

Draft
Community Outreach Plan
for the
Climate Action Plan Update
City of Escondido

PREPARED FOR

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April 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Community Outreach Plan (Outreach Plan) summarizes the strategies the City of Escondido (City) and the planning team¹ will use to engage the public and other interested parties in the preparation of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) update. The Outreach Plan guides and prioritizes City efforts, first summarizing goals and guiding principles for public engagement and outreach, followed by summaries of the specific outreach methods that will be used during the climate action planning process.

The major phases and outreach opportunities are illustrated in the CAP Tentative Project Schedule shown in Figure 1.

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Outreach Plan is to actively engage local residents, stakeholders, and other affected agencies in developing the City's CAP update and evaluating associated environmental issues. Engaging the community in the planning process to solicit meaningful input is essential to ensure that CAP measures are feasible, equitable, and can be implemented efficiently. The tools and strategies set forth in this Outreach Plan will assist the City in engaging with local residents, businesses, and other community members (referred to as collectively as "stakeholders"). The outreach program may evolve and change from that published in the Final Outreach Plan at the City's discretion to meet the CAP program needs or accommodate varying circumstances, as well as to align and coordinate with other related planning efforts.

1.2 GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

The goals of outreach and engagement are to (1) raise awareness of the CAP update; (2) provide education on the basic science of climate change and the need for proactive climate action planning; (3) provide opportunities for input at the various steps of CAP development as discussed in Section 1.3.1.; (4) provide opportunities to influence decision-making on the CAP update; and (5) provide a public process that facilitates compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines' requirements and other expectations for community involvement. The rationale for each of these goals includes the following principles:

- ▲ *Awareness* – Stakeholders must be aware of the CAP planning process before they can participate.
- ▲ *Education* – Stakeholders must be educated and knowledgeable about the CAP update and planning process to participate effectively.
- ▲ *Input* – Stakeholders' knowledge and perspectives help the planning team verify or expand on available information.
- ▲ *Decision-making* – Stakeholders are encouraged to engage in the decision-making process.

¹ The planning team consists of key City staff, representatives of SANDAG, and the CAP consultants - Ascent Environmental and EPIC.

- ▲ *Open and public process* – As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 (b)(1)(F), a “qualified” greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction plan must be adopted in a public process following environmental review. Once adopted, the updated CAP would represent a qualified plan for reduction of GHG emissions, consistent with the requirement set forth in the CEQA Guidelines section cited above, and would support tiering of future development projects for purposes of CEQA review of GHG impacts. Having a clear process by which the public can participate, review, and comment on the draft CAP will result in a better document that can be used later to streamline CEQA analysis and compliance for many types of projects in the City.

1.3 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AND CEQA PROCESS

The tentative project schedule in Table 1 shows a brief overview of the CAP and CEQA processes and how they connect with the outreach activities that are addressed in more detail in Section 2.

Table 1: Climate Action Plan and CEQA Tentative Project Schedule						
	Winter 2017-2018	Spring 2018	Summer 2018	Fall 2018	Winter 2018-2019	Spring/Summer 2019
GHG Emissions Inventory, Reduction Targets and Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Complete baseline inventory and forecasts ▲ Determine GHG emissions reduction targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Research and calculate reduction potential of various GHG reduction measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Identify CEQA significance thresholds for GHG emissions ▲ Prepare technical report on GHG emissions reduction target and measures and comparison of forecasted emissions versus emissions after implementation of the CAP Update 			
CAP Update		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Develop policies based on identified GHG emissions reduction measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Develop draft CAP Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Incorporate comments from City and develop draft CAP Update for public review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Public review of draft CAP Update ▲ Incorporate public comments and prepare draft Final CAP Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Finalize CAP Update for hearings ▲ Adopt Final CAP Update
Environmental Review			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Conduct Environmental Initial Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Develop draft CEQA document ▲ Develop draft of technical report on CEQA thresholds ▲ Draft development review checklist for CEQA streamlining for City review ▲ Prepare Qualitative Summary of inventory discrepancies from time of CAP adoption to time of CAP Update for inclusion in the CAP Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Public review of draft CEQA document ▲ Notice of Availability ▲ Incorporate public comments and prepare draft Final CEQA document ▲ Review and refine draft technical report and development review checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Finalize CEQA document for hearings ▲ Notice of Completion ▲ Adopt/Certify Final CEQA document ▲ Notice of Determination ▲ Adopt final technical report and development review checklist with CAP update
Community Outreach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Develop Community Outreach Plan ▲ Initiate collection of a notification list and develop an email notification service ▲ Planning Commission and City Council informational meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ CAP Workgroup meetings ▲ Planning Commission and City Council informational meetings ▲ Website updated and available for CAP information ▲ Mobile Community Conversations ▲ Community Workshop #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ CAP Workgroup meetings ▲ Mobile Community Conversations ▲ Community Workshop #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ CAP Workgroup meetings ▲ Planning Commission and City Council informational meetings ▲ Staff Work Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Planning Commission and City Council Adoption Hearings ▲ Staff Work Session ▲ Staff Training on development review checklist

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1.3.1 Climate Action Planning

The City will use a five-step process for climate action planning that was modeled after guidance from ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI). ICLEI’s Cities for Climate Protection™ Campaign assists local jurisdictions to adopt policies and implement quantifiable measures to reduce local GHG emissions, improve air quality, and enhance livability, sustainability, and resiliency. ICLEI’s recommended five-step process for climate action planning is summarized as follows:

▲ **Step 1. Conduct a baseline emissions inventory and develop forecasts for future emissions**

The City will calculate GHG emissions for a base year and for forecast years aligned with California’s milestone years for GHG reduction and the City’s planning horizon (i.e., 2020, 2030, and 2035) based on local consumption and growth data for various categories. The inventory and forecasts provide a benchmark against which the City can measure progress.

▲ **Step 2. Establish an emissions reduction target for the forecast years**

The City will establish emission reduction targets for community-wide GHG emissions. These targets will foster political will and create a framework to guide the planning and implementation of measures.



Figure 1: Climate Action Planning Process

▲ **Step 3. Develop and adopt a Climate Action Plan**

Through a multi-stakeholder process, the City will update the existing CAP with descriptions of the policies and measures that the local government may take to reduce GHG emissions and achieve its emissions reduction targets. The updated CAP will include a timeline, a

description of potential financing mechanisms, and an assignment of responsibility to departments and staff. In addition to direct GHG reduction measures, the updated CAP will also incorporate public awareness and education efforts. Adoption of the updated CAP will require City Council approval.

▲ **Step 4. Implement policies and measures**

The City will implement the policies and measures contained in the CAP after the CAP has been adopted by the City Council. Policies and measures implemented by the City will encompass a variety of emissions categories such as transportation, energy use, water consumption, waste generation, and other categories that are part of the community-wide inventory.

▲ **Step 5. Monitor and verify progress**

Monitoring and verifying progress on the implementation of measures to reduce or avoid GHG emissions is an ongoing process. Monitoring begins as measures are implemented and continues for the life of the measures, providing important feedback that can be used to improve the measures over time.

The five steps provide a flexible framework that can accommodate varying levels of analysis, effort, and availability of data. Climate action planning is an iterative process and needs to be revisited at regular intervals to ensure successful outcomes. This Outreach Plan addresses how the City will engage with its citizens and stakeholders for the current iteration which will result in a qualified CAP as described in Section 1.2.

1.3.2 Environmental Review

The City will be preparing a CEQA document that would assess environmental effects of the updated CAP. The CEQA document will be developed concurrent with the CAP update and will be prepared and released for public review along with the draft CAP update. The process for preparing a CEQA document can be summarized as follows:

- ▲ **Environmental Initial Study** – At this stage, the lead agency (City of Escondido) will determine whether the project may have a significant effect on the environment (i.e., whether an Environmental Impact Report [EIR] or negative declaration should be prepared).
- ▲ **Draft CEQA Document** – Using the draft CAP update, the City will analyze the potential impacts of the project, disclose those impacts, and identify any necessary mitigation measures to avoid or reduce significant impacts.
- ▲ **Public Review of Draft CEQA Document** – The City will release the draft CEQA Document for public review and request agencies and the public to review and provide written feedback to the City on its analysis, disclosure of the environmental issues, and any necessary feasible mitigation measures of the proposed project (i.e., the CAP).
- ▲ **Response to Comments** – The City will provide written responses to comments received on the draft CEQA document.

- ▲ Adoption or Certification of Final CEQA Document – The City will develop a Final CEQA document and the City Council will consider whether to adopt/certify the Final CEQA document which includes the draft CEQA document, Responses to Comments, and changes to the draft CEQA document that may have been necessary in response to public comments.

1.4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1.4.1 Climate Action Plans

In 2010, additional guidance was added to the CEQA Guidelines which states that a qualified plan for the reduction of GHG emissions must “be adopted in a public process following environmental review” (CEQA Guidelines 15183.5 (b)(1)(F)). The City intends to develop an updated CAP to be consistent with the components of a qualified CAP per the CEQA Guidelines and provide a thorough outreach program as discussed in Section 2.

1.4.2 CEQA Process

When developing a CEQA document, a lead agency is required to notify the public at distinct stages in the process. CEQA also requires the lead agency to provide opportunities for public comment. The goal of these requirements is to fully inform the public, affected government agencies, and other interested parties of the environmental effects of the project and to provide opportunities to the public to comment on the impact conclusions and any mitigation measures. Public involvement in the CEQA process aims to ensure that the public has a voice in the decision-making process; specifically, that public concerns about environmental issues and the potential effects of the project on the physical environment are addressed prior to project approval. The legal public notification and commenting requirements associated with the CEQA process are outlined in Section 2.3.3.

2 OUTREACH PROGRAM

Successful public engagement relies on an understanding of the context and audience, as well as the thoughtful design of tools and strategies to most effectively engage those audiences. According to the 2016 American Community Survey, the City of Escondido had a population of 151,594, with a median age of 34. In terms of household types, 73 percent were family households with an average family size of 3.74, and 27% were non-family households. The predominant racial makeup was 74.5 percent White (32.5 percent Non-Hispanic White). Hispanic or Latino of any race were 53.2 percent of the population. Median household income is \$54,268 and the City’s largest employers are the health care industry, education, municipal government, and hospitality.

This Outreach Plan targets a broad spectrum of local stakeholders including residents, businesses, community members, as well as major institutions and nonprofits that may have current or future investment in Escondido. Not only will climate change impact stakeholders differently, depending on a number of factors including age, socio-economic status, employment, and homeownership; when it comes to reducing GHGs, some stakeholders will need to adapt and change more than others. Thus,

it is critical to engage these stakeholders early on in the process to solicit input and develop broad support for the effort. To ensure comprehensive outreach to the community, the Outreach Plan identifies best practices used during previous engagement efforts, and includes several engagement tools and strategies, which are briefly described below.

2.1 SYNCHRONIZATION OF OUTREACH WITH PLANNING MILESTONES

The City is committed to listening and responding to the community's input at each step in the planning process. As technical information and draft recommendations are available, they will be discussed with the public and other interested parties and presented on the website at the City's discretion. Key information will also be discussed at public workshops prior to the release of the draft updated CAP to allow participants to provide input and feedback. This input and feedback will be synthesized and used to guide the final recommendations in the CAP update. Through the CEQA process, the public will be given the opportunity to review and comment on environmental analysis of the proposed CAP update.

During the course of developing the CAP (in the anticipated timeline shown in Table 1), the City might initiate other, separate planning processes that benefit from CAP-related discussions or GHG reduction strategies. For this reason, CAP-related outreach efforts could be synchronized or integrated into other planning efforts to promote efficiency and/or effectiveness. Not only would this help weave various outreach activities together into a coordinated process to leverage existing partnerships and community networks, but it may also help address community engagement fatigue and burnout.

To the extent practicable, City staff will align the CAP work program with other outreach activities to ensure that activities and tasks are grouped to be more efficient. This in turn will also lead to more effective public outreach and community engagement activities.

2.2 KEY OUTREACH CONTACTS

2.2.1 Outreach Coordinator and CAP Program Manager

The role of the Outreach Coordinator will be to serve as a central contact for the public and stakeholders for the CAP and CEQA document. For this project, the Outreach Coordinator is also the CAP Program Manager and will participate in and help coordinate all facets of the implementation of the Outreach Plan for the CAP.

Anyone seeking information on the CAP or CEQA document should contact:

Mike Strong, Assistant Planning Director
(760) 839-4556
mstrong@escondido.org

2.2.2 Media Strategies

The City will actively engage and alert appropriate media outlets with project updates at applicable milestones throughout the CAP update and CEQA process. Press releases will be circulated to announce community workshops, mobile community conversations, and public hearings. The City's Communications Officer will work with local media outlets and encourage them to follow the planning process and include features in local publications. Media strategies will be led by the CAP Program Manager and supported by the planning team.

Media inquiries should be addressed to:

Teresa Collins, Communications Officer
(760) 270-4707
tcollins@escondido.org

2.3 COMMUNITY OUTREACH TOOLS

This section includes a brief description of outreach best practices from the City's past experiences and each tool that the City plans to use as part of the outreach program. A short explanation of the tool is provided, including the following milestone indicator:

- ▲ **Project Milestone:** Indicates the target date(s) or project milestone(s) of the CAP/CEQA process in which the tool will be used.

2.3.1 Outreach Best Practices

It can be challenging to engage residents, businesses and nonprofits, and other stakeholders due to availability constraints and lack of clarity on the benefits of participation. The City's past engagement efforts offer several best practices to address barriers to participation, which are applicable to the CAP outreach and engagement effort. Successful engagement involves:

- ▲ Harnessing the networks and reach of existing community organizations such as the school districts, CAFÉ, Escondido Education COMPACT, and the Escondido Bike/Walk Committee;
- ▲ Going to where the people are (e.g., tables at community events or reserved time during existing Homeowner's Association (HOA) and Neighborhood Association meetings);
- ▲ Creating multiple levels and forms of engagement; and
- ▲ Crafting creative methods to elicit input.

An example of a creative approach to elicit input is the Envision South Centre City visioning effort. The City recently conducted a visioning session for the South Centre City Specific Plan with 5th grade students at a local elementary school. City staff worked with students in their classrooms and

developed an “art visioning exercise” that helped engage underrepresented stakeholders in an accessible and fun way, accommodating group discussion and interest in producing creative ideas for the future of Escondido. This type of outreach was innovative, and was recently recognized by the American Planning Association, winning an award of excellence in outreach. Targeted engagement activities such as the “art visioning exercise”, paired with broader strategies such as online surveys and tables/booths at local events would provide multiple opportunities for the community to participate.

Lastly, education and engagement must go hand in hand. Participants will come to the table with varying levels of knowledge about climate change. To enable all stakeholders to participate fully and effectively, it is essential to create shared understanding about the basic science of climate change and the linkage between human action and the warming planet.

2.3.2 Notification List

An initial potential list of interested parties will be compiled from existing resources. The list will be used to notify interested parties of upcoming events and of postings of new materials on the project website. Persons will be added to the mailing list throughout the CAP and CEQA process and may sign up by sending a request to the CAP Program Manager at mstrong@escondido.org.

▲ **Project Milestone:** Ongoing.

2.3.3 CEQA Notices

The City will prepare all California environmental process notices to alert the public and stakeholders at critical points in the environmental review. The notices shall comply with CEQA and will be filed with the State Clearinghouse, as appropriate. The State Clearinghouse sends notices to State agencies, departments, boards, and commissions for review and comment; however, the City may have specific agency contacts when agency representatives have been working more closely with the City. Where possible, the City will send the notices directly to these specific contacts. The CEQA notices may include the following: Notice of Completion (NOC), Notice of Availability (NOA), and Notice of Determination (NOD).

▲ **Project Milestones:**

- ▶ NOC and NOA – Winter/Spring 2019, when the draft CEQA document is released for public review.
- ▶ NOD – Spring/Summer 2019, if the City Council adopts the CAP and the Final CEQA document, then the NOD will be filed with the County Clerk by the City Planning Department.

2.3.4 Project Website

The City's planning team will maintain a page on the City's website dedicated to the CAP update and CEQA processes. Interested parties will be able to sign up for the email notification list, view project documents, and find contact information to send comments and suggestions. Some interactive activities may be developed to mirror activities provided at the public workshops to allow interested parties to provide meaningful input if they are unable to attend a meeting in-person. The website will continue to be maintained throughout CAP implementation. The website address is:

<https://www.escondido.org/climate-action-plan-documents.aspx>

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** Ongoing. The website will be available and updated throughout the CAP update process.

2.3.5 Electronic Mail Notifications

Using the notification list (see Section 2.3.2), City staff will send email updates at key milestones in the planning process and keep interested parties aware of recent project progress or how to stay engaged.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** At least a week prior (or as required by legal statutes) to meetings, the day a document is released for public review, prior to the close of comment periods, and other times, as needed.

2.3.6 Press Releases

Press releases will be circulated to announce public workshops and public hearings. The City will work with local media outlets and encourage them to follow the CAP update process and include features in local publications. Media strategies will be led by the City's Communications Officer and supported by the CAP Program Manager and planning team.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** As needed - prior to, or after, major milestones in the planning process such as meetings, workshops, hearings, community events, document releases, public review periods, etc.

2.3.7 Other Outreach Tools

Other tools may be used as needed, such as fact sheets, handouts, sample policy language, presentation boards, and infographics.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** As needed.

2.4 MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

2.4.1 CAP Workgroup

City staff will meet collectively throughout the CAP update process to steer the development of the planning process, content for surveys or workshop material, and to flag areas for broader community discussion. The Workgroup is expected to:

- ▲ review, provide comments, and recommendations for key work products (GHG inventory, draft CAP update, etc.);
- ▲ provide recommendations on the feasibility of proposed CAP measures; and
- ▲ use local expertise to offer recommendations on implementing new and revised CAP measures and goals.
- ▲ **Project Milestones:** Biweekly meetings, as needed.

2.4.2 Community Workshops

City staff will conduct at least two (2) public workshops at strategic times during the planning process where members of the public will be able to receive up-to-date information on the planning process and provide input. Public comments received at the workshop(s) will be reviewed and used to inform the CAP update. The City will present poster boards summarizing the baseline GHG inventory and projections, proposed reduction targets, and a preliminary list of GHG reduction measures for the public's input. Members of the public will be asked to prioritize measures based on their preferences and provide additional feedback on other measures they may want to see included. To maximize participation of the diverse target audience, Spanish language translation services will be provided, and workshops will be designed so that they are interactive and allow for small group discussions. An online survey that is modeled after the workshop will also be created for those that cannot attend either event in person.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:**
 - Summer 2018 – a public workshop to discuss the updated GHG inventory, recommended reduction targets, and preliminary list of GHG reduction measures.
 - Fall 2018 – A public workshop to discuss the draft CAP update.

2.4.3 Mobile Community Workshop

In order to remove barriers to participation and to reach populations that may not be interested, or are unable to attend a formal workshop, City staff will develop a Mobile Community Workshop that can be

implemented at existing community events. These events could include the 2nd Saturday Arts and Culture Event, Farmer’s Market, Cruisin’Grand” festival, Grand Avenue Festival, as well as at the request of local organizations such as a Homeowner’s Association, Parent Teacher Student Association, or at a local Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), etc. The purpose of the Mobile Community Workshop would be to provide background information on the CAP; raise public awareness about future opportunities to engage; and offer an interesting format for the public to provide input on CAP elements.

The Mobile Community Workshop could consist of a table display with flyers/brochures, visually-appealing posters, and an interactive survey to capture input from passersby. City staff may also develop a short 10- to 15-minute workshop that can be conducted with small groups at existing community events. Mobile Community Workshops could be tailored specifically for the venue and audience. For example, City staff could collaborate with local schools and educators to design an interactive session on climate change and planning that would align with science and civic studies curricula. Students could provide input on the CAP update by envisioning the potential challenges that they or their community may face in various climate change scenarios.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** Summer 2018 and Fall 2018 – attend existing events in the City to host Mobile Community Conversations.

2.4.4 Planning Commission and City Council Informational Meetings

City staff will update and inform both the Planning Commission and City Council on the CAP process, including updates on the Outreach Plan, GHG emissions inventory, reduction targets, public input, and progress on schedule. This is expected to be an informational item during at least three (3) regular City Council meetings between the kickoff of the planning effort and the release of the draft CAP.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** Ongoing. Updates and informational meetings will be provided from Spring 2018 through Spring 2019.

2.4.5 Public Hearings

The Planning Commission and City Council will hold public hearings on the draft CAP. These hearings will proceed in accordance with the City’s public hearing requirements and will be announced via the City’s newspaper legal advertisement requirements, including advertising the public hearings on the project website and sending an email notification to the notification list (see Section 2.3.2). The public will be invited to comment during the public hearings.

- ▲ **Project Milestones:** Spring/Summer 2019 – Planning Commission and City Council public hearings on the final updated CAP and the CEQA document.