

CLIMATE ACTIONS PLANS GROW IN ACCEPTANCE IN SONOMA COUNTY



While support for climate protection has become fairly ubiquitous in Sonoma County, only one of its nine cities has implemented an official Climate Action Plan (CAP). To be fair, the other eight have adopted sustainability-related ordinances into their municipal codes such as integrated green building standards, water efficiency measures, and rideshare programs. **Recently however, the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) began developing an implementation program that will lead to each jurisdiction having their own CAP, consistent with California’s State Senate Bill 375.**

The nature of the RCPA's plan, otherwise known as Climate Action 2020, is to present each jurisdiction with a "menu" of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction policies that are compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). **Once implemented, these policies will help achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2020.** Environmental benefits aside, Climate Action 2020 is project management at its finest.

Initial Development

- Update GHG inventories;
- Perform a policy-gap analysis;
- Quantify identified policies in terms of emissions reductions; and
- Create a "menu" of sustainability measures for each city.

Public Outreach

- Create online presence through internet marketing and social media;
- Develop a stakeholder register; and
- Network with planning commissions from each jurisdiction.

Environmental Documentation

- Complete an Environmental Impact Report for Climate Action 2020 that is compliant with CEQA;

- Conduct scoping meetings with stakeholders and the public; and
- Finalize EIR based on public comment.



Opponents of climate action plans believe they are a waste of money and resources, and that they will take away the power of local governments to regulate themselves. This is ironic, however, as **the whole nature of a plan is to incorporate all municipalities into the process so that there is more of a consensus.**

Plans are iterative and require constant revision, amendments, hearings, and more revisions. Climate Action 2020 will be no different, but with proper planning a positive climate change could become a reality sooner than we think.

Source: <http://www.globalsiteplans.com/environmental-design/communityeconomic-development/climate-actions-plans-grow-in-acceptance-in-sonoma-county/>