



April 4th, 2022

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers,

We would like to recognize and thank the City for its bold environmental leadership, for selecting 100% renewable energy as the default for residential and commercial accounts through the Orange County Power Authority, and for beginning the process of creating a sustainability master plan.

The community has shown the desire and need for a community-driven and equitable plan to make Huntington Beach more sustainable and climate-safe, and a sustainability master plan can provide this. At Climate Action Campaign we believe that the pathway to ensuring community health, equity, and economic development begins with a plan that is easily monitored, enforceable, and legally binding.

The current proposed sustainability master plan is vague in its description of how the plan will be monitored and does not state that the plan will be in line with the state's CEQA qualification to be a legally binding plan in order to reduce identified greenhouse gas in the city. We recommend that the city asks for an updated sustainability master plan proposal that could be CEQA qualified, and a legally binding plan, and reflects clear unambiguous language around setting goals that will reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions.

Proposing A CEQA Qualified, Legally Binding Plan:

Adopting a legally binding sustainability plan will convey to residents that the City is doing everything in its power to protect and ensure the health, safety, and prosperity of the community. The proposal for the sustainability master plan currently has an aspirational outline but lacks actionable and strategic goals or targets tailored to the City's local context. Many similar plans such as Climate Action Plans throughout the region have shifted to favor bold, legally binding plans to mitigate the climate crisis and ensure the city is becoming more sustainable. Currently, eight cities in our neighboring county of San Diego have legally binding Climate Action Plans that work towards similar goals as the sustainability master plan. We urge the City to make the sustainability master plan legally binding and ensure all measures are enforceable and legally defensible.

CEQA mandates that all state and local agencies must adopt enforceable measures to mitigate the expected Greenhouse Gas impacts of its General Plan. Huntington Beach can align with this and have this plan qualify under CEQA by extending the sustainability master plan to also include a plan to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions which works to ensure social equity, economic prosperity, and environmental health. Doing this will move Huntington Beach towards being a bold environmental leader for other cities to follow, and put the city in line with state laws and policies regarding the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.

These laws include:

- SB 32, mandates statewide GHG emissions reductions of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.



- Executive Order S-3-05, mandates statewide GHG emissions reductions of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Executive Order B-55-18, mandates statewide carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter.

Set Clear Targets to Ensure a Climate Safe Future/ Set Clear Targets to Reduce Emissions

By setting clear targets and goals within the proposal as to how the plan will work to reduce emissions, the city will have a measurable and trackable way to ensure the city is becoming more sustainable. Irvine has recently set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030, and the City of Santa Monica has set 100% clean energy targets by either 2030 or 2035. We recommend using the sustainability master plan to identify and set similar clear targets which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the city. Potential goals that would show the city's firm commitment to environmental and community health and equity would be committing to carbon neutrality by 2030, 100% clean energy by 2030, and eliminating building emissions by 2045.

Huntington Beach has opted into 100% clean energy as the default for residential and commercial accounts, but even as our cities achieve 100% clean electricity, natural gas from buildings remains one of the most significant sources of emissions in Orange County, and sources of pollution in our daily lives. To fully transition away from fossil fuels, while addressing the environmental harm, and social inequity fossil fuels in Huntington Beach have created we must identify strategies to reduce and ultimately eliminate natural gas consumption.

We urge the city to adopt specific and timely targets to eliminate fossil fuel emissions such as:

- Reducing GHG emissions from buildings by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and eliminating building emissions by 2045 through widespread building electrification.
- Require that all new construction is all-electric.
- Pass plans to retrofit existing buildings, starting in communities of concern.
- Subsidize and incentivize the removal of gas appliances
- Support workforce development and training programs that promote good-paying careers for technicians that install and service electric appliances.
- Developing financial incentives to lower purchase and installation costs for electric appliances.
- Creating public outreach and education campaigns to promote building electrification.

In addition to reducing emissions, these targets provide numerous co-benefits including lower energy bills and lower costs for new construction, improved indoor and outdoor air quality, safer energy infrastructure, and the creation of good-paying green jobs.

When the city begins to develop out their master sustainability plan we can offer further insight on additional targets and goals to ensure the city of Huntington Beach is more sustainable and equitable for all. Some of the most effective ways to ensure a climate safe and just future for all in



addition to using clean energy is to have bikable walkable neighborhoods, world class transit, all electric homes, and prioritize climate resiliency.

Thank you again for beginning this important process of creating a sustainability master plan for the city, and for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions, the Climate Action Campaign team wants to be a resource, and is always here to provide assistance.

Sincerely,
Lexi Hernandez
OC Climate Equity Organizer and Advocate



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