

[STAFF REPORT FOR USE FOR WORK SESSIONS AND COUNCIL MEETINGS]

PORTLAND/VANCOUVER AREA CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION GRANT

Date: February 4, 2024
Department: Planning, Development and Research
Meeting Date: February 13, 2024

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Length:

ISSUE STATEMENT

Metro is the recipient of a Climate Pollution Reduction planning Grant (CPRG planning grant) from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The grant supports planning work to create regional climate action plans for the Portland-Vancouver metro area that will identify strong candidate projects for the growing number of state and federal funding streams aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This includes implementation grants that EPA plans to make available later in 2024. Metro is leading this work in close coordination with regional partners.

This grant funds Metro to produce three deliverables over the four-year grant period:

- **A Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP)**, due March 1, 2024 – this is a plan that identifies high-priority, implementation-ready GHG reduction actions that could be delivered with current staffing.
- A separate, subsequent **Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP)**, due late summer 2025 – this is a broader plan that includes a comprehensive inventory of GHG emissions for the metro area, and a set of proposed strategies to reduce emissions.
- A **Status Report**, due late 2027, that updates EPA on the status of any actions funded by the PCAP and CCAP.

Metro staff are wrapping up the Priority Climate Action Plan and seeking Council direction before beginning to develop the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

ACTION REQUESTED

Metro staff request that Council:

- Support the projects that are moving forward to apply for implementation grants based on the Priority Climate Action Plan.
- Give feedback to help ensure that the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan addresses regional needs and opportunities.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

In December 2023, Metro Council adopted five-year strategic targets related to economy, environment, and housing, including a target titled “Meeting our Climate and Resilience

Goals” that states, “we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” Council members provide direction on how Metro’s climate targets should be reflected in Metro-led plans such as the Climate Smart Strategy, the Regional Transportation Plan, and the Regional Solid Waste plan, and have approved updates to these and other plans that identify specific actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and establish climate leadership. In addition, agency partners across the region have adopted climate-related plans for their communities that support Metro’s efforts at the regional scale. In the short term, the CPRG planning grant helps Metro identify opportunities to implement climate-related projects and policies in these existing plans. In the long term, the grant provides opportunities for Metro to expand its leadership on climate by identifying additional opportunities to reduce GHG emissions that go beyond what is called for in current plans.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

Staff are seeking Council feedback on how the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, which is the next deliverable in the CPRG grant, can best advance Metro’s climate leadership.

The Priority Climate Action Plan, which is the first deliverable under CPRG, focused on areas where Metro and partner agencies already collaborate to reduce GHG emissions, including transportation, residential buildings, and solid waste management. Some projects in these areas appear well-aligned with a separate set of CPRG implementation grants that EPA is making available, and Metro and agency partners are moving forward to apply for these projects. Staff seek Council’s support for these projects and feedback on how the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan can best advance the region's climate goals.

BACKGROUND

The EPA CPRG program offers 4-year planning grants to metropolitan statistical areas and states to create plans and identify strategies that:

- Significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a manner that improves equity, community health and advances other agency goals.
- Can be implemented by public agencies.
- Are aligned with federal and state funding sources.

As part of the CPRG grant, Metro will produce two plans:

- A Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), due March 1, 2024, that identifies high priority, implementation-ready greenhouse gas reduction actions that can be funded with available resources – including a separate set of CPRG implementation grants that EPA is making available to public agencies across the U.S. in spring 2024.
- A Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), due late summer 2025, that includes a comprehensive inventory of greenhouse gas emissions for the metropolitan area and a broader set of strategies to reduce emissions.

These plans will help the region pursue the growing number of federal and state funding programs focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, projects must be included in the PCAP to be eligible to apply for \$4.3 billion in competitive CPRG implementation grants from EPA. Applications for these implementation grants are due

April 1, 2024. Any public agency in the metropolitan area can lead an implementation grant application for any of the actions included in the PCAP. Similarly, the CCAP may also help make projects eligible for other federal climate implementation funds.

The CPRG grant extends to the entire seven-county Portland-Vancouver metropolitan statistical area, which includes Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah, Skamania, Washington and Yamhill counties. Metro has established the Climate Partners' Forum, a group of technical staff from agencies across the metropolitan statistical area, to guide the development of CPRG deliverables. Forum members ensure that the resulting plans reflect partners' prior work on climate, identify common gaps in local plans for the CCAP to address, and coordinate with each other to apply for implementation funds.

Priority Climate Action Plan

The PCAP focuses on identifying high-impact climate actions that can be readily implemented by public agencies with funding from the EPA's CPRG implementation. The plan will include:

- An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in the metropolitan area.
- A list of strategies to reduce these emissions.
- An assessment of whether each strategy is ready for implementation.
- An analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions reductions and other benefits of each strategy.

Because of the focus on implementation readiness, Metro is prioritizing strategies that have already been endorsed by public agency partners and the public through adopted climate action plans for inclusion in the PCAP.

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

There are many opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area – and not all of them will be ready to apply for funding in spring 2024. Greenhouse gas reduction strategies that need more time for development are candidates for the CCAP, which is due at the end of summer 2025. The CCAP will be similar in structure to the PCAP, but the process allows more time for Metro and partner agencies to consider a broader set of greenhouse gas reduction strategies in the CCAP and to conduct more in-depth analysis of these strategies' impact on greenhouse gas emissions, equity, and other co-benefits.

It is important to note Metro is not the only agency leading a CPRG planning grant that is relevant to the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. The states of Oregon and Washington also have CPRG planning grants that relate to communities in the metropolitan area, and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians is leading a planning grant that covers tribes throughout Oregon and Washington. Any of these plans may identify greenhouse gas reduction strategies that support agencies in the metropolitan area in meeting their climate goals. Metro is coordinating with state and tribal partners to ensure alignment and avoid duplication among the different CPRG grants that are relevant to the region.

ATTACHMENTS

None

[For work session:]

- Is legislation required for Council action? Yes No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? Yes No
- What other materials are you presenting today? Presentation slides.