes an analysis of the potential cumulative effects of the implementation of in-process GPAs both in terms of (1) whether they would contribute to new or more significant cumulative impacts on other resources in combination with implementation of the proposed CAP Update and (2) how they affect the County's ability to meet its GHG reduction targets.

The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130) and the Appellate Decision require discussion of any significant cumulative condition to which the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. If the project would contribute to a significant cumulative condition, an adequate discussion of the impacts "shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15030[b][5]). Thus, CEQA requires that the lead agency disclose the project's incremental contribution to a significant cumulative impact or explain the basis for a finding of insignificance, mitigate the project's contribution to any significant impact, and evaluate any indirect effects of that mitigation (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4).

The County has conducted an impact evaluation of the cumulative impacts of in-process GPAs related to 15 resource topics in the Draft SEIR. This analysis discloses both the potential for a significant cumulative impact and the CAP Update's incremental contribution to any impact. As discussed in the Draft SEIR, the CAP Update would not result in significant contribution to cumulative GHG impacts, either related to the generation of emissions associated with implementation of CAP Update measures and actions or due to conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulations for reducing GHG emissions. Specifically, in evaluating the contribution of the CAP Update implementation to cumulative GHG emissions, the Draft EIR explains (page 4-25):

> any temporary construction GHG emissions would be offset by the overall net benefit of GHG emissions reduction resulting from operation of projects associated with the CAP Update. Implementation of the CAP Update would result in a beneficial impact related to GHG emissions.

Similarly, related to conflict with the goals of applicable GHG reduction plans (including the 2022 Scoping Plan and the 2021 Regional Plan), the Draft SEIR finds, based on substantial evidence, that the CAP Update implementation would not contribute to a cumulative impact.

The SEIR does, however, disclose that the in-process GPAs could result in significant cumulative GHG impacts. The Draft SEIR acknowledges that "if approved, implementation of the in-process GPAs would result in generation of GHG emissions and would have the potential to conflict with the goals of the 2022 Scoping Plan and 2021 Regional Plan related to GHG emissions reduction" (page 4-25). Page 4-26 of the Draft SEIR explains that the County modeled the anticipated GHG emissions of the in-process GPAs to evaluate the potential effects of the in-process GPA projects on the County's ability to meet the targets established in the CAP Update. As explained therein, the County modeled emissions from the GPA projects based on default modeling parameters specific VMT modeling and without the inclusion of any sustainability features (which

could result from new standards set through CAP Update implementation) or project-level mitigation measures that may be identified.[1] Modeled emissions from the in-process GPA projects were added to the County's forecast emissions to determine if the known, in-process GPAs could affect the County's ability to achieve its GHG reduction targets. The analysis found that GHG emissions would exceed the 2030 target if all the in-process GPAs were implemented and that the 2045 target would be achieved. Because implementation of the in-process GPAs would generate GHG emissions that would limit the County's ability to meet the GHG emission reduction target in 2030, there would be a cumulative impact related to conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation for reducing GHG emissions. Section 4.4.8.3, "Summary" (page 4-26), concludes that the cumulative impact would be more severe than disclosed in the 2011 GPU PEIR.

Thus, the County has fully explained the significance determination related to cumulative GHG impacts. The County is not required by either the language of the Appellate Decision or CEQA to mitigate for the contribution of other projects identified in a cumulative analysis to an anticipated cumulative effect.

Furthermore, although not required to establish a mitigation program for potential future projects that are inconsistent with the General Plan, the Draft SEIR does identify methods that the County could consider to limit the contribution of future GPAs to cumulative effects. New Policy LU-19, for example, which is described in the Draft SEIR as part of the General Plan Goal and Policy Edits Alternative, could reduce the future impacts of GPAs by requiring certain processes and findings during future environmental review.

Comment O18-10
The comment states that the CAP offers a conclusory and inaccurate alternatives analysis.

Response O18-10
As summarized in Response O18-3 above, the County acted in good faith in working with stakeholders to identify smart growth alternatives. To expedite the implementation of these alternatives and improve feasibility, the County envisioned that these alternatives would include the development of zoning overlays that correspond to a program of incentives and disincentives for development. These overlays would influence where development would occur without outright development bans or changes to the underlying planning designations.

For clarification, the statement in the Draft SEIR that "[m]ost of the VMT anticipated through 2050 in the plan area occurs under existing conditions and would be relatively unchanged by the development pattern of future growth" is valid and accurate; this is true both for the CAP Update alone and for all the smart growth alternatives. This is a function of the existing built environment in the county and the rate of projected future growth. The smart growth alternatives would only affect projected future growth.

[1] The California Emissions Estimator Model modelling results used to determine whether the County would meet its GHG reduction targets with the in-process GPAs is provided in Appendix B to the Draft SEIR.

For the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative specifically, the analysis assumed that the overlay program would have the effect of moving half the growth anticipated outside the VMT efficient and fire safe areas into those areas. This assumption was based on the limited geographic area that meets the smart growth parameters set out for this alternative. Growth in the county cannot be fully accommodated in areas that both are not designated "high" or "very high" fire hazard and have a VMT per resident of 15 percent below the SANDAG regional average. The established parameters, therefore, generate reasonably foreseeable outcomes of a potentially feasible alternative.

The Draft SEIR summarizes the VMT calculations prepared by Fehr & Peers (see Draft SEIR Appendix C), acknowledging that with the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative, VMT for new development would decrease by 6.6 percent in 2035 and 3.0 percent in 2045. Therefore, reductions in VMT for new development could be substantial. However, when considered with the 8.8 million VMT generated in the base year (i.e., VMT from existing development that would not change with the implementation of any smart growth alternative), the overall reductions in future, countywide VMT are less than 1 percent in both 2035 and 2050.

To clarify the importance of the VMT reductions from new development that could be achieved under this alternative, the last paragraph on page 5-26 under the heading "Comparison to the Effects of the CAP Update" is revised to read:

> Most of the VMT anticipated through 2050 in the plan area occurs under existing conditions and would be relatively unchanged by the development pattern of future growth. Only minor decreases in VMT associated with the existing population are expected due to the DS 39 modeling assumptions (see CAP Update Appendix 3). If implemented, this alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 6.6 percent in 2035 and 3.0 percent in 2050. This represents a substantial VMT reduction for new growth. However, when viewed in conjunction with existing development, the magnitude of overall VMT reduction is relatively small because the vast majority of unincorporated county VMT under future year alternatives can be attributed to existing land uses. Overall, the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative would result in a 0.53 percent reduction in unincorporated county VMT for 2035 and a 0.41 percent reduction in unincorporated county VMT for 2050 (see Appendix C for detailed modeling results). Associated minor reductions in air and GHG emissions are also expected to occur under this alternative.

In addition, the last sentence of the first full paragraph on page 5-27 has been revised as follows:

> Therefore, although this alternative would reduce VMT from new development, the magnitude of ~~is not expected to meaningfully reduce~~ VMT or GHG emissions reductions in the unincorporated county would be much smaller when all VMT in the future condition is considered.

Separately, in the cumulative analysis of VMT for CAP Update implementation plus in-process GPAs (see Draft SEIR Appendix B), Fehr & Peers's modeling indicates that there

would be an overall increase in future, countywide VMT of less than 1 percent if all GPA projects were constructed. Isolating the VMT generated by new growth, the in-process GPA projects could increase VMT from new development by 10.3 percent in 2035 and 5.7 percent in 2050. Nonetheless, Fehr & Peers expects the magnitude of overall VMT reduction "to be small since the vast majority of unincorporated County VMT under future year alternatives can be attributed to existing land uses." This is consistent with the discussion of the potential for future growth to contribute to countywide VMT in the Draft SEIR alternatives analysis.

As explained in Appendix B to the Draft SEIR, the modeling of VMT from in-process GPAs that was conducted for the purpose of cumulative analyses started with the SANDAG Regional Plan EIR Alternative 2 (Data Set 39) model and layered 2,964 additional households in the associated master-geographic reference area (MGRA) for the model. Modeling of cumulative VMT incorporates several interrelated factors that affect VMT levels (e.g., mode choice to complete trips, distance traveled among trip origins and destinations) that would not be reflected in a cumulative VMT estimate that is based on adding the project-level VMT modeled for individual projects. Synergies in trips between proposed projects and existing development are captured through comprehensive analysis. Total projected GHG emissions from all sources (including VMT) associated with buildout of in-process GPAs would be 37,310 $MTCO_2e$ in 2030 and 36,285 $MTCO_2e$ in 2045. The GHG emissions from in-process GPAs are not included in the CAP Update. Similarly, the evaluation of GHG emissions that is prepared for CAP forecasting is distinct from the calculations of project-level emissions. As described in CAP Update Appendix 3, the GHG emissions inventory and projections prepared for the CAP Update include emissions from community activities and sources under County jurisdiction and from County government operations and show changes in emissions over time from anticipated population, housing, and employment growth, as well as the future impact of federal and California regulations, policies, and programs adopted as of 2022 that would reduce GHG emissions from future activities. The sources and common assumptions used for the inventory and projections and the methods used to prepare each category of the inventory and projections are described in detail in Sections 2, 4, and 6 of CAP Update Appendix 3. The CAP Update GHG emissions projections are based, in part, on growth forecast assumptions for the unincorporated area and do not reflect the specific features or details of individual development project proposals. The GHG emissions forecasts provided in the Draft SEIR analysis also do not assume the application of any project-level design features or mitigation requirements to reduce GHG emissions below modeled levels.

The comment references three GPA projects specifically. The first, Harmony Grove Village South, is mentioned in a footnote. The second is Preserve at Riverbend. These projects are listed in Table 4-1 ("In-Process Projects That Include General Plan Amendments") of the Draft SEIR (not in the CAP Update, as stated in the comment). Both projects are included in the cumulative VMT modeling in Appendix B to the Draft SEIR. As explained above, this VMT modeling provides a realistic representation of the VMT anticipated in the cumulative scenario and is one component of the GHG emissions forecast prepared for the cumulative scenario. The analysis shows that these in-process

GPA projects could generate GHG emissions that offset some of the reductions identified in the CAP (from VMT-related CAP measures or others).

The third project is described as "previously approved" but is unnamed in the comment. The comment appears to refer to Otay Ranch Village 14 and the amendments to Planning Areas 16/19 based upon the materials referenced. The commenter includes the Otay Ranch Village 14 and Planning Areas 16 and 19 project first approved June 26, 2019, and revised and approved for a second time on June 3, 2020, to illustrate project-level GHG emissions to suggest this project would undermine the CAP Update targets. This project is not listed in Table 4-1, nor is it an in-process GPA with the County because it was approved prior to the NOP for the CAP Update SEIR. In addition, the Otay Ranch Village 14 project was purchased for conservation and would not result in any of the GHG emissions stated in the comment.[2] The Otay Ranch project would have no effect on the CAP's targeted GHG reductions based on this information.

The County has prepared an evaluation of the potential for the in-process GPA projects to affect the County's ability to meet its targets. That analysis concludes that "GHG emissions would exceed the 2030 target if all of the in-process GPAs were implemented" (Draft SEIR page 4-26). This does not mean that the CAP Update will be ineffective or undermined by future development that is inconsistent with the General Plan and forecast growth. There are two basic mechanisms in place to address this concern. First, such growth would be outside the scope of the CAP Update and would require full GHG emissions analyses and project-level mitigation to reduce impacts to be identified. Second, the CAP Update inventories and forecasts would be periodically updated; this would update baseline conditions to reflect any changes in development or growth projections and require the County to adjust measure and action implementation, if necessary, to continue to meet established emissions reductions targets.

Future projects that could amend the General Plan to change land uses and densities remain outside the scope of the General Plan and CAP Update. The prospect of cumulative projects outside the project creating an adverse cumulative condition or affecting project effectiveness is not a reasonable basis for selection of an environmentally superior alternative. It is also not appropriate for the CAP Update or SEIR to evaluate the merits of future development proposals relative to the time and resources spent to develop the CAP Update.

Furthermore, while the smart growth alternatives may affect the in-process proposals by instituting barriers to development, none of the smart growth alternatives propose a ban on GPA projects. The alternatives analysis correctly compares the smart growth alternatives to the impacts of the approved General Plan plus CAP Update. It does not, and should not, compare the smart growth alternatives to the cumulative impact analysis.

[2] Attorney General Bonta Announces Permanent Conservation of San Diego Wildlands | State of California - Department of Justice - Office of the Attorney General

Comment O18-11
The comment states that the CAP must place limits on the number of units that can utilize the CAP for streamlining and must require a CAP update when the number of units (General Plan consistent and GPAs) surpass its projections.

Response O18-11
General Plan land use designations and policies establish a jurisdiction's approach to managing the growth that is forecast to occur in the region; the General Plan plans for projected growth but does not change projected growth. The comment notes that the CAP Update forecasts are based upon reasonably foreseeable growth through 2045, as identified by SANDAG (DS39) and independently verified through a market study, rather than full buildout of the General Plan. These same DS39 growth projections were applied to each of the alternatives evaluated in the Draft SEIR.

Section 15183.5(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines sets forth the necessary elements of a CAP that a future project must include to allow tiering and streamlining of the analysis of its incremental contribution to cumulative GHG emissions. As explained in Section 15183.5(b)(2):

> An environmental document that relies on a greenhouse gas reduction plan for a cumulative impacts analysis must identify those requirements specified in the plan that apply to the project, and, if those requirements are not otherwise binding and enforceable, incorporate those requirements as mitigation measures applicable to the project. If there is substantial evidence that the effects of a particular project may be cumulatively considerable, notwithstanding the project's compliance with the specified requirements in the plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, an EIR must be prepared for the project.

As explained further in Response O18-17 below, the County has developed a CAP Consistency Checklist to aid in the implementation of the CAP Update. The Checklist includes the attributes a future project must include and would be used to verify that the project both is within the scope of the CAP Update forecasts and would implement the CAP Update actions that apply to its implementation. One of the Checklist requirements is consistency with General Plan; because of this element of the Checklist, future projects that require General Plan amendments would not be eligible for streamlining their CEQA analysis of GHG emissions.

Additionally, the CAP Update includes requirements for monitoring and periodic updates so that adjustments can be made to allow the County to achieve its GHG reduction targets in light of deviations that could occur between forecasts and actual projects that are proposed and implemented in the unincorporated county. The County also would utilize outside monitoring programs, such as the County's Housing Production and Capacity Portal. As explained in the CAP Update, the County's Housing Production and Capacity Portal would be used to monitor the development of housing units in the unincorporated area to ensure this CAP and future CAP updates accurately mitigate for housing development consistent with the General Plan. The Portal tracks progress toward implementing the General Plan by illustrating housing production and land use capacity

since 2011. This is accomplished through close monitoring of the existing number of dwelling units, changes to land use capacity, production of housing units, and remaining dwelling unit capacity of the General Plan.

However, the number of housing units alone does not determine the total GHG emissions in the unincorporated county. Although the Portal will be an important tool for the County to use to monitor CAP implementation, it is not the key factor in demonstrating achievement of the GHG reduction targets outlined in the CAP. Section 15183.5(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines does not require that CAPs used for streamlining place limits on the number of units that can use that plan for streamlining or that a qualified plan needs to include provisions requiring an updated plan when the number of units surpasses such a limit.

As described in more detail in Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," the County would regularly monitor implementation progress to track the effectiveness of each measure and action, update the emissions inventory, and make adjustments, as needed, to keep the County on track toward meeting its GHG reduction targets.

Comment O18-12
The comment includes a request to revise the alternatives analysis in the Draft SEIR based on the understanding that the discussion identifies the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative as infeasible.

Response O18-12
The Draft SEIR does not identify the Sustainable Communities Strategy Alternative as infeasible. As explained further in Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," the description of the alternative simply identifies that the Road User Charge, which was included in the modeling and is a source of substantial projected VMT reductions, was removed from the regional plan through amendment. In addition, the "2021 Regional Plan includes other policy and transportation network assumptions beyond the Road User Charge that further result in lower VMT, and many of these assumptions rely upon public vote, funding, or SANDAG Board actions" (Draft SEIR page 5-31). For these reasons, growth under the County's adopted General Plan cannot be reasonably assumed to produce the same results through implementation of an overlay ordinance alone. The description of the alternative goes on to explain:

> If the Board were to adopt a smart growth alternative that would aspire to achieve development outcomes in alignment with the SANDAG Regional Plan Mobility Hub framework, a broader and more comprehensive set of General Plan land use map and Zoning Ordinance changes would be required that mirrors the program described in the Regional Plan because the incentives described above may not be sufficient to result in conformity. In this case, the Board would likely be considering both up-planning in areas around the SANDAG Mobility Hubs and down-planning in areas outside of those locations. This would require a more comprehensive update to the General Plan due to the large geographic scope of land use map changes and scale of community engagement required. It is

> assumed that all measures and actions in the CAP Update would be implemented as proposed.

Therefore, the Draft SEIR identifies the elements of an alternative that would achieve the outcomes identified in the SANDAG Sustainable Communities Strategy. County staff classified the alternative as potentially feasible and have prepared a CEQA-compliant analysis of comparative impacts. The final determination of feasibility will be made by the Board in their Findings of Fact. No changes have been made in the Draft SEIR in response to this comment.

Comment O18-13

The comment includes a request for clarification regarding the calculation of VMT reductions for the Village Support Areas Alternative in the Draft SEIR and suggests that it should be "removed as a Smart Growth Alternative. Otherwise, the CAP misleads the public and decisionmakers."

Response O18-13

As explained at length in both the Draft SEIR and these responses to comments, the smart growth alternatives address the Appellate Court decision on the 2018 SEIR and were informed by public engagement. The alternatives identify land use planning actions that, if adopted by the Board, would be implemented in addition to the CAP Update. The CAP Update cannot mislead the public and decision-makers about the smart growth alternatives because the alternatives are not an element of the CAP Update, and they are not evaluated in the plan.

The VMT modeling conducted for the Village Support Areas is included in the Draft SEIR as Appendix C. As explained on page 5-28 of the Draft SEIR:

> For the purpose of analysis, new households assumed in the CAP Update modeling were adjusted to assume location in Village Support Areas within their original Community Plan Area in randomized process weighted to ensure approximately equal growth in density across a Village Support Area. Densities within the Villages were not changed from the established assumptions for growth under the General Plan. Based on this modeling, the Village Support Areas Alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 1.0 percent in 2035 and 0.3 percent in 2050. If the modeling were refined to assign growth into specific Village Support Areas closer to incorporated cities, greater VMT reductions would be anticipated; however, because the location of future growth under the Village Support Areas concept would be within 0.5-mile of any Village, redistribution of growth within Community Plan Areas provides a reasonable assumption to inform analysis. Further, while the change in location reduces trip lengths associated with the relocated households, it may not change the likelihood to use transit, to use alternative modes of transportation, or to commute a long distance to work using a personal vehicle. Note also that no employment changes associated with non-residential development were assumed in the modeling. Therefore, the modeling reflects the highest VMT outcomes since it does not capture the typical benefits associated with mixed-use developments and

> neighborhood serving retail and focuses only on growth in housing units (Fehr & Peers 2023).

The comment requests explanation of the apparent discrepancy between the VMT modeling conducted for the Village Support Areas Alternative and the net change in total GHG emissions reported separately for buildout of the Alpine Community Plan Update, which was proposed in 2017 (and for which a Draft SEIR was released in 2020). There are several reasons that this comparison is neither apt nor informative. First and foremost, the evaluation of potential changes to VMT in the CAP Update SEIR looks at changes throughout the unincorporated county that would result from a redistribution of growth, whereas the Alpine Community Plan Update proposed increases to the development capacity in the community plan area and the associated SEIR evaluated the change in GHG emissions from the General Plan growth scenario to an increased development capacity. The Draft SEIR for the Alpine Community Plan Update also conservatively assumed full buildout of the plan by 2030. This portrays a maximum of potential GHG emissions—a worst-case scenario—and is not consistent with the more realistic growth projections used in the CAP Update.

“Smart growth" is defined in the Appellate Decision as “compact, efficient, and environmentally sensitive pattern of development that focuses future growth away from rural areas and closer to existing and planned job centers and public facilities, while preserving open space and making more efficient use of existing urban infrastructure.” An alternative that includes overlays and incentives that would transfer growth otherwise allowable and anticipated in more rural areas of the unincorporated county to within 0.5 miles of the established villages meets these requirements. No revisions have been made to the Draft SEIR in response to this comment.

Comment O18-14

The comment indicates that the CAP Update claims that limits on GPAs are not feasible and cites recent Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors actions as evidence of this authority.

Response O18-14

Although the comment attributes a discussion of feasibility to the CAP, text of the Draft SEIR alternatives analysis is cited. Page 5-7 of the Draft SEIR outlines a Prohibition on Changes to the General Plan Land Use Map Alternative. Of note, this is an evaluation of a conceptual alternative that would result in a complete prohibition on GPAs, not one that would limit GPAs in alignment with the Los Angeles County example provided.

The discussion that follows does cite state law related to prohibiting future Boards of Supervisors from revising, modifying, or amending the County’s General Plan as one reason for rejection of the alternative. A key reason for rejection, however, is that this alternative would not reduce the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. As explained on page 5-8 of the Draft SEIR:

> GPAs that increase density are outside the scope of the CAP Update, which has been developed as mitigation for the adopted General Plan and covers only the

> type and level of growth that is within the scope of the General Plan. As discussed in further detail in Section 4.4 of Chapter 4, "Other CEQA Sections," any in-process or future GPAs would conduct a stand-alone CEQA analysis, including an analysis of project specific GHG emissions to determine the project's alignment with County plans and applicable state and local programs adopted to reduce GHG emissions. Moreover, this alternative would result in the same suite of measures and actions, with the same potential for new or substantially severe impacts, as the proposed CAP Update alone and would not improve alignment with the project objectives. For these reasons, this alternative has not been carried forward for detailed analysis.

This comment does not address any legal deficiencies with the CAP Update or Draft SEIR. No revisions to the Draft SEIR have been made in response to this comment.

Comment O18-15
The comment states that the "CAP claims that the General Plan itself is 'smart growth.'" The comment identifies more recent mapping and planning prepared by SANDAG as evidence that "designated rural 'villages' in themselves are not necessarily sustainable areas to increase development."

Response O18-15
The CAP Update does not make any statements related to whether the General Plan is smart growth. Section 5.5.1, "Development of Smart Growth Alternatives," of the Draft SEIR (page 5-19) does describe the smart growth objectives of the General Plan in the context of establishing the consistency between smart growth alternatives and the General Plan. That discussion states:

> In addition to reducing VMT and GHG emissions, adopting and implementing a smart growth alternative in the unincorporated area could result in development outcomes aligned with previously directed policy objectives, such as increasing housing diversity and affordability levels near jobs and transit and reducing sprawling land use patterns. The General Plan, for which the CAP Update serves as a mitigation measure, was designed to achieve "smart growth" objectives including concentrating development in designated villages with integrated infrastructure and nonresidential uses. Achieving these goals reduces VMT attributable to new development. See Section 1.3 in Chapter 1, "Project Description," of this draft SEIR, regarding the County's efforts through the General Plan to focus development within village areas and closer to services in the western portion of the incorporated county. In addition, please refer to Table I-1 in the General Plan regarding sustainability policies.

"Smart growth" is defined in the Appellate Decision as "compact, efficient, and environmentally sensitive pattern of development that focuses future growth away from rural areas and closer to existing and planned job centers and public facilities, while preserving open space and making more efficient use of existing urban infrastructure." There is no requirement that a land use plan is consistent with SB 743 or a sustainable communities strategy be labeled "smart growth." Indeed, each of these planning

processes serves specialized and unique purposes that inform County land use planning, and the Draft SEIR describes the relative effects and benefits of several smart growth strategies.

The comment cites the CAP Update related to the existing built environment, which states in full:

> The unincorporated area's mix of village, semi-rural, and rural communities demonstrate a range of development intensities and population densities, often with remote travel destinations and few areas served by public transportation particularly in semi-rural and rural communities.

The comment also states that villages "are not necessarily sustainable areas to increase development." This portion of the comment does not appear to be directed at the analysis or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. No further response can be provided.

Comment O18-16
The comment indicates that the CAP Update fails to demonstrate that the plan will achieve the reduction targets. The comment suggests that the plan does not contain feasible measures with mandatory performance standards. Statements are provided related to enforceability, feasibility and implementation, funding, additionality of CAP Update actions, overall CAP purpose, and the necessary elements of a CAP.

Response O18-16
The CAP Update is feasible and fully enforceable. Specific statements related to enforceability, feasibility and implementation, funding, additionality of CAP Update actions, overall CAP purpose, and the necessary elements of a CAP are discussed separately below.

CAP Update Enforceability

As explained above in Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," and Response O3-2, the CAP Update identifies measures and quantified implementing actions with sufficient GHG emission reduction potential to achieve the County's established targets. In addition to these quantified implementing actions, "Path to Net Zero" actions are included in the CAP Update. The "Path to Net Zero" actions establish steps the County will take to meet the aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2045. While the CAP Update does not identify quantified GHG emissions reductions for "Path to Net Zero" actions, their implementation could result in quantified reductions in the future with additional data and monitoring. The County has not relied upon these actions to achieve the 2030 and 2045 targets established in the CAP Update. The four transportation actions referenced in the comment as lacking "enforceable standards" (T-1.1a, T-1.1b, T-3.1.a, T-3.1.b, T-3.1.c.) are Path to Net Zero actions. The quantified actions within the CAP include performance standards that substantial evidence demonstrates would collectively achieve the specified emissions level, in conformance with Section 15183.5(b)(1)(D) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

CAP Update Feasibility and Implementation

The comment also indicates that Actions T-2.1 and T-3.1 "lack sufficient evidence to ensure feasibility" but provides no detail or evidence to support this claim. Also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explain that the CAP Update adequately identifies a set of measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve its GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045. Note also that Planning & Development Services Sustainability Planning Division has nine full-time staff devoted to CAP implementation, monitoring, and updating. Appendix 10 of the CAP Update identifies staffing resources equivalent to 77 full-time staff that are required to implement the CAP, a majority of whom (90 percent) are existing staff.

CAP Update Funding

The CAP Update does include a discussion of the various potential funding sources that will be explored as part of CAP Update implementation in Chapter 5, "Implementation and Monitoring," on page 116. CAP Update Table 13 ("CAP Implementation and Monitoring Program") also identifies potential funding sources for each action. The CAP Update cannot dedicate funding to implementation of the CAP Update before its adoption. County budgeting and funding of programs is determined on an annual basis for the next fiscal year. An adopted CAP Update would direct County departments to budget for work related to implementing these measures, including application for grants to supplement County funds, as outlined in Appendix 10. Where new funding is required to implement measures, while not currently secured, there is evidence to support that funding sources or authority over funding decisions exist to implement those measures. The County's annual progress reports have demonstrated the County's success implementing existing adopted GHG reduction programs, as confirmed by the GHG emissions inventory used in the CAP Update, which confirmed that the County met the AB 32 target.

CAP Update Additionality

The comment also states that CAP actions must be "additional" by "exceed(ing) preexisting obligations imposed either at the state level or regional level." As explained in Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," the CAP Update references the criteria used to develop the measures and implementing actions that achieve quantified GHG reductions, which includes existing and new or expanded programs that are, "Additional to existing regulations from the state or federal government."

CAP Update Purpose

The comment accurately characterizes the CAP Update as a program to fulfill mitigation established in the County's 2011 GPU PEIR. As explained on page 2 of the Draft SEIR:

> A total of 19 separate mitigation measures were adopted to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of County operations and from activities within the unincorporated county to below a level of significance. One of the 19 measures,

> designated CC-1.2, called for the preparation of a CAP. Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 was incorporated into the General Plan as Goal COS-20 and Policy COS-20.1. Specifically, Goal COS-20 in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan requires reduction of community and County operations GHG emissions and Policy COS-20.1 requires preparation, maintenance, and implementation of a CAP.

The comment cites case law establishing that mitigation measures must be fully enforceable and "not mere expressions of hope." These assertions are acknowledged. The County continues to pursue full implementation and enforcement of 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure CC-1.2. See also Section 9.1.1.1, Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change for further discussion regarding the purpose of the CAP Update and its relationship to the General Plan.

Elements of the CAP Update

Finally, the comment quotes the State CEQA Guidelines' criteria for plans that can be used for the tiering and streamlining of future GHG analyses and cites the *Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action Amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines*. Although text related to performance standards and substantial evidence are emphasized, no comment on the CAP Update is provided. Similarly, the comment cites an unrelated legal case (*Communities for a Better Environment v. City of Richmond,* 184 Cal.App.4th 70 [2010]), wherein the court reinforced that CAP measures should be feasible and include performance standards. Again, no comment on the County's CAP Update or the Draft SEIR is provided.

Again, as described above and in Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," the County has developed a group of measures and actions, which substantial evidence demonstrates would collectively achieve the established emissions targets if implemented on a project-by-project basis.

Comment O18-17
The comment states that the consistency Checklist for the CAP Update "requires major revisions" and remarks that "several" of the Checklist requirements are contingent on action by the Board that is "far too off into the future."

Response O18-17
The CAP Update's attainment of the County's 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets is the result of (1) several initiatives to be directly implemented by the County and (2) incorporating GHG-reduction features into the construction and operation of development projects (including County-initiated and privately initiated projects). A purpose of the CAP Consistency Checklist is to incorporate applicable CAP measures and actions into projects when they are not otherwise binding and enforceable. The Checklist applies to discretionary projects that are subject to and not exempt from CEQA (including new development applications and expansions or renovations of existing development). To be consistent with the CAP Update, a project must demonstrate consistency with existing General Plan regional categories, land use designations, and zoning designations and

demonstrate consistency with applicable CAP Update measures and actions. The CAP Consistency Checklist sets forth two sets of CAP Consistency Requirements (one set for privately initiated projects and a second set for County-initiated projects) that project proponents are required to incorporate into their projects to demonstrate consistency with the CAP Update. If a project is not consistent with the regional categories and land use designations of the General Plan and zoning designations, then it shall not use the CAP Consistency Checklist for CEQA streamlining.

The CAP Update includes actions to reduce GHG emissions, some of which require the development and implementation of ordinances and programs that require additional study, outreach, development, and separate Board approval. Such actions are quantified in a manner that reflects these factors; that is, the estimates of GHG emissions reduction potential from quantified implementing actions are based, in part, on assumptions regarding the date by which the actions would take effect. For CAP Update actions that would be incorporated into County-initiated and privately initiated projects via the CAP Consistency Checklist, the effective dates of the Consistency Requirements in the Checklist are consistent with the effective dates assumed in the quantification of GHG reduction potential in the CAP Update as shown in Appendix 7.

The comment specifically references Consistency Requirements #1 and #4 for privately initiated projects, which have effective dates of 2028 and 2030, respectively. The calculations performed to anticipate the GHG emissions reductions from these actions in the CAP Update do not assume that these actions would take effect immediately upon adoption of the CAP Update.

The TDM ordinance (Consistency Requirement #4) is required by CAP Update Action T-6.2, which states that the County will adopt a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance by 2028. Moreover, Action T-6.2 is not a quantified implementing action in the CAP Update. Therefore, GHG emissions reductions resulting from projects complying with the TDM ordinance, once effective, would be in addition to quantified GHG emissions reduction potential reported in the CAP Update The effective date of this Consistency Requirement is not inconsistent with the CAP Update.

Regarding electrification of loading docks (Consistency Requirement #1), which is required by CAP Update Action T-3.1, the GHG reduction potential reported in the CAP Update reflects an effective date of 2030 for implementation of this action. The Checklist correctly identifies the requirement as not applicable until the ordinance has been amended and the amendments have gone into effect. The effective date of this Checklist requirement is not inconsistent with the CAP Update.

The comment restates and quotes from the tree planting and tree preservation requirements (Consistency Requirements #8 and #9) but does not further comment on these requirements. These Consistency Requirements would apply to privately initiated projects upon adoption of the CAP Update. Moreover, the CAP Update includes Action A-2.1, a quantified implementing action under which the County would achieve GHG emissions reductions through development and implementation of an Equity Driven Tree Planting Program that results in the planting of new trees on County property and in the

unincorporated area. As set forth in the CAP Update, GHG emissions reductions would occur under these actions as a result of actions taken by the County and do not rely on incorporating GHG reduction features into development projects.

The comment also makes a statement that "(t)he remaining items essentially only require adherence to Tier 2 standards of the CALGreen Code" without providing further detail. The Checklist includes several requirements with references to Tier 2 requirements in CalGreen, including Consistency Requirement #2, Install Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure; Consistency Requirement #5, Electrify Buildings and Appliances; Consistency Requirement #6, Increase Renewable Energy; and Consistency Requirement #7, Increase Water Efficiency. Each of these requirements appropriately references specified provisions of Tier 2 CALGreen requirements to substantiate how CAP Update actions will be incorporated into development projects to achieve GHG emission reductions in furtherance of the CAP Update's attainment of its 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets.

The comment then asserts that the Checklist "represents an incredible missed opportunity for the County to ensure meaningful on-site GHG mitigation" without any elaboration. It then offers suggested revisions to the Checklist. The County has reviewed these suggestions considering the Checklist's purpose of incorporating applicable CAP measures and actions into projects when they are not otherwise binding and enforceable and has the following responses:

- Regarding parking de-coupling, the CAP Update does not include any quantified implementation actions through which GHG emissions reductions are achieved from parking de-coupling. The CAP Update does include Action T-6.2.a, under which the County would adopt a TDM ordinance to include preapproved options for new development to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated areas. This action is incorporated into the Checklist as Consistency Requirement #4. The County will evaluate parking de-coupling as well as other parking-related strategies as potential preapproved options during development of the TDM ordinance.
- Regarding transit, carpool, and vanpool subsidies, the CAP Update includes Action T-6.1, under which the County would develop a program to provide free transit passes or free trips in the unincorporated area to reduce VMT, and Action T-6.3, under which the County would increase access to first- and last-mile transportation services and connections to reduce VMT. As set forth in the CAP Update, GHG emissions reductions would occur under these actions as a result of actions taken by the County and do not rely on incorporating GHG reduction features into development projects. However, the County will evaluate transit, carpool, and vanpool subsidies from project proponents as potential preapproved options during development of the TDM ordinance (Action T-6.2.a; Consistency Requirement #4) and as potential elements of the programs developed under T-6.2 and T-6.3.
- Regarding clustering design that reduces VMT and preserves habitat and provision of on-site mixed uses, the CAP Update does not include any quantified

implementation actions through which GHG emissions reductions are achieved from these strategies. The CAP Update does include Action T-6.2.a, under which the County would adopt a TDM ordinance to include preapproved options for new development to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated areas. This action is incorporated into the Checklist as Consistency Requirement #4. The County will evaluate clustering design that reduces VMT and preserves habitat and provision of on-site mixed uses as potential preapproved options during development of the TDM ordinance.

- Regarding prohibitions or limits on natural gas fireplaces and hearths, the CAP Update does not include any quantified implementation actions through which GHG emissions reductions are achieved through prohibitions or limits on natural gas fireplaces and hearths. However, the County will evaluate whether to prohibit or limit natural gas fireplaces and hearths as part of its implementation of CAP Update Action E-2.1, regarding amendment of the County Code of Regulatory ordinances by 2026 to require all-electric equipment in new residential, commercial, and industrial construction, and as part of its implementation of CAP Update Action E-2.2, regarding amendment of County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances, adoption of a building performance standard, and development of an incentive program by 2030 to increase energy efficiency and electrification in existing residential and non-residential development.
- Regarding provision of bicycle storage lockers, racks, and other bicycle storage facilities for residents and employees, the CAP Update does not include any quantified implementation actions through which GHG emissions reductions are achieved from bicycle parking and storage. The CAP Update does include Action T-6.2a, under which the County would adopt a TDM ordinance to include preapproved options for new development to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated areas. This action is incorporated into the Checklist as Consistency Requirement #4. The County will evaluate bicycle parking and related strategies as potential preapproved options during development of the TDM ordinance.
- Regarding placement of conservation or agricultural easements at a 2:1 ratio when a project results in conversion of natural habitat or agricultural lands, the CAP Update includes Action A-1.1, under which the County would acquire conservation lands and protect them in perpetuity, and Action A-1.2, under which the County would restore County-owned lands to increase carbon storage. As set forth in the CAP Update, GHG emissions reductions would occur under these actions as a result of actions taken by the County and do not rely on incorporating GHG reduction features into development projects. Separate from any GHG streamlining benefits provided to projects under the CAP Update's Checklist, proposed discretionary projects must undergo review of agricultural and biological resources prior to permit issuance, as described on the County's website: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/procguid.html.
- Regarding measures to reduce GHG emissions from heavy-construction equipment and prohibit gas-powered landscaping equipment, the CAP Update

includes Action T-2.1, under which the County would develop a program to provide residents and businesses with incentives to purchase alternative fuel or zero-emissions construction and landscaping equipment to reduce emissions, and Action T-2.2, under which the County would develop and adopt a landscaping equipment ordinance to require the use of zero-emission landscaping equipment by 2030 and zero-emission construction equipment by 2045 in the unincorporated area. As set forth in the CAP Update, GHG emissions reductions would occur under these actions as a result of actions taken by the County and do not rely on incorporating GHG reduction features into development projects.

In summary, the CAP Checklist requirements appropriately align with relevant assumptions of the CAP Update modeling of the GHG reduction potential of quantified implementing actions. Accelerated timelines, requiring projects in "high VMT areas to provide funding for the CAP's measures," and other potential requirements referenced in the comment are not included in the CAP Update's package of quantified implementing actions that would achieve the County's 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets and are not necessary to avoid "contravention of the CAP's targets" as asserted by the commenter, nor are they necessary for the CAP Consistency Checklist to fulfill its purpose of incorporating applicable CAP measures and actions into the construction and operation of development projects when they are not otherwise binding and enforceable to contribute to the CAP Update's attainment of the County's 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction targets.

Comment O18-18
The comment expresses a desire for the County to incorporate the comments described above.

Response O18-18
Refer to Responses O18-1 through O18-17, above. The County is confident, based on the evidence provided therein, in the legal adequacy of both the CAP Update and the Draft SEIR.

Letter O19

FARM BUREAU San Diego County

The Voice of Local Farmers

Serving San Diego agriculture since 1914

January 5, 2024

Meghan Kelly
County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Subject: County of San Diego Draft 2024 Climate Action Plan

Dear Ms. Kelly,

The San Diego County Farm Bureau (Farm Bureau) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the County of San Diego's Draft Climate Action Plan (Draft Plan). Established in 1914, San Diego County Farm Bureau is a nonprofit supported by over 1,400 dues-paying members. Our mission is to foster San Diego agriculture through education, public relations, and public policy to promote the economic viability, sustainability, and community building of agriculture. O19-1

As stated in the Draft Plan, the Agriculture and Conservation sector refers to emissions associated with livestock, application of fertilizer, and the use of petroleum – or diesel – powered equipment. Emissions associated with this sector accounted for only four percent of the total emissions in 2019. The Agriculture and Conservation sector includes two GHG reduction strategies comprising five measures, four of which affect agriculture directly.

A-2: Develop a tree planting program that expands canopy across the unincorporated area and prioritizes underserved communities

Farm Bureau agrees that trees are a significant source of carbon capture and storage due to their size and longevity. While it is impressive that the Tree Planting Program at County Parks has planted 30,029 trees since 2015, it is important to note that agriculture is losing thousands of trees due to the increasing economic costs of farming every single year. We ask that when developing the tree planting program, the county consider ways that they can support agriculture keeping the trees that are already planted in the ground and that will also continue to produce food for our community. O19-2

A-3: Preserve agricultural lands to prioritize carbon storage and balance economic and development goals

Farm Bureau supports the preservation of agricultural lands in order to maintain the county's agricultural landscape, economy, and food source for years to come. We are supportive of the PACE program. However, it is important to note that just because agricultural land is preserved does not mean that it will continue to be an operational farm. Farming is a business and must remain economically viable in order for the land to continue to be farmed on. When costs such as labor, crop protection materials and water

FARM BUREAU San Diego County

The Voice of Local Farmers

Serving San Diego agriculture since 1914

are too high, and the regulatory burdens are too cumbersome, a land owner may have no choice but to abandoned their farm. Farm abandonment usually creates a bigger issue of unmaintained land, overgrown with invasive brush, and a likely wildfire hazard.

A-4: Incentivize carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land and support climate-friendly farming practices in the unincorporated area

Farm Bureau is supportive of an incentive-based approach to implementing a variety of techniques on natural and working lands that reduce GHG emissions and provide co-benefits such as water and land conservation. We appreciate the work that County Staff has put into seeking Farm Bureau feedback on their Carbon Farming Program.

A-5: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural operations

Farm Bureau supports the incentive-based approach to replacements of diesel-powered farm equipment to lower emission, or electric, equipment and energy efficiency improvements. The Draft Plan states that these improvements will also lead to a reduction in overall operational costs as cleaner equipment replacements are often more fuel-efficient and energy use reductions will lower utility costs. We must ensure that electricity capacity is sufficient to run these electric replacements. It is also important to note that if the cost of electricity continues to increase, the lower utility cost benefits will be irrelevant.

O19-2 cont.

The Draft Plan attributes only four percent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the unincorporated area to farming activities. While Farm Bureau and the farming community support an incentive-based approach in reaching the County's goal of net zero emissions, we must remember that emissions created in farming our foods, fiber and flowers are largely offset by carbon sequestration in the growing crops. Farming in San Diego County is necessary to locally feed and provide oxygen to our community. Without a local food source, farming is at risk of being sourced from overseas where not only is our food security threatened, but the carbon footprint to transport produce increases dramatically and environmental practices, labor laws, and pesticide regulations are questionable.

Farm Bureau appreciates the work that County Staff has put in to seek our feedback and again, thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Dana Groot
President

Letter O19 San Diego County Farm Bureau

Dana Groot, President
January 5, 2024

Comment O19-1
The comment provides background information about the San Diego County Farm Bureau.

Response O19-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O19-2
The comment addresses topics related to CAP Update Measures A-2 through A-5, including suggestions for tree planting program implementation (A-2), comments on the economic viability of farming (A-3), support for incentive-based implementation (A-4 and A-5), and comments on the cost of electricity (A-5).

Response O19-2
The County appreciates the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The CAP Update includes measures to reduce GHG emissions through preserving natural and agricultural lands. Specifically, Measure A-2 would result in a tree planting program that expands the canopy across the unincorporated area and prioritizes underserved communities; Measure A-3 would preserve agricultural lands to prioritize carbon storage and balance economic and development goals; Measure A-4 would incentivize carbon farming to expand carbon storage capacity on agricultural land; and Measure A-5 would reduce GHG emissions from agricultural operations. Please also refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," regarding how the proposed CAP Update measures would collectively achieve the established GHG emissions targets.

Letter O20

From: Kelly, Meghan
To: Spoon, Steven (Chad); CAP
Subject: FW: CAP Letter of Support
Date: Monday, January 8, 2024 8:03:08 AM
Attachments: image001.png
LOS_COSD_CAP_SDCP_KB.pdf
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png
image005.png
image006.png

Meghan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan | Sustainability Planning Division
619.323.6462 | meghan.kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

From: Hamburger, Ariel <Ariel.Hamburger@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 7:46 PM
To: Farmer, Tyler <Tyler.Farmer@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: CAP Letter of Support

From: Jill Monroe <jmonroe@sdcommunitypower.org>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 7:00:12 PM
To: Hamburger, Ariel <Ariel.Hamburger@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Cc: Ashley Rodriguez <arodriguez@sdcommunitypower.org>; Jen Lebron <jlebron@sdcommunitypower.org>; Lee Friedman <LFriedman@sdcommunitypower.org>
Subject: [External] CAP Letter of Support

Hi Ariel,

Please see the attached letter of support from San Diego Community Power for the County's Climate Action Plan. O20-1

Thank you,
Jill

Jill Monroe
Senior Manager Marketing & Communications
Mobile 619-813-0679 | **Fax** 619-768-0356
jmonroe@sdcommunitypower.org

PO BOX 12716
San Diego, CA 92112
sdcommunitypower.org
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SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY POWER

PO BOX 12716
San Diego, CA 92112
sdcommunitypower.org

January 5, 2024

Sustainability Planning Division
1600 Pacific Highway, Fourth Floor, Room 402
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Meghan Kelly,

San Diego Community Power is proud to support the continued efforts of the County of San Diego's Sustainability Planning Division and their meaningful updates to the Climate Action Plan. The County's commitment to addressing the climate crisis and implementing ambitious benchmarks and milestones is admirable, and SDCP appreciates the significant strides being made to maximize emissions reductions in our community through the Zero Carbon Portfolio Plan.

SDCP commends the goals of the CAP to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use and electrification of County Operations (E-1). SDCP is eager to support the County with these efforts, whether through programmatic support or enrollment of eligible County operational accounts in our Power100 service, which provides customers who opt in with 100% carbon-free electricity. We also commend the CAP's focus on building electrification (E-2&3) – as it is a crucial step towards achieving sustainable and environmentally friendly development.

O20-2

SDCP would like to recommend additional policy pathways to further advance this critical initiative. Specifically, we would support requirements for electrical work to be exclusively performed by C-10 licensed contractors. This measure ensures that qualified professionals are engaged in the electrification process, ensuring the safety and efficacy of these crucial projects.

Much like the CAP's commitments in Actions 3.2 & 3.3, SDCP is dedicated to building local renewable resources, bringing solar and other renewable opportunities to our communities of concern, and providing choice to customers in the unincorporated areas of the County. We look forward to further coordination on these points – specifically on opportunities around local generation. SDCP would welcome additional collaboration from the County on engagement with the 17 federally recognized Tribal Authorities located within the unincorporated region to ensure the Tribal Authorities have the same opportunities from SDCP for programs, development and energy choice.

Finally, SDCP encourages inclusion of language that highlights the continued collaboration of our agencies on programs that actively support existing homeowners, renters and businesses in their efforts to electrify or otherwise reduce their energy costs. This partnership has already yielded innovative solutions through the formation of the Regional Energy Network.

O20-3

SDCP recognizes the County's commitment to continuous improvement in the CAP and the notable partnership with SDCP. The collaboration between the County and SDCP has been exemplary, showcasing a shared dedication to reducing emissions and advancing renewable energy in the region.

O20-4

Thank you for your dedication to this critical cause, SDCP looks forward to supporting the updated CAP.

Sincerely,

Karin Burns (Jan 5, 2024 17:03 PST)

Karin Burns



LOS_COSD_CAP_SDCP

Final Audit Report 2024-01-06

Created:	2024-01-06
By:	Jill Monroe (jmonroe@sdcommunitypower.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAaJ6hjvCELq1I4iuc3qwWzYT2FXPRMKaD

"LOS_COSD_CAP_SDCP" History

Document created by Jill Monroe (jmonroe@sdcommunitypower.org)
2024-01-06 - 0:52:45 AM GMT

Document emailed to Karin Burns (kburns@sdcommunitypower.org) for signature
2024-01-06 - 0:53:08 AM GMT

Document e-signed by Karin Burns (kburns@sdcommunitypower.org)
Signature Date: 2024-01-06 - 1:03:04 AM GMT - Time Source: server

Agreement completed.
2024-01-06 - 1:03:04 AM GMT

Adobe Acrobat Sign

Letter O20 San Diego Community Power

Karin Burns
January 5, 2024

Comment O20-1
The comment states that the letter of support from the San Diego Community Power for the CAP Update is attached.

Response O20-1
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O20-2
The comment includes an introductory statement and commends the County's efforts in preparing the CAP Update. The comment also commends the goals of the CAP Update to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and electrification of County operations.

Response O20-2
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment O20-3
The comment recommends that electrical work be exclusively performed by C-10 licensed contractors. The comment encourages further collaboration with the County.

Response O20-3
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a). The comment will be provided to County decision-makers for their consideration during the adoption hearings for a Final CAP Update.

Comment O20-4
The comment recognizes the County's dedication to improve the CAP Update and continued collaboration with San Diego Community Power.

Response O20-4
The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

9.1.4 Individual Comments and Responses

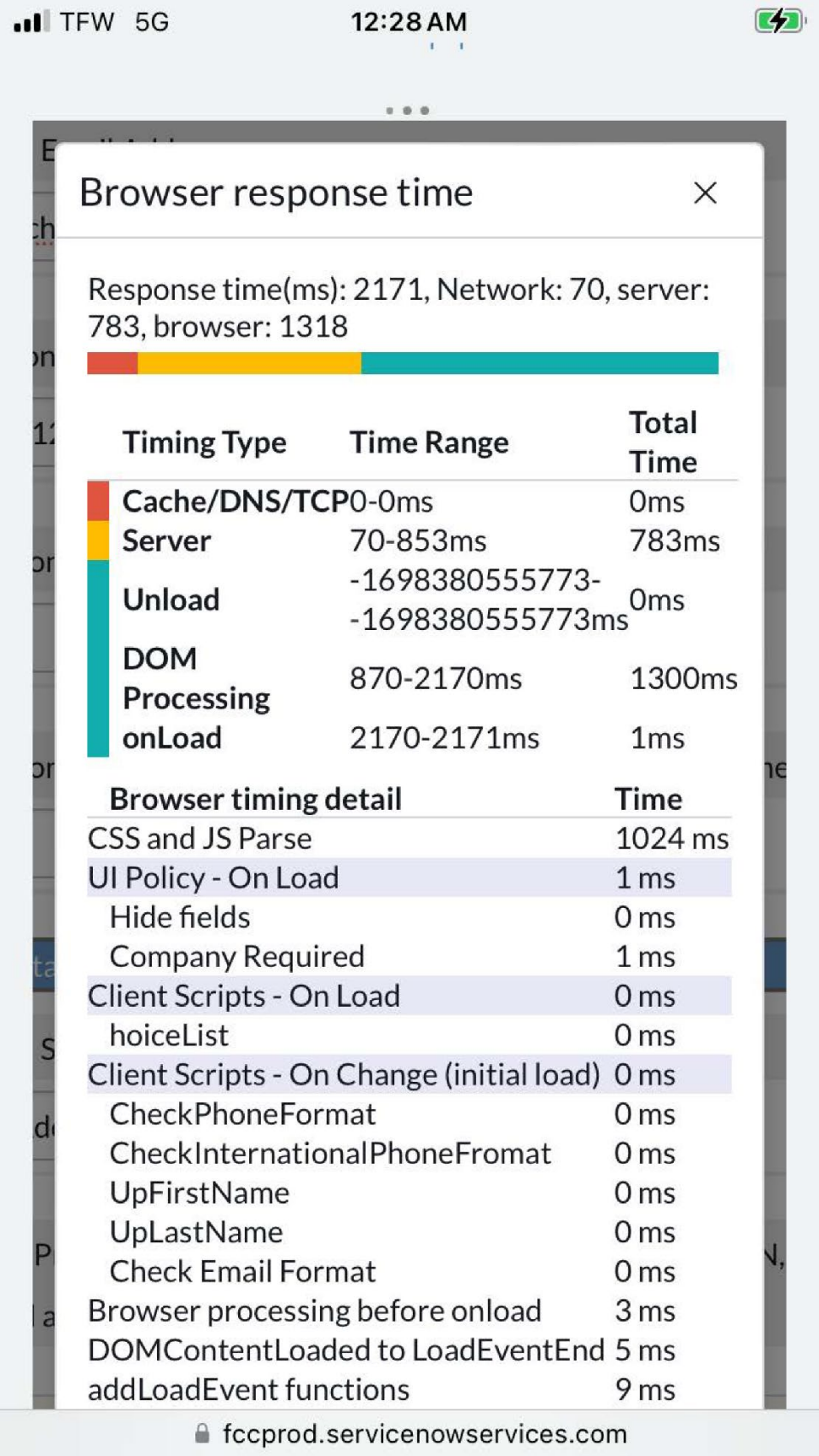
Letter I1

Respondent No: 1
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Oct 26, 2023 23:36:42 pm
Last Seen: Oct 26, 2023 23:36:42 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Name (First, Last)**	Robyn Griffith
Q2. **Email Address**	rchristinegriffith@icloud.com
Q3. **If applicable, please select the resource area(s) your comment applies to. Select all that apply.**	Air Quality Energy Environmental Justice Greenhouse Gas Emissions Hazards and Hazardous Materials Hydrology and Water Quality Noise
Q4. **Enter your comment here**	not answered
Q5. **Upload your files here**	https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-us-california/e78496e71f8227db727afcaaac2d00245dd94cc1/original/1698388575/23f3c87412a88cc3bec1934586da1c44_IMG_1558.png?1698388575

I1-1


TFW 5G
12:28 AM
Browser response time
Response time(ms): 2171, Network: 70, server: 783, browser: 1318
Timing Type
Time Range
Total Time
Cache/DNS/TCP
0-0ms
0ms
Server
70-853ms
783ms
Unload
-1698380555773--1698380555773ms
0ms
DOM Processing
870-2170ms
1300ms
onLoad
2170-2171ms
1ms
Browser timing detail
Time
CSS and JS Parse
1024 ms
UI Policy - On Load
1 ms
Hide fields
0 ms
Company Required
1 ms
Client Scripts - On Load
0 ms
hoiceList
0 ms
Client Scripts - On Change (initial load)
0 ms
CheckPhoneFormat
0 ms
CheckInternationalPhoneFromat
0 ms
UpFirstName
0 ms
UpLastName
0 ms
Check Email Format
0 ms
Browser processing before onload
3 ms
DOMContentLoaded to LoadEventEnd
5 ms
addLoadEvent functions
9 ms
fccprod.servicenowservices.com

Letter I1 Robyn Griffith

October 26, 2023

Comment I1-1

The comment consists of an online comment form, which indicates that the comment is applicable to the following resource topics: air quality, energy, environmental justice, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. However, no specific comment is provided.

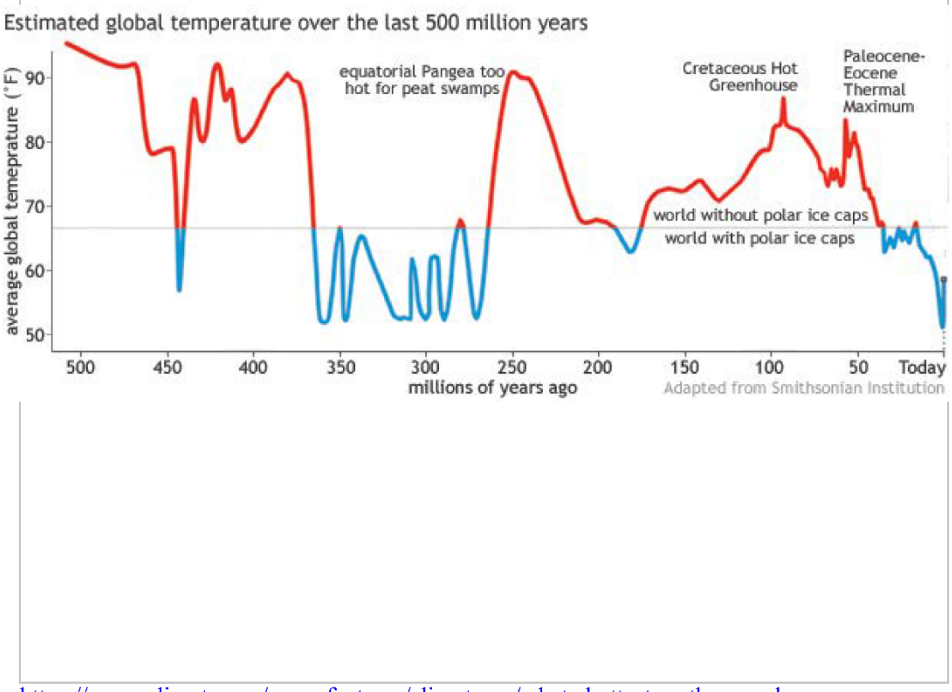
Response I1-1

The listed resources are evaluated in the Draft SEIR. See Sections 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, and 2.12 for impacts analysis related to air quality, energy, environmental justice, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise, respectively.

Letter
I2

From: Matt
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SEIR Public Comment
Date: Thursday, October 26, 2023 1:27:27 PM

Please prove climate change. Do not say that many scientists say so. Show hard data like this:



https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/whats-hottest-earths-ever-been

Save us spending money for nothing!

Best regards,

Matthew Pfeffer
760-535-8811

I2-1

Letter I2 Matthew Pfeffer

October 26, 2023

Comment I2-1

The comment requests evidence to prove climate change.

Response I2-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I3

Respondent No: 2
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Oct 30, 2023 04:31:09 am
Last Seen: Oct 30, 2023 04:31:09 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Name (First, Last)**	Mike Borrello
Q2. **Email Address**	maborrello@roadrunner.com
Q3. **If applicable, please select the resource area(s) your comment applies to. Select all that apply.**	Air Quality Energy Environmental Justice Greenhouse Gas Emissions Land Use and Planning Transportation

Q4. **Enter your comment here**

In case you've not noticed, the so called 'climate emergency' is a disputed matter in [true] scientific circles as 1609 scientists have all agreed around the world. As a resident of San Diego County I DO NOT CONSENT having another one of my tax dollars spent on 'climate change' mitigation. Please read the declaration I've attached.

I3-1

Q5. **Upload your files here**	https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-us-california/8677aae96c5cf7e7407918ec027e03faa2f39d22/original/1698665395/69fe6da1c893edae8a4a14db429753b3_WCD-version-081423.pdf?1698665395

Letter I3 Mike Borrello

October 30, 2023

Comment I3-1

The comment states that climate emergency is disputable and expresses opposition to any climate mitigation.

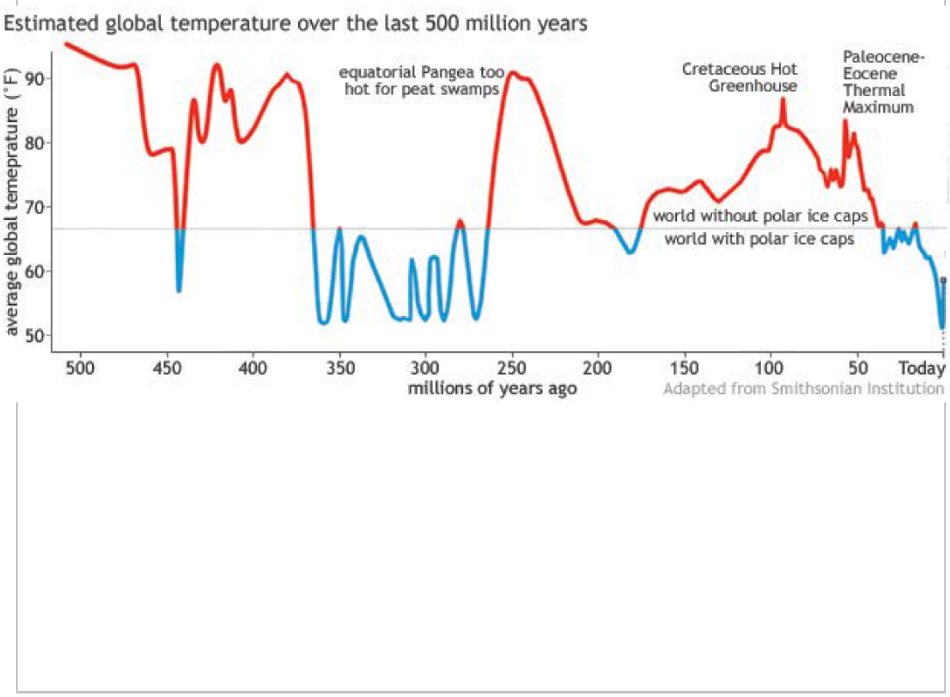
Response I3-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I4

From: Matt
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SEIR Public Comment
Date: Monday, November 6, 2023 5:57:00 PM

Please prove climate change!



I4-1

Best Regards,

Matt Pfeffer
760-535-8811

Letter I4 Matt Pfeffer

November 6, 2023

Comment I4-1

The comment requests evidence to prove climate change.

Response I4-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I5

Respondent No: 3
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Nov 15, 2023 13:11:51 pm
Last Seen: Nov 15, 2023 13:11:51 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Name (First, Last)**	Daphne Galang
Q2. **Email Address**	daphnegalang09@gmail.com
Q3. **If applicable, please select the resource area(s) your comment applies to. Select all that apply.**	Biological Resources

Q4. **Enter your comment here**

Dear County of San Diego CAP SEIR, On page 5-67, Figure 5-1i, there was a map of area "H" that included the unincorporated community of Spring Valley, CA 91977. Please amend the map provided by Ascent to include the overlapping federal open space for the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The current Ascent map marks "parks and open space" for the County of San Diego Parks & Recreation, but omits the state and national parks and national refuges. Please also check the legend or map key for the number and location of the schools, especially in area "H". For example, there seems to be more "stars" marking schools than there are public schools currently existing in the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, and the Grossmont Union High School District. Cuyamaca Community College is a "college" rather than a "school". Is the map including other private schools? The map is not clear, since each school was not individually named. Lastly, the fire hazard markings of yellow for "high" risk and red for "very high" risk overlapped onto my residential street and onto the local, neighborhood elementary school property. Are these fire hazard areas related to the interface between the suburban and open space areas? The current map does not explain why these colors included single-family homes and public institutions, such as La Presa Elementary School, that are beyond the defensible space minimum, and are across a street with another row of houses between my home and the open space. Respectfully, Daphne H. Galang, Spring Valley, CA 91977 P.S.-Thank you for the printed copy of the draft County of San Diego CAP SEIR available in the Rancho San Diego Public Library on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

I5-1

Q5. **Upload your files here** not answered

Letter I5 Daphne Galang

November 15, 2023

Comment I5-1

The comment requests Figure 5-1i to be revised to include the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The comment states that national and state parks and open space are not included in the figure. The comment requests clarification on what schools (e.g., private schools, public schools, and colleges) are labeled on the figure. The comment also seeks clarification on the fire hazard severity zones shown in the figure.

Response I5-1

The comment refers to a submap prepared for the Fire Safe and VMT Efficient Alternative. The purpose of the map is to identify the portions of the unincorporated county where growth would be incentivized under the smart growth alternative. Services and parks are provided for reference but are not integral to the mapping or analysis provided in the Draft SEIR.

The fire hazard severity zones depicted on Figure 5-1i are based on information prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. These maps are developed to inform planning decisions and are not intended to be indicative of fire risk on any particular property. No revisions have been made to the Draft SEIR in response to this comment.

Letter I6

Respondent No: 4
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Nov 20, 2023 14:28:51
Last Seen: Nov 20, 2023 14:28:51
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name (First, Last)**	Jarrod caswell
Q2.	**Email Address**	jarodcaswell@gmail.com
Q3.	**If applicable, please select the resource area(s) your comment applies to. Select all that apply.**	Transportation

Q4. **Enter your comment here**

You should fun this community free shuttle service giving 1k rides amonth I6-1

Q5.	**Upload your files here**	https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-us-california/d9cc0593276f04cedc5b7bbdeb51c77edbdcf82e/original/1700519330/3cce9ed054fef75471eb68a5ddb9245c_IMG_3365.jpeg?1700519330



Letter I6 Jarrod Caswell

November 20, 2023

Comment I6-1

The comment recommends that the County should provide community free shuttle service.

Response I6-1

The County appreciates the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to established GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Note that the CAP Update includes Measure T-6: Support transit and transportation demand management to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area. As articulated in the CAP Update (page 56), "the County can partner with the region's transit agencies (e.g., San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, North County Transit District) to support transit ridership for unincorporated area residents." Measure T-6 will also use TDM policies that include shuttle service and transit subsidies and increase access to transportation services (e.g., neighborhood electric vehicles, microtransit, bike and scooter share).

Letter
I7

From: Bridgett Ross
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Climate Action plan
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:51:40 PM

Hi,

I am writing to comment/ask about two aspects of the plan:

1. **Car charging in multi-occupancy buildings** (eg, condos, apartments): I didn't see any legal requirements or financial support for these buildings to allow residents to charge at their building. Many older buildings do not have places for people to charge their cars and have no plans to make car-charging accessible unless required by law. Often these buildings cannot afford to do more than the bare minimum to stay up to code. It is hard for people to purchase an EV car if they cannot charge it at home. Charging stations across San Diego are often broken. Personally, I would love an electric car, but cannot buy one because I have nowhere to charge it and I cannot depend on unreliable public charging stations. I7-1

2. **Bike lanes**: I couldn't understand the specific plans from the document. I request that attention be given to linking up existing bike lanes so that there are not "mostly" safe routes. Consider riding from the beach to downtown. There is always an incredibly dangerous mile. While not in San Diego, my dear friend Sarah Langenkamp died on a short stretch off road that was the only unsafe segment of her bike route in Washington D.C. There have been similar deaths here. I mention her name because her death is tragic and received National attention. Additionally, please create SAFE bike lines. Do not install temporary bike lanes and then leave them for years assuming they are good enough. Or assume that their failure somehow reflects the inadequacy of bike lanes. I7-2

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. And thank you for your effort on the climate action plan.

Thank you,
Bridgett

Sent from my iPhone

Letter I7 Bridgett Ross

December 21, 2023

Comment I7-1

The comment includes an introductory statement and expresses concern about accessibility to car charging stations in multi-occupancy buildings.

Response I7-1

The County appreciates the commenter's concern for equitable access to car charging infrastructure. This comment aligns with key themes heard during community outreach conducted during CAP Update preparation. Incentivizing access to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, particularly in frontline communities, is a key element of the County's strategy to decarbonize the on-road vehicle fleet. In addition, the County has several separate initiatives related to electric vehicle charging. For example, as explained on page 5 of the CAP Update:

> Since 2020, the County has collaborated with regional partners to advance zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) in the region as a founding member of the Accelerate to Zero Emissions (A2Z) Collaboration. Comprised of local and regional governments, industry, academia, and local community-based organizations in the San Diego region, the A2Z Collaboration is developing a vision for and implementing a San Diego Regional Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy that will accelerate investment in ZEVs and EV infrastructure to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions and address climate change. The A2Z Collaboration brings together key stakeholders in the region to attract public and private investment and advance equitable access to EVs and charging stations across the region.

The CAP Update includes Measure T-3: Install electric vehicle charging stations and provide incentives for zero-emissions vehicles in the unincorporated area, which would increase the accessibility of electric vehicle charging infrastructure at publicly accessible locations, including multi-occupancy buildings. Through Action T-3.1, the County would install 2,040 publicly available electric vehicle charging stations by 2028 and require vehicle charging infrastructure installations and preferential parking for zero-emission vehicles for multi-family residential and non-residential construction projects.

Comment I7-2

The comment expresses concern about bike lane safety.

Response I7-2

The CAP Update establishes a vision for a net zero future that includes improved bike lanes. Specifically, the CAP Update includes Measure T-5: Improve County roadways to encourage walking, biking, rolling to/from transit and destinations and increase transportation efficiency. As described on page 55 of the CAP Update, this measure includes roadway enhancements that protect all users and create a more comfortable and safer experience for pedestrians and bicyclists to reduce single occupancy automobile trips and encourage active transportation. This measure will implement infrastructure improvements (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes) using improved materials and

designs and create education safety programs that support shifting transportation modes to walking, biking, rolling, carpooling, and public transit. However, specific plans related to bike lane layout and linkages are established through the County's Active Transportation Plan, which was approved by the Board in 2018. Additionally, the County uses Chapter 1000, "Bikeway Planning and Design," of the Caltrans publication *California Highway Design Manual*, as amended as the bikeway standard on County public roads.

The County acknowledges the commenter's concern regarding bike lane safety. Please see Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," which explains the purpose of the CAP Update, and see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identifies measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Letter I8

From: Michelle Baca
To: CAP
Subject: [External] The San Diego Climate Action Plan
Date: Monday, January 1, 2024 10:03:04 PM

I urge you to vote against the The San Diego Climate Action Plan
1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled it's carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly.
2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence
3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean
4) the policies lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships
5) there is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblow rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023
6) huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice

I8-1

Respectfully,
Michelle Baca
4992 Corte Santico
Oceanside, CA

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Letter I8 Michelle Baca

January 1, 2024

Comment I8-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I8-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I9

From: Kelly, Meghan
To: Spoon, Steven (Chad)
Subject: FW: [External] County"s Draft Climate Action Plan
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 8:08:30 AM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png
image005.png

Please save, thanks.

Meghan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan | Sustainability Planning Division
619.323.6462 | meghan.kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov

From: Albert Perdon <albertperdon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 1, 2024 9:30 AM
To: Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] County's Draft Climate Action Plan

The Draft Action Plan will do little to achieve the goals for protecting the climate. There is an alternative that will achieve the outcome that is hoped for. The Count's unincorporated areas offer the greatest potential for improving the climate.

Adopt the recommendations presented in the Wolford Brief that will enable 12 million Californians to live in new cities without being dependent on owning and operating an automobile. 310.871.1113

I9-1

Letter I9 Albert Perdon

January 1, 2024

Comment I9-1

The comment states that the CAP Update "will do little to achieve the goals for protecting the climate." The comment recommends adoption of the recommendations in the Wolford Brief to accommodate growth without dependency on automobiles.

Response I9-1

The County acknowledges the commenter's concern regarding the effectiveness of the CAP Update measures and actions in achieving climate protection goals. Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains the methodology the County used to established GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

The commenter has not provided said brief for reference. Therefore, no further response is provided.

Letter
I10

From: Dan at Super Star by Help Me 2 Learn
To: CAP
Subject: [External] San Diego Climate Action Plan
Date: Monday, January 1, 2024 8:01:38 PM

Hello San Diego,

I understand you are considering San Diego Climate Action Plan.
While it may be necessary to create such a plan and I am for reducing our carbon emissions, I suggest that you take a look at the bigger picture.
We also need to encourage business and reduce regulations, not increase regulations.
Please make also make it easier to live in San Diego and do business in San Diego.
Make it more affordable to live and work here. I10-1

Have a Super Star Day,
Dan
Dan Sheffield
Super Star Games by the Help Me 2 Learn Company
call or text: 760-419-7216

Featuring: **Super Star Games**: "Your Kids will Love Learning with Super Star Games"
for school: www.HelpMe2Learn.com and for home and homeschool: www.SuperStarPhonics.com

Letter I10 Dan Sheffield

January 1, 2024

Comment I10-1

The comment expresses support for carbon emissions reduction and concern about regulations on businesses and the affordability of San Diego County.

Response I10-1

The County is committed to working with stakeholders as the CAP Update is implemented to ensure the local economy is supported. For example, implementation of Measure SW-4 would result in increased economic opportunities for community composting and agricultural operators and implementation of Action E-3.2.c would support green economy workforce development. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is provided here.

Letter
I11

From: Aurora Foster
To: CAP
Subject: [External] CAP COMMENT
Date: Tuesday, January 2, 2024 10:25:38 AM

Implementing San Diego Climate Action Plan will restrict our personal choice, lifestyle, and freedom.

There is NO scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean.

These policies will lead to fascism with government and corporate partnerships.

There is NO climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologist.

STOP RUINING CALIFORNIA AND START BEING FOR THE PEOPLE NOT FOR THE PROFIT!!!!

I11-1

Letter I11 Aurora Foster

January 2, 2024

Comment I11-1

The comment states that implementation of the CAP Update will restrict personal choice, lifestyle, and freedom. The comment also questions the effectiveness of the CAP Update measures and the threat of climate change.

Response I11-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I12

From: Rosie & Patrick Higuera
To: CAP
Subject: [External]
Date: Tuesday, January 2, 2024 7:47:20 PM

This climate action place is racist and fascist at its core, undermining indigenous people and citizens as well. Highly industrialized countries like China have controlled their citizens, stolen their rights all with these same promises.

There is no way to measure the carbon emissions either!

We the people say, no!!!
Rosie Higuera

I12-1

Letter I12 Rosie Higuera

January 2, 2024

Comment I12-1

The comment claims that the CAP Update is racist and fascist and states that carbon emissions cannot be measured. The commenter is in opposition to the CAP Update.

Response I12-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I13

From: Elena Bee
To: CAP
Subject: [External] CAP
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 7:45:07 AM

To whom is may concern:
It is already too expensive to live in San Diego CA - I am holding on by the skin of my teeth, but with these new plans to control virtually all San Diego spending in that every action implemented locally will have to be Climate Action Plan (CAP) friendly to be approved is **not a good idea** and will have more people and businesses leaving the State, this is a huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice.
Reasons why:
1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled it's carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly. 2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence 3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean 4) the policies lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships.

From Elena Baker, an American Citizen who has lived in CA for over 37 yrs. I pay my taxes but am considering moving out of State because cost of living is already too high.

I13-1

Letter I13 Elena Baker

January 3, 2024

Comment I13-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I13-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I14

From: Summer Boger
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SEIR public comment
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 12:47:22 PM

We can all agree we want housing to be more heat and cool efficient, and we can all agree we want open spaces, parks and farms. However, I am against excessive spending to implement new infrastructure for which we don't have the money. We don't need more regulations; CA has too many as is. We don't need more emission-control strategies that take away our financial ability to support ourselves.

I disagree with the Net Zero plans because they are not sustainable to human life, to the economy or to common sense or reason. It is a rash idea to disregard human life and to be willing to sacrifice human life for the fake "climate emergency." Green House Gases (GHG) are not killing us. We can adapt to them better than the Net Zero proposals! Those proposals are pure coercion and eventual totalitarian top-down government tactics against "We The People." In America, this is not how we get things done.

I'm against any vehicle miles-traveled-coercion by toll roads or 15 or 20-minute cities that put limitations on one's ability to travel by personal vehicle. Solar and Electrical Vehicles (EV's) are not sustainable. They have toxic chemicals; they use foreign resources like rare-earth metals, that we do not mine for in the US as we should if we really want those products. Our energy power grid infrastructure cannot sustain more EV's. Renewable Energy technologies are not equivalent to current energy creation and are not sustainable for the population here. We are setting ourselves up for more rolling black outs and higher costs of energy which are not sustainable for the average person. EV fires are extremely hot and hard to put out which put us at much higher risk for the spread of wildfires. This is toxic hazardous waste, and it is insane to pave the way for more of these vehicles here in San Diego.

I14-1

Building more High Density Housing (HDH) is not a solution to pollution. Teaching people how to farm and encouraging people to be farmers is. We need more farmers more than we need more dense housing and public transportation.

Will you make exceptions to new regulations when, "construction related to implementation of the GHG reduction measures and their associated actions could result in exceedances of local criteria air pollutant thresholds?" What an oxymoron. You, the elite, are making "Rules for me, but not for thee."

I disapprove of the Water Efficiency Plan as it can limit people's water consumption to unsustainable levels. People should not be having to weigh if they can shower that day or if they do laundry, and that is where this plan will be leading.

I see lot of vague visions in this report. I see very little numbers showing the plan of action and how this will actually make a difference in lowering any substantial average temperatures locally. What is the goal? What is the achievable number you are wanting? Is there any proof these changes will accomplish the goal? I recommend removing from the language anything about Net zero, zero carbon, zero emission, or zero GHG. These are unrealistic, unattainable, unreasonable goals. A lot of it is like cheating on your taxes and trying to come up with ways that you are able to write-off your emissions.

Summer Boger
San Diego Resident since birth
Zip: 92007

Letter I14 Summer Boger

January 3, 2024

Comment I14-1

The comment expresses concern about government spending and regulations associated with the CAP Update. The comment questions the effectiveness of the CAP Update measures and disagrees with the net zero emissions target. The comment states that the existing infrastructure cannot sustain more electrical vehicles and renewable energy technologies are not sustainable.

Response I14-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not provide support for the statement that renewable energy technology is unsustainable. Renewable energy would be obtained from San Diego Gas & Electric through San Diego Community Power, which has an established renewable energy portfolio. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I15

From: Marcie Farthing
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Opposition to the CAP
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 9:29:57 AM

I am opposed to the CAP proposed by San Diego County.
There is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblown rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023.
Plus there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean.
The policies will lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships and be a huge waste of money.
The plan reads very racist and offensive and is a huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice.
I vote no.
Marcie Farthing

I15-1

Letter I15 Marcie Farthing

January 3, 2024

Comment I15-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I15-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I16

From: David j Freund
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Climate Hoax Action Plan
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 1:25:13 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

This email is to emphatically say NO to the implementation of any Climate Hoax Action Plan (a/k/a CAP) policies in San Diego County.

1. The financial cost to San Diego residents will be overwhelmingly burdensome.
2. Due diligence and transparency will demonstrate that implementing CAP policies will only benefit governments and corporations...not people or planet.
3. Currently there is ZERO evidence to support CAP policies being AT ALL effective in reducing or mitigating any issues related to the climate.
4. CAP policies significantly restrict and/or compromise our freedoms as San Diegans, as Americans and as human beings.

Most relevant to the conversation about CAP policies is this: according to the current data from impeccable sources, there is no actual climate emergency...just like with the [alleged] COVID 19 pandemic hoax, flawed modelling and overblown rhetoric is drowning out scientific reality.

I16-1

Respectfully,
--
David Freund
760.533.7326

Letter I16 David Freund

January 3, 2024

Comment I16-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change. The comment questions the benefits and effectiveness of the CAP Update measures. The comment states that implementation of the CAP Update measures will cause financial burden on people and restrict freedom.

Response I16-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I17

From: patti kirchwehm
To: CAP
Subject: [External] NO
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 9:20:19 AM

Once again you are trying to control with this idea,(CAP) rather than enhance our way of life.
You should be giving encouragement , rather than commands, especially since your reports are biased.

Why would we think you have any better ideas for us environmentally, when you allow waste to accumulate from homeless and illegal migrants, when you do nothing environmentally to cleanup riverbeds polluted wit drug needles, feces, trash, when you spend millions on ineffective mass transit that few utilize?
The pollution from Tijuana into the ocean that flows onto our beaches has continued for years. Why don't you solve that?
The citizens don't want any of the above, but you allow it!

The citizens are responsible to recycle. Every time you mandate a new law for the environment, you charge them. This is totally discriminatory, as it places more of an economic burden on lower income families, unless you charge others more to compensate! I17-1

How much did you spend on those compost buckets that few will utilize for that? Do you know what they will be used for???? i.e mop buckets, pet waste, lunch bucket, beer cooler, etc..
Oh, you are going to pay for "compost bucket police" to fine offenders?

Have you ever been so busy following the rules and laws , that you forget to live?
That will be your citizens....robots with no independent brains, not required to think.

We evolve or die off. That is evolution. Don't kill us off financially overnight with new rules and fines.
Your goal of a healthy environment should evolve gradually, not because you want it now.

I respectfully suggest that you get out of the "boardroom" and mingle with the citizens, look at all of the scientific data, before you vote on a comprehensive package.

Patti K.

Letter I17 Patti Kirchwehm

January 3, 2024

Comment I17-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and concern regarding the CAP Update's effects related to quality of life and financial burden on lower income families.

Response I17-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR.

With regards to the disproportionate economic burden on lower income families, please see Section 2.7, "Environmental Justice," for a discussion related to the potential for disproportionate impacts on environmental justice communities to occur as a result of the project. Implementation of the CAP Update includes a combination of regulations, programs, incentives, and outreach and educational activities to reduce GHG emissions. To address equity in CAP Update implementation, a cost analysis (Appendix 12) was prepared to understand how some populations or local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from climate change and CAP implementation, and an Equity Implementation Framework (Appendix 9) was developed to prioritize climate action in frontline communities and ensure equity-based outcomes and co-benefits are realized equitably throughout the unincorporated area.

Letter
I18

From: Barbara Stanforth
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Climate Trojan horse
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 9:40:10 AM

Hi, I plead that you stop interfering in people's lives and as a government allow people free will and opportunity. The more govt tries to interfere with climate and equality, the worse it gets. I have personally observed this and studies show that as well.
Stay out of my life, and do your job by keeping a strong police force, paved streets (they are a disgrace)and a well educated populace (kids can barely read) Stop trying to play God. I18-1

Barbara Stanforth LMFT, CHT
Leucadia Family Counseling and Hypnotherapy
(760) 419-1912
Leucadiafamilycounseling.com

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Letter I18 Barbara Stanforth, LMFT, CHT

January 3, 2024

Comment I18-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and concern that the CAP Update will restrict personal freedom.

Response I18-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I19

From: Mike Townsend
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Against Implementing Climate Action Plan (CAP)
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 12:42:32 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

This email is to emphatically say NO to the implementation of any Climate Action Plan (a/k/a CAP) policies in San Diego County.

The evidence and reasoning behind my negative view of the CAP are as follows:

1. The financial cost to San Diego residents will be overwhelmingly burdensome.
2. Due diligence and transparency will demonstrate that implementing CAP policies will only benefit and enrich governments and corporations, accelerate impoverishment of the common people, and have no positive effect on the health of the planet.
3. Currently there is ZERO evidence to support CAP policies being AT ALL effective in reducing or mitigating any hypothesized consequences attributed to climate change.
4. CAP policies would significantly restrict and/or compromise our freedoms as San Diegans, as Americans and as human beings.

Most relevant to the conversation about CAP policies is this: according to the current data from impeccable sources, there is no actual climate emergency...just like with the [alleged] COVID 19 pandemic, flawed modeling, greed and overblown rhetoric is drowning out scientific reality.

I19-1

Respectfully,
Michael Townsend
Carlsbad, CA

Letter I19 Michael Townsend

January 3, 2024

Comment I19-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I19-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I20

From: George Tye
To: CAP
Cc: Mary Frances; dedetye@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Climate action plan
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 3:07:26 PM

We are writing to express our extreme opposition to the San Diego Climate Action Plan (CAP). Climate change has been occurring since the earth was formed and there is zero evidence that man can do anything to substantially affect it. The earth has been warmer than it is now and it has been much colder. God is in charge, not man.

Here are some other reasons why anyone in their right mind would dismiss this cockeyed proposal:

1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China have more than doubled their carbon output. Locally and nationally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly.
2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more, implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence
3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean
4) the policies lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships
5) there is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblow rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023
6) huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice

I20-1

Sincerely,

George and Diane Tye
Carlsbad

Letter I20 George and Diane Tye

January 3, 2024

Comment I20-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I20-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I21

From: Stacey Baker
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Climate plan NO!!!
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 9:02:54 PM

Costs for this are insane and do nothing but limit people's freedoms. We are not owned. Our actions are not controlled. There is no climate emergency!!!! Stop with this fake information as another money grab and do gain more control and power.

1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled it's carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly.
2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence
3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean
4) the policies lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships
5) there is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblow rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023
6) huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice

I21-1

Sent from my iPhone, which means this message will most likely contain typos!

Letter I21 Stacey Baker

January 3, 2024

Comment I21-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I21-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I22

From: Susan Custer
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 11:39:05 AM

Please do not approve the San Diego Climate Action Plan. This will only cause the cost of living to increase more and it is already outrageous. Our utility rates are already the highest in the county and so is our cost of living.
A few additional reasons are as follows:
1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled it's carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly.
2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence
3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean
4) huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice
Thank You,
Susan Custer

I22-1

--

Susan B. Custer, Realtor
DeGasperis and Associates Real Estate
Phone: 760-672-1954
BRE # 01203418
susanbcuster@gmail.com

Letter I22 Susan Custer

January 4, 2024

Comment I22-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I22-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I23

From: Tamara Dixon
To: CAP
Subject: [External] No CAP
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 6:13:49 PM

To whom it may concern,

No to CAP.

There is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean.

There is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblow rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023

I23-1

No to CAP
Tamara Dixon

Tamara Dixon
Sent from my mobile phone
619-787-7396

Letter I23 Tamara Dixon

January 4, 2024

Comment I23-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I23-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I24

From: kelly.leberthon12@gmail.com
To: CAP
Subject: [External] NO on the San Diego Climate Action Plan
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 5:18:55 PM

NO on the San Diego Climate Action Plan. You can learn from this article:

"The idea is, well, fossil fuels are causing climate catastrophe, but this is just false. Fossil fuels impact the climate, but they're not causing a catastrophe. The fact is that fossil fuel development isn't causing a climate crisis. It's actually making humanity far safer from climate. And one fact that I've been stressing for years, which we're finally hearing now in the US and around the world and from our presidential candidates is actually if you look at what's happening, don't just look at rhetoric or anecdotes about, "Hey, this flood killed this many people." But if you look at how many people are dying overall from climate-related disasters like floods and storms and heat and cold, that's not something that's getting worse. That's something that's getting much better.

The rate of climate disaster death has gone down by a factor of 50. So it's gone down 98% in the last 100 years. Why? Because whatever warming impact we've had on climate is trivial compared to our ability to neutralize climate danger to what I call master climate. If you have a lot of energy to power irrigation systems and to power crop transport and to heat and to cool, and to build sturdy infrastructure and to have storm warning systems to tap evacuation, you're going to be incredibly safe from climate. So climate change doesn't matter compared to climate mastery. And the way you get climate mastery is having cheap energy. And the only way you can get cheap energy on a large scale right now and for the foreseeable future is fossil fuels."
Kelly Le Berthon

I24-1

Letter I24 Kelly Le Berthon

January 3, 2024

Comment I24-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I24-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I25

From: Julie Lynne
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Opposed Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:25:28 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I oppose the Climate Action Plan. The cost benefit does not warrant the implementing these regulations. I25-1

Sincerely,

Julie Lynne
Resident, San Marcos, CA. 92078

Letter I25 Julie Lynne

January 4, 2024

Comment I25-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and states that the cost does not justify the benefit for implementing the CAP Update.

Response I25-1

Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which explains the cost reports that support the CAP Update.

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The CAP Update also includes a cost analysis (Appendix 12), which was prepared to understand how some populations or local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from climate change and CAP implementation. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I26

From: Richard Newton
To: CAP
Subject: [External] PLEASE OPPOSE Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 11:22:40 AM

Dear San Diego County Climate Action Plan Representative:

Please register my opposition to the CAP for the following reasons:

1. The plan fails to meet the utilitarian threshold of cost/benefit analysis. Climate change, to the extent it is caused by excess carbon dioxide, is a global problem. Countries such as China- a major manufacturer and polluter, has doubled its CO2 emissions in the recent past. India has also increased its CO2 emissions. San Diego County produces and minuscule amount of global CO2, and as a result, any such reductions will have negligible impact on the global problem, yet the financial costs and other burdens to be borne by San Diego County residents are massive and significant.

2. The CAP is racist and offensive. The implications are that indigenous and "of-color" people do not benefit from the conveniences of the modern world, as we all do, yet bear disproportionate burdens from it. Economic disparities exist because of differing levels of wealth, that is not racist. Further, "social-justice" as an objective of CAP is not relevant to a climate and environmental plan reducing carbon emissions.

3. These polices lead to micromanagement of residents and impacts on their freedoms as Americans. Such fascism must always be rejected. It places a huge burden on personal and economic freedom.

4. There is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblown rhetoric [is] drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023. See attached picture. Yes, it is quite possible that we are being lied to for political and other reasons. Again, I note that "social justice" is not relevant to climate concerns, but included as a goal. Tell me it isn't political. This wouldn't be the first time in history that the powers-that-be lie to justify what they profit from. Think of all those profitable contracts politicians will control, and their buddies that will get them. All on the backs of the residents of San Diego County.

I26-1

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,

Richard Newton

WATCH EPOCHTV.COM DOCUMENTARIES 'NO FARMERS, NO FOOD' | 'GOTAWAYS, THE HIDDEN BORDER CRISIS' | ATL INTERVI

THE EPOCH TIM

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA | SEPT. 27–OCT. 3, 2023

& Tradition



PATRONESS OF THE ARTS
Queen Henrietta Maria
LIFE & TRADITION C4

CANCER PREVENTION
Benefits of Green Tea
MIND & BODY B10



SURGERY
Improving Your Odds
MIND & BODY B8

CRAFTING A LEGACY
Outliving Your Life
LIFE & TRADITION C1



DENIS LOVROVIC/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

▲ Environmental activists participate in a Global Climate Strike march in Zagreb, Croatia, on Sept. 20, 2019.

In the News

A Fulton County investigator from the district attorney's office in Atlanta accidentally shot herself while inside the county courthouse last week, officials say. ... A3

Arizona's attorney general says the city of Phoenix's donation of firearms to Ukraine violated state law governing the disposal of unclaimed firearms. ... A5

The Georgia judge presiding over the election interference case against former President Donald Trump has ordered jurors'

Meteorologists, Scientists Say 'There Is No Climate Emergency'

Flawed modeling and overblown rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say

By Katie Spence

There's no climate emergency. And the alarmist messaging pushed by global elites is purely political. That's what 1,609 scientists and informed professionals stated when they signed the Global Climate Intelligence Group's "World Climate Declaration."

"Climate science should be less political, while climate policies should be more scientific," the declaration begins. "Scientists should openly address uncertainties and exaggerations in their predictions of global warming, while politicians should dispassionately count the real costs as well as the imagined benefits of their policy measures."

The group is an independent "climate watchdog" founded in 2019 by emeritus professor of geophysics Guus Berkhout and science

Continued on A6

Letter I26 Richard Newton

January 4, 2024

Comment I26-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and states that that plan fails to meet the utilitarian threshold of cost-benefit analysis. The comment claims that the CAP Update is racist and will place burden on personal freedom and finance. The comment also claims that social justice is not relevant to climate change.

Response I26-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR.

Implementation of the CAP Update includes a combination of regulations, programs, incentives, and outreach and educational activities to reduce GHG emissions. To address equity in CAP Update implementation, a cost analysis (Appendix 10) was prepared to understand how some populations or local communities may experience disproportionate costs or impacts from climate change and CAP implementation, and an Equity Implementation Framework (Appendix 9) was developed to prioritize climate action in frontline communities and ensure equity-based outcomes and co-benefits are realized equitably throughout the unincorporated area. Please also see Section 2.7, "Environmental Justice," for a discussion related to the potential for impacts associated with CAP Update implementation to disproportionately affect environmental justice communities.

Letter
I27

From: Judy OConnor
To: CAP
Subject: [External] NO NO NO on Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:11:06 PM

San Diego County Supervisors,
We do not need a Climate Action Plan. It is a huge waste of OUR money.
The cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled their carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being extremely costly. There is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblown rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023 .
You represent the people and we do not want or need this.
NO ON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
Judy OConnor
Carlsbad

I27-1

Letter I27 Judy OConnor

January 4, 2024

Comment I27-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I27-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter
I28

From: Sam Smith
To: CAP
Subject: [External] Opposition to Climate Action Plan
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 7:14:52 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I have carefully reviewed the Climate Action Plan and I must oppose the plan. There are many areas that are quite concerning. The areas of most concern for me are the following three:

1) The distraction from real environmental issues that focusing on CO2 causes. We face the more important ecological issues of pollution and soil deterioration. These issues are actually impacting our food chain and the interconnectedness of life on the planet. This plan will further aggravate these issues not only by putting funds primarily on CO2 but, the actions, will increase microplastics and other toxic components through large scale production mechanisms and production of bio-synthetic products.

2) None of the actions in the plan have ever been shown to achieve the purported outcomes. If you have actually engaged in reading the verified evidence regarding these actions, you'll understand that these actions will not have any significant impact on global climate. The majority of CO2 is produced from our oceans - approximately 96% of all CO2 on on the planet.

3) Other nations such as China and India double their carbon emissions regularly and they have no plans to change. Al Gore's 2006 movie "An Inconvenient Truth" erroneously stated that China was taking action to reduce vehicle emissions. That citing has been shown to be vastly incorrect. In fact China has significantly increased emissions. Even if these actions were to work here, which there is no proof that they will, they would have zero impact on global climate.

I28-1

Regards,
Sam Smith

Letter I28 Sam Smith

January 4, 2024

Comment I28-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update based on three primary areas of concern: increases in microplastics and other toxic components "through large scale production of mechanisms" and focusing funding on carbon dioxide reductions; lack of evidence to support significant impacts on global climate from CAP Update measure implementation; and the contribution of other nations to global climate change.

Response I28-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a). See also Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the analytical basis of the reduction calculations and implementation details for quantified implementing actions that are included in the CAP Update, including actions that would increase carbon storage, and a description of the evaluation of complimentary benefits included in the CAP Update.

Letter
I29

From: Krisha Markowicz
To: CAP
Subject: [External] No to CAP
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 5:05:51 PM

To whom it may concern-
I'm a resident of Carlsbad and do not want you to approve CAP. Here are my reasons why you need to NOT APPROVE.
1) the cost benefit analysis doesn't pan out - other countries such as China has more than doubled it's carbon output. Locally, our reduction will be miniscule while being costly.
2) the plan is racist and offensive - CAP authors assume indigenous peoples and persons of color are harmed more implying they are not enjoying the benefits of modern society and living are living a pre-industrial existence
3) there is no scientific evidence that the measures will make any difference as most CO2 is produced in the ocean
4) the policies lead to fascism with government/corporate partnerships
5) there is no climate emergency according to scientists and meteorologists - "Flawed modelling and overblow rhetoric drowning out scientific reality for the sake of money and power, experts say." Epoch Times 9/27/2023
6) huge intrusion on individual freedom and choice
Thank you,
Mrs. Wolter

I29-1

Letter I29 Krisha Markowicz

January 3, 2024

Comment I29-1

The comment expresses opposition to the CAP Update and disagreement about climate change.

Response I29-1

As described on pages 1 through 4 of the Draft SEIR, the County's preparation of the CAP Update is intended to fulfill the County's obligation under Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 of the 2011 GPU PEIR to prepare a CAP and to reduce GHG emissions consistent with state legislative requirements. The Draft SEIR has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed CAP Update. The scientific basis of climate change and the sources of GHG emissions as primary contributors to climate change are summarized in Section 2.8.1.1 of the Draft SEIR. The comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Letter I30

From:	mike_bullock@earthlink.net
To:	CAP
Subject:	[External] SEIR Public Comment
Date:	Friday, January 5, 2024 1:33:05 PM
Attachments:	Bullock_to_SD_CountyReCAP_AndSEIR.doc Ref(1)SierraClubLetterReSD_County"s2ndCAP.pdf Ref(2)D064243PublishedRuling.pdf Ref(3)AG_LetterToSANDAG_2011.docx Ref(4)_Hansen+Amicus+_Page15.pdf

County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
Attention: Megan Kelly
Project Manager, Climate Action Plan
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
Via e-mail at: CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov
858-505-6445

Subject: Comments in Response to San Diego County's Draft CAP Supplemental EIR and CAP

Dear CAP Project Manager Kelly:

Please find the following attached files:

- My letter of January 5th, in response to the Subject Documents
- That letter's References 1 through 4.

Please let me know if there is a problem with downloading and/or reading these files. I will soon email you the letter's References 5 through 10. Thank you for your critically-important work. Please let me know if you would like to meet to discuss this letter or related topics.

I30-1

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Bullock mike_bullock@earthlink.net
760-421-9482

Mike Bullock
1800 Bayberry Drive
Oceanside, CA 92054

Jan. 5, 2024

County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
Attention: Meghan Kelly
CAP Project Manager
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
Via e-mail at: CAP@sdcounty.ca.gov
858-505-6445

Subject: Comments in Response to San Diego County's Draft CAP Supplemental EIR and CAP

Dear CAP Project Manager Kelly:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the important subject documents.

Personal Introduction

I have a BSEE, an MSE and worked as a Satellite Systems Engineer for 36 years at Lockheed Martin. My title was Senior Staff Systems Engineer. After retiring, I continued my systems engineering work, with a focus on climate change and transportation policy. Since retiring from Lockheed Martin, I have presented papers at technical conferences in Calgary, San Francisco (virtually), Long Beach, Chicago, a suburb of Chicago, New Orleans, the DC metro area, San Diego, and Guadalajara, Mexico. I also present on Climate and Transportation to political organizations and individual political candidates and/or office holders.

I30-2

I have been involved in the San Diego County's CAP process from the beginning. However, my Sierra Club work ended after Reference 1, which is the Sierra Club letter regarding the Appellate Court appeal for the 2nd CAP. Doing a "Find", on my last name, in Reference 1 shows that it occurs 29 times. "Parking" occurs 511 times. Reference 1 shows that a good car-parking system was the primary mitigation measure proposed by the Sierra Club, for both lawsuits. There are good reasons for this, as will be shown.

It must also be pointed out that the proposed mitigation measure to increase economic fairness and reduce single occupancy commuting for County employees by implementing a car parking system that generated earnings for employees has fallen on deaf ears, at the County. It was defined in detail for both County attempts to create a legal CAP. It has been dubbed Dividend Account Parking. It was requested in the Sierra Club letter on the NOP and in their letter on this Draft CAP and Draft SEIR. It is defined in this letter.

Focus on Light-Duty Vehicles & the Need to Stabilize Anthropogenic Climate Change

Cars and light-duty trucks are the category that emits, by far, the most GHG emissions in the US, in California, and in San Diego County. This letter is primarily focused on this overwhelmingly important category and its potentially devastating impact on the environment. *Humanity must stabilize our anthropogenic climate change.* That is humanity's top-level requirement. That requirement flows down to subsystems, including cars and light-duty trucks in San Diego County. These statements need to appear in any significant documentation associated with any project (discretionary project,) under CEQA law impacting transportation outcomes. California's (CA's) 2030 and 2045 CA Climate Mandates (SB 32 and AB 1279) do not conform to the unambiguous statement by James Hasen, this country's most respected climate scientist, regarding the required reduction in 2030 of industrialized nations, to avoid climate stabilization. This is also shown in detail below. I30-3

There is a good reason that the Secretary General of the UN has said that we are dangerously close to the point of no return.

Legal Requirements

Explain the Discrepancies Between CA's Plan to Achieve Its CA Climate Mandate of 2030 and the Draft CAP, and Why It is Important (Climate Stabilization)

As shown on Page 30 of Reference 2, one of the reasons the Court ruled against the County was that its CAP failed to achieve the California (CA) Climate mandate of that time, S-3-05. Today, CA's first-occurring Climate Mandate is quantified in SB 32. As you know, SB 32 calls for CA GHG emissions to be at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. CA's official plan to achieve it is the CARB Scoping Plan, which, for example, specifies "priced parking", which would be accomplished with the car parking system that has been dubbed "Dividend Account Parking" and has been proposed as a feasible mitigation measure to the County many times, over the years, going back to 2009 or so. The County's CAP must conform to the official CA Plan to achieve CA's climate mandate. This is shown in Reference 3. Dividend Account Parking is defined below. I30-4

On Page 10 of Reference 3, AG Harris wrote, "In order to stabilize the climate and avoid the most catastrophic outcomes of climate change, we must substantially reduce our annual GHG emissions over time, achieving a low carbon future by midcentury."

She is expressing and thus exposing our requirement to stabilize the climate. The Draft SEIR does not mention such a requirement. Please understand that what the industrialized nations must do to support climate stabilization is much larger than the overall average. The industrialized nations must do more, so that the developing countries can do much less. The "40% less" and the "48% less" that you mention ("48

percent reduction in 1990 emission levels by 2030") on Page 2.8-1 are not enough, since CA is part of an industrialized nation.

Your legal duty is not to minimize our predicament. Let's be clear. "Stabilization" is the avoidance of destabilization, where we have warmed the earth enough to set in motion a process that we are then powerless to stop.

Here is one example. Melting the permafrost causing large amounts of methane to go into the atmosphere that will warm the atmosphere more, melting more permafrost. This helps to explain the Secretary General's statement that we are dangerously close to the point of no return.

On Page 10 of Reference 3, in the footnote, the AG writes (paraphrasing) that the CA climate mandates cannot be ignored because they are about climate stabilization, which is the objective of CEQA. I would have written that it is the *most important* objective of CEQA, by far. However, by calling climate stabilization *the* objective, the AG made that point very well.

I30-4 cont.

Enforceable Measures to Achieve Meaningful Results

A set of measures that, taken together, are not enough to achieve climate stabilization, is not a meaningful set of measures. The climate will destabilize if we do nothing. Doing too little does not change that terrible outcome. Meaningful must mean successful, in terms of doing our part to achieve climate stabilization. Mitigation measures must be climate stabilizing, taken together.

I30-5

Reporting Environmental Outcomes

The environmental impacts that are likely if all municipal governments adopt a CAP and SEIR such as those being currently proposed (the two drafts) must be described, or "reported." This follows from the legal need to consider *cumulative impacts*. So far, the County's efforts have failed to fully explain what climate failure, or climate *destabilization* looks like. I realize that municipal governments have followed the lead of California's Office of Policy Research (OPR) in trying to explain the impacts of climate change. But these attempts have been woefully inadequate. Climate destabilization will most likely result in the loss of most forms of life on our planet (ignoring microbiology.) Climate destabilization would include a devastating collapse of our human population. Most people will starve to death, because anthropogenic climate change will destroy our habitat, which equates to our ability to produce food. Put another way, the resulting climate will limit our ability to produce food, leading to our extinction or near-extinction. Warming will accelerate processes that will increase warming. These warming feed-back processes are not limited by anything that is useful to us. This is important information. To hide it from decision makers and the public violates CEQA law. Climate destabilization is a very important environmental impact, and it needs to be described.

I30-6

If the climate scientists have taught us anything, it is that we must reduce our GHG emissions significantly by 2030. 2030 is the first climate stabilization requirement. 2045 is the second. If we fail on the 2030 requirement, destabilization will result. The 2045 climate stabilization requirement will not matter. This also needs to be explained.

Thanks to many EIRS poorly explaining our climate crisis, many people are confused. A good example is the County Board's "Regional Decarbonization Framework" (RDF). It uses 2035 as if it is an important year. It is not. It is a "throwback" to the 2005 CA Climate Mandate of Executive Order S-3-05, which had the target years of 2010, 2020, and 2050. We know much more than we knew in 2005. Also, things have not worked out as we had hoped and assumed, back in 2005. About 15 years ago, 2035 was selected for SB 375 because it was halfway between the last two targets. Spreading the misinformation that 2035 matters is extremely dangerous. 2030 is five years sooner. Our current job is to greatly reduce our emissions by 2030, not 2035. No one should be thinking about 2035.

I30-6 cont.

Need for Enforceable Measures that Include Those in the CA Plan to Achieve CA's 2030 Climate Mandate

Reference 2 shows a need for *enforceable* measures and then the question is if the enforceable measures will achieve climate-stabilizing targets, given the concept of cumulative impacts, including the impacts of all municipal governments doing their general plan updates and CAPs no better than what San Diego County is currently proposing.

From Page 26 of Reference 2:

> As a plan-level document, the CAP is required by CEQA to incorporate mitigation measures directly into the CAP (extra emphasis added by both bold and underlining):
>
> > "A public agency *shall provide the measures to mitigate or avoid* ***significant effects*** *on the environment are* ***fully enforceable*** *through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures*. Conditions of project approval may be set forth in referenced documents which address required mitigation measures or, *in the case of the adoption of a plan*, policy, regulation, or other public project, *by incorporating the mitigation measures into the plan*, policy, regulation, or project design." (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6, subd. (b), italics added.)

I30-7

Note that climate destabilization is the most significant of all possible "significant effects on the environment" that could be imagined. So of course, the outcome (that particularly bad environmental impact) of climate destabilization should be avoided, most reasonable people would agree, if they value life. Therefore, the outcome of the enforceable measures is critical. From Page 28 of Reference 2 (emphasis added):

> The County's failure to comply with Mitigation Measure CC-1.2 ***and*** Assembly Bill No. 32 ***and*** Executive Order [No.] S-3-05, supports the conclusion that the CAP and Thresholds project will have significant, adverse environmental impacts that have not been previously considered, mitigated, or avoided.

AB 32 and S-3-05 are no longer CA's Climate Mandates. SB 32 and AB 1279 are. Accomplishing SB 32 may not be enough. It is the "floor" of what must be done. Clearly then, the Draft must at least comply with both SB 32 and the Plan to achieve it, which is the CARB Scoping Plan. The SEIR repeatedly mentions the Scoping Plan, without going into some of the most important details. That is unfortunate. The details show that San Diego County, with both SANDAG and the municipal governments ignoring the details of the Scoping Plan including its most important mitigation measures, will not achieve SB 32, unless CA decides to legislate that a car parking system (such as Dividend Account Parking) must be used everywhere and legislates all the other mitigation measures described. I30-7 cont.

The Draft CAP and SEIR provide the OPR-recommended discussion of state mandates S-3-05, AB 32, AB 1279, and SB 32. But discussion is not enough. The Draft CAP must adopt the detailed mitigation measures in the Scoping Plan. That means it must implement those that can reasonably be done by the County. And it must strongly advocate for the others, justifying the assumption that they will get done.

The Climate Stabilization Requirement for 2030

Mitigation Measures Necessary to Achieve Climate Stabilization

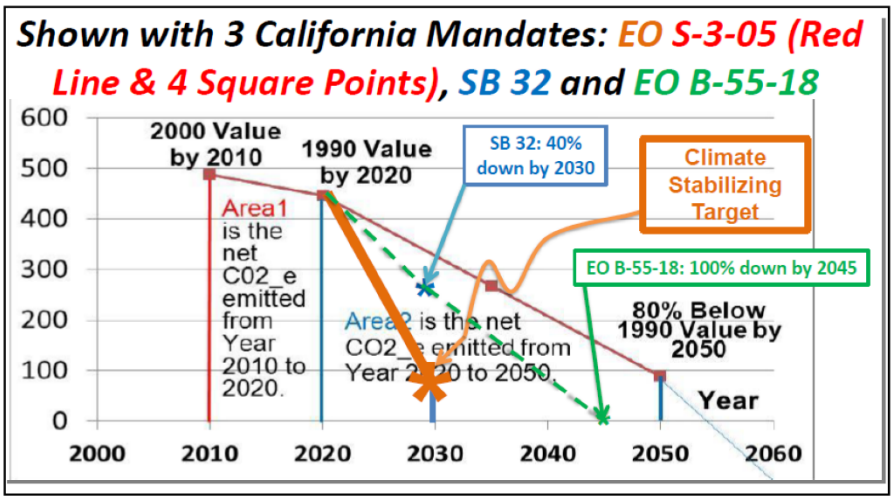
CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan is about achieving California's Climate Mandates. The Climate Mandate for 2030 is to emit GHG at no more than 40% below our 1990 GHG emission value, by 2030. Sadly, this falls significantly below the science-based 2030 climate-stabilization requirement that can be derived from an unambiguous statement by James Hansen, as follows.

Reference 4 (the 5th attached file in the email with this letter as the 1st attached file) statement on Page 14 is that the required rate of reduction, if commenced in 2020, would be 15%. That rate means that the factor of 0.85 must be achieved, year after year. If done for 10 years, the factor would be $(0.85)^{10} = 0.2$, by 2030. This reduction of 80% down from the 2020 value matches the 2050 target requirement of Executive Order S-3-5, which is 80% below the 1990 value. According to S-3-05, the 2020 emission value should be the same as the 1990 emission value. The S-3-05 emission of 2050 was designed to support capping atmospheric CO2 at 450 PPM. "Capping" means that the sum of the Earth's emissions (anthropogenic and natural) equals the sum of all of the Earth's sequestration (mostly photosynthesis.) Therefore, the Reference 4 statement shows that the author (Dr. James Hansen) wanted the world to achieve the third target of S-3-05, to get the atmospheric CO2 to stop going up, 20 years sooner (2030 instead of 2050) than what S-3-05 was written to achieve. Part of the problem with S-3-05 is that it was written in 2005 and humanity has not reduced their emissions as much as was hoped and we have learned more about our climate predicament. I30-8

To put this in focus, it is helpful to view the 2030 climate stabilization requirement against our state climate mandates. This is shown in Figure 1.

The California climate mandate for 2030 is only 40 percent below the 1990 value. However, Reference 5, the CARB Scoping Plan, which is the 6th attached file, makes it clear that significant driving reductions are needed to achieve the 40% reduction value, because we cannot possibly phase out the internal combustion engine LDVs fast enough. For example, on Page 100 of Reference 5, it says we must reduce VMT. On Page 117 of Reference 5, it says that we are failing, and we must therefore "double down" on our VMT reduction.

Figure 1 The 2030 Climate Stabilization Target Compared to State Mandates, Noting That Executive Order (EO) B-55-18 Has Been Replaced by AB 1279



I30-8 cont.

<u>What the CARB Scoping Plan Says, Regarding Vehicle Miles Travelled and the Needed Mitigation Measures, Including Those That Are About Car Parking</u>

I30-9

Page 192 of Reference 5 says, "VMT reductions will play an indispensable role in reducing overall transportation energy demand and achieving the state's climate, air quality, and equity goals."

Page 194 of Reference 5 says, "The pace of change to reduce VMT must be accelerated."

Page 192 of Reference 5 says, "Appendix E (Sustainable and Equitable Communities) elaborates on reasons for reducing VMT and identifies a series of policies that, if

implemented by various responsible authorities, could help to achieve the recommended VMT reduction trajectory included in this Scoping Plan (and related mode share increases for transit and active transportation)." It must be noted that clearly, San Diego County is not a responsible authority since it is choosing so-called "free parking" for their employees over human survival, despite over 10 years of being provided a proposed mitigation measure to implement Dividend Account Parking for its employees.

The 7th attached file in the email with this letter is Appendix E of the 2022 Scoping Plan. It is Reference 6 for this email.

On Page 4 of Reference 6 the truth (which CARB analysts have correctly computed) is stated about our need to reduce VMT:

> ***2.1 Zero-emission vehicles are not enough to solve the climate crisis.***
>
> *Contrary to popular belief, zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) alone are not enough to solve the climate crisis. The 2022 Scoping Plan illustrates that despite cleaner vehicles and low-carbon fuels, the path to carbon neutrality by 2045 also depends on reducing per capita VMT (the total passenger vehicle miles driven by an average person in California on any given day). To meet the carbon neutrality goal, the Scoping Plan proposes reducing VMT from 24.6 miles per day in 2019 to 18.4 miles by 2030 (a 25 percent reduction) and to 17.2 miles per day by 2045 (a 30 percent reduction).*

I30-9 cont.

Note the large per-capita driving reduction that is needed by 2030, just to achieve the 2030 State Mandate, which is only half of what is needed, according to Dr. James Hansen, who wants to avoid climate catastrophe.

On its Page 16, Reference 6 advocates for "parking fees."

On its Page 18, Reference 6 states that "free parking" incentivizes driving alone; and that for the State to meet its climate goals, parking cash-out is needed. Reference 6 also states that a state measure is to end its subsidies to car parking for its 200,000 employees. Would the County do the same for its employees? This letter shows a painless way to make that happen. Painless in the sense that even employees that drive every day will not lose any money.

In Reference 6, on Page 27, the Scoping plan says the State should take this action, with reasons then added, as follows:

> *Reduce or eliminate parking requirements (and/or enact parking maximums, as appropriate) and promote redevelopment of excess parking, especially in infill locations. Building parking for infill development makes construction costs more prohibitive, considering parking can cost up to $100,000 per stall, which takes away both physical space and budget from the construction of housing and other needed services and amenities.*

Reference 7 is Appendix D of the CARB Scoping Plan. It is the 8th attached file in the email with this letter. It has a focus on local actions.

From Page 9 of Reference 7:

Local jurisdictions should focus on these three priority areas when preparing a CEQA-qualified CAP:

- *Transportation electrification*
- *VMT reduction*
- *Building decarbonization*

By prioritizing climate action in these three priority areas, local governments can address the largest sources of GHGs within their jurisdiction.

I30-9 cont.

Table 1 of Reference 7 says, "pricing parking" is a priority GHG Reduction Strategy.

Table 3 of Reference 7 says, "For multifamily residential development, requiring parking costs to be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit" is a key project attribute that reduces GHG.

Footnote 54 of Reference 7 states that, "AB 2097, adopted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in September 2022 eliminates parking requirements for residential and commercial development within a half-mile of transit".

Why the CARB Scoping Plan Comments About Parking Beyond Employee Parking Is Important

The County has direct control over how it operates its parking for its employees. It can also amend its off-street parking ordinances that set policy regarding on-street parking on roads in unincorporated areas.

Reference 8 shows that Dividend Account Parking is a system that works in all cases, not just employee parking.

Here is the Abstract, from Reference 8:

ABSTRACT

Bundled-cost and *bundled-benefit* car-parking systems (generally called "free parking") are defined, showing that they are not free and that they increase the drive-alone mode, since non-drivers lose just as much money as those that use the parking.

I30-10

Dividend-Account Parking (DAP) is defined as a parking system in which the parking spaces are *shared* by all drivers that are driving a car that is registered in the system. "Registered" means that the car can be associated with a person having an *account* in the system. Car parking is *value-priced*, with an option for a *congestion pricing overlay*. The critical final feature is that the earnings (*dividends*) are given to the people for whom parking is built, such as employees, shoppers, residents of apartments or condominiums, students, or train riders. It is stated that this system is defined in the California Democratic Party (CDP) Platform, making it the official policy of the largest political, environmental, and public-policy-advocacy organization in California. It is also at the center of the Sierra Club's lawsuit against the San Diego County's Climate Action Plan (CAP). The court has found in multiple rulings that DAP is feasible mitigation.

Motivations for change are provided, mostly based on an Air and Waste Management Association paper, *Climate-Stabilizing California Light-Duty-Vehicle (LDV) Requirements*. The following is shown:

1. Parking reform is needed, since fleet electrification, while critically needed (ASAP), cannot, under even the most wildly optimistic assumptions, achieve the needed GHG emission reduction, for light-duty vehicles (LDVs), soon enough to achieve climate-stabilizing targets.
2. Per-capita driving must be reduced.

It is asserted that parking reform has a large role to play.

DAP is presented as a feasible, enforceable, mitigation measure for any Climate Action Plan or for any application where sustainability is a goal.

The way to get DAP (Dividend Account Parking) designed, installed, and operated for County Employees is to use a car-parking vendor that would then want to spread the system as widely as possible, ASAP. Although the same system works for all types of parking, the equations used to distribute the earnings vary for different types of applications.

I30-10 cont.

For County employees, here is how earnings are computed for a hypothetical employee called "Joe".

Over the time- period used, like a week, for example:

> "***Joe's Earnings***" = "***Total Money Earned by the Employee Parking***" multiplied by "***Joe's Time at Work***", with that product then divided by "***Total of the Time Spent at Work, for All Employees***."

The ideal is for people to be tied to accounts and for cars to be tied to accounts and then for there to be absolutely nothing to do except what is done now: find a spot, and park. The only thing left to do is to drive away, when desired. The money flows automatically, as it should. Note that all cars with license plates can be associated with an address and that system can be used when a car parked is not registered in the DAP system.

The County would not design this. The County would produce a Requirements Document to support an RFP process. The Requirements Document could refer to documents such as Reference 8 or cut and paste from them. The County should be able to get a grant to do this work. Alternatively, the County could obey CEQA Law and use the money it spends on lawsuits to do this work.

To comply with the CARB Scoping Plan (no "free" parking), the County should proceed in this way:

1. The County should not use the CARB Scoping Plan phrase "priced parking" but instead announce that it is proceeding with *managed parking* and point out that so-called "free parking" is not free, because such a scheme lowers wages,

increases rent, and increases the cost of many items, including food. And that instead of "free parking" we need *managed parking*, with these features:

2. Parking should be managed so that it earns money for those for whom the car-parking is built or for those who are losing money because the parking is being provided. Opening an account, for easy deposit, would be encouraged. Employees would get an "add-in" payment, if that is needed, so they break even. The data needed to compute earnings would also be collected automatically. For example, employees might be required to carry a FOB when they go to work to facilitate computing the time an employee is at the work location. If a train system has car parking, it would be helpful to have all riders carry a FOB, which would also make it easy to automatically charge the fare, besides making it easy to compute the train station, car parking earnings.

3. All parking is shared. That means that it is available to everyone with a license plate, so they can be billed. Opening an account that associates the license plate with an account would be encouraged, for the easy flow of money.

4. Parking is value priced, with the exception being on-street, when the occupancy is lower than an agreed-upon threshold, such as, for example, 50%. When occupancy is below the threshold, on-street parking could be free.

I30-10 cont.

5. Parking pricing would include congestion pricing algorithms, to keep the occupancy rate from exceeding an agreed-upon value.

6. Parking is fully automated, so there is no more to do than for so-called "free" parking.

7. Data collection to support the earnings calculations is fully automated, such as being at a work site, or spending money at a store.

8. The entire system is provided (designed, installed, and operated) by a vendor, selected in an RFP (Request for Proposal) process.

9. The best place to have the first system is at a place of employment, noting that a municipal government is an employer, and that the system should not cost the employer any money. (ACE Parking, for example, is willing to do the system at no cost. They would take a small percentage of the revenue, leaving earnings for those for whom the DAP system parking is built.)

10. The vendor would be skilled at monetizing unused parking and monetizing data.

11. Privacy would be protected, as it should likewise be specified for a Road Use Charge system.

12. The vendor would be skilled at providing solar canopies, providing charging stations, and buying and selling electricity.

I have explained this system to the CEO of ACE Parking. He is anxious to supply the solution. He would submit a proposal. That is documented in Reference 9. The CEO understands that Dividend Account Parking (DAP) is the car parking system of the future if we humans are going to have a future.

To be clear, the CEO of ACE parking would like ACE Parking to be the car parking vendor that designs, implements, and operates, in accordance with an agreed-upon contract or understanding, an automated, value-priced car parking systems that will increase economic fairness and choice while it decreases the choice to drive.

Parking is expensive to provide. Its "value price" is based on that cost. An employee that has a reasonable option to not drive to work and chooses that option will get the car parking earnings with no need to pay for the use of their parking. The same earnings would be paid to employees that make the minimum wage as those make the largest salaries at the employment location. The earnings to those making a low wage might put food on the table.

The problem is that people that hold office and are in positions of authority in government make so much money that they can't understand that a car parking system that increases economic fairness and choice would matter. Everyone says they empathize with low-income workers, but that empathy, if it really exists, does not cause decision makers to think that so-called "free parking" is a problem. However, what we call "free parking" decreases pay and increases the cost of goods and services, including food and rent.

I30-10 cont.

The goal here is more than to just reduce the Singe-Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) mode of commuting to work at the County and to just allow the employees to have more freedom to choose how they want to spend their earnings. Given our climate emergency, the horror of climate destabilization, and the fact that LDVs emit the most GHG (by far), it is important to have this improved car-parking system spread to all employees that are suffering under the bundled-benefit car parking system (erroneously called "free") and furthermore to have this system spread to other types of car parking. This disruptive economic change, in which bad systems of parking are replaced with a good system of parking, will best be done by the private sector, although the County needs to start the process.

Step 1 is for the County to produce a Requirements Document that will define, in an unambiguous way, the DAP system. The County then needs to use that Requirements Document to conduct a Request for Information (RFI) or a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify the best possible 3rd party vendor to design, install, implement, and run its DAP Car-Parking system. Like Uber and Lyft were to taxicabs, the winner of this competition will have its eye on spreading their better system, without limits.

County Operations Strategic Sustainability Plan (Sustainability Plan) Oversight

On Page 2-8-4 it is written, regarding this Sustainability Plan:

> *The County's 2020–2030 County Operations Strategic Sustainability Plan (Strategic Plan) supersedes the previously implemented 2015 Strategic Energy Plan. The Strategic Plan sets goals to promote sustainability in four key sectors of County operations: energy, water, waste, and transportation. The goals outlined in the Strategic Plan relating to GHG emissions are as follows:*
> • *reduce energy use and GHG emissions,*
> • *promote clean energy production,*
> • *provide sound facility energy management,*
> • *achieve cost savings,*
> • *reduce fleet vehicle miles traveled (VMT),*
> • *eliminate underutilized vehicles to decrease size of fleet,*
> • *electrify the fleet where possible, and*
> • *expand EV charging infrastructure on County sites for both public and fleet.*
>
> *The Strategic Plan is intended to consolidate the sustainability planning efforts of other County planning documents under a single County operations purpose (i.e., mission statement).*

I30-11

This "*Strategic Sustainability Plan (Strategic Plan)* is supposed to be adequate out to 2030. It does not include a single statement about car parking, thus contradicting the official CA Plan to achieve CA's 2030 climate mandate. The County seems determined to provide "free parking", even though that system directly contradicts the finding of CARB in its CARB Scoping Plan that "priced parking" is needed. Again, the CARB Scoping Plan is the official CA Plan to achieve SB 32, which is the official 2030 Climate Mandate of 2030. The County seems to be living on a planet that has no climate change problem and in a state that has no climate mandates and no plan to achieve that mandate.

County leadership has been failing, regarding getting a legal CAP for nearly 15 years. No one apologizes and no one is accountable. Senior management have been continually praised for their performance. Those doing CAPs seem to understand that their real mission is to do as little as possible.

It is well known that the County has one of the largest workforces in the County. What they do would matter. This would be particularly true if they pioneered a new way to operate employee parking, that was favored by a super majority of the employees and any unions that are representing the employees. This would happen because every employee would earn more money, as shown in the peer-reviewed presentation slides in Reference 10.

Economic Development Features of Dividend-Account Car Parking

As the process begins to work towards the implementation of DAP, the media, the environmental world, and the political world will take full notice. DAP will become like Community Choice Energy districts: at first controversial but then universally accepted. There can only be one first implementer. It could be San Diego County. The notoriety will be noticed by those working in technology and especially those starting new technology companies. Young, well-educated workers know full well that we have an anthropogenic climate change crisis. They want to be part of the solution.

The third-party vendor will need to earn money from parking that is not being used by employees. They therefore have a strong economic interest in getting more drivers to get their cars associated with a DAP account. They will want the system to be easy to use. Cities will want their on-street parking to be both "parking-meter" parking and DAP, to be more convenient to use. Likewise, they will want their "pay-station" parking to also be DAP parking. There will undoubtable be a phone app to quickly register a car and driver in the system and another app to report on vacancy rates for each space. If a space has a high vacancy rate, it might be time to convert the space to some other use. The third-party implementer will be motivated to promote every event and every attraction in locations where they have vacant parking that they want to sell. To park cheap, some will be shown how to park some distance away and use transit to get to the parking-impacted locations.

I30-12

Significance, Due to Being in Conflict with Applicable Plans

Page 2.8-13 of the Draft SEIR shows that under Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, implementing a project, such as the draft CAP being considered here, would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to climate change if it is in conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. The applicable plan is the CARB Scoping Plan. The proposed CAP and the SEIR conflict with that plan for many reasons, including that they cling to the notion that so-called "free parking" does not need to be replaced.

On the bottom of Page 2.8-15 and the top of Page 2.8-16 these words appear:

> ***Built Environment and Transportation Measures and Actions.*** *This category includes strategies to decarbonize the vehicle fleet, install EV charging stations, incentivize the use of alternative fuels and landscaping practices, and to promote and support transit and ride sharing to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use. Key actions with potential to result in new or more severe impacts related to GHG emissions include Actions T-3.1 and T-3.1.a, which would support new hydrogen fueling infrastructure and installation of EV charging stations, as well as Action T-5.1 2 which would result in the implementation of transit-supportive roadway treatments and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure*

I30-13

This shows that the County does not believe the CARB Scoping Plan is correct when is says that the needed reduction in driving will need pricing measures. This violates CEQA law because it obscures the work of CARB from the decision makers and the public.

On Page 2.8-22 there is a reference to, with the "such as" qualifier, "transportation demand management." The "such as" qualifier means that the County may not have any Transportation Demand Management (TDM) mitigation measures. Cities sometimes have Transportation Demand Management Ordinances, as part of their CAP. These ordinances sound like reasons for hope. However, they only require that companies that move into the city, after the ordinance is adopted, have a TDM Plan to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) commuting. Since this is a very small percentage of the companies in the city, the ordinance is not likely to have a significant effect. Companies that are required to have a TDM are likely to do as little as possible because their main concern is their business. No city has ever done a TDM Plan for their own employees, hoping that no one notices their hypocrisy. CAPs are designed to sound like they are doing a lot while doing very little.

Section 2.8.2.4 on Page 2.8-24 again considers the possibility that the CAP and SEIR conflict with an applicable plan, such as the Scoping Plan. It says the SANDAG RTP will reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) 20 percent, when only 19 is required. There are serious problems with that statement. The SANDAG Board removed the RUC from the 2021 RTP (and all future RTPs), which conflicts with the CARB Scoping Plan's statement that pricing strategies are needed. They are therefore only reducing VMT by 18.6%, which they claim they can round up to 19%, meeting the letter of SB 375. The much larger problem is that SANDAG is insisting that it is acceptable to *ignore* the CARB Scoping Plan with its call for a 25% reduction in VMT with respect to 2018 levels, by 2030. The Scoping Plan's 25% reduction is approximately a third larger than the 19% reduction required by SB 375. However, the much larger difference between the Scoping Plan and SB 375 is that the SB 375 reduction is to be achieved by 2035; the Scoping Plan tells us that the 25% reduction is required 5 years sooner, in 2030. Rose colored glasses are nice, but the SEIR is overlooking CEQA law and precedent that applicable laws and plans, such as the Scoping Plan, cannot be ignored.

I30-13 cont.

The inadequate RTP is called out again in a misleading manner on Page 2.8-29.

Table 2.8-4 shows T-4, claiming that it will reduce County Commutes. However, there is no TDM measure for County Employees that complies with the CARB Scoping Plan assertion that the only way to achieve success is with pricing and the use of what CARB calls "priced parking". Note that if CARB needed to function in our political world of political demagoguery, they would call this "managed parking" and proceed as stated above.

Table 2.8-6, in its "VMT Reduction" category says, "Implement parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies". However, there is nothing to suggest that the County is serious about this. They do not admit that plaintiffs have been working for Dividend Account Parking for 15 years and the

County has spent large amounts of legal fees to try to avoid this. Car parking policy is a serious matter. We are running out of time. We need details and serious commitments. 2030 is soon. I30-13 cont.

Impossible Assertions

The Table of 2.8-5 conflicts with the CARB findings. CARB was clear that pricing of roads, pricing of parking, and a doubling of transit service was needed by 2030. The SEIR and the draft CAP do not accomplish those things, with enforceable measures or with a commitment to work for the policies that it can't enact. The County work does not tell us how the pricing can simply be assumed or is not really needed to get the outcome asserted in Table 2.8-5. I30-14

Comments on Measures Either in the Draft or Need to Be In the Draft

Measure: Improve Roadway Segments as Multi-Modal

This measure will take time and what needs to be measured or estimated is the resulting driving reduction and there is no information on that. This policy is valuable, but we should understand that the urgency of our crisis means that the "Pricing" strategies are much more important. The pricing strategies are the DAP system for parking and the RUC system, for road use. Traffic calming, road diets, good shoulders, sidewalks, and roundabouts to replace stop signs and signalized intersections will reduce GHG, energy use (no traffic lights) and traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

Never increase roadway capacity for cars. Our knowledge of *Induced Traffic Demand* informs us that more capacity will never reduce congestion. Instead, an increase in capacity will induce enough additional driving to fill the added capacity. Always make streets safer for all users, especially those using active transportation modes. Signalized intersections kill people. A recent red-light runner in Oceanside killed 3 people at the intersection of Coast Highway and Oceanside Blvd. These types of accidents are well known to occur. Replace these killer intersections with traffic-calming roundabouts, ASAP. Starting and stopping at signalized intersections requires more energy and emits more GHG, compared to roundabouts. I30-15

More Information on Enforceable Measures to Reduce Driving

Good Bicycle Projects and Bicycle Traffic Skills Education

The best criterion for spending money for bicycle transportation is the estimated reduction in driving divided by the amount spent (VMT-Reduction per dollar spent). It is hoped that the following strategies will come close to maximizing this important parameter. I30-16

1.) Projects to Improve Bicycle Access

The Smart-Growth (VMT-Reducing Growth) neighborhoods, central business districts, and other high trip destinations or origins, both existing and planned, should be checked to see if bicycle access could be substantially improved with either a traffic calming

project, a "complete streets" project, more shoulder width, or a project to overcome some natural or made-made barrier. One Oceanside example is to build a Vista Way bicycle bridge over I-5 in Oceanside, to allow those walking or biking to travel between the South Oceanside coastal neighborhood and the regional shopping center, which contains such large stores as Wal-Mart and Best Buy. Currently, those walking or biking from the Vista Way area West of I-5 must travel much further and travel over a steep hill (Cassidy Street). There are no large stores in the Coastal region of Oceanside, west of I-5. Vista Way was connected for bike riders and pedestrians before the construction of I-5. Given that the design and construction of the I-5 highway has caused this problem, funding should come from highway funds, for this mitigation measure.

League of American Bicyclist Certified Instruction of "Traffic Skills 101"

Most serious injuries to bike riders occur in accidents that do not involve a motor vehicle. Most car-bike accidents are caused by wrong-way riding, riding on sidewalks, and errors in intersections; the hit-from-behind accident is rare.

After attending *Traffic Skills 101,* students that pass a rigorous written test and demonstrate proficiency in riding in traffic and other challenging conditions could be paid for their time and effort.

As an example of what could be done in San Diego County, if the average class size was 3 riders per instructor and each rider passes both tests and earns $100 and if the instructor, with overhead, costs $500 dollars, for a total of $800 for each 3 students, that would mean that $160M could teach $160M/$800 = 200,000 classes of 3 students, for a total of 600,000 students. This is approximately 20% of the population of San Diego County. If a significant percentage of the graduates become frequent, utilitarian riders, this program will be a very cost-effective mitigation measure. It is certainly technologically feasible.

If SANDAG is uninterested in doing this program countywide, the County could do this for those that work for the County or live in the unincorporated areas. If the program is successful, cities will want to participate in the program.

I30-16 cont.

The Final EIR Should Include Plots and Explanations of the Plots, in the EIR, to Leave No Doubt About the Validity and Grave Nature of Anthropogenic Climate Change

Readers need to understand how much trouble we are in and how we got where we are.

The parameters of humanity's Code Red Climate Emergency need to be explained. Therefore, at the front of any EIR, the information shown in Figures 2 through 4 should be included and explained.

I30-17

Figure 2 shows the rise of the world's atmospheric CO2 over the last 50 years.

Figure 3 shows both the

- atmospheric temperature (averaged over a year and averaged over the earth, derived from an isotope analysis) and
- atmospheric CO2 (from air bubbles in ice-core samples),

over 800,000 years. It should be noted that our species is thought to be only around 300,000 years old. The Red line is the temperature, and the Blue Line is the atmospheric CO2, in the units of parts per million (ppm.)

Figure 3 shows that when climate deniers say that our Earth's climate is always changing, and so therefore climate change is natural, they are correct, except for one important fact. There is nothing natural about the outrageous, recent run-up of atmospheric CO2, to over 420 ppm, in such a short time, shown on the far-right side of Figure 4. The slope is so steep that it appears to be an instantaneous spike, on the far-right side of Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows just 1% (which is 1,000 years) of the distance on Figure 3, from current time to the first 100,000 years into the past. For Figure 4, the color conventions are switched, from what they are in Figure 3. The red line is the earth's atmospheric CO2 and temperature is the blue line. Figure 4 shows that the CO2 spike is the result of our combustion of fossil fuels, because its beginning coincides with the start of our industrial revolution. Figure 4 covers the time of the development of our civilization. It shows that temperature and atmospheric CO2 were normal, until about 150 years ago, which is the start of our industrial revolution, when we started to burn fossil fuels. By doing extensive calculations, we know how much CO2 we have produced from the combustion of fossil fuels. Then, by directly measuring the atmospheric CO2 and the acidity of the oceans, we know where that CO2 currently resides. We also know that atmospheric CO2 traps heat. There is no doubt that we have an Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) catastrophe in the making. We are living in a spike of CO2. Neither the magnitude (around 420 ppm) nor the slope (around 3 ppm per year) have occurred in millions of years. Achieving climate-stabilizing requirements ("targets") is our only hope.

I30-17 cont.

Figure 2 Atmospheric CO2, Increasing Over Recent Decades

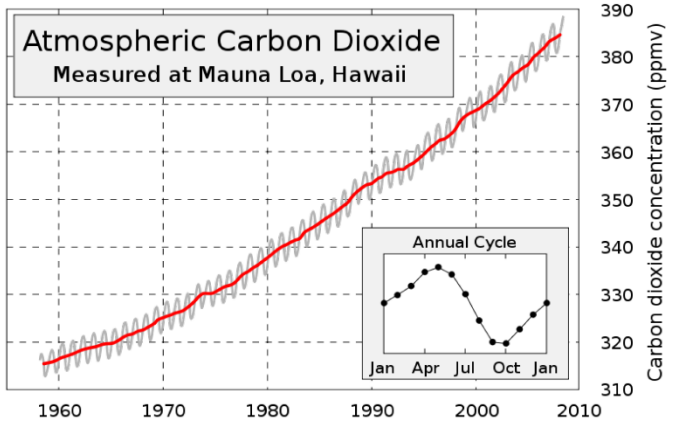


Figure 3 **Atmospheric CO2 and Mean Temperature, from 800,000 Years Ago, with Current CO2 Spike**

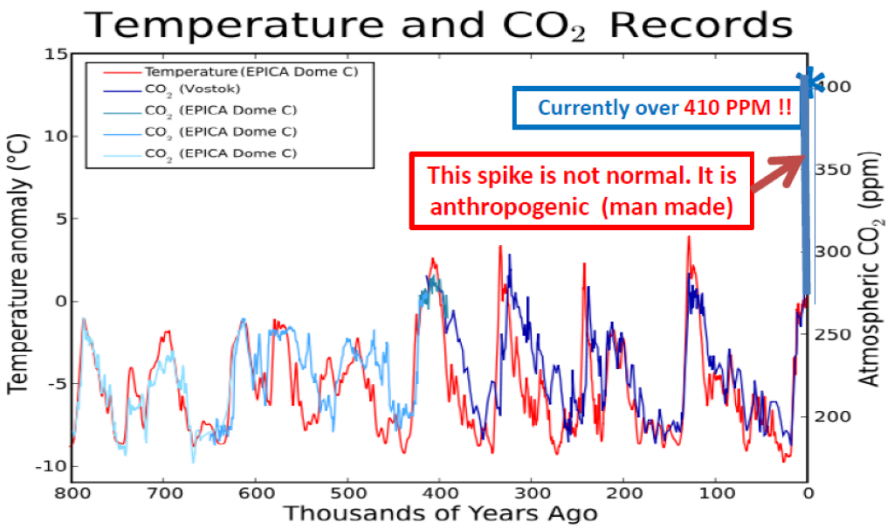
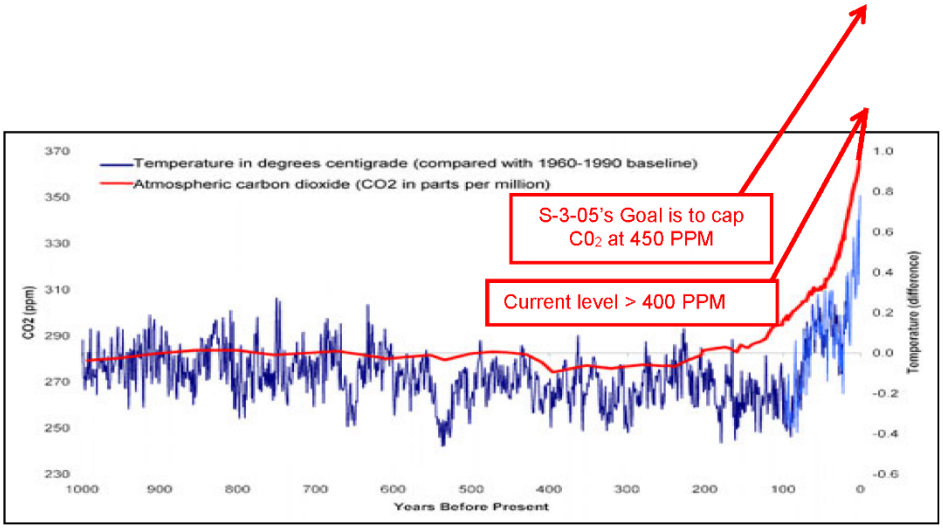


Figure 4 **Atmospheric CO2 and Mean Temperature, Over the Last 1,000 Years**

I30-17 cont.



It should also be clearly stated that cars and light-duty trucks (Light-Duty Vehicles, or LDVs), by far, emit more GHG than any other category of emission. Electricity emits the 2nd most. However, there is a good chance that California can achieve the 2030 climate-stabilization requirement that is derived above (80% below our 1990 value), for the category of electricity. By approximating the renewable content of our electricity as zero, in 1990, the 2030 climate-stabilization requirement for electricity is to have its renewable content be 80%. Many cities in California have stated in their Climate Action Plans (CAPs) that their electricity will be 100% renewable by 2035. Unfortunately, such optimism cannot be expressed for LDVs. Our only hope is the implementation of enforceable plans, containing enforceable mitigation measures, that will, taken together, do these two things, in sufficient magnitude:

- cause the cars on the road in 2030 to be more efficient and
- reduce our per-capita driving (VMT).

The CARB Scoping Plan is the official CA Plan to achieve our official 2030 Climate Mandate. Its measures need to be fully implemented.

I30-17 cont.

In Closing

Thank you for performing your critical work. Thank you for reading this material. Please let me know if you would like to meet to discuss this letter or related topics.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Bullock mike_bullock@earthlink.net
760-421-9482

References

1.) Comments on San Diego Climate Action Plan (PDS2015-POD-15-002) and Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (PDS2016-ER 16-00-003) Chatten Brown & Carstens to County of San Diego, September 25, 2017

2.) Sierra Club v. County of San Diego, D064243, filed 10/29/14, a published Appellate Court Ruling, (Super. Ct. No. 37-2012-00101054- CU-TT-CTL, ruled 3-0 in favor of the Sierra Club

3.) Comment Letter. *Draft Environmental Impact Report for 2050 RTP and SCS*, From AG Harris to the SANDAG Board, September 16, 2011.

4.) Exhibit A, Brief of Amicus Curiae James Hansen, Case3:11-cv-02203-EMC Document108 Filed 11/14/11. Available on request from mike_bullock@earthlink.net and attached to the email submission of this letter.

5.) 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality, November 16, 2022

6.) *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality's Appendix E, Sustainable and Equitable Communities*, November 16, 2022

7.) *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality's Appendix D, Local Actions* November 16, 2022

8.) *Dividend-Account Parking: Feasible & Enforceable Mitigation*, Updated from Air and Waste Management Association Paper 2010-A-554-AWMA, Presented at the Air and Waste Management Association Conference, in Calgary, Canada. 2010. Mike Bullock

9.) Email *Re: Oceanside Transit Center: Housing Retail Office = Need for an Intelligent Car-Parking System,* Keith Jones to Mike Bullock, March 11, 2022.

10.) Presentation Slides*, Eliminating the Harm of Bundled Cost or Bundled Benefit Parking*, Presented at the Energy-Utility-Environment-Conference (EUEC), in San Diego, CA, 2021. Mike Bullock

Letter I30 Mike Bullock

January 5, 2024

Comment I30-1
The comment is an introductory statement and indicates that references to the letter are provided.

Response I30-1
The County has received and considered the comments and references provided. Responses to specific comments are provided below.

Comment I30-2
The comment provides background information about the commenter and states that the prior request for a car-parking system to reduce single occupancy commuting for County employees has not been addressed.

Response I30-2
Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Regarding the car-parking system proposed by Sierra Club, the Appellate Decision determined that the County's response to not include the proposed car-parking system is adequate. As explained in Response O4-15, the County re-evaluated the appropriateness of a parking reduction program and determined that a dividend accounting measure would not result in significant GHG reduction benefits due to employee commute patterns (particularly since the COVID-19 epidemic) and would be difficult to implement because of labor agreements. Therefore, the car-parking system has not been incorporated into the CAP Update. The Court's decision on the County's response to Sierra Club's proposed car-parking system is as follows:

> This response is adequate because it explains why the lead agency's position disagrees with the recommendations and objection raised in the comment. (Guidelines, § 15088, subd. (c).) The response contains factual assertions (e.g., free or subsidized parking already provided; majority of County employees under a collective bargaining agreement; unbundling parking would affect employee compensation) and analysis based on those facts. The trial court erred in determining that this response was too conclusory.

Comment I30-3
The comment introduces the comments provided below and states that emissions related to cars and light-duty trucks are the focus of the comments.

Response I30-3
The comment is an introductory statement and does not raise significant environmental issues related to the Draft SEIR, and no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment I30-4
The comment states that meeting the GHG emissions goals mandated by SB 32 is not adequate to stabilize climate change. The comment also states that climate stabilization should be the objective of CEQA.

Response I30-4
Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets (including the 2022 Scoping Plan) and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. As described throughout this SEIR, the purpose of the CEQA analysis is to identify and reduce, to the extent feasible, the environmental impacts of implementing the proposed CAP Update.

Comment I30-5
The comment implies that the CAP Update measures are not meaningful and therefore cannot achieve climate stabilization.

Response I30-5
Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Comment I30-6
The comment states that the County fails to describe the environmental impacts of climate destabilization and describes some of these effects. It also notes that hiding the impacts of climate stabilization is a violation of CEQA, and that given these impacts, the GHG emissions reduction target year should be 2030 not 2035.

Response I30-6
The County appreciates the commenter's knowledge of the importance of addressing the potential effects of climate change. However, contrary to the commenter's assertion, the charge of the SEIR is not to describe all the potential effects of climate change nor, as referenced by the commenter, climate destabilization. Rather, pursuant to CEQA, the SEIR analyzes the impacts of implementation of the CAP Update, which is intended to reduce GHG emissions to meet state-defined targets. The most current legislation and regulatory setting related to GHG emissions reduction are discussed in Section 2.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," of the Draft SEIR (pages 2.8-4 through 2.8-12). See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for more information regarding GHG emissions reduction targets.

Comment I30-7
The comment claims that CEQA requires mitigation measures to be incorporated into the CAP Update and that the CAP Update will have significant adverse environmental impacts related to climate destabilization. The comment also states that the state climate mandates discussed in the CAP Update and the SEIR are insufficient and that the CAP Update must adopt 2022 Scoping Plan mitigation measures.

Response I30-7
As noted above in the response to comment I30-6, pursuant to CEQA, the SEIR analyzes the impacts of implementation of the CAP Update, which is intended to reduce GHG emissions to meet state-defined targets. The CAP Update's potential impacts related to climate change are discussed in Section 2.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," of the Draft SEIR. As discussed in the Draft SEIR, implementation of the CAP Update would not generate significant GHG emissions and would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Therefore, mitigation measures are not required. See pages 2.8-13 through 2.8-36 of the Draft SEIR for a detailed discussion GHG emissions impacts related to implementation of the CAP Update.

The applicable state mandates related to GHG emissions reduction are discussed in Section 2.8.2.2, "State," of the Draft SEIR. Section 2.8.2.3.4, "Issue 2: Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation of an Agency Adopted for the Purpose of Reducing the Emissions of GHGs," of the Draft SEIR discusses how the CAP Update would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, and regulations, including the 2022 Scoping Plan, SB 32, and AB 1279. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for detailed discussion on how the CAP Update would meet the applicable GHG emissions reduction targets and additional measures are not required.

Comment I30-8
The comment claims that the California climate mandate for 2030 is insufficient to meet the science-based 2030 climate stabilization requirement based on references provided. The comment also states that the Scoping Plan indicates that we cannot phase out the internal combustion engine light-duty vehicles fast enough and we must "double down" on VMT reduction.

Response I30-8
The CAP Update has been prepared pursuant to the current state legal and regulatory framework for achieving GHG reduction. The County notes the commenter's perspective on whether the State's current GHG reduction targets are adequate; it is not the charge of either the CAP Update or this SEIR to recommend different targets. The CAP Update is consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan as discussed in Section 2.8.2.3.4, "Issue 2: Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation of an Agency Adopted for the Purpose of Reducing the Emissions of GHGs," of the Draft SEIR. Implementation of the CAP would put the County on a path to carbon neutrality ahead of SB 32's 2030 target. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for detailed discussion on how the CAP Update would meet the

applicable GHG emissions reduction targets. See Section 9.1.1.1, "Master Response: CAP Update Purpose and Land Use Change," which explains the purpose of the CAP Update. The CAP Update includes Action T-3.1 to increase the use of electric and other zero-emissions vehicles in the unincorporated county and Actions T-5.2 and T-6.3 to reduce VMT.

Comment I30-9
The comment provides excerpts of text from the 2022 Scoping Plan and indicates that transportation electrification, VMT reduction, building decarbonization, and pricing parking should be priority GHG reduction strategies for local jurisdictions.

Response I30-9
The County has received and reviewed the reference documents provided. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for a discussion of the measures and actions included in the CAP Update to reduce GHG emissions.

Comment I30-10
The comment provides excerpts of text from the Scoping Plan related to dividend-account parking. The comment explains the need for and features of managed parking and how the County should proceed to provide managed parking for its employees.

Response I30-10
The County appreciates the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions through the use of managed parking. While the County has not adopted this strategy as part of the CAP Update, it has proposed other measures and actions to encourage multimodal transportation options and discourage use of single occupancy vehicles. Please see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets. Refer to Response O4-15 and Response I30-2 for discussion of dividend account parking.

Comment I30-11
The comment quotes text from the *2020–2023 County Operations Strategic Sustainability Plan* (Strategic Plan) and claims that the plan does not discuss car parking and thus contradicts the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Response I30-11
The County appreciates the commenter's perspective on the shortcomings of the Strategic Plan; however, the comment does not address the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a).

Comment I30-12
The comment explains the economic development features of a dividend-account car parking system.

Response I30-12
The economic development features described in the comment are noted. The comment does not raise significant environmental issues related to the Draft SEIR, and no further response is required on this issue pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a). See also Response I30-2.

Comment I30-13
The comment states that the CAP Update and SEIR conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan because they do not address free parking and claims that this is a CEQA violation. The comment also states that the County may not have any TDM mitigation measures and that a TDM is not likely to have a significant effect. The comment claims that the SANDAG RTP/SCS conflicts with the 2022 Scoping Plan. The comment also expresses support for the dividend account parking system.

Response I30-13
The 2022 Scoping Plan provides nonregulatory and non-exhaustive guidance for local governments and lead agencies related to how local climate action planning can support the State of California's climate goals. It includes recommendations intended to build momentum for local actions that align with the State's climate strategies, with a focus on climate action planning and approval of new land use development projects but does not represent an exhaustive list of everything local governments can do to support state climate goals. Therefore, it is not required that a CAP include all potential GHG reduction measures included in the 2022 Scoping Plan to be consistent with the plan. For further discussion of consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan, refer to Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," and Responses A3-2, A3-4, and A3-5.

The CAP Update does include a measure that requires the County to "support transit and transportation demand management to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area" (CAP Update Measure T-6). As described on page 56 of the CAP Update, this measure is supported by a series of actions focused on reducing vehicle trips, including one that would adopt a TDM ordinance that would aim to reduce the number of vehicle trips associated with new development.

While the commenter may have misgivings as to the consistency of the RTP/SCS with the 2022 Scoping Plan, as described on pages 2.8-24 to 2.8-29 of the SEIR, the CAP Update is consistent with both the 2022 Scoping Plan and the RTP/SCS. The CAP Update would result in decreased GHG emissions compared to the baseline and would achieve the GHG reduction targets for 2030 and 2045. All GHG-related measures in the CAP Update would support the 2022 Scoping Plan goal of achieving GHG reduction targets because the CAP Update is intended to reduce GHG emissions generated within the unincorporated area and from County operations. Additionally, CAP Update measures

and actions that reduce VMT and transportation-related GHG emissions would also support the goals of the RTP/SCS.

Comment I30-14
The comment claims Table 2.8-5 in the SEIR conflicts with CARB findings and states that the CAP Update and SEIR do not accomplish pricing of roads, pricing of parking, and doubling of transit, which are required by CARB.

Response I30-14
The County does not have jurisdictional control of transit. Priced parking for County employees was considered but does not result in meaningful GHG emissions reduction due to telecommuting patterns. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for a discussion of the GHG emissions reduction targets, measures, and actions included in the CAP Update to reduce GHG emissions.

Comment I30-15
The comment expresses support for measures to improve roadway segments as multimodal, but notes that pricing strategies are more important, and cautions against increasing roadway capacity for cars.

Response I30-15
The County acknowledges the support for multimodal transport. CAP Update Action T-5-1 would make multimodal improvements on County roads, Action T-5.1.a would develop education program to encourage and provide access to alternative modes of transportation and increase safety, Action T-5.2 would develop the Safe Routes to School program, and Action T-6.2 would include roadway treatments that would support transit and optimize traffic flow that could improve safety for multimodal transport. The CAP Update does not include measures or actions to increase roadway capacity. CAP Update Actions T-5.1, T-5.2, and T-6.2 would support the use of alternative modes of transportation and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in the unincorporated area. See also Response I30-14 regarding the use of pricing strategies.

Comment I30-16
The comment suggests projects to improve bicycle access and implementation of a certified education program for bicyclists to reduce accidents. The comment also states that the funding for bicycle access projects should come from highway funds.

Response I30-16
The County acknowledges the commenter's suggestion for how to further reduce GHG emissions. The CAP Update includes actions to improve bicycle access and safety. Specifically, Action T-4.1.a would provide educational programs and campaigns to encourage County staff to walk, bike, and take transit, Action T-5.1 would install 315 miles of bikeways by 2030 to encourage alternative modes of transportation, and Action T-5.1.a would develop educational materials to increase bicycle use, access, and safety. Please also see Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," which describes the methodology the County used to establish

GHG reduction targets that are appropriately aligned with statewide targets and adequately identify measures and actions to reduce GHG emissions to levels that achieve the targets.

Comment I30-17
The comment provides informative graphics related to the atmospheric temperature and carbon dioxide emission and requests that these graphics and associated information are included in the Final SEIR. The comment requests that the County state that cars and light-duty trucks emit more GHG emissions than any other category of emission. The comment states also that the 2022 Scoping Plan's measures need to be fully implemented.

Response I30-17
The County has received and reviewed the provided informative graphics related to the atmospheric temperature and carbon dioxide emission. Incorporation of these graphics and associated information would not change the impact analyses presented in Section 2.8, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions," of the Draft SEIR. Therefore, no revision to the SEIR is required. The SEIR provides GHG emissions inventory by section and indicates that transportation is the largest GHG emissions sector in California in Table 2.8-2 and that on-road transportation is the largest GHG emission sector in the unincorporated area in Table 2.8-3. See Section 9.1.1.3, "Master Response: CAP Update GHG Reduction Targets, Measures, and Actions," for a discussion of the GHG emissions reduction measures and actions included in the CAP Update to reduce GHG emissions. The SEIR has been prepared to address the potential effects of the CAP Update implementation, not to analyze the impacts of climate change. See Response I30-6 above.

Comment I30-18
The comment contains references five through 10 mentioned in Comments I30-8 through I30-11.

Response I30-18
The County has reviewed the attached references and has considered them in responding to Comments I30-8 through I30-11.

Letter
I31

From: Paul Hannosh
To: CAP
Subject: [External] SEIR public comment
Date: Sunday, January 7, 2024 8:14:13 PM

I agree we want housing to be more heat and cool efficient, and we can all agree we want open spaces, parks and farms. However, I am against excessive spending to implement new infrastructure for which we don't have the money. We don't need more regulations; CA has too many as is. We don't need more emission-control strategies that take away our financial ability to support ourselves.

I disagree with the Net Zero plans because they are not sustainable to human life, to the economy or to common sense or reason. It is a rash idea to disregard human life and to be willing to sacrifice human life for the fake "climate emergency." Green House Gases (GHG) are not killing us. We can adapt to them better than the Net Zero proposals! Those proposals are pure coercion and eventual totalitarian top-down government tactics against "We The People." In America, this is not how we get things done.

I'm against any vehicle miles-traveled-coercion by toll roads or 15 or 20-minute cities that put limitations on one's ability to travel by personal vehicle. Solar and Electrical Vehicles (EV's) are not sustainable. They have toxic chemicals; they use foreign resources like rare-earth metals, that we do not mine for in the US as we should if we really want those products. Our energy power grid infrastructure cannot sustain more EV's. Renewable Energy technologies are not equivalent to current energy creation and are not sustainable for the population here. We are setting ourselves up for more rolling black outs and higher costs of energy which are not sustainable for the average person. EV fires are extremely hot and hard to put out which put us at much higher risk for the spread of wildfires. This is toxic hazardous waste, and it is insane to pave the way for more of these vehicles here in San Diego. I31-1

Building more High Density Housing (HDH) is not a solution to pollution. Teaching people how to farm and encouraging people to be farmers is. We need more farmers more than we need more dense housing and public transportation.

Will you make exceptions to new regulations when, "construction related to implementation of the GHG reduction measures and their associated actions could result in exceedances of local criteria air pollutant thresholds?" What an oxymoron. You, the elite, are making "Rules for me, but not for thee."

I disapprove of the Water Efficiency Plan as it can limit people's water consumption to unsustainable levels. People should not be having to weigh if they can shower that day or if they do laundry, and that is where this plan will be leading.

I see a lot of vague visions in this report. I see very little numbers showing the plan of action and how this will actually make a difference in lowering any substantial average temperatures locally. What is the goal? What is the achievable number you are wanting? Is there any proof these changes will accomplish the goal? I recommend removing from the language anything about Net zero, zero carbon, zero emission, or zero GHG. These are unrealistic, unattainable, unreasonable goals. A lot of it is like cheating on your taxes and trying to come up with ways that you are able to write-off your emissions.

I31-1 cont.

Paul Hannosh
San Diego Resident
Zip: 92008

Letter I31 Paul Hannosh

January 7, 2024

Comment I31-1
This is a duplicate of Letter I14.

Response I31-1
See Response I14-1 above.

Letter
I32

From: Spoon, Steven (Chad)
To: CAP
Subject: FW: [External] County Draft CAP and DEIR
Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 8:37:19 AM

From: Bill Tippets <billtippets@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 9:44 PM
To: Kelly, Meghan <Meghan.Kelly@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Cc: Slovick, Mark <Mark.Slovick@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Farmer, Tyler <Tyler.Farmer@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Talleh, Rami <Rami.Talleh@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] County Draft CAP and DEIR

Hi Meghan,

I was re-reading portions of the CAP and DEIR with particular interest in the Built Environment and Transportation section and associated GHG emission reduction measures.

In reviewing public comments made regarding those documents, and now that public comment period has closed, it occurred to me that several pieces of information and clarification would be useful to have as the process moves ahead.

I aasume the County can provide information and clarifications related to the material it has already presented or used in developing the CAP and DEIR.

One request is to get clarification on what housing projections the CAP/DEIR used. The documents incorporated previous SB 375 and SB 743 analysis, and SANDAG growth projections. There are several housing unit projections or potentials (2016-2050) ranging from the GPU maximum allowable per zoning (~60,000 units?) to the SB 743 number (~30,000), and then the recent RHNA allocation (~7,600 for 2021-2029) - and up to 9,500-10,000 out to 2050?)? Where in the documents can we find the specific number of projected housing units that the CAP/DEIR used in its analysis? I32-1

Related to that, and because the County asserts that the CAP cannot include land use/zoning change measures (it uses the GPU measures), but has an approved VMT plan that is supposed to induce development to VMT efficient (and the infill locations you've identified), how does that affect the projected distribution of future housing compared to what the GPU would have produced? I32-2

Also, would the County produce a map that overlays the DEIR alternative analysis locations of the LowVMT/Infill areas and the Mobility Hub areas? And then overlay the likely distribution of housing based on the current GPU land use/zoning? I32-3

I realize that you have a lot of work to prepare for the next phase of the CAP/DEIR effort. Even so, getting more clarity on these items would greatly help me and presumably others to evaluate the next set of documents.

Best regards,

Bill Tippets
(619) 822-4323

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results" - Winston Churchill

Letter I32 Bill Tippets

January 7, 2024

Comment I32-1

The comment acknowledges that the public comment period for the Draft SEIR has closed. The comment requests clarification on the housing projections used in the CAP Update and SEIR analysis.

Response I32-1

The CAP Update's emissions projections estimate future emissions by considering forecasted growth in population, housing units, and employment, and the impact of adopted legislation and regulations on future emissions. The population, housing, and employment forecast for the CAP Update was based on San Diego Association of Governments' 2021 Regional Plan EIR Alternative 2 growth assumption (land use data set "DS" 39 scenario). Please see pages 2-3 to 2-5 of the Draft SEIR for a discussion of buildout assumptions for the SEIR analysis and Cap Update Appendix 3 (Tables 5 and 6) for the specific unit projections.

Comment I32-2

The comment states that the County has an approved VMT plan that is supposed to guide development to be VMT efficient and asks how the VMT plan affects the projected distribution of future housing compared to what the General Plan would have produced.

Response I32-2

The comment seems to reference the County's Transportation Study Guidelines, which is a program separate from the CAP Update. For clarification, the County's VMT threshold does not directly regulate development. Although the threshold and forthcoming VMT mitigation program may indirectly influence where development occurs, growth was distributed evenly across the unincorporated area in the VMT modeling performed for the CAP Update. As a result, the estimate is conservative compared to what could occur with the influence of the County's Transportation Study Guide (i.e., VMT generation and the GHG reductions necessary to address VMT may be overestimated).

As noted by the commenter, the CAP Update does not include land use or zoning changes to the General Plan. It does, however, include measures and actions to reduce VMT, including Actions T-3.1, T-4.1, T-4.1.a, T-4.2, T-5.1, T-5.1.a, T-5.1.b, T-5.2, T-6.1, T-6.2, T-6.2.a, T-6.2.b, and T-6.3. Additionally, in response to the Appellate Decision, the SEIR includes an analysis of four smart growth alternatives. These alternatives, which were crafted based on their ability to reduce VMT and on extensive stakeholder engagement, would result in changes to the adopted General Plan land use map. Please see Chapter 5, "Alternatives," of the Draft SEIR, for a description of these alternatives and their impacts, along with an explanation of the subsequent planning requirements for implementation of these alternatives. See also Section 9.1.1.2, "Master Response: Evaluation of Smart Growth Alternatives in This SEIR," for a discussion of the smart growth alternatives considered.

Comment I32-3
The comment requests a map that overlays the likely distribution of housing based on General Plan land use and zoning on the locations of the low-VMT/infill areas and the Mobility Hub areas evaluated in the Draft SEIR alternative analysis.

Response I32-3
The County acknowledges the mapping request. Extensive mapping was prepared as part of the outreach associated with the development of the smart growth alternatives. All stakeholders were given an opportunity to provide input on where smart growth should be located. As described on pages 5-20 and 5-21 of the Draft SEIR:

> Based on requests from various stakeholders, the County prepared an interactive land use overlay mapping application and a series of approximately 90 static smart growth maps to facilitate discussions with stakeholders and development of alternatives. These maps and other materials are available to the public on the CAP Update website.

The Land Use Overlays map application includes the current General Plan land use, fire hazards severity zones, and the established villages in the county. The Land Use Overlays application is located on the County website at: https://gis-portal.sandiegocounty.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8be6380b8f024460862f1c9334e999a0. In addition, the locations of the low-VMT areas, infill areas, and Mobility Hub areas are shown in Figures 5-1 through 5-3 of the Draft SEIR (pages 5-47 through 5-111).

Because the utility of the requested map is unclear in the context of the analysis and conclusions in the Draft SEIR, additional mapping has not been performed in response to this comment.

9.2 Summary of Changes

9.2.1 Changes to the CAP Update Since Release of the Draft SEIR

Table 9-5 below summarizes the changes made to the CAP Update since release of the Draft SEIR in October of 2023. As shown below, these updates clarify the content of the CAP Update. As appropriate, these changes are reflected in this Final EIR; however, they do not affect the analysis or conclusions in the to the Draft SEIR.

Table 9-5 Changes to the CAP Update

Section	Page	Updates to Public Draft
Global		Changed implementation supplemental information name of "Cost Benefit Analysis" and "Disproportionate Impact to Communities" to "Cost Effectiveness and Disproportionate Cost Analysis"
		Changed name of "Carbon Farming Program" and "Carbon Farming Pilot Program" to "Climate Smart Land Stewardship Program"
		Minor formatting updates and grammatical corrections
		Edited Energy sector vision statement
		T-3.1a: Edited action description
		T-5.1a: Edited action description
		E-2.2: Edited action description
		E-2.2b: Edited action description
		E-2.2c: Edited action description
		E-3.2c: Edited action description
		W-1.1: Edited action description
		W-3.1: Edited action outcomes
Preface: Acknowledgements		Added acknowledgements
Chapter 1: Introduction	4	Added additional examples of regional collaboration
	9	Added and clarified the role of the County's Sustainable Land Use Framework project on future land use changes and impacts to the CAP
	13	Added discussion on how the Safety Element increases climate resiliency
	14	Added discussion on career training and licensing/certification
Chapter 2: Community Outreach and Engagement	18	Updated photo of CAP cover page
	19	Changed "free rain barrels" to "free/discounted rain barrels"

Section	Page	Updates to Public Draft
Chapter 3: GHG Emissions Inventory, Projections, and Reduction Targets	38	Added footnote to Figure 10 (County GHG Emissions Projections and Targets) to reference Figure 13 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions from CAP Implementation)
Chapter 4: GHG Emissions Reduction Measures	44	Clarified monitoring occurs as part of the CAP's Annual Monitoring Report
	46	Added footnote to Figure 13 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions from CAP Implementation) to reference Figure 10 (County GHG Emissions Projections and Targets)
	47	Updated photo of CAP measure page
	49	Strategy: Decarbonize the On-Road and Off-Road Vehicle Fleet: Edited strategy description
	52	T-3: Edited measure description
	53	Strategy: Support Active Transportation and Reduce Single-Occupancy Vehicle Trips: Edited strategy description
	56	T-6: Edited measure description
	65	Edited Energy sector description
	66	Strategy: Increase Building Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Electrification in the Unincorporated Area and County Operations: Edited strategy description
	67	E-1: Edited measure description
	68	E-2: Edited measure description and equity based outcomes
	78	Strategy: Increase Solid Waste Diversion in the Unincorporated Area and in County Operations: Edited strategy description
	79	SW-1: Edited measure description
	89	Edited Water and Wastewater sector description
	90	Strategy: Decrease Potable Water Consumption In the Unincorporated Area and County Operations: Edited measure description
	93	Strategy: Increase Stormwater Collection, Water Pumping, and Wastewater Treatment Efficiency: Edited strategy description
	94	W-3: Edited measure description
	99	Edited Agriculture and Conservation sector description
	100	Strategy: Preserve Natural Lands and Improve Land Management Practices to Protect Habitat and Increase Carbon Storage: Edited strategy description
	102	A-2: Edited measure description
	105	A-4: Edited measure description

Section	Page	Updates to Public Draft
Chapter 5: Implementation and Monitoring	115	Added and clarified description of implementation supplemental information
	116	Added discussion of regional collaboration in CAP implementation
	117	Added and clarified how measures will be monitored
	143	Table 13: Added note about funding sources
	146	Table 14: Corrected appendix name, updated text to add clarification, and added hyperlink
Chapter 6: Glossary	147	Added glossary
Back Cover Page		Added photo of skate park at Lindo Lake County Park

9.2.2 Changes to the Draft SEIR

Table 9-6 below summarizes the changes made to this SEIR since release of the Draft SEIR in October of 2023. As shown below, these revisions clarify, amplify, or otherwise make insignificant modifications to the Draft SEIR.

Table 9-6 Changes to the Draft SEIR

Section (Page)	Summary of Change	Reason for Revision
Section S.1.2.5 (p. 9)	Consistency with the CAP Update would be the only threshold of ~~significance~~ general use for County projects (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(b)).	Clarification
Section 2.4 (p. 2.4-5)	Policy COS-1.4: Collaboration with Other Jurisdictions. Collaborate with other jurisdictions and trustee agencies to achieve well-defined common resource preservation and management goals.	Update
Section 2.4 (p. 2.4-6)	Policy COS-1.5: Regional Funding. Collaborate with other jurisdictions and federal, state, and local agencies to identify regional, long-term funding mechanisms that achieve common resource management goals. Policy COS-1.10: Public Involvement. Ensure an open, transparent, and inclusive decision-making process by involving the public throughout the course of planning and implementation of habitat conservation plans and resource management plans. Policy COS-1.11: Volunteer Preserve Monitor. Encourage the formation of volunteer preserve managers that are incorporated into each community planning group to supplement professional enforcement staff.	Update
Section 2.4 (p. 2.4-7)	Policy LU-6.4: Sustainable Subdivision Design. Require that residential subdivisions be planned to conserve open space and natural resources, protect agricultural operations including grazing, increase fire safety and defensibility, reduce impervious footprints, use sustainable development practices, and, when appropriate, provide public amenities. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.] Policy M-12.9: Environmental and Agricultural Resources. Site and design specific trail segments to minimize impacts to sensitive environmental resources, ecological system and wildlife linkages and corridors, and agricultural lands. Within the MSCP preserves, conform siting and use of trails to County MSCP Plans and MSCP resource management plans.	Update
Section 2.9 (p. 2.9-10)	Policy M-1.2: Interconnected Road Network. Provide an interconnected public road network with multiple connections that improve efficiency by incorporating shorter routes between trip origin and destination, disperse traffic, reduce traffic congestion in specific areas, and provide both primary and secondary	Update

Section (Page)	Summary of Change	Reason for Revision
	access/egress routes that support emergency services during fire and other emergencies. Policy M-3.3: Multiple Ingress and Egress. Require development to provide multiple ingress/egress routes in conformance with state law and local regulations. Policy M-4.3: Rural Roads Compatible with Rural Character. Design and construct public roads to meet travel demands in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands that are consistent with rural character while safely accommodating transit stops when deemed necessary, along with bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians. Where feasible, utilize rural road design features (e.g., no curb and gutter improvements) to maintain community character.	
Section 2.9 (p. 2.9-13)	Policy S-17-3: Airport Operational Plans. Require operational plans for new public/private airports and heliports, as well as future operational changes to existing airports, to be compatible with existing and planned land uses that surround the airport facility.	Update
Section 2.10 (p. 2.10-15)	Policy COS-5.4: Invasive Species. Encourage the removal of invasive species to restore natural drainage systems, habitats, and natural hydrologic regimes of watercourses.	Update
Section 2.10 (p. 2.10-43)	Policy S-~~9.3~~10.4, which requires development within mapped flood hazard areas be sited and designed to minimize on-site and off-site hazards; Policy S-~~9.4~~10.5, which allows new uses and development within the floodplain fringe (land within the floodplain outside of the floodway) only when environmental impacts and hazards are mitigated; Policy S-~~9.5~~10.6, which prohibits development in the floodplain fringe when located on Semi-Rural and Rural Lands to maintain the capacity of the floodplain; Policy S-~~9.6~~10.7, which prohibits development in dam inundation areas that may interfere with the County's emergency response and evacuation plans; Policy S-~~10.1~~11.1, which limits new or expanded uses in floodways to agricultural, recreational, and other such low-intensity uses and that do not meet certain criteria identified in the policy; Policy S-~~10.2~~11.2, which would require the use of natural channels for County flood control facilities; Policy S-~~10.3~~11.3, which would require flood control facilities to be adequately sized, constructed, and maintained to operate effectively; Policy S-~~10.4~~11.4, which would require new development to incorporate measures to minimize storm water impacts; Policy S-~~10.5~~11.5, which would require new development to provide necessary on-site and off-site improvements to storm water runoff and drainage facilities; and Policy S-~~10.6~~11.6, which would ensure new development maintains the existing hydrology of the area.	Correction

Section (Page)	Summary of Change	Reason for Revision
Section 2.10 (p. 2.10-45)	New farmworker housing would also be required to implement adopted General Plan goals and policies related to surface hydrology and drainage, including Policies LU-6.5, LU-6.10, LU-6.12, COS-5.1, ~~S-8.1, S-8.2, S-9.1, S-9.2, S-9.3, S-9.4, S-9.5, S-9.6,~~ S-10.1, S-10.2, S-10.3, S-10.4, S-10.5, ~~and~~ S-10.6, and 11.1 through 11.6, as described above.	Correction
Section 2.10 (p. 2.10-47)	Additionally, new renewable energy projects would be required to implement adopted General Plan goals and policies related to surface hydrology and drainage, including Policies LU-6.5, LU-6.10, LU-6.12, COS-5.1, ~~S-8.1, S-8.2, S-9.1, S-9.2, S-9.3, S-9.4, S-9.5, S-9.6,~~ S-10.1, S-10.2, S-10.3, S-10.4, S-10.5, ~~and~~ S-10.6, and 11.1 through 11.6, as described above.	Correction
Section 2.11 (p. 2.11-1)	As indicated, implementation of the proposed project would ~~not~~ result in new or more severe significant impacts on land use and planning.	Correction
Section 2.12 (p. 2.12-7)	Policy S-~~15.1~~17.2: Land Use Compatibility. Require land uses surrounding airports to be compatible with the operation of each airport. Policy S-17.3: Airport Operational Plans. Require operational plans for new public/private airports and heliports, as well as future operational changes to existing airports, to be compatible with existing and planned land uses that surround the airport facility. Policy S-17.5: Private Airstrip and Heliport Location. Locate private airstrips and heliports outside of safety zones and flight paths for existing airports where they are compatible with surrounding established and planned land use, and in a manner to avoid impacting public roadways and facilities.	Correction and Update
Section 2.12 (p. 2.12-28)	Future projects associated with implementation of the CAP Update would be required to comply with adopted General Plan Policy N-4.9, which requires noise compatibility of any projects that may be affected by noise from public or private airports, and Policy S-~~15.1~~17.2, which requires land uses surrounding airports to be compatible with the operation of each airport.	Correction
Section 2.12 (p. 2.12-29)	Development of new farmworker housing associated with CAP Update would be required to comply with adopted General Plan Policy N-4.9, which reduces potential noise impacts to noise-sensitive land uses, and Policies ~~S-15.1, S-15.2, and S-15.4~~S-17.2, S-17.3 and S-17.5, which require land uses surrounding airports to be compatible with airport operations.	Correction
Section 2.12 (p. 2.12-30)	Although the locations of most projects that would be constructed to achieve the targets of the CAP Update are unknown, it is reasonable to assume that development would be consistent with applicable Airport Land Use	Correction

Section (Page)	Summary of Change	Reason for Revision
	Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs), would be subject to compliance with adopted General Plan Policies N-4.9, ~~S-15.1, S-15.2, and S-15.4~~S-17.2, S-17.3, and S-17.5, and would be required to implement 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measures Noi-5.1 through Noi-5.3.	
Section 2.12 (p. 2.12-32)	As discussed in Section 2.12.3.5, "Issue 3: Excessive Noise Exposure from a Public or Private Airport," above, excessive noise from a public or a private airport associated with implementation of the project would not be significant with implementation of 2011 GPU PEIR Mitigation Measure Noi-5.1 and compliance with adopted General Plan Policies N-4.9, ~~S-15.1, S-15.2, and S-15.4~~S-17.2, S-17.3, and S-17.5.	Correction
Section 2.15.1 (p. 2.15-2)	CAL FIRE released updated maps of FHSZs within SRAs for public comment in 2022. These maps show an overall reduction in lands within High FHSZs and an increase in lands within the Very High FHSZ designation in the unincorporated county. ~~However, these~~ These designations ~~are proposed and~~ have ~~yet to be~~ been adopted and became effective on April 1, 2024.~~; the 2007 maps remain the most current adopted maps at this time.~~	Update
Section 2.15.3.2 (p. 2.15-10)	As discussed in Section 2.15.1, "Existing Conditions," the majority of the unincorporated county is within an SRA, and most lands within the unincorporated county are classified as ~~High and~~ Very High FHSZs in SRAs (CAL FIRE ~~2007~~2024).	Update
Section 4.4 (p. 4-35)	Most of the in-process GPAs are located more than 2 miles from an airport except the ~~two~~ Peppertree Park Units 9 and 10 projects that are located within 2,000 feet of Fallbrook Airpark.	Correction
Table 4-1 (p. 4-43)	The fourth row for "Peppertree Park SPA (Units 7 + 8)" has been deleted.	Correction
Section 5.5.2 (p. 5-22)	Implementation of smart growth alternatives that result in changes to the adopted General Plan land use map would require subsequent planning by County staff to develop tools to modify the application of the adopted General Plan. State laws facilitating housing streamlining and development (including Senate Bill 330, known as the Housing Crisis Act) also prevent the County from reducing residential capacity on a site zoned for housing in certain areas of the county without identifying replacement capacity. In addition, it is difficult to downzone higher density housing element sites identified and approved by the state as feasible sites for lower-income development. Government Code Section 65863 requires that cities and counties ensure that their general plans provide for regional housing needs. In addition, cities and counties are required to have no "net loss" of	Clarification

Section (Page)	Summary of Change	Reason for Revision
	lower and moderate-income dwelling units. The County cannot take action that would reduce identified affordable housing sites for these income categories.	
Section 5.5.3.1 (p. 5-26)	If implemented, this alternative is anticipated to reduce VMT for new development by 6.6 percent in 2035 and 3.0 percent in 2050. This represents a substantial VMT reduction for new growth. However, when viewed in conjunction with existing development, the magnitude of overall VMT reduction is relatively small because the vast majority of unincorporated county VMT under future year alternatives can be attributed to existing land uses.	Clarification
Section 5.5.3.1 (p. 5-27)	Therefore, although this alternative would reduce VMT from new development, the magnitude of ~~is not expected to meaningfully reduce~~ VMT or GHG emissions reductions in the unincorporated county would be much smaller when all VMT in the future condition is considered.	Clarification
Section 5.7 (p. 5-45)	The "CAP Significance Determination" for the "Issue Area" Environmental Justice in Table 5-2 is revised as follows: ~~SU~~ LTS	Correction
Chapter 6 (p. 6-15)	———. 2024. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Areas.* September 29, 2023 – Effective April 1, 2024. Available: https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008. Accessed May 20, 2024.	Update

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2024.