

CAC and CERF Win Accountability and Transparency in the Climate Action Plan in Settlement with City of San Diego

CAC and CERF sued the city in 2022 for not complying with CEQA, prompting a new set standard for climate targets and public disclosure

San Diego, CA - February 13, 2024 - [Climate Action Campaign](#) (CAC) and the [Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation](#) (CERF) are pleased to announce a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to combat climate change and protect public health by ensuring cities reduce dangerous fossil fuel pollution and comply with state climate law.

After years of advocacy and legal action, CAC and CERF reached a settlement in their lawsuit over the City of San Diego's 2022 Climate Action Plan Update. The groups sued for violations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the City lacked the mechanism to ensure its CAP would reduce emissions by 40% by 2030 and zero out emissions by 2035, as promised. The settlement represents a crucial step forward in holding the city accountable for its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to a clean energy future.

“Today is a big win for the community. San Diego is ground zero for suffering through the impacts of the climate crisis—from devastating storms and flooding, the collapse of our coastline, and extreme heat—and we must triple down on implementing solutions to get us off fossil fuels and towards a safe and resilient future,” said Nicole Capretz, Founder and CEO of Climate Action Campaign. “This settlement finally requires the city to take action and correct course if they are off-track on meeting their pollution reduction goals.”

This settlement establishes a new precedent in requiring the city to set annual greenhouse gas reduction targets and triggers public disclosure, public hearings, and an amendment to the CAP to identify how the city will realign with its targets when off-course by a certain percentage.

As highlighted in the city's latest climate-monitoring report, the City of San Diego has made commendable progress in increasing renewable energy usage through San Diego Community Power. However, this progress has been overshadowed by the alarming rise in emissions from cars and trucks, which are the city's largest source of pollution.

The city remains off-track in electrifying buildings and city fleets and shifting transportation mode share towards biking, walking, and transit.

“We commend city officials for their efforts thus far, but it is clear that more ambitious and transformative measures are needed to achieve our 2035 net-zero emissions goal,” said Sara Ochoa, Programs Director for CERF. **“This settlement provides an opportunity for collaboration between the community and industry and to develop innovative solutions and accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy. As we’ve seen, we need to invest in reducing emissions and increasing our communities’ resilience to climate impacts, such as flooding and storm damage, to reduce social and economic costs.”**

As we move forward, Climate Action Campaign remains committed to advocating for policies that prioritize environmental justice, equity, and sustainability. Together, we can build a brighter future for San Diego and future generations.

About Climate Action Campaign:

Climate Action Campaign is a Southern California-based nonprofit dedicated to fighting climate change and advancing health, equity, and resiliency throughout the state..Through advocacy, education, and community engagement, we work to promote policies and initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect natural resources, and create a more resilient and equitable society. Join us in our mission to create a sustainable future for all. For more information visit <https://www.climateactioncampaign.org/>.

About Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation:

CERF is a nonprofit environmental organization founded in 2008 by surfers in North San Diego County and active throughout California’s coastal communities. CERF was established to aggressively advocate, including through litigation, for the protection and enhancement of coastal natural resources. For more information visit CERF online at <https://cerf.org/>