

CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION GRANTS – PLANNING GRANT

EL PASO MSA WORKPLAN

WORKPLAN SUMMARY:

The geographic area included in the scope of work for the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) and Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) spans an area covering 10 municipalities, 2 counties, 15 census-designated places and unincorporated communities, and 5,587 square miles of territory. Within that territory are a number of both urban and rural areas, cities, towns and villages as well as a large number of unincorporated areas from east to west. Aside from the geographic breadth of the MSA, the work will also be defined by geographic factors not considered within this scope of work. The western most portion of the MSA makes up a part of the largest binational metroplex in the western hemisphere. The urban environment defined most often as the Paso Del Norte lies at the crossroads of three states and two countries. The City of El Paso, alongside several of our surrounding sister cities share the entirety of their southern borders with Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. There are also 5 international ports of entry that have a significant impact on emissions across the region. This circumstance in addition to our status as a predominantly underserved and disadvantaged community makes the El Paso MSA a standout among all other MSAs participating in this work with the EPA, presenting both unique challenges and groundbreaking opportunities. Critical to this work is the recognition that while the scope of CPRG covers territory only in the United States and within boundaries of the state of Texas, the reality of the El Paso MSA is that Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico and the communities of southern New Mexico are significant contributors and potential collaborators for this work.

The expectation based on observed precedent is that the transportation and energy sectors represent the largest contribution to regional emissions. Therefore, there will be much opportunity to address transit, trade and building efficiency as a tool to reduce emissions. However, the goal of this work is not simply to reduce emissions, but also to explore how the implementation of GHG reduction measures impact the people of the region in terms of affordability, human health and quality of life. Assumptions regarding the definition of impactful results are untenable and require intensive communication with, listening to and empowering the people of our region. Having a metropolitan configuration represented by a range of large urban communities to small cities and rural towns punctuated by the expansive west Texas open space environment exacerbates that challenge in terms of community outreach and civic empowerment. Many communities within the MSA lack trust in public institutions due to years of underinvestment and sporadic engagement. This challenge presents an opportunity for the El Paso MSA to establish a climate based civic empowerment framework built to exemplify environmental justice as defined by Justice 40.

RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES:

Lead Organization:

The El Paso MSA work will be led by the City of El Paso's Office of Climate and Sustainability.

- Point of Contact: Fernando Liano Berjano; berjanofl@elpasotexas.gov; 915-212-1655
- Alternative point of contact: Nicole Alderete-Ferrini; ferrininm@elpasotexas.gov; 915-474-2202

As lead entity, the city will act as the grantee for the CPRG, accountable for fiscal stewardship of planning dollars, coordination of entities and contracting with necessary consultants as indicated within this workplan.

Coordinating Entities (as of the publication of this workplan):

- City of Socorro,
- Village of Vinton,
- Town of Horizon City,
- Town of Anthony,

- City of San Elizario,
- El Paso County,
- Hudspeth County,
- The Rio Grande Council of Governments
- El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization

The City of El Paso will lead this collaborative group of entities toward the goal of developing the first Regional Climate Action Plan in service of communities across the expansive El Paso MSA. The coordinating entities are inclusive of regional partners who have stepped forward first, but is only a starting point for what will make up the comprehensive network of communities and stakeholder groups. As the work moves forward, other surrounding municipal governments, tribal entities and public organizations will be invited to engage. (*See Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination Section*)

It is our intention to approach the planning phase of the CPRG in three key lines of effort: 1) developing technical deliverables (GHG emissions inventory and projections, benefit analysis) 2) engaging with community to gather feedback about priorities, concerns and desired outcomes in their neighborhoods related to climate pollution and 3) follow up on measuring impact and benefit as well as follow through with a consistent presence within affected communities. In order to achieve this the El Paso MSA intends to sub-award and/or contract out specific deliverables. (*See Budget Section for a breakdown*).

DELIVERABLES DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:

As a reflection of each of the key lines of effort and their respective deliverables the City of El Paso proposes the following as the basis for coordinated priority planning, comprehensive outreach and public accountability. The overall approach will be incorporated throughout the 4-year term of the grant varying slightly in terms of specific tasks, roles and results for each key deliverable.

OVERALL INTERAGENCY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION (IIC):

The El Paso MSA will establish an institutional/interagency stakeholder framework capable of maintaining transparency, collaboration and accountability in the delivery of outcomes required by CPRG. Consistent communication, clear leadership and ground up accountability make up the basis of our proposed model. The structure is a three-level model driven directly by the community to be defined as follows:

- **Level 1 Community Stakeholders:** This group of stakeholders is representative of the community itself. Level 1 stakeholders are the people of the El Paso MSA whom we serve. Active engagement and on the ground, information gathering in the form of desired outcomes and policy will inform the direction of the work and ultimately guide targeted impact for projects, initiatives and policy measures. Examples of key groups to be included here are Community Based Organizations, Neighborhood Associations, promotoras and individual citizens. Promotoras have been established as an inclusive of a network of organizations whose mission is to provide reliable, timely and accurate information to vulnerable families who have traditionally been more disconnected and have less access to basic needs, including internet access and where Spanish is the predominate language. Level 1 stakeholders will be a key component to the engagement process. It is also an accountability measure for the work.
- **Level 2 Stakeholders:** This group of stakeholders represents entities with a significant effect and interest in management of regional emissions and is inclusive of both public, private and not for profit groups. An initial scan of potential Level 2 stakeholders is inclusive of the electric utility, water utility, TCEQ, regional community foundations, conservation groups and health agencies. In addition to providing access to key data necessary for the development of the GHG inventory and projections, these entities will also assist in defining metrics and co-benefits beyond emissions reduction. Less formalized than the LSC, level 2 stakeholders will be asked to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding in order to codify partnership and responsibility, assuring accountability to our community.

- **Leadership Steering Committee (LSC):** The committee will function as a senior level advisory group charged with guiding the scope of work led by the City of El Paso. The LSC will be comprised of multiple public entities committed through a mutual cooperation agreement. Each entity will assign a point of accountability as an official representative. This Committee will participate in (i) the selection process for consultants procured to support the scope of work, (ii) data collection representative of each entity by region (iii) stewardship of engagement and outreach activities within their region, and (iv) review and comment regarding CPRG deliverables.

OVERALL PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (PSE):

The El Paso MSA proposes to establish the *Paso Del Norte Community Climate Collaborative (PDN C3)*. The collaborative begins with stakeholders, partners and agencies embedded across the geography of the MSA. As described above in the IIC, the City of El Paso will convene multiple entities, organizations, individual subject matter experts and community members for a variety of in-person and virtual engagements. To some extent, traditional outreach tools such as polling, regular emails, phone calls and texts will be utilized to confirm benchmark meeting dates that work for stakeholders so that collectively, key deadlines are met within a timely fashion. However, the El Paso team will also be leveraging a variety of non-traditional tools and methods to reach our community.

The purpose of building a collaborative such as this is to accelerate the work of the El Paso MSA addressing environmental justice and empowering community-driven solutions in overburdened and underserved areas across the region. Utilizing this approach brings about significant opportunity for innovation in addition to building much needed community trust, resulting in equitable and resilient communities.

Identified collaborator groups will be consulted to address any knowledge and data gaps with information specific to each group and to gain access to early information. Feedback provide insight into unidentified community need beyond the goal of emissions reduction. All feedback will be captured and interpreted through a Community Needs Assessment tool established by the City of El Paso in 2015 as a result of the City Resilience Strategy. The tool has subsequently been utilized since then so as to track trending data. The CAN is an excel-based tool used to translate the feedback received during community meetings into a semi-quantitative assessment of the needs.

A key innovation made possible by this grant is the *Paso Del Norte Climate Fellowship*. Created by the City of El Paso Office of Climate and Sustainability, the fellowship will consist of 27 volunteers from across the region organized in 9 teams of 3 people. Scheduled to launch in March of 2024, it will provide the cornerstone to our community ability to do more than reach people, but rather to empower them from within their own neighborhood. The fellows are planned to deploy on an annual basis as follows:

- Central El Paso County including the City of El Paso: 5 teams, 1 for each planning area within the city limits.
- West El Paso County including Anthony & Vinton: 1 team.
- East El Paso County including San Elizario, Socorro, Horizon City: 2 teams.
- Hudspeth County: 1 team.

Climate Fellow recruitment will begin in the fall of 2023 and will be chosen from a range of high school, undergraduate and graduate students and to the greatest extent possible, representative of the region to which they are assigned. Local school programs such as early college education, the University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Tech University and El Paso Community College represent key partners that will act as a starting point for recruitment. Recent graduates of regional institutions will also be considered. Climate Fellow recruitment, from within their respective communities, will help bridge information gaps as Fellows will be familiar with local challenges, know how to best address their audience and lead with existing community trust. Having a community member lead these conversations will empower both the Fellow and the community.

The mission of the fellowship is to work across the partner network leveraging level 2 stakeholders such as Frontera Land Alliance, the El Paso Community Foundation, Eco El Paso, the Community First Coalition and promotora groups. Fellows will be offered specialized training in this type of work as well as in justice, equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. The information gathered during the fellowship program's outreach will be incorporated into the data collection/analysis for the PCAP, CCAP, and Status Report. The City of El Paso alongside the selected Climate Action Consultants will be tasked with incorporating data collection critical to the regional planning analysis into the deliverables of the CPRG.

The following indicate categories that establish the framework for public and stakeholder engagement. These are by no means exhaustive, but rather provide a basis for communication moving forward:

1. **Identifying Communities of Need:** Identifying the region's most vulnerable and underserved populations will be the primary step in creating a robust engagement and outreach plan. Currently, partners affiliated with the Leadership Steering Committee have been selected because of their connection with and knowledge of their own communities. Beyond the LSC, Level 2 stakeholders are deeply embedded within communities and offer a perspective from the boots on the ground. These structures allow for a robust and well-informed perspective of each area of the MSA from a vulnerability standpoint. In addition to the partnerships and knowledge of our community, we anticipate usage of a variety of nationally recognized tools. For example, Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>, the United States Census and the CDC Social Vulnerability Index.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The El Paso MSA will involve stakeholder groups and the public in the development process by meeting with and engaging in public spaces such as schools, libraries, community recreation centers, faith-based centers and areas of worship. In addition to in person engagement, public outreach will be activated in virtual as well as hybrid models utilizing a unique City of El Paso asset, the Center for Civic Empowerment (CCE). The center is equipped to host up to 150 people in person with dynamic audio/video, multilingual translation and full access for persons of all abilities across the entire territory. The CCE will be the home base for digital outreach and communication for this work.

Each regional entity will attend at least 1 engagement meeting. While some engagements will be led by LSC entity staff, our team acknowledges that in order to truly engage and ultimately empower, it is trusted community groups that must facilitate interaction. Key engagements will be strategically planned in collaboration with and ultimately facilitated by Level 2 Stakeholder partners such as Neighborhood Associations, Regional Coalitions, Community Organizations and promotora groups. Promotora outreach is inclusive of a network of organizations whose mission is to provide reliable, timely and accurate information to vulnerable families who have traditionally been more disconnected and have less access to basic needs, including internet access and where Spanish is the predominate language. PDN Climate Fellows will play a moderating role in all community outreach. This model has been utilized successfully in underrepresented areas of our region for many years. This is where the PDN C3 model created by the City of El Paso moves well beyond traditional models and reaches the most underrepresented.

3. **Public Engagement Plan:** The basis of public engagement for the El Paso MSA rests on two pillars, the PDN Community Climate Collaborative and the PDN Climate Fellowship. (See Overall PSE) The City of El Paso alongside a consulting team of climate and equity experts will oversee all public engagement across the region. Maintaining a consistent presence within each community, the team will co-lead presentations and information sessions alongside Level 2 Stakeholders. Public engagement planning will be dynamic and responsive to the feedback received throughout the process.
4. **Development Process:** Progressive plan development updates will be made available to the public through both public websites such as the City of El Paso's Office of Climate and Sustainability (OCS) as well as City of El Paso's Social Media

sites. Updates will be made monthly with updated dates to each new post. All past progress notes will be made available on the City of El Paso's (OCS) web page.

In addition to digital posting of plan updates, presentations to partners and organizational leadership across the region will be consistent and collaborative for the duration of the CPRG. These meetings are publicly posted and often digitally streamed and archived for accessibility. However, beyond posting plan updates, re-engagement with Level 1 stakeholders for the duration of the process will be key to assuring benefit to all communities as well as providing public accountability on commitments made early in the process through the finalized plan.

Key Deliverable #1: Priority Climate Action Plan

Development Approach:

The El Paso MSA will produce the following deliverables under its PCAP:

- (i) preliminary GHG inventory,
- (ii) quantified GHG reduction measures,
- (iii) low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits analysis, and
- (iv) review of authority to implement.

The following phases of work will define the production of the PCAP deliverables:

1. **Preliminary Planning and Coordination:** The lead entity will leverage already established regional partnerships, reinforcing already open lines of communication. Beginning with the Leadership Steering Committee, exchange of information regarding existing initiatives, projects and or plans supportive of climate action form the basis for both this workplan and entrance discussions regarding roles and responsibilities among the partners. Alignment of resources as well as expectations across multiple entities including the granting agency, EPA, is core to a strong beginning for this work.

Grantor / Lead Entity Alignment Session

The City of El Paso invites representatives of the EPA assigned to CPRG in our region to meet with our team in our capacity as Lead Entity with the goal of identifying key points of contact for the both the grantor (EPA) and the grantee (lead entity) as well as establishing a common expectation of deliverables, bringing forward questions posed by the broader collaborative and confirming alignment of objectives, priorities, key deliverables and associated planning activities for the 4 year duration of the grant.

Post Grant Award Community Partner Kick Off

Following grant award and alignment with the EPA team, the City of El Paso will convene an in-person community partner kick-off inclusive of not only the leadership steering committee, but also level 2 Community Stakeholders in order to introduce the breadth of the work and the currently projected outcomes for our community. This initial meeting will provide opportunity for both LSC entities and level 2 Community stakeholders to provide feedback in terms of regional climate priorities and resources that may have not already been considered. The Kick Off will occur within 45 days of grant award with an intended deliverable summarizing feedback and potential as well as document /s for the various partners and levels of commitment for each.

Climate Action Consulting Selection and Award

Following grant award, the City of El Paso will finalize the selection process for Climate Action Planning Professional Services. Procurement activities are intended begin as early as June 2023 in order to be ready to kick off the CPRG Program by late summer 2023 / Early Fall 2023. Consultants will be required to comply with all timelines and deliverables associated with CPRG.

In addition to the climate consulting team, to assure objective equity and inclusion throughout the process, the El Paso MSA has elected to procure an independent justice, equity, diversion and inclusion consultant. (*See Budget and Timeline*)

2. **Data collection:** The development of the PCAP and CCAP rely on a substantial and thorough data gathering effort as well as literature review at the MSA level. The contracted consulting team will, via the City of El Paso, interact with surrounding municipalities, utilities and other community partner agencies with access to relevant data informing this phase of the project. Each partner entity will be responsible for assisting in the data collection phase of the work. That responsibility applies but is not limited to the following three categories:

GHG emissions data: For emissions data, the consultants and partners, depending on availability, will collect data in the following order: local, State, and National level-data. Priority will be given to primary data but in some instances secondary data might be necessary to develop the products of the PCAP and CCAP. The team will gather, if available, (a) the existing historic and current GHG inventories available, (b) identify current and projected GHG emissions per sector, (c) economic and population data, current and forecasted, (d) employment data, (e) list of projects with potential to reduce GHG emissions, (g) co-pollutants data, and (f) projects' information on GHG emissions reduction potentials.

As stated in the Program Guidance documentation, EPA's or other Federal sources' data may be used for the development of the GHG emissions inventory¹.

Planning and Policy Inventory: Review of existing climate pollution-related projects, studies and planning frameworks: An in-depth review of ongoing and future climate pollution-related activities, existing policy and comprehensive planning works. This will include studies, policies and regulations as well as mitigation and adaptation actions anticipated or currently under development.

As of the writing of this workplan, the planning and policy inventory has already begun. Beginning with the comprehensive inventory conducted in 2018 as a part of the City of El Paso Resilience Strategy, as well as an initial scan of Leadership Steering Committee partners the team has identified key planning documents and previous studies addressing issues related to climate action. Many of them while not named "Climate Action Plan", do in fact address climate related concerns and potential solutions. Currently there are information gaps related to smaller more rural communities. This indicates a need to lean into a comprehensive scan of state and national studies conducted in the area as well as direct interaction with leadership in those communities at the onset of our work.

Asset Inventory: An initial list of relevant projects, studies, policies, regulations and development strategies as well as existing financial vehicles and funding sources on regional level will be developed.

This activity will be primarily based on an in-depth data-gathering and literature review of available information as well as collaboration with the local stakeholder network, academic institutions and key regional experts to compile all the required information. Similar to the planning and policy inventory, there are currently information gaps across the territory, to be addressed at the onset of our work.

¹ Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks by State; US GHG Reporting Program; National Emissions Inventory.

3. Analysis and calculations

- a. **Preliminary GHG inventory:** with the previously collected data, the preliminary GHG emissions inventory will be developed using a nationally recognized methodology.

It is important to note that occasionally, GHG accounting methodologies used to prepare GHG inventories require primary data that might not be available for some sectors or municipalities; in this case, secondary data at state and/or national level will be utilized. Thus, it is important to review, if necessary, different country-level sources, and, if needed, cross-check the data or cover lack of data with the corresponding national stakeholders throughout the Consultant's national network. Please note all these assumptions and suggestions will be discussed with the EPA during the inception phase.

- b. **Quantified GHG reduction measures:** During the Data Collection phase information on measures would be collected (see above). For the PCAP, a list of priority measures will be put together. This set of measures will have information as contained in CPRG Project Guidance document for Planning. Special emphasis will be given to measures that reduce emissions and pollutants in low-income and disadvantaged communities, evaluating and defining any unexpected negative consequences due to the implementation of the projects (i.e. increased economic burden).
- c. **Low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits analysis:** Census, CDC's Social Vulnerability Index² and CEJST platforms to inform the Low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits assessment. Data from these tools combined technical information for each prioritized measure will enable a thorough analysis and selection of appropriate indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the projects. Description of the engagement process can be found below under the PCAP Public and Stakeholder section.
- d. **Review of authority to implement:** each GHG reduction measure included in the PCAP will be assessed by the team with regards to its statutory and regulatory requirements. Channels of communication with relevant federal and state agencies will be established as part of this program to address, among other things, any actions needed for implementation of the measures (see below under PCAP Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for more information).

PCAP INTERAGENCY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION (IIC):

IIC for the PCAP is focused primarily on exploratory information gathering, trust building and codification of roles and responsibilities. The Information to be gathered includes specific challenges, needs and desired outcomes from the different communities of the El Paso MSA. In order to coordinate the three-level stakeholder groups, the following activities will be carried out:

Identification of key actors: While a robust list of stakeholders has already been identified to participate in the Leadership Steering Committee, outreach to both Level 1 and Level 2 stakeholders will commence upon initiation of the PCAP work. As each partner joins the work, their role regarding development or implementation of the program will be established. A commitment to the outcomes of the CPRG at any level is necessary to assure meaningful participation and long-term program sustainability beyond the grant cycle.

1. **Institutional and operational arrangements:** The process of establishing a singular climate action plan focused on reducing GHG emissions across the territory, creating benefit for underserved communities requires extensive multi-jurisdictional cooperation and commitment. In order to overcome challenges and leverage opportunities presented by the complex political, cultural and socioeconomic conditions of the region and the various institutions, a clear operational structure will be codified

² <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html>

in the three-level structure of the proposed IIC (Leadership Steering Committee, Level 2 Stakeholders and Level 1 Stakeholders)

- a. **Operational Planning:** This workplan and the program guidance will serve as the basis of the 4-year operational plan. A draft framework including specific agency roles and responsibilities will be presented for discussion and adoption during the Post Grant Award Community Kick Off. Key deliverables confirmed in that document include: 1) Confirmation of a Point of Accountability 2) Instruction regarding how to utilize and access a shared working cloud drive that will function as the repository for information, documentation and work product and 3) a working project calendar illustrating key project deadlines, community benchmarks and recurring coordination meetings. City of El Paso staff will function as administrators of drive and the project calendar. While in person interaction is preferred, hybrid options will be available given the expansive geographic nature of the MSA.
- b. **Institutional Agreements:** Interagency agreements will be guided by the structure of the IIC as defined above. Leadership Steering Committee partners will be part of a comprehensive cooperation agreement adopted by each entity. Level 2 stakeholders will be asked to participate in a memorandum of understanding that clearly establishes the responsibilities of that entity to the group. Level 1 stakeholders are the least formal of the three. A statement of community climate priorities will be developed as part of the PCAP. The document will function as a pledge to activate volunteers and provide clarity regarding the path forward.

PCAP PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (PSE):

Climate Fellows will engage with their respective communities

The PSE processes were described above in detail and lay out the first engagement with level 1 stakeholders and the activation of level 2 ones. During PCAP PSE, the team will be learning and exploring the desired outcomes, benefits and perceptions of climate change and climate action from the communities.

Key Deliverable #2: Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

Development Approach:

El Paso MSA will produce the following deliverables under its CCAP:

- (i) GHG inventory,
- (ii) GHG emissions Projections,
- (iii) GHG reduction targets
- (iv) quantified GHG reduction measures
- (v) Benefits analysis for the full geographic scope and population covered by the plan,
- (vi) low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits analysis,
- (vii) review of authority to implement,
- (viii) Intersection with other funding availability, and
- (ix) Workforce planning analysis.

It is important to note that the development of the CCAP will be based on the work previously carried out to produce the PCAP. Some deliverables are a continuation of the ones to be developed for the PCAP and some are completely new. The activities described below to produce the above-mentioned deliverables will refer, in some instances, to sections of Key Deliverable #1. The Consultant will, under direct supervision of the LE, lead the development of the CCAP deliverables.

1. **Data collection:** for the CCAP, data will need to be classified by sector, both for emissions and sinks. Sectors to be included in the CCAP are industry, electricity generation and use, transportation, buildings, agriculture, natural and working lands and waste and materials management. Data will be classified by sector and jurisdiction of the MSA.
 - a. **GHG emissions data:** see PCAP development approach for a detailed explanation on the data gathering process and sources.
 - b. **Review of existing climate pollution-related projects, studies and planning frameworks:** the list of measures identified for the PCAP will be updated. New identified measures will be included in the final list for the CCAP and those projects no longer viable or cancelled will be removed from the list. Again, for the CCAP, measures will be classified by relevant sectors.
 - c. **Pollutants and co-benefits data:** co-pollutants data will be gathered for all participating jurisdictions of the MSA. Data will be collected from municipal and counties' environmental services departments; TCEQ and other relevant agencies. Other co-benefits, if applicable and measurable, will be tracked and monitored (i.e. health benefits, reduced commuting time). Unintentional and negative impacts will be pre-identified, if applicable, for each mitigation measure. Mitigation and monitoring plans will be incorporated as part of the Benefit Analysis deliverable.
 - d. **Funding research:** on top of alignment with IRA and BIL federal funding, the team will look into other existing funding programs from federal agencies (EPA, DOE, DOI, DOT, FHWA, FTA, FRA, USBR, and EDA), state agencies (SECO, TWDB, TCEQ), the North American Development Bank (NADB), and private sector donors and foundations focusing on climate issues (TxWAC, Texas Water Foundation, Surdna Foundation, Lyda Hill Philanthropies).
 - e. **Workforce data:** the team will engage with the regional workforce development agency, Workforce Solutions Borderplex³, to evaluate workforce needs, gaps and challenges and identify potential solutions region-wide.

2. Analysis and calculations

- a. **GHG inventory:** with the previously collected data and the preliminary GHG emissions inventory carried out for the PCAP, the complete GHG inventory will be developed. Multiple tools and datasets will be considered and agreed upon the MSA partners and the consultants. The proposed accounting methodology is the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories⁴; having been used by most US and international cities, it will allow El Paso MSA to track progress of its mitigation efforts and compare and evaluate measures from other regions and cities. The GPC methodology will allow to categorize emissions by sector as specified in the Program Guidance document. All MSA jurisdictions participating in the program will have a comprehensive breakdown of their GHG emissions by sector.

The proposed baseline year for GHG emissions is 2019, a pre-Covid19 year with regular trade and commercial activity. If necessary, due to lack of data, 2021 might be considered as a second option. The final baseline year will be agreed upon between the partners, EPA and the selected consultants.
- b. **GHG emissions projections:** two different projection scenarios will be developed for 2030 and 2050. The “business-as-usual” scenario, with no GHG emissions measures implemented, and the “sustainable” scenario where all identified measures are implemented. Sectoral projections will be developed for all sectors included in the GHG

³ <https://borderplexjobs.com/>

⁴ https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/ghgp/standards/GHGP_GPC_0.pdf

emissions inventory. Economic and demographic data are essential for the development of this deliverable and will be closely considered during the data collection phase.

- c. **GHG reduction targets:** targets will be set for 2030 and 2050. These targets will be agreed upon partners and the community based on the reduction measures identified, economic conditions and what the best is for the region. Targets will be consistent with National and State targets, if applicable.
- d. **Quantified GHG reduction measures:** based on the priority list of measures identified for the PCAP, the final and complete list of GHG reduction projects will be put together. Special emphasis will be given to the development of the metrics to track success and to identify funding sources, public and private. Without a robust set of performance metrics and the necessary funding, the future implementation of the measures will be challenging and the proposed GHG reduction targets hard to achieve. Measures identified for the PCAP may not be included in the final list for the CCAP depending on its planning and funding state at that point.
- e. **Benefit analysis:** data on co-pollutants reduction will be developed for this section. Collaboration between MSA partners and TCEQ is key for obtaining and analyzing the mitigation effect on co-pollutants. As soon as summer of 2023, the team will engage with the regional office of the TCEQ to start collecting and evaluating data.
- f. **Low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits analysis:** Census, CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and CEJST platforms to inform the Low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits assessment. Data from these tools combined technical information for each prioritized measure will enable a thorough analysis and selection of appropriate indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the projects. Description of the engagement process can be found below under the PCAP Public and Stakeholder section.

Concrete data on co-pollutants emissions reductions and other benefits for low-income and disadvantaged communities will be included in the CCAP.

- g. **Review of authority to implement:** each GHG reduction measure included in the PCAP will be assessed by the team with regards to its statutory and regulatory requirements. Channels of communication with relevant federal and state agencies will be established as part of this program to address, among other things, any actions needed for implementation of the measures (see below under PCAP Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for more information).
- h. **Intersection with other funding availability:** Phase II of the CPRG program will be prioritized for funding the identified mitigation measures but other funding sources from IRA and BIL will be monitored by the team. Federal agencies such as DOE, DOT and EDA will be monitored as well as state agencies like SECO and TXDOT. Other sources, like the North American Development Bank (NADB), foundations and private organizations will be included in the funding alignment evaluation.
- i. **Workforce planning analysis:** a sectoral analysis of possible workforce shortages and needs will be conducted in conjunction with the regional workforce agency, Workforce Solutions Borderplex⁵. The analysis will include existing relevant programs and funding sources, expected shortages, needs and potential solutions for the development of the needed workforce.

⁵ <https://borderplexjobs.com/>

Training for the development of GHG emissions inventories and projections, including sections on data collection, calculation and analysis, will be scheduled and budgeted for the selected consultants to train staff from all members of the Steering Committee to be able to carry out this work efficiently, accurately and independently in the future.

CCAP INTERAGENCY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION (IIC):

All protocols and processes explained under the PCAP section for IIC will be utilized for the CCAP but there are specific actions that will be taken to ensure the correct development of the CCAP IIC. Information gathered from partners under the PCAP will be confirmed, verified, and updated if necessary. Refining of data and expanding the analysis of the climate measures will be included in this CCAP IIC.

The LSE, alongside the consultants, will closely track alignment with new or modified programs and actions at the state and federal level. This ongoing awareness of policy and/or funding changes will ensure an optimal development of climate measures in the region.

CCAP PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (PSE):

During the CCAP PSE the fellows work will adapt to the needs of the communities, looking for concrete feedback on perceptions, goals, benefits and outcomes from the community and how to collaboratively translate those into climate action and meaningful initiatives that serve the community. Level 1 and 2 stakeholders will support, alongside the consultants and the City of El Paso, all activities necessary to gather community input and strengthen the climate work in the region.

Key Deliverable #3: Status Report

Development Approach:

In the summer-fall of 2027 the Status report will be submitted to the EPA. The scope of this report will include the items described below. An internal report will be produced by Fall 2026 in order to be ready to comply with the final timeline of the program a year later.

- a. **Quantified GHG reduction measures:** Measures identified under the CCAP will be monitored and evaluated. The key indicator of this phase will be the state of implementation of the measure: finalized, in-progress, rejected/not-implemented. In case of a measure in development, next implementation steps, actions and challenges will be defined on the status report.
- b. **Updated Benefits Analysis:** co-pollutants updated data will be included in the report, including information of co-benefits as defined under the CCAP and unintended consequences of the implementation of the measures/CCAP.
- c. **Updated Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis:** identical analysis as the one conducted for the b/ section above.
- d. **Updated Review of Authority to Implement:** newly approved legislation and regulations will be identified, if applicable, under the review of authority section.
- e. **Update review of Intersection with Other Funding Availability:** updated information on federal, state and private funding available after the submission of the CCAP in 2025.
- f. **Updated Workforce Planning Analysis:** in conjunction with the regional Workforce entity, workforce development, challenges and needs will be updated.

- g. **Next Steps/Future Budget/Staffing Needs:** a detailed analysis of necessary steps for the region to continue progress towards its GHG goals and climate action will be developed. Staffing and budget needs will be defined as well as new funding sources and regulations. This section will build upon the CCAP and other relevant planning efforts for the region as of 2027.

Updates for the GHG inventory and GHG emissions projections will be developed if possible for the fall of 2027. These updates are may not be produced depending on data availability and relevance at that point for the region. Staff will be trained to use the selected software or tool for GHG calculations. This will ensure the correct tracking of the measures and projections not only for the final two years of the project (2026 and 2027) but in the long term as well. This training will be extended to regional partners of the El Paso MSA.

STATUS REPORT INTERAGENCY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION (IIC):

Specific meetings of the Steering Committee will be scheduled as soon as Spring 2026 to coordinate all necessary tasks and activities for the development of the Status report. Meeting will be held quarterly until the submission of such report. The establishment of the PDN C3 will enable the regional support for climate work beyond the development of the CCAP in an ongoing way. An intense 4-year collaborative effort between regional entities should be the initial step towards a continued and coordinated regional climate collaboration.

STATUS REPORT PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (PSE):

Paso Del Norte Climate Fellows will co-lead, alongside City of El Paso staff and consultants, the stakeholder and community engagement effort, identifying next steps and discuss potential funding opportunities and neighborhood scale projects with their respective communities.

All status updates regarding regional climate initiatives will be made available to the public through both public websites such as the City of El Paso's Office of Climate and Sustainability (OCS) web page as well as partner Social Media sites. Updates will be made monthly with updated dates to each new post. All past progress notes will be made available on the City of El Paso's (OCS) web page.

Ongoing discussions including informational in-person sessions and updates will continue with each community beyond the CPRG grant period. Climate Fellows, Level 1 and Level 2 Stakeholders will be invited back for these engagement sessions on a voluntary basis. These will serve as next steps to be taken within their local governments.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS, OUTPUTS, AND OUTCOMES

The following are representative of initial discussions with the PDN C3 and previous planning efforts. A large part of the effort in developing the PCAP will be to better understand what outcomes the community is seeking with regard to climate action. Identifying and defining what is important at the household, neighborhood and business level will be transformative for the prioritization the CCAP. While the initial outputs and outcomes may remain, the community will ultimately drive additional results and metrics.

Outputs

- Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), March 1, 2024.
- Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) Summer-Fall 2025
- Status Report, Summer-Fall 2027
- Fellowship Established and Number of Fellows successfully completing the program
- Four (4) Climate Innovation Teams events attended, Summer-Fall 2027

- Municipal staff trained on the selected methodology to calculate GHG emissions and emissions projections.
- Demographics of Engaged Residents (Focus on youth, seniors and low-moderate income)
- Awareness of community programming + regional climate change impacts
- Number of Community Partners engaged and connected with climate initiatives
- Ratio of number of events to number of community members in attendance and engaged
- Overall reach of climate communications (including social media)

Outcomes

- Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutants) reduced over the lifetime by the measures identified.
- Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutants) reduced in low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutants) reduced annually.
- Enhanced community engagement and participation on climate related activities.
- Improved staff capacity across the MSA to address the impacts of climate change.
- Creation of jobs related to the identified measures.
- Impact on climate related health concerns within our region
- Outreach outcomes
 - Establish consistent community presence
 - Establish long-term regional collaboration
 - Build community trust

Performance metrics for outputs and outcomes

The metrics necessary to track success of the implementation of the project and achievement of the outputs and outcomes will be developed before the submission of the first quarterly report. An easy-to-use tool (i.e. excel based tool) will be developed to track progress of:

- Budget: expenditures and purchases.
- Deliverables as defined for the PCAP, CCAP and Status Report
- Outputs and outcomes

The tracking and reporting tool will be updated, at least, quarterly before the submission of the reports to the EPA.

SCHEDULE:

The proposed schedule will be uploaded as a separate file.

REPORTING:

As described in Section 12.6 of the program guidance, quarterly reporting will be performed. The first report will be submitted 4 months after the signing of the agreement with EPA. These reports will cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, financial expenditures, preliminary data results if applicable, anticipated future activities, and any changes of key personnel. The development of these reports is included in the schedule and accounted for in the budget.

BUDGET:

The proposed budget will be uploaded as a separate file.

CLIMATE INNOVATION TEAMS:

The El Paso MSA is interested in participating in the Climate Innovation Teams listed below. Travel to annual convenings has been included in the workplan budget for four (4) staff members. Attendance to the CIT convenings will strengthen the project's deliverables by incorporating lessons learned and best practices from all over the nation into the El Paso MSA Climate Plan.

- Estimating emission reductions and program benefits in disadvantaged communities.
- Sector-based strategies.
- Workforce development.
- Leveraging funding from other federal, state, and private sector sources.

The El Paso MSA would be interested in exploring the option of creating a CIT focused on Climate Action for interjurisdictional territories that cross either state lines, international boundaries or both.