

RESOLUTION NO. 256-51**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCATA
ADOPTING THE HUMBOLDT REGIONAL CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AS THE
CITY OF ARCATA'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AND MAKING FINDINGS AS A
RESPONSIBLE AGENCY UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY ACT**

WHEREAS, the State of California has established greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets including reducing emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 pursuant to Senate Bill 32 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 pursuant to Assembly Bill 1279; and

WHEREAS, the City of Arcata's 2045 General Plan includes policies and implementation measures calling for adoption of a climate action plan and tangible actions to reduce community emissions, including General Plan Implementation Measure AQ-4 (Climate Action Plan) and implementation measures focused on infill development, transportation and resource conservation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, through its goal setting processes in 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2025-26, has consistently identified adoption of a climate action plan as a Council priority project; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the City of Arcata entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Humboldt and the other incorporated cities committing to develop a shared, countywide Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP); and

WHEREAS, Humboldt County, through its Planning and Building Department, led the development of the RCAP, and served as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the RCAP, and prepared a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan and CEQA GHG Emissions Thresholds (State Clearinghouse No. SCH #2024081319), as corrected and clarified by Final Environmental Impact Report Errata dated November 25, 2025 (Final EIR Errata); and

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2025, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors adopted the RCAP by Resolution No. 25-196, and by separate Resolution No. 25-197, certified the Final Programmatic EIR, as corrected and clarified by the Final EIR Errata, and adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) and a Statement of Overriding Considerations; and

WHEREAS, the County-certified Final Programmatic EIR consists of the Draft EIR, comments received during the public review period, responses to comments, and revisions to the Draft EIR, as required by CEQA Guidelines 15132; and

WHEREAS, the Draft EIR contemplates the City of Arcata as a responsible agency with

discretionary action to adopt the proposed RCAP (Draft EIR, at page 1-6); and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed and considered the Final Programmatic EIR, including the comments received on the Draft EIR and the County's responses to those comments, as part of the environmental record supporting this action; and

WHEREAS, the County-certified Programmatic Final EIR evaluates the potential environmental effects of implementing the RCAP at a programmatic level and identifies mitigation measures applicable to future discretionary projects that may be undertaken to implement RCAP strategies, measures, and actions rather than to adoption of the RCAP itself; and

WHEREAS, the Final EIR identifies potentially significant impacts associated with future RCAP-related projects in the areas of aesthetics (light and glare), air quality (toxic air contaminant emissions during construction), biological resources (including riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, and wetlands), cultural and tribal cultural resources, and noise (ground-borne vibration), and identifies mitigation measures designed to reduce such impacts to a less than significant level when applied at the time specific projects are proposed and reviewed; and

WHEREAS, these mitigation measures generally require future project proponents to comply with applicable regulations, prepare site-specific technical studies, consult with resource agencies and tribes, and implement avoidance, minimization, and compensation measures, including but not limited to lighting design standards, construction emissions controls, aquatic resource protection and compensation, archaeological assessment and monitoring, and construction vibration controls; and

WHEREAS, the Final EIR further identifies certain categories of impacts that could remain significant and unavoidable in connection with unidentified future projects implementing the RCAP, due to the broad, policy-level scope of the RCAP and uncertainty regarding the location, scale, design, and feasibility of mitigation for future infrastructure and development projects; and

WHEREAS, these potentially significant and unavoidable impacts include effects on scenic vistas and visual resources from large-scale renewable energy and renewable fuel projects; emissions of criteria air pollutants from future construction and operations; impacts to special-status species and habitat from infrastructure development; conversion of agricultural land; impairment of historical resources where avoidance is not feasible; construction and operational noise; and impacts associated with future water supply, wastewater, and electrical infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, because specific future projects to implement RCAP strategies have not been proposed or approved, the County determined that it could not conclude with certainty that mitigation measures would fully reduce all such impacts to a less than significant level, and therefore adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15093 in connection with certification of the Programmatic Final EIR; and

WHEREAS, the County’s Statement of Overriding Considerations concludes that the economic, legal, social, technological, and environmental benefits of adopting the RCAP as a countywide policy framework to reduce GHG emissions and address climate change outweigh the potential environmental impacts associated with future implementation projects, which will be subject to separate, project-level environmental review and mitigation, as required by CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the RCAP provides a coordinated, countywide framework for reducing GHG emissions through sector-based strategies and measures addressing building energy, transportation, solid waste, water and wastewater, carbon sequestration, and regional coordination; and

WHEREAS, the City of Arcata desires to adopt the RCAP as its climate action plan to implement adopted City policies, coordinate with regional partners, support grant competitiveness, and provide a clear framework for long-term GHG reduction planning and implementation; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the RCAP by the City of Arcata does not approve, fund, authorize, or entitle any specific development project or physical infrastructure, but establishes a policy framework to be implemented over time through future City actions subject to separate review and authorization; and

WHEREAS, the City’s action to adopt the RCAP constitutes an independent discretionary action by the City, and the City is acting as a Responsible Agency for purposes of CEQA; and

WHEREAS, as a CEQA Responsible Agency, the City must review and consider the County-certified Final EIR, reach its own independent judgment regarding the environmental effects of adopting the RCAP, and make appropriate findings for significant environmental effects, to the extent such effects are within the City’s jurisdiction or authority to address, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines 15091, 15093, and 15096; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed and considered the County-certified Final EIR, the Final EIR Errata, the MMRP, and the Statement of Overriding Considerations adopted by Humboldt County, together with the administrative record and all other information submitted for the City’s consideration, including County Resolution No. 25-197; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public meeting at City Hall in the City of Arcata on April 15, 2026, to consider adoption of the RCAP.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Arcata as follows:

Section 1. CEQA Responsible Agency Findings

- A. The City Council finds that the County-certified Programmatic Final EIR (SCH No. 2024081319), as corrected and clarified by the Final EIR Errata dated November 25, 2025, adequately analyzes and discloses the potential environmental effects associated

with implementation of the RCAP at a programmatic level and is sufficient for the City's action to adopt the RCAP.

- B. Acting as a Responsible Agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15096, the City Council has reviewed and considered the County-certified Final EIR and Errata prior to its decision on this action and finds it adequate for adoption of the proposed RCAP (CEQA Guidelines, § 15096(e)).
- C. The City Council further finds pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15901(a)(1), changes or alterations have been incorporated in the RCAP as mitigation measures which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects described in the Final EIR, as incorporated into the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). Such findings pertains to aesthetics impacts (including impacts AES-1, AES-2, AES-3, and AES-4), air quality impacts (including AQ-2 and AQ-3), biological agriculture and forestry resources impacts (including BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, BIO-4, BIO-5, BIO-6, BIO-7, and BIO-8), agricultural impacts (including AG-1), cultural and tribal cultural resources (including CR-1, CR-2, and CR-4), noise impacts (including NOI-1 and NOI-2), and utilities and service system impacts (including UTL-1). The City Council bases this finding on the evidence included in the Final EIR, along with the summary in the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Resolution no. 25-197 (Resolution No. 25-197), Section 6, EIR – Environmental Impacts Mitigated to Less than Significant.
- D. The City Council further finds pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15901(a)(3), the RCAP mitigation measures do not reduce all environmental impacts to less than significant with mitigation measures included. However, specific economic, legal, social, technological or other considerations make reducing the impacts to less than significant and the project alternatives infeasible as evidenced in the Final EIR and summarized in Resolution No. 25-197, Section 7, EIR – Environmental Impacts Not Mitigated to Less Than Significant.
- E. The City Council further finds pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 and 15093, despite the significant and unavoidable impacts identified in the EIR related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, agriculture, cultural and tribal resources, noise, and utilities, the beneficial economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of implementing the RCAP override and outweigh the significant environmental effects. Among the benefits include the City of Arcata's contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting the climate objectives of the Arcata General Plan 2045 and Statewide targets, which supersede the significant and unavoidable impacts. The evidence for this finding is included in the EIR and summarized in Resolution 25-197, Section 11, EIR – Statement of Overriding Considerations, which is hereby incorporated by this reference.
- F. The City Council further acknowledges that the EIR identifies mitigation measures applicable to future discretionary projects that may be undertaken to implement RCAP strategies, measures, or actions, and that Humboldt County adopted an MMRP to ensure implementation of such measures at the time those future projects are approved. The City Council shall implement mitigation measures relevant within its jurisdiction in connection with such future projects. The City Council further finds that adoption

of a separate MMRP is not required for the City's action to adopt the RCAP.

- G. If the City later proposes or acts as Lead Agency for a discretionary project to implement RCAP strategies, measures, or actions, the City will conduct appropriate project-level CEQA review at that time, apply feasible mitigation measures, and make any required findings in accordance with CEQA. The County-certified Programmatic Final EIR may serve as a program-level environmental document for such future actions, consistent with CEQA Guidelines 15152 and 15168.

Section 2. Adoption of the RCAP

- A. The City Council hereby adopts the Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) as the City of Arcata's Climate Action Plan.

DATED:

ATTEST:

Rhea Varley
City Clerk, City of Arcata

Kimberley White
Mayor, City of Arcata

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 256-51, passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Arcata, County of Humboldt, State of California, on the ____ day of _____, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

Rhea Varley
City Clerk, City of Arcata