

January 13, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor, Members of the San Diego City Council, Chief Sustainability Officer

Subject: CAB Recommendations Informed by Public Input on the Draft 2025 Status Update for the **Climate Action Implementation Plan**

The **City of San Diego Climate Advisory Board (CAB)** submits this letter to share key recommendations informed by public input received during the [December 10, 2025 stakeholder workshop](#) on the [Draft 2025 Status Update for the Climate Action Implementation Plan \(CAIP\)](#).

Public comments reflected strong engagement and consistent concern about whether the Draft Update provides sufficient clarity, accountability, and direction to ensure **timely and equitable implementation** of the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP).

Based on that input and further discussion, the Climate Advisory Board offers the following **recommendations** to the Chief Sustainability Officer for modifying the update, and to support Council's upcoming discussion of the update.

1. Restore Cost Information to Support Budget Alignment

- Restore **estimated costs and staffing needs** for CAIP actions. At a minimum, carry forward the estimates from the original CAIP for reference.
- Update and republish the **Implementation Cost Analysis (ICA)**, or identify a replacement tool that fulfills the same budgeting and prioritization function.

2. Strengthen Accountability by Improving CAP Action Status Tracking

- Support “**In Progress**” and “**On Time**” designations with **interim milestones and task-level tracking**, using the CAP Dashboard task mechanism to show whether actions are actually advancing toward completion.
- Ensure actions are not marked “**On Time**” when CAP Dashboard task deadlines have been missed or when required funding has not been secured.

3. Prioritize Actions the City Can Actually Deliver

- Clearly identify which CAP actions can realistically be advanced **with existing staffing and funding** prior to the next CAP update.
- Identify which actions must be **accelerated in the near term** to stay aligned with CAP goals, rather than deferring course correction to the next CAP update.

4. Accelerate High-Impact Actions in Buildings and Transportation

- Identify and advance a short list of **high-impact, low-cost actions** in the building and transportation sectors, which are the City's largest emissions sources.

- **Buildings:**
 - Adopt alteration-based reach codes, including cost-effective **AC-to-Heat-Pump replacements**.
 - Begin assessing and collecting **non-compliance fees** under the City's 2019 **Building Energy Benchmarking** ordinance, to improve compliance and **generate revenue**.
 - Support **SB 1221 Neighborhood Decarbonization Pilots** by collaborating with SDG&E, SDCP and community partners to advocate for San Diego-area participation. This includes developing **community outreach strategies** so **Communities of Concern** in San Diego are well positioned for inclusion in SB 1221 pilots.
- **Transportation:**
 - Emphasize and accelerate **actions already underway**, including Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements, Complete Streets and active transportation projects, quick-build safety and mobility improvements, and EV charging infrastructure deployment.

5. Improve Equity and Community Engagement in Implementation

- Establish clearer pathways for **community-based organizations, nonprofits, and small businesses** to participate in CAP implementation.
- Identify how **blue carbon** and other nature-based solutions are incorporated into CAP implementation, including opportunities for community participation. Blue Carbon is a critical way for reducing carbon emissions in our region. We recommend that the City work with existing partners in the region to fully establish a **Blue Carbon Economy**.
- Track and report **equity outcomes** alongside implementation status, particularly for high-impact actions and pilot programs.

In conclusion, the Climate Advisory Board finds the Draft 2025 Status Update of the CAIP **largely reflects existing reporting without providing the additional clarity needed to guide implementation**. The CAB offers the recommendations above to support accountability, prioritization, and effective near-term action.

Respectfully,

City of San Diego Climate Advisory Board

cc:

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