DATE: October 20, 2021

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT
CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW
On January 13, 2021 (5), the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) approved new policy guidelines for the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update. The CAP Update is a mitigation measure for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with existing and any new development anticipated to occur under the County’s 2011 General Plan. The primary objective of the CAP is to reduce GHG emissions generated from current and future activities within the unincorporated county and emissions generated by operating County facilities, including County facilities and operations located within incorporated cities (County operations).

On July 14, 2021 (2), staff presented to the Board a progress report on the CAP Update that included the approach for developing new GHG reduction measures, engaging diverse stakeholders, and prioritizing equity within the CAP Update. The July 14, 2021 (2) hearing also included a staff presentation on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and smart growth alternatives for inclusion within the Supplemental EIR. The Supplemental EIR adds to the previous environmental analysis included in the 2011 General Plan Final Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR), which did not consider potential impacts on the environment from the CAP measures themselves. The Board voted unanimously to receive the presentation for a CAP Update Progress Report and directed the Chief Administrative Officer to analyze the impacts of any proposed programs on the cost of housing.

Today staff will present a progress report on the CAP Update, including a revised project schedule and additional information related to the smart growth alternatives for inclusion in the Supplemental EIR. As the project and environmental review are still in development and further updates will be brought to the Board before its final decision on the CAP Update and Supplemental EIR, this progress report and any Board comments in response do not represent a commitment to any particular course of action. Final binding policy decisions by the Board will occur after completing the CAP Update and Supplemental EIR process.
RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find that the proposed actions are exempt from CEQA per Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed actions do not commit the County to any definitive course of action and there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Subsequent actions would be reviewed pursuant to CEQA and presented to the Board for consideration prior to implementation.


EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT
The Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update prioritizes environmental justice and equity as directed by the Board of Supervisors on January 13, 2021 (5). The County of San Diego will engage diverse stakeholders and community interests through robust community engagement centered on equity as a lens to view the project. A series of workshops and focused discussions have been held throughout 2021 and will continue through late 2022, to identify topics related to climate and environment that impact the most vulnerable communities within the unincorporated county in a process that is transparent, fair, and inclusive. Community input will inform the development of CAP measures and shape the policies and programs to reduce the disproportionate impacts these communities face and improve complementary benefits (e.g., improved air quality, positive health outcomes, increased economic opportunities, and resiliency to the effects of climate change).

FISCAL IMPACT
There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update progress report. There may be future fiscal impacts associated with future recommendations as a result of the CAP. Any such recommendations would return to the Board for approval.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT
There is no business impact associated with receiving the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update progress report. Staff would return to the Board with future actions related to the CAP Update that could have a business impact for further consideration and direction.

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT
The Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update will be shaped by robust community input solicited from diverse stakeholders throughout the unincorporated county. County staff have actively sought, and will continue to actively seek, engage, and solicit feedback from stakeholders, including Community Planning and Sponsor Groups, throughout the project timeline.

BACKGROUND
On January 13, 2021 (5), the County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved new policy recommendations to guide the preparation of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update. The Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a comprehensive and legally enforceable CAP that meets and exceeds the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, or Senate Bill 32, which calls for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions of 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. Board direction also included establishing actions to meet a goal of net-zero carbon
emissions by 2035-2045 (in line with Executive Order B-55-18, which has a goal to make the State of California carbon neutral by 2045 while ensuring utilities provide customers with 100% carbon-free energy by the same date). Further, the Board directed that the CAP be shaped by community input and updated data and modeling, and set clear goals and metrics to ensure environmental justice and equity. Finally, the Board's direction stated that the CAP should not rely on purchasing carbon offsets (i.e., the reduction, removal, or avoidance of GHG emissions that compensate for GHG emissions generated elsewhere) to meet reduction targets.

The CAP Update is a mitigation measure for GHG emissions associated with existing and any new development anticipated to occur under the County’s 2011 General Plan. The relationship between the 2011 General Plan and CAP Update is represented graphically in Attachment A. The primary objective of the CAP Update is to reduce GHG emissions generated from current and future activities within the unincorporated county and emissions generated by operating County facilities, including County facilities and operations located within incorporated cities (County operations). The CAP Update process includes preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Supplemental EIR) as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which supplements the previous environmental analysis included in the 2011 General Plan Final Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) since it did not consider the impacts of the CAP measures themselves on the environment. The Supplemental EIR also includes the evaluation of smart growth alternatives.

On July 14, 2021, staff presented to the Board a report on the progress of the CAP Update, including the general approaches for developing new GHG reduction measures, or “CAP measures”, for inclusion in the CAP Update, an update on the smart growth alternatives for inclusion in the Supplemental EIR, and the approach to public outreach and engagement. The following is an update to that July report.

**Project Update**

Work is ongoing on several components of the CAP Update, including developing the GHG emissions baseline inventory, conceptual CAP measures, and smart growth alternatives, while engaging communities and stakeholders on each aspect of the project. Since the last progress report on the CAP Update, the schedule has been revised as noted in the following section.

**GHG Emissions Inventory and Emissions Projections**

The CAP Update will include a baseline inventory of GHG emissions associated with existing development and from County operations in 2019. Baseline GHG emissions will be projected through 2050 for existing and anticipated future development in the unincorporated county and County operations. The GHG emissions inventory and projections are based upon existing development and anticipated new development associated with the 2011 General Plan land use map and any subsequent amendments to the General Plan. To determine the anticipated growth that will occur in the unincorporated area, staff have contracted with a consultant to prepare a market study that evaluates population and employment growth forecasts, past development trends, market and economic conditions, and supply and demand considerations. The amount of population, employment, and residential dwelling units identified by the study and considered reasonably foreseeable will form the basis of the CAP Update’s projections for growth in the unincorporated county through 2050.
A large portion of the GHG emissions in the baseline and projections is anticipated to come from the transportation sector, which accounted for 45% of the GHG emissions in the 2018 CAP baseline inventory. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is currently finalizing its Regional Plan (Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan), which is a transportation infrastructure plan that will help the region meet the California Air Resources Board GHG emissions target of 19% below 2005 levels by 2035, as established in Senate Bill 375. The Regional Plan contains strategies, measures, and capital improvements designed to provide alternative transit options for San Diego area residents and visitors to choose from instead of vehicles in order to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The transportation network included in the Regional Plan will form the basis of the model used by the CAP Update to estimate the unincorporated area share of regional GHG emissions VMT associated with existing development and anticipated future growth (i.e., population, jobs, and housing forecasts). The SANDAG Regional Plan is scheduled for adoption in December 2021, after which modeling services from the agency would be available for the County’s use.

The CAP Update originally anticipated having data available from SANDAG in the early part of 2021. However, since final modeling will not be available until February 2022, a revised timeline that reflects a nine to twelve-month schedule change has been prepared to account for the acquisition of modeling services that align with the new Regional Plan’s transportation network. The CAP Update is now estimated to be heard by the Board in late 2023. Please see Attachment B for additional information related to the revised project timeline. Staff will continue implementing measures from the 2018 CAP to reduce GHG emissions until the CAP Update is adopted.

**CAP Measure Development and Public Outreach**

Staff held individual and group stakeholder meetings to gather feedback on the development of CAP measures. Stakeholders have included environmental, economic, and community groups in the region whose interests span all five emissions reductions sectors of energy, water & wastewater, solid waste, built environment & transportation, and agriculture & conservation.

Since the last progress report in July, staff has held a series of outreach workshops as part of the development of new CAP measures. The workshops have provided a foundation for developing draft vision statements for an equitable, net-zero carbon emissions future as it relates to each of the emissions reduction sectors. Workshop flyers and registration links were delivered to 16,850 people in advance of the respective workshops to encourage participation.

The first workshop held on July 28, 2021, focused on Energy, Water & Wastewater, and Solid Waste. In the 2018 CAP, the highest emitting activities from these sectors included electricity consumption and solid waste generation. Measures used to reduce emissions in these sectors included requiring the County to participate in a Renewable Energy Program that achieves 90% renewable energy by 2030, incentivizing distributed energy generation through residential solar photovoltaic systems, achieving 80% waste diversion by 2030, reducing the amount of water used for landscaping throughout the unincorporated area, and reducing water consumption at County facilities. The workshop included 28 participants who discussed topics including equitable access to energy, water, and waste utilities; development of high-density housing near services and jobs;
development of incentives for resource use reduction; and development of educational components to help realize these goals.

On August 25, 2021, a second workshop covered the Built Environment & Transportation emissions reduction sector. In the 2018 CAP, the highest emitting activities from this sector were from operating passenger cars and light-duty trucks. Measures used to reduce emissions in this sector included improving roads to increase cyclist and pedestrian safety, transitioning to alternative fuels in the County fleet, and installing electric vehicle charging stations. This workshop included 34 participants who provided comments related to stopping urban sprawl; development of transportation infrastructure that is not car-centric; development of increased and equitable public transportation; advancement of electric vehicle infrastructure incentives and expansion; advancement of programs to support green buildings and increased opportunities for multi-family residences; and quality of life considerations, such as access to high-speed internet and increased tree canopy in underserved communities.

A third workshop held on September 29, 2021, covered Agriculture & Conservation. In the 2018 CAP, the highest emitting activities from this sector included operating agricultural equipment and manure management. Measures used to reduce emissions from this sector included increasing tree planting and transitioning farm equipment to alternative fuels. This workshop provided an overview of the CAP Update project components and sources of GHG emissions related to this sector. Stakeholder input was solicited through a series of interactive poll questions and a discussion forum.

Public workshops and individual or small group stakeholder meetings will continue regularly throughout the CAP Update process.

Development of Smart Growth Alternatives
Adoption of the CAP Update by the Board has the potential to result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment, and therefore it will have to comply with CEQA requirements. CEQA requires that the CAP Update’s Supplemental EIR evaluate alternatives to the CAP Update that would reduce significant impacts from implementing the CAP measures. Alternatives to the project that will be considered by the Board may include policy changes, various combinations of CAP measures that achieve the GHG emissions targets, and in this case, consideration of smart growth alternatives that are intended to significantly reduce VMT as required by the Court of Appeal for Division One of the Fourth Appellate District (Appellate Court) in Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego (2020) 50 Cal.App.5th 467.

The smart growth alternatives would propose actions that, if adopted in addition to the CAP measures, would further reduce GHG emissions by reducing VMT through changes in development patterns. The relationship between project alternatives and the CAP Supplemental EIR is illustrated in Attachment A. While the Appellate Court ruling requires that the Supplemental EIR consider and evaluate smart growth alternatives, the Board has the discretion to determine whether to adopt one of the alternatives as part of the CAP Update project or not. The evaluation of smart growth alternatives within this project satisfies the Appellate Court ruling, and if adopted, may further reduce VMT and GHG emissions in the unincorporated county.
In addition to reducing VMT and GHG emissions, adopting, and implementing a smart growth alternative in the unincorporated area could result in development outcomes aligned with previously directed policy objectives, such as increasing housing diversity and affordability levels near jobs and transit and reducing sprawling land use patterns. Adoption of a smart growth alternative would focus development in areas close to employment centers, commercial services and amenities, and public facilities such as schools, fire stations, libraries, and parks/recreational opportunities. This approach assists in maximizing the use of existing infrastructure, preserve open space and natural resources and reduce the distance individuals need to travel to meet their needs. Smart growth tends to create a greater range in housing and transportation options by incentivizing redevelopment of underutilized properties, thereby offering more choices and a greater range of prices. Smart growth may also contribute to the economic development potential of existing communities by providing new investment opportunities, providing a framework for capital improvements, and supporting more efficient development patterns that allow for a wider mix of uses.

A key component of smart growth is encouraging all stakeholders to participate in the decision making process. Involving a broad set of stakeholders in planning for smart growth can help foster distinctive communities with a strong sense of place, resulting in increased access for a wider range of residents while creating new placemaking opportunities through the planning process. That is, smart growth areas become people-oriented places where people want to live, work, play, socialize, and learn. Due to each place's unique characteristics and stakeholder desires, development outcomes associated with applying new, focused, smart growth strategies in unincorporated communities would largely depend on the communities themselves and the viability of the strategies, programs, and incentives that would be implemented.

The project team continues to coordinate with a broad range of stakeholders to learn which communities and themes they would like to see prioritized in the smart growth alternatives process. The stakeholders include community members, building industry, economic development groups, and environmental groups. Their input will inform the development of a suite of smart growth alternatives and policies for evaluation in the Supplemental EIR. To date, the range of ideas related to smart growth alternatives includes the following themes:

- VMT efficiency,
- Constraints on development in high/very high wildfire areas,
- Incentivize development in areas with existing infrastructure (e.g., roads, utilities, and public services) and near employment centers,
- Incentivize development in General Plan Village areas and Village support areas (e.g., within a half-mile of a Village boundary),
- Incentivize development in future opportunity areas (e.g., Valley Center and Interstate 15 corridor), and
- Incentivize development consistent with the SANDAG Regional Plan growth forecast.

In the Regional Plan, SANDAG has identified strategies that generally align with and encourage smart growth development. These “Smart Growth Concepts” were incorporated into SANDAG’s San Diego Forward: 2015 Regional Plan and most recently in the update of the Regional Plan, released for public review in May 2021 and anticipated for adoption in December 2021.
Regional Plan incorporates smart growth planning concepts into a regional growth pattern focused around “Mobility Hubs.” Mobility Hubs are envisioned as places of activity where capital transportation investment will support future housing and jobs. Future capital investment in Mobility Hubs, as identified by the Regional Plan, would include: “transit leap” (i.e., improvements on transit accessibility an efficiency); “complete corridors” (i.e., network investments to improve efficiency of all transportation types); investment in alternative transportation options that provide last-mile connections to transit centers; and improvements to technology and communication systems. On August 6, 2021, County staff submitted comments on SANDAG’s draft Regional Plan which identifies opportunities for mobility hub and related investments in the unincorporated area, and have had subsequent meetings with SANDAG staff to identify opportunities.

Application of Smart Growth Planning in the Unincorporated County
Smart growth alternatives for inclusion in the CAP SEIR will continue to be developed through the middle of 2022 through stakeholder engagement. Staff anticipates hosting workshops about specific smart growth alternatives with the Planning Commission, Board, and the public before public review.

Stakeholders have identified several broad themes that can be applied to large portions of the unincorporated area for consideration under smart growth alternatives. Because the analysis of stakeholder-proposed alternatives is ongoing, three conceptual areas have been selected to illustrate how smart growth could be applied in diverse communities, specifically North County Metro, Valle de Oro, and the East Otay Mesa area.

The North County Metro Community Plan area comprises land east and west of I-15 and north and south of SR-78. It is spread across three unincorporated areas (identified as North County Metro North, South, or East) that border or are entirely encircled by the cities of Vista, San Marcos, Carlsbad, and Escondido. In general, the North County Metro area is built out with low-density residential land uses with a mix of some commercial and open space, but the area does include higher density land uses around the Buena Creek Sprinter Station, which is the only existing public light rail transit station in the unincorporated area. The area is accessible through an existing road network as well as some public transit. Notably, North County Metro - North (located between the cities of Vista and San Marcos north of SR 78) is centered around the Buena Creek Sprinter Station. North County Metro - East (located southeast of Escondido) has no light rail transit stations and is approximately three miles from the Escondido Transit Center.

Smart growth in the North County Metro - North area could include transit and multi-modal improvements focused around the existing Buena Creek Sprinter Station. SANDAG’s Regional Plan identifies mobility hubs in the cities of Vista and San Marcos, located northwest and southeast of North County Metro – North, respectively. These mobility hub boundaries do not extend to any areas within North County Metro – North. The Regional Plan identifies one transit leap project through the community: improved frequency of the North County Transit District Sprinter light rail at the Buena Creek Sprinter Station. Existing proximity to this Sprinter Station provides future residents and workers with direct transit access to commercial centers along the SR-78 corridor between Carlsbad and Escondido. In the County’s comment letter to SANDAG on the Regional Plan, County staff encouraged SANDAG to consider expanding adjacent mobility hubs to include...
the North County Metro – North area around the Buena Creek Sprinter Station. Consistent with this recommendation, smart growth improvements in this area could include redeveloping low-density areas along Santa Fe Avenue and Sycamore Avenue/Robelini Drive to mixed-use buildings that provide a range of housing and commercial options near high-frequency transit. Further, smart growth investment could include installation or improvement of sidewalks along all roadways adjacent to the Sprinter Station, and bicycle facilities providing connections to nearby commercial areas (e.g., North County Square), schools (e.g., Hannalei Elementary School), and existing bicycle/pedestrian networks in the cities of Vista and San Marcos.

The Valle de Oro Community Plan Area is located immediately east of the City of La Mesa, north of Spring Valley, and south of the City of El Cajon. This community is primarily built out with low-density residential land uses, but it also includes a mix of commercial uses, some open space, and Cuyamaca College. The area is accessible by SR-94 and SR-54 and has a developed road network, and is served by several bus lines along several major roadways and at the college.

SANDAG’s Regional Plan identifies mobility hub and transit leap opportunities within the La Mesa Mobility Hub. However, no opportunities are identified with the nearby Valle de Oro community. In Valle de Oro, smart growth development could include the redevelopment of existing commercial buildings along Campo Road to mixed-use development, providing similar commercial and retail access to existing conditions, and locating new residential uses directly adjacent to these services. This is consistent with the County’s comment letter to SANDAG on the draft Regional Plan to consider extending the La Mesa Mobility Hub to include portions of the Valle de Oro community along Campo Road, and to extend Transit Leap opportunities and investments along existing transit routes that provide access between the community and La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and Cuyamaca College. Further, development could include transportation investment to encourage multi-modal travel such as pedestrian walkways connecting key community destinations (e.g., grocery stores, large housing developments, transit stations), dedicated bicycle facilities along Campo Road that connect with existing or planned bicycle infrastructure in adjacent communities, and improved transit service that provides high-frequency access to Cuyamaca College and employment centers such as La Mesa or Downtown San Diego.

The East Otay Mesa area is located to the southeast of the City of Chula Vista where State Route SR-11 ends at the U.S.-Mexico border and the Otay Mesa Port of Entry. The area is accessible by SR-125 from the north and SR-905 from the west. The existing land use is predominantly characterized by large, vacant parcels, agriculture, and light industrial uses, while the East Otay Mesa Specific Plan currently designates much of the area for a mix of technology business park, industrial, commercial, and residential. The East Otay Mesa area does not contain many locally serving commercial amenities (e.g., grocery stores, restaurants) or key public infrastructure such as parks and recreational amenities. While the area has limited existing bus service, SANDAG has designated the Otay Mesa area as a smart growth opportunity area and recently included portions of the area within the proposed U.S.-Mexico Border Mobility Hub in the Regional Plan, which may result in future transportation infrastructure, including light rail service.

If smart growth strategies were applied to the East Otay Mesa area, future development could prioritize transit-supportive investment to encourage multi-modal travel connecting to existing and future improved transit service that provides high-frequency access to major employment centers.
such as Downtown San Diego, Kearny Mesa, and Sorrento Valley. These policies would be consistent with SANDAG’s identification of Otay as a mobility hub area, and support County staff opportunities identified in the County’s comment letter to SANDAG on the Regional Plan to increase transit leap opportunities between future development areas, light rail stations, and Ports of Entry.

All new development and redevelopment could incorporate compact development patterns that emphasize smaller lot sizes, close proximity between buildings, and access to community natural and recreational space. Smart growth development could include the redevelopment of existing industrial buildings along Otay Mesa Road to mixed-use development, providing similar commercial and retail access to existing conditions, but locating new residential uses (and a mix of residential use types) directly adjacent to these services. Development would prioritize locally serving retail, such as a grocery store, and restaurants, as well as prioritizing park space and recreational amenities. Future efforts would also encourage the siting of commercial and retail services such that they are accessible via walking or biking from new homes. Investments could include wide pedestrian walkways connecting key community destinations (e.g., grocery stores, housing developments, transit stations) and dedicated bicycle lanes along connectors to Otay Mesa Road that connect with existing or planned bicycle infrastructure in adjacent communities.

**Smart Growth Planning Implementation**

As mentioned, the Board must adopt the CAP Update and certify the Supplemental EIR. Adoption of a smart growth alternative is optional. If the Board adopts a smart growth alternative, additional actions would be necessary during the CAP Update hearings and beyond.

During the CAP Update hearings, the Board would be asked to identify a community, or communities within which to focus smart growth programs and incentives. The selection of smart growth alternatives requires the identification of areas within the unincorporated communities that could be considered “smart” places for new development for reasons including, but not limited to, compact, efficient, and environmentally friendly design that is achievable; proximity to job centers, services, amenities and infrastructure (e.g., roads, water, sewer); and/or presence of existing or plans for future transit infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, bus service, new transit service).

Upon the selection of one or more smart growth communities, the Board would be asked to direct staff to prepare a Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Ordinance, which would place a smart growth zoning designation on properties within the selected smart growth areas. An overlay is a new zone or “layer” that could be added on top of existing zoning. The overlay zone would identify those properties that would be eligible for future programs or process improvements that would incentivize residential, commercial, and mixed-use growth within the smart growth boundary. Depending upon the nature and extent of the regulatory framework within the Smart Growth Overlay Ordinance, additional environmental analysis may be required prior to implementation.

After adopting the CAP Update and Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Ordinance, staff would conduct existing conditions analyses within the selected communities to better understand the barriers to smart growth and the opportunities that each community presents. Barriers to smart growth could include lack of critical infrastructure such as fire stations, or schools, or result from land uses or...
zoning not aligning with the highest-and-best use for individual parcels which may cause extra processing time and costs.

The existing conditions analysis would also consider how to incentivize and create opportunities for smart growth, including a focus on identification of opportunity sites for redevelopment, market and economic incentives (e.g., fee waivers, streamlining) to encourage new mixed uses and housing diversity, and a consideration of fee structures (i.e., reduction in development fees) to support new development and supportive capital improvements. The analysis would describe where land use changes should be made, how to support future transportation infrastructure, how to incentivize diverse housing types and redevelopment of underutilized sites that support the development of low-and-middle-income housing, and how to support mixed-uses. Within the communities that were selected for smart growth, staff would align existing programs to streamline new housing at low- to middle-income levels by ensuring that smart growth areas were included in the work program.

In future phases of outreach, staff would begin to concurrently advance conversations with community residents, businesses, and other interested stakeholders to better identify how they would like to see smart growth strategies implemented in their community. This would form the foundation of future policies that would guide resulting growth and future outcomes including locations for new housing, transit investments, and expanded accessibility and locations for locally-serving amenities or commercial spaces and public spaces.

While individual community needs and development outcomes would vary based on the existing conditions and community identity, the following list exemplifies the types of programs that could be considered and brought back for the Board's consideration:

- Prepare development incentives such as fee waivers, application streamlining, and other process improvements to encourage low-and middle-income housing.
- Create special improvement districts and programs that can provide focused funding for capital improvement projects.
- Create opportunities and incentives to encourage redevelopment of underutilized commercial sites to residential or mixed-uses.
- Adopt design standards for streets, sidewalks, and public rights-of-way to ensure safety and mobility for all modes of transportation.
- Create incentives for businesses and homeowners to locate in areas with existing infrastructure or within designated commercial corridors near transit.

**Future General Plan Land Use Changes**

In some communities, a smart growth alternative could result in proposed increases in residential density, known as "up-planning" which may require changes to the General Plan land use map, in order to achieve desired development outcomes. Similarly, subsequent changes to the County's Zoning Ordinance may be required to establish a regulatory framework that can achieve alignment across the General Plan land use map and County Zoning Ordinance which regulates development. Any changes to the General Plan land use map or Zoning Ordinance would require additional environmental analysis prior to implementation.
The amount of up-planning proposed would vary by community, would be reflective of the community’s desired development outcomes, and would be at the discretion of the Board. For example, to support future mixed-use development around the Buena Creek Sprinter Station in North County Metro Area - North, focused changes to the General Plan land use map and Zoning Ordinance may be required to support the build-out of the immediately surrounding area, and to determine how to fund capital improvements based on the community needs analysis. This work would require a relatively shorter timeframe due to the smaller land area that would need to be evaluated and smaller community to engage.

If the Board were to adopt a smart growth alternative that would aspire to achieve development outcomes in alignment with the SANDAG Regional Plan Mobility Hub framework, a broader and more comprehensive set of General Plan land use map and Zoning Ordinance changes would be required. Please refer to Attachment C which illustrates draft SANDAG Mobility Hubs. In this case, the Board would likely be considering both up-planning in areas around the SANDAG Mobility Hubs and down-planning in areas outside of those locations. This would require a more comprehensive update to the General Plan due to the large geographic scope of land use map changes and scale of community engagement required.

In general, the greater the extent of changes to the land use map required (i.e., the larger the geographic region), the longer timeframe, more extensive the environmental analysis, more community outreach, and more complex the planning process that would be required. If the Board were to select a small number of communities in which to focus smart growth (e.g., under five), changes to the land use map would be much more focused and may require limited up-planning or other changes to the land use map to support the desired development outcomes such as support of mixed-uses and additional opportunities for new housing types (e.g., smaller product types such as townhomes and condominiums) in areas located near existing and future transit infrastructure. While changes to the land use map within the selected communities would require environmental analysis that is subsequent to the CAP SEIR, because the scope of the analysis would be confined to a smaller subset of the unincorporated communities, a more detailed analysis could be incorporated into the environmental document which would provide greater CEQA streamlining and ministerial opportunities. Timeframes for this type of focused update to the General Plan land use map within the smart growth boundary could likely be accomplished within three years from the time of Board direction due to the relatively small geographic area that would be considered.

If the Board decided to undertake a broader General Plan Update with comprehensive land use map changes including up-planning and down-planning across the entire unincorporated area, a similar process would occur as described above, but timeframes, outreach, and subsequent planning actions would be more extensive due to the application across all unincorporated communities. The process would also include an evaluation of existing conditions, and coordination with community residents and businesses to determine how to guide development in the future and what desired development outcomes to prioritize. The subsequent planning implementation actions to guide new development would take more time and require more staff and resources. Additionally, changes to the land use map of this extent would likely require changes to other aspects of the General Plan, including the Mobility and Conservation and Open Space Elements in order to bring those elements into conformance. A broadly scoped General Plan land use map update would also require environmental analysis of up-planning and down-planning
SUBJECT: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Throughout the unincorporated county which would require a new programmatic analysis of all land use changes and the potential for environmental impacts from those changes. Because the focus would be at the entire unincorporated county scale, the level of detail of the analysis would not be available to afford the same level of future CEQA streamlining for new development as in a more focused update. Timeframes for this type of General Plan Update would likely extend beyond five years from the time of Board direction.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT
This action is for the Board to accept the presentation related to the Climate Action Plan Update. As the project and environmental review are still in development and further updates will be brought to the Board prior to its final decision on the CAP Update and Supplemental EIR, this progress report and any Board comments in response do not represent a commitment to any particular course of action. Final binding policy decisions by the Board must await the completion of the CAP Update and Supplemental EIR process. Therefore, the presentation and action is exempt from CEQA per Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed actions do not commit the County to any definitive course of action and there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN
Today’s actions support the County of San Diego’s 2021-2026 Strategic Plan of Building Better Health, Living Safely, Operational Excellence, and Sustainable Environments/Thriving by advancing these priorities through the development of the Climate Action Plan Update.

Respectfully submitted,

SARAH E. AGHASSI
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)
ATTACHMENT A: General Plan Summary of Actions
ATTACHMENT B: Revised Project Timeline
ATTACHMENT C: SANDAG Draft Mobility Hubs
ATTACHMENT D: North County Metro Smart Growth Area Example
ATTACHMENT E: Valle de Oro Smart Growth Area Example
ATTACHMENT F: East Otay Mesa Smart Growth Area Example
SUBJECT: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT (DISTRICTS: ALL)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: ☐ Yes ☒ No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED
☐ Yes ☒ No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:
N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:
N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:
N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):
N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Planning & Development Services

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

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