



## STAFF REPORT

DATE: DECEMBER 5, 2023  
TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS  
FROM: BILL SMITH, CITY MANAGER  
PREPARED BY: MARK TOMICH, DIRECTOR  
SUBJECT: ADOPT 2023 COLTON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE.

### RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends that the City Council take the following action:

Approve a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Colton adopting an update to the Colton Climate Action Plan, identifying measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the City's jurisdictional control and making responsible agency findings pursuant to CEQA. (File Index No. DAP23-0027)

### BACKGROUND

On November 3, 2015, the Colton City Council adopted the City's first Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was a product of collaborative efforts by the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) and 21 cities to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The main types of greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane, and nitrous oxide. State laws approved in the early 2000s established GHG reduction targets impacting the development process at the local level. Some of the key regulations included:

- Assembly Bill 32 - Global Warming Solutions Act (2006) which established a statewide GHG emissions cap for Year 2020 to not exceed 1990 levels.
- Senate Bill 375 – Sustainable Communities Strategy (2008) which focused on the reduction of GHG emissions from vehicles. It targeted the reduction of passenger/light duty vehicle per capita emissions by 8% by 2020.
- Update to the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA (2010). This amendment required project-level analysis of GHG emissions and possible mitigation.

Following completion of the San Bernardino County Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (“Regional Plan”) by SBCOG, including a Programmatic EIR, participating cities subsequently adopted their own greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets based on their input into the Regional Plan. The City of Colton’s emissions reduction target was 15% below the City’s 2008 emission level, which aligned with the statewide reduction target. The City’s 2015 CAP includes 18 local reduction measures such as increasing solar installation, tree planting programs, sustainable transportation efforts, wastewater reduction, and performance standards for new development. Cumulatively, implementation of the State, County and local reduction measures was projected to reduce Year 2020 greenhouse gas emissions by 33% below business as usual (BAU) levels. The City of Colton met this goal by 2016.

In 2016, the California Legislature expanded upon AB 32 with **SB 32**, which mandates a 40% reduction below 1990 GHG emissions levels by 2030. In January 2017, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) developed the “SB 32 Scoping Plan,” that charted a path towards the expanded GHG reduction goal by using technologically feasible and cost-effective methods. The SBCOG then proceeded to collaborate with 25 participating jurisdictions to update the Regional Plan. City of Colton staff, including representatives from Planning, Building, Public Works/Engineering and the Environmental Sustainability & Conservation Section of the Utilities Division worked collaboratively with SBCOG staff and consultants to develop local GHG reduction measures that best addressed the City’s needs and capabilities. This update included the preparation and adoption of an Addendum to the Programmatic EIR, for which the City of Colton is a Responsible Agency. The updated Regional Plan and Addendum were adopted by the SBCOG on June 14, 2023. The City of Colton, along with other jurisdictions in the SBCOG region, are currently in the process (or have completed) local adoption of their respective components of the updated Regional Plan.

## **ISSUES/ANALYSIS**

Building energy use from residential, commercial, and industrial buildings is one of the largest components of regional GHG emissions (26%) and one of the primary areas where local governments have regulatory authority. Therefore, the recommended local measures greatest focus is on this sector. In addition to GHG emissions reduction, the building energy measures would also result in other benefits, such as reduction in electricity use and generation, reduced combustion of natural gas, and overall energy consumption expenditures.

Other local measures which will result in significant GHG emission reductions include:

- Encouraging and facilitating use of mass transit;
- Community fleet electrification;
- Waste diversion and reduction; and
- Renovation of existing buildings to achieve higher levels of water efficiency.

## Screening Tables

The CAP Update includes a separate document, Screening Tables for implementing GHG Performance Standards for residential, commercial and public facilities development (Attachment 4 to this report). Development projects will have the option of preparing a project-specific technical analysis to quantify and mitigate GHG emissions or completing the compliance review checklist to demonstrate compliance with performance standards.

City staff will utilize the GHG Screening Tables as part of the CEQA process to implement the performance standards and determine the GHG emission targets for development. The Screening Tables assign a point value to each GHG reduction measure incorporated into a development project to ensure that GHG emissions are less than significant. The Screening Tables include a menu of options that provide flexibility on how development projects would implement the reduction strategies to achieve an overall reduction of GHG emissions.

### CAP Implementation

The Regional Plan recommends that local governments take the following steps to implement their CAPs:

**Administration and Staffing:** Although administration of a local CAP does not necessarily require a new full-time employee position, the Regional Plan recommends that local governments develop a CAP Implementation Team, consisting of staff from key departments, to support implementation of the GHG reduction measures. Alternatively, the City may appoint a single CAP Implementation Coordinator to oversee the successful implementation and tracking of all GHG reduction strategies.

**Funding and Budgeting:** Implementation of the local GHG reduction measures will require the City, other public agencies, local businesses, developers/buildings, existing commercial building owners and homeowners to incur (yet to be determined) increased costs for capital improvements and maintenance and operations costs. However, in some cases operating costs are anticipated to decrease, resulting in offsetting savings. Section 5.2.2.1, Table 5-1 of the Regional Plan lists potential funding sources to support the GHG reduction measures.

**Phased Implementation:** Section 5.2.1 of the Plan includes a sample implementation timeline for the local CAP. The following timeline is for the City's consideration only, and does not mandate the listed actions:

- Phase 1 (2023-2025):
  - Develop any needed ordinances, policies, procedures, and programs
  - Create a planning framework for voluntary measures and a performance standard
  - Identify funding for short- and long-term projects to reduce GHG emissions
  - Perform a cost-benefit analysis
- Phase 2 (2026-2027):
  - Evaluate effectiveness of Phase 1 measures
  - Incorporate tracking of measures into regular City operations

- Adjust implementation plan based on first evaluation
- Conduct a GHG inventory update
- Conduct outreach on progress, current measures, and upcoming measures
- Implement Phase 2 measures
- Identify measures for implementation in Phase 3
- Phase 3 (2028-2030):
  - Continue with effectiveness evaluations (Phase 1 and 2 measures)
  - Adjust implementation plan based on the evaluations
  - Conduct another GHG inventory update
  - Conduct outreach on progress, current measures and upcoming measures
  - Implement remaining measures
  - Start planning for post-2030 actions.

**Community Outreach and Education:** Citizens and businesses in the City of Colton are integral to the success of the local GHG emissions reduction targets and for the region as a whole. Their involvement was and is essential, considering that several measures depend on the voluntary commitment, creativity, and participation of the community. The City's original 2015 CAP, which remains the core of the 2023 CAP Update, was developed with considerable input from the business community and residents.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Regular monitoring is critical to ensure programs are functioning as they were originally intended. Early identification of effective strategies and potential issues/roadblocks will enable the City to make informed decisions on future priorities, funding, and scheduling. Some of the recommended monitoring tasks (Section 5.2.3.2 of the Plan) include:

- Updating the GHG inventory at appropriate intervals.
- Tracking state progress on implementation of state-level measures.
- Tracking completion of local GHG reduction measures; and
- Preparing annual progress reports to the City Council on CAP implementation.

#### Overall City Benefits from Adoption of 2023 CAP Update

Partnering with SBCOG member jurisdictions on the Update has resulted in **economies of scale** during the GHG data collection process, calculating GHG inventory results, forecasting GHG emission estimates, reviewing and standardizing GHG reduction measures, and preparing basic regulatory language and text common to all GHG/CAP documents. Together, these collaborative actions have saved money and time for all partnership jurisdictions.

Another important outcome of the Update will be **streamlining CEQA compliance**. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require lead agencies to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of GHG emissions that would result from a project. The Guidelines also allow individual projects to tier off a qualified GHG reduction plan. Thus, individual projects do not need to each conduct a GHG analysis to comply with CEQA if they

can demonstrate consistency with the City's approved CAP. This will result in cost savings for applicants/developers, as well as the City as it conducts environmental review for capital projects.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) adopted a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report on May 5, 2014 which analyzed implementation of the original Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, including within participating cities. On November 3, 2015, the City Council of the City of Colton found that the EIR reflected the independent judgement of the City and contains a complete and accurate reporting of the environmental impacts of the Plan.

On June 14, 2023, the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) adopted a CEQA Addendum to the EIR for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update. Staff is recommending that the City Council find the Addendum as an accurate reporting of the environmental impacts of the Regional Plan Update, including the City of Colton's 2023 Climate Action Plan Update.

### **FISCAL IMPACTS**

There is no additional fiscal impact to adopt the Resolution approving the City's Climate Action Plan. Existing, budgeted staff positions will complete the additional staff workload commitments, yet to be determined, as the CAP is implemented. As Planning staff are already familiar with Performance Standards and Screening Tables from the 2015 CAP, the day-to-day increase in workload is expected to be performed successfully by existing staff.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Provide alternative direction to staff.

### **ATTACHMENT**

1. City Council Resolution No. R-105-23
2. Addendum to EIR\_SBCTA Agenda - 7-5-23\_Item 22
3. Colton 2023 CAP - Regional GHG Reduction Plan
4. San\_Bernardino\_Regional\_GHG\_Reduction\_Plan\_Appendices\_Mar\_2021
5. Colton GHG Screening Tables\_2023
6. R-34-23\_DAP23-0027\_2023 Colton Climate Action Plan Update