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Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
Funding Opportunity Number (FON) **EPA-R-OAR-CPRGP-23-01**
Planning Workplan Update
June 29, 2023

I. Workplan Summary:

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) proposes to use EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funding to comprehensively organize municipalities and the State to address three main goals, no earlier than June 1, 2023, and not to exceed four years from the project start date, running until 2027:

1. Carry out a benefits-cost analysis of actions that will ultimately reduce climate pollution throughout Central Massachusetts and North-Eastern Connecticut.
2. Engage with Environmental Justice communities to ensure that historically overburdened communities have ample access to climate investment funds. CMRPC will provide targeted outreach to EJ communities through in-person forums, surveys (online and paper), and through an environmental justice advisory committee formed of EJ community leaders.
3. Effectively utilize Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds by comprehensively exploring all climate actions to reduce climate pollution.

CMRPC recently submitted a Notice of Intent to Participate (NOIP) to develop a Priority Climate Action Plan and Comprehensive Action Plan for MSA Region 01 which encompasses the geographic area starting from the Town of Royalston in North-Central Massachusetts to the Town of Groton in East-Central Massachusetts, and South to the Towns of Voluntown and Windham in Eastern Connecticut. Through CMRPC's PCAP, we expect to target emissions reductions for the following sectors: transportation, industrial, commercial, residential thermal, electricity, agricultural, and waste incineration.

CMRPC expects that the PCAP and CCAP for MSA Region 1 will build on the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030, as this plan outlines comprehensive strategies to achieve statewide GHG emissions limits and sector-specific sub-limits adopted by the Massachusetts State Secretary for 2025 and 2030. In August of 2022, Governor Baker signed into law an additional climate law that provides additional interim targets for emissions reductions to achieve a level of GHG emissions by 2050 that can be considered net-zero. Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection also released their Integrated Resources Plan: Pathways to Achieve A 100% Zero



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Carbon Electric Sector By 2040 in October of 2021 and outlines strategies for meeting net zero carbon emissions by 2040. Not only will CMRPC utilize past clean energy plans created by both the Massachusetts and Connecticut state governments, but we will also audit municipal plans such as Municipal Climate Action Plans and towns' Energy Use Reduction Plans to help with goal formulation and project prioritization. Additionally, CMRPC plans to build on Phase I of our Regional Greenhouse Gas Analysis Project from 2022, and on Connecticut's Greenhouse Gas Inventory updates from 1990-2021. Both studies found that transportation emissions account for the highest percentages of total emissions between Central Massachusetts and Connecticut as of 2017 and 2021, respectively.

As both Massachusetts and Connecticut look forward to the next few decades of climate action, CMRPC is looking to effectively leverage the planning work that has already been completed, the emission reduction programs that are already underway across the region, as well as BIL and IRA funding to direct future climate investments to EPA Region 1 communities. The PCAP will include a Comprehensive GHG inventory for Central Massachusetts and North-Eastern Connecticut Towns and Cities, quantified GHG reduction measures for each sector, a low-income and disadvantaged communities benefits analysis, and a review of authority to implement. To aid in the development of the PCAP, we plan to hire an outside contractor to solidify a more recent baseline year to use that will help to create an accurate emissions inventory for Central Massachusetts and North-Eastern Connecticut. This vendor will also aid in the measuring of the emissions reductions of all proposed projects. Our CCAP will include a comprehensive climate action funding roadmap and will include strategies to optimize among BIL and IRA funds, as well as other state funding to fire up industrial demand for climate reduction measures, activate private investment, and grow Massachusetts and Connecticut state programs that already exist. CMRPC will also engage with community-based organizations to ensure that Environmental Justice and disadvantaged communities are included in both the planning and implementation processes for these plans, and to ensure that policy solutions and projects will reverse the harmful effects of pollution on these communities. Collaboration across state lines at both the local, regional, and state levels will be crucial for establishing an effective steering committee and technical advisory committees that address economy-wide decarbonization and build climate resilience infrastructure that lasts. CMRPC plans to collaborate with the MSA's two other regional planning agencies, Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and Connecticut's Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) to ensure effective community outreach. Community outreach events will be organized by sub-region during the fall of 2023, as most Towns within the MSA have populations of less than 40,000 residents. CMRPC plans to leverage existing state municipal programs such as the Green Communities Program and will utilize the Massachusetts Municipal Association and Connecticut Conference of Municipalities as well to ensure effective outreach.



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II. Responsible Entities

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission is committed to serving as the lead agency for this grant. Ian McElwee, Principal Planner, will be the lead contact for all grant award matters. Ian McElwee can be reached by e-mail at imcelwee@cmrpc.org and/or at 1-508-459-3331 via telephone. Our other two key partners in this grant are the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG). Karen Chapman will be the main point of contact for MRPC who can be contacted at kchapman@mrpc.org. NECCOG's main point of contact is John Filchak who can be contacted at john.filchak@necog.org.

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission plans to collaborate with local, state, & regional organizations/agencies, advisory committees and contractors during the deliverable development process. First and foremost, CMRPC plans to collaborate with other regional government organizations such as the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) and Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) through a combination of in-person and virtual meetings to provide input on draft deliverables throughout the grant process. MRPC and NECCOG have agreed to provide their full participation in this planning process as of 04/05/2023 and 05/01/2023, respectively. CMRPC plans to work with these regional planning agencies/COGs to ensure that community outreach to each municipality within the MSA is being conducted thoroughly, as RPAs have the necessary community ties for effective community outreach. Municipalities within the MSA will also have a chance to be involved in the project steering committee to oversee the planning process and provide feedback and guidance on goals, interim deliverables, community engagement activities, and vision statements. CMRPC plans to split the MSA into 12 sub-regions: 6 within CMRPC's jurisdiction, 4 within MRPC's jurisdiction, and 2 within NECCOG's jurisdiction. One municipal official will be chosen from each sub-region to represent their respective sub-region on the steering committee. CMRPC will lead steering committee meetings along with our other partner RPAs.

Other MA state agencies and groups that CMRPC plans to inform and consult with during the planning process are the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP – the state's regulator for air, water, solid waste and land use control programs), the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, the



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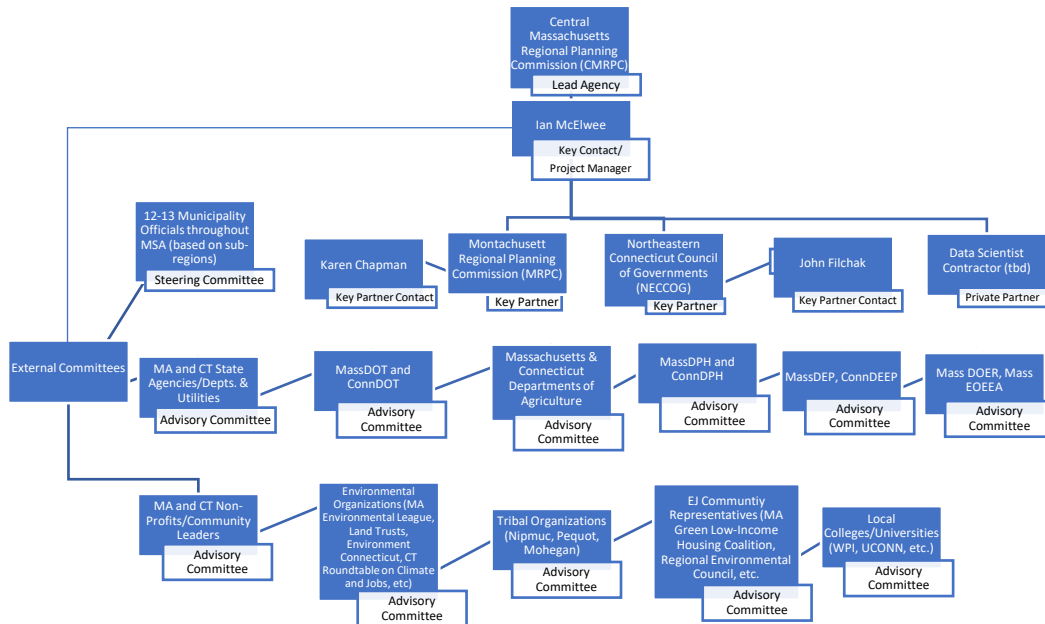
Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (Mass DOER – the state’s regulator for the Green Communities Division which focuses on the reduction of energy use and costs by implementing clean energy projects in municipal buildings, facilities, and schools across the State), and MA tribal groups. All the above-mentioned state agencies will be informed regarding data collection needs, technical expertise for the advisory committee, apprising for the PCAP and CCAP, and other niche advisory committees as needed.

Connecticut agencies and groups will be informed and consulted with as well as part of the technical advisory committee, including CT’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Public Health (DPH), Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS), Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Department of Agriculture (DoAg), Department of Housing (DOH), Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Social Services (DSS), University of Connecticut (UConn) and CT tribal agencies.

CMRPC plans to convene a Technical Advisory Committee/subcommittees as well to help provide expert/professional feedback on plan/report components. Members of this committee may include National Grid, Eversource, The Nature Conservancy (MA and CT), MassAudubon Society/Audubon Connecticut, representatives of local colleges and universities within MSA Region 1, the Environmental League of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Green Low Income Housing Coalition, the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Mass EOEEA, representative(s) from the Green Communities Program, Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs, Environment Connecticut, with others possible. CMRPC also plans to reach out to local and regional land trust associations to help inform the development of the PCAP and CCAP. As future GHG mitigation projects become identified throughout our planning process, representatives on the technical advisory committee will review these action measures to ensure that they can be effectively implemented. Projects to be reviewed could include, but are not limited to, decarbonization efforts for buildings and vehicles, tree planting, other natural restoration projects, solar and wind projects, and other renewable resource projects. Members will also provide feedback as to how to tailor projects more efficiently. We want to guarantee that all communities can benefit from the PCAP, and that no one is left behind due to a community’s population size or rural characteristics. As the technical advisory committee provides this feedback to us, sub-committees will be formed based on sub-sector (i.e. utilities, open space, transportation, etc.) to review plan deliverables and projects as needed to provide more detailed feedback that will enhance the plan. CMRPC has not assembled the advisory committee or sub-committees yet but plans to begin outreach for the advisory committee during the summer of 2023.



Additionally, CMRPC is currently in the process of finding a private data scientist contractor for all GHG data collection, climate modeling, and analysis deliverables throughout the planning process. Finally, CMRPC is committed to coordinating efforts where applicable and advantageous with the five New England based MSAs participating in the program and their lead entities in order to share resources, knowledge, and better disseminate state level planning information. An organizational chart has been developed and provided below to consolidate all of the above information.



III. Deliverables Development Process

A. Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP)

1. PCAP Development Approach

The Worcester-CT MSA Priority Climate Action Plan, or PCAP, will provide a roadmap for how CMRPC will lead its collaborating partners to conduct extensive community and stakeholder engagement, to aggregate vital information from existing plans, and to perform a sector-wide greenhouse gas inventory to use as a baseline metric. To prioritize actions to address climate change in the PCAP, CMRPC plans to also include a quantification of GHG reduction measures, a Benefit Analysis for low-income/disadvantaged folks in the region, and a review of authority to implement these measures.



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2. Formulation of Committees and Sub-Committees

To develop a robust climate action plan on an expedited timeframe, we propose to conduct several parallel activities in the first few months of the planning process. Before the planning process begins, we will establish two standing committees that will advise and guide the planning process not only throughout the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) but also the other two deliverables as required for the grant program. We will form a Steering Committee made up of 12 town officials from across the MSA (one from each sub-region) that will oversee the planning process and provide feedback and guidance on activities, goals, interim deliverables, and will assist in the community engagement activities. The steering committee will meet monthly during the planning process to ensure that the plan is meeting the goals and objectives of the program, and of the region. The first task for the steering committee will be working collaboratively to develop a draft vision statement for the plan that will be presented to and refined by the public during community engagement events described later in the planning process.

A second committee, a Technical Advisory Committee, will be formed with the goal of providing sector-specific knowledge and expertise to the plan. At first, this committee will be comprised of researchers and/or stakeholders working in the transportation, building, and waste sectors, as well as leaders and community members of the region's Environmental Justice areas. Additionally, the committee will be comprised of community members or leaders of rural, suburban, and urban communities. Once projects are identified from the planning process, members from a variety of community types will review projects to ensure that they can be effectively implemented and provide feedback as to how to tailor projects more efficiently. We want to guarantee that all communities can benefit from the PCAP, and that no one is left behind due to community's population size or rural characteristics.

While the Technical Advisory Committee will provide broad feedback during the planning process, sub-committees will be formed to look at specific sectors and projects to provide more detailed feedback that will influence and enhance the plan. We envision that these committees will meet on an as-needed or on a quarterly basis, adding members for additional sector or activity-based feedback as the plan progresses.

3. Execution of PCAP Deliverables

3.1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (Required)

Once the committees are finalized, the data collection process will commence. CMRPC understands this process will likely require a QAPP in place. Once the QAPP is complete, CMRPC will begin the planning process by developing an up-to-date and thorough, sector-specific



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Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for the region that examines every prioritized sector that emits GHGs and has usable data available to provide as accurate of an inventory as possible. Prioritized sectors within the PCAP include, but will not be limited to, Buildings, Transportation, Waste, and Agriculture. As well as GHG-emitters, carbon sinks, such as forested land/tree cover will also be incorporated into the PCAP GHG inventory.

In order to complete this, CMRPC will either independently procure a consultant to complete the inventory or enter into a group procurement with the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) (leading the Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH Metro Area) and the Southeast Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) (leading the Providence-Warwick, RI-MA Metro Area) to hire one consultant to complete inventories for each of the three regions. The consultant and CMRPC staff will work with Massachusetts and Connecticut state officials to pull applicable and useable data from each state's emissions inventories for the prioritized sectors and gather additional data from sector-specific stakeholders, MPO, state, and federal data catalogues to create the inventory. For example, for the transportation sector, CMRPC may work with the consultant to utilize EPA Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator MOVES software to calculate emissions for that sector. A baseline year will be determined based on the most recent year that we can acquire consistent data for across all sectors. For the PCAP, GHG reduction targets are not required. Reduction targets will be outlined in the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP).

3.2 GHG Emissions Projections (Not Required)

CMRPC will utilize the results from our initial modeling exercise (which will outline a recent and reasonable emissions trajectory) to establish a baseline of overall emissions. This baseline will allow CMRPC's private vendor to assess changes in GHG levels and other action benefits that we will include in the PCAP.

3.3 GHG Reduction Targets (Not Required)

GHG reduction targets are to be developed after data collection is completed and will be included in the CCAP.

3.4 Quantified GHG Reduction Measures (Required)

The same consultant will also work with CMRPC to create Quantified GHG Reduction Measures. First, CMRPC will gather GHG reduction measures from all existing plans that have been created from organizations and agencies housed within the MSA. Then, the consultant and CMRPC will develop an interactive toolkit to calculate the quantified emissions reductions for various GHG reduction projects. To quantify the GHG reduction potential of measures included in the PCAP, CMRPC will work with a private contractor to model and estimate emissions reducing potential



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at the smallest level possible to isolate individual PCAP measures with a higher degree of certainty. This tool will allow staff to enter project inputs and receive an estimate on the quantity of emissions eliminated if said project were to be implemented. This tool will be able to be used for each of the program deliverables and by local communities when developing their own climate action plans.

To aggregate the list of all measures that will be included in the PCAP, Central MA and Eastern CT will utilize the measures that are listed in the PCAP interactive toolkit, as well as those in existing and ongoing plans from across both Massachusetts and Connecticut State agencies, and as outlined and identified during our region's planned stakeholder coordination process. In addition, actions and measures included will be those that best achieve the shared goals of Massachusetts, Connecticut and the U.S. EPA: those that achieve the most significant GHG reductions and the greatest reduction of co-pollutants, projects that provide the largest number of benefits to LIDACs, projects that minimize environmental and health inequities that currently exist within the MSA, projects that are technologically viable, projects that support and grow both regions' workforce, as well as projects that are economical.

3.5 Benefits Analysis (Encouraged)

If CMRPC has the capacity early in the process, CMRPC will carry out a literature review of recent reports to describe the scope and extent of future benefits of near-term climate action to avoid climate change effects as part of a Central Massachusetts-Eastern Connecticut-wide benefits analysis under the PCAP. CMRPC will utilize the benefits estimated through the modeling exercises that will be carried out for the development of the PCAP. The modeling exercises will show the direct costs of measures to address climate change and will show effects on both Central MA and Eastern CT's economy, employment, and public health for continued and coordinated climate action out to 2035.

3.6 Low Income/Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis (Required)

CMRPC recognizes that to create an effective plan for climate action, equitable measures must be in place to account for the social, economic, and environmental oppression that has placed numerous of our communities at a disadvantage. To account for these systemic inequalities, a Low Income/Disadvantaged Communities (LIDAC) Benefits Analysis will then be performed as part of the PCAP. First, CMRPC will utilize data to identify the Environmental Justice Populations in the MSA through the EPA's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool¹ (CEJST). Using this tool, we will select the municipalities within our MSA, allowing us to identify which communities within the region are over-burdened with issues related to their environment, climate change, health, energy, pollution, workforce development, and/or lack of economic

¹ EPA LIDAC Technical Guidance available online at: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>



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opportunity, and more. We will also be sure to cross-reference this data with localized Environmental Justice data for the MSAs in each state with the Environmental Justice map viewers provided by the State of Massachusetts² and the State of Connecticut.³

Once we have collected data on the LIDAC communities within the MSA, we will undergo a Benefits Analysis, combining this data with equitable community outreach in the identified communities. We plan to hold additional outreach events in LIDAC communities, such as workshops, listening sessions, and tabling at community events that are existing independently of CPRG. This analysis of needs in LIDAC communities will allow CMRPC to plan within the PCAP in a way that accounts for the additional burden these communities may face with climate change, without over-burdening the communities while trying to mitigate these issues.

3.7 Review of Authority to Implement (Required)

A Review of Authority to Implement will be completed as part of the PCAP. CMRPC plans to assess actions and measures as they are identified and included for the PCAP to ensure that actions comply with jurisdiction requirements depending on the actor that is identified in the PCAP. CMRPC will consult with other state agencies and departments as necessary to ensure that key partners understand the authority to implement actions that are outlined in the PCAP. CMRPC will ensure that all actions taken by our organization or one of our partner organizations under the PCAP are legal under the authority of that organization. CMRPC will also consult with other Regional Planning Commissions and Local Agencies to ensure all leaders performing any actions under this grant have the legal authority to implement these actions.

3.8 Leveraged/Intersection with other Funding Opportunities (Encouraged)

As a regional planning agency that obtains much of our funding from outside of the state apparatus, CMRPC is always keeping track of funding opportunities that could become available on the state and federal level, including funding made available through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), as well as through state programs such as the Green Communities Program, MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and state revolving loan funds, among others. CMRPC plans to work closely with NECCOG to make sure that all state funding opportunities between both states are explored and accounted for adequately and that these funding opportunities have connections to entities that are identified in the PCAP. Keeping track of funding opportunities and funding recipients

² MA EEA Environmental Justice map viewer available online at: <https://mass-eoea.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1d6f63e7762a48e5930de84ed4849212>

³ CT Environmental Justice Communities WebMap available online at: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=d062c9279e8a44db8137b286d8758d56>



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and coordinating with relevant stakeholders around PCAP actions will be essential to maximize GHG reduction potential overall.

3.9 Stakeholder Engagement Activities (Required)

CMRPC plans to consult representatives on the steering committee once per month to ensure that the PCAP is meeting the goals and objectives of the program and of Massachusetts and Connecticut, as well as to provide feedback on the analysis, planning, and implementation of policies and projects. CMRPC will also consult with the technical advisory committee and associated sub-committees bi-monthly to provide expert/professional feedback on plan/report components and ensure that disadvantaged populations are included in the planning process. CMRPC plans to conduct two rounds of outreach to each sub-region throughout the duration of the project, with the first round focusing on assessing community priorities, and the second round focusing on gathering feedback for future GHG reduction projects in the region. CMRPC plans to partner with translators as needed to ensure that non-native English speakers are accommodated. CMRPC also plans to create a website to further engage members of the public and interested stakeholders about PCAP deliverables, to showcase the emissions toolkit, and to serve as a way for community members to provide additional feedback throughout the process.

4. Utilization of Previous Plans

While the emissions inventory is being developed, CMRPC staff will conduct a robust audit of existing local plans that will provide relevant information for these efforts, such as Climate Action Plans, GHG Inventories, Heat Resiliency Plans, and community-wide Master/Comprehensive Plans. Assessment of these plans will be used to determine what aspects of climate pollution reductions have already been identified, planned, completed, and measured, as well as the existing concerns of communities as it relates to climate change and environmental/energy resiliency. This will help inform the community engagement and outreach efforts that we will conduct throughout the region on a comprehensive scale.

5. PCAP Stakeholder and Community Engagement

5.1 Breakdown of RPA Leadership

As the leading entity of this grant, CMRPC staff will lead community and stakeholder engagement efforts under the PCAP. RPA staff within the MSA will spearhead community engagement events. CMRPC staff will lead the engagement efforts that occur within the CMRPC region. We will include Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee members to help lead the engagement efforts where appropriate as these members understand their communities and topics in a different, meaningful, and localized way, compared to CMRPC staff. Where engagement activities occur in towns within the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG), CMRPC



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will sub-contract with those regional planning agencies to lead the engagement with guidance and support from CMRPC staff. Enlisting the appropriate RPA for the town hosting a community outreach event will provide the local expertise necessary to enhance the effectiveness of events. However, CMRPC will manage the corresponding RPA's involvement, ensuring the events hosted by other RPAs are productive under the goals of the PCAP.

5.2 Engagement Activities: Phase I (Fall 2023)

As required for each deliverable in the CPRG program and to ensure that the PCAP is a community-driven plan with realistic and implementable action items, stakeholder community engagement throughout the region will be an essential part of the plan as soon as efforts begin. For the community engagement process of the plan, we will engage with the public in interactive meetings and will utilize elements from the Community Resilience Builder Process and the C40 Cities Inclusive Community Engagement Playbook. Community-specific stakeholders will be carefully selected and invited to all engagement events, ensuring representatives are present from all GHG-emitting priority sectors. This includes, but will not be limited to the MBTA and WRTA for transportation, managers of electrical powerplants for energy, and stakeholders within the agricultural, industrial, commercial, and residential sectors in both MA and CT. During engagement events, at different stations, we will ask stakeholders and community members to comment on the draft vision for the plan, map areas of vulnerability that should be addressed in the plan, and to create strategies for reducing emissions region-wide. We will also explain why we must plan for climate change, and how both a changing climate and the plan will impact their communities.

5.3 Survey Distribution and Analysis (Winter 2024)

Immediately following the engagement activities, CMRPC will create a survey designed to gather resident-input on how GHG-reduction measures and climate action measures should be prioritized based on their local knowledge and experience. The survey will be created by CMRPC, and CMRPC will lead distribution within our region. We will provide direction and guidance for the other RPAs within our MSA to distribute this survey in their corresponding regions. The survey will be distributed via email, social media, town mailers (ex. Water and tax bills), and will be available in print at town halls for residents who are not comfortable filling out a survey online.

Informed by the results of this prioritization survey, CMRPC will work with the data analysis consultant to develop a list of projects that will have a significant, and calculable impact on reducing emissions. Next, CMRPC's consultant will develop an interactive and versatile toolkit with the capability of taking a variety of inputs over different sectors and applying calculations to provide a measurable output of emissions reductions for future projects that could be



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implemented within the MSA. This toolkit will take existing calculations on emissions reduction efforts and place them in one location, whether that is a spreadsheet or online platform, so that users can input different variables for different projects and return an output with as much accuracy as possible. This will ensure that performance metrics are standard across the region for accurate reporting of emissions reductions against the established baseline. As soon as a workable toolkit is created, we hope to share it with the communities in the region for their use in their own local climate action plans as well.

5.4 Engagement Activities: Phase II (Winter 2024)

Once strategies have been prioritized through the survey analysis and staff have developed full projects with measurable results, a second phase of community engagement events will take place. This second phase will provide community members with a final chance to provide input and understand the next steps in the CPRG planning process. These events will take the form of a presentation of the prioritization of climate action and GHG reduction strategies so far and will offer a space for community and stakeholder discussion in response to these results.

Geographically, we will approach this phase similarly with CMRPC guiding the phase overall, and RPAs leading the events within their region.

5.5 Culmination of Results into the PCAP (February 2024)

Following the second phase of community engagement, CMRPC will use the results from these events in CMRPC's, NECCOG's, and MRPC's regions to finalize the PCAP project list. Meanwhile, staff will also review the proposed projects in the plan to determine which authorities have the authority to implement the projects and will work with these entities to understand the projects in further scope and detail so they have the information ready to apply for implementation funding when that time arrives.

B. Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

1. CCAP Development Approach:

Following the submission of the PCAP, staff will begin the planning process for the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). For the CCAP, we expect to follow a similar planning structure as outlined for the PCAP to complete the plan. However, the CCAP will take an even more enhanced approach. First, the CCAP will include an economy wide GHG inventory, accounting for all GHG emitting and sinking sectors, while the PCAP will focus on selected priority sectors. In addition, the CCAP will include additional analysis and outreach efforts to examine the short and long-term GHG-reduction goals and climate action projects and opportunities. For the CCAP, we will separate the identification of short-term goals as those the



MSA will achieve from the date that the plan is completed through 2035, and long-term goals as those from when the plan is completed through 2050. Not only will the CCAP provide these short and long-term goals, but it will provide measures to achieve those goals for GHG-reduction in the MSA.

2. CCAP Stakeholder and Community Involvement

2.1 Augmenting Steering Committee Efforts (Summer 2024)

At the beginning of the planning process, we will meet internally and with the steering committee to discuss the successes and challenges the RPAs and steering committee faced with the PCAP. We will discuss strengths and weaknesses in outreach efforts and data collection and analysis. This will allow the RPAs and the steering committee to better inform the ways in which CMRPC can lead in enhancing this work for the CCAP process, and will result in more comprehensive deliverables, meeting the requirements of the CCAP (outlined below in section 3).

2.2 CCAP Engagement Phase I: Enhancing Outreach (Fall 2024 – Winter 2025)

We propose to utilize a similar planning structure as the PCAP to allow the CCAP to benefit from the established connections made with event spaces, community events, local stakeholders, and more during PCAP organization. Although we want to do this to build on the connections made in the previous deliverable, CMRPC also commits to further outreaching to other groups that were under-utilized or under-engaged during the PCAP process. We plan to conduct two rounds of community engagement. The first will be at the beginning of the CCAP process to discuss and solidify short and long-term GHG-reduction goals with the stakeholders and residents within our MSA. The second round of outreach events in each sub-region will allow CMRPC and our partners to engage the public in proposed projects, next steps, and what strategies to achieve these goals will look like for the community. Like the efforts being made under the PCAP, RPAs will coordinate engagement events within their regions, with CMRPC providing guidance.

2.3 CCAP Engagement Phase II: Region-Wide Event (Fall 2024)

In addition to the two rounds of outreach to each sub-region, we plan on holding an event for the entire MSA to bring together community members and discuss topics and concerns that we've found to be commonalities throughout the region. For this day-long event, CMRPC will work with our partnering RPAs to organize breakout sessions. Each breakout session will be led by technical advisory committee members. This event will bring stakeholders, community leaders, and residents under the same roof to identify the goals and issues that are most common across each sector and Environmental Justice populations. CMRPC will be equipped to present the results of previous engagement events and audits of existing relevant climate-



related plans. This activity will be particularly useful when considering region-wide strategies to approaching climate change and emissions reduction efforts. We hope to coordinate with Connecticut and Massachusetts state officials to use this opportunity to discuss each state's approach to long term climate change planning and how the regional CCAP can be integrated into the two states' CCAPs as well. CMRPC will then be able to use all the data and community responses from across the MSA to inform the CCAP Deliverables.

3. Execution of CCAP Deliverables

3.1 Economy-Wide GHG Inventory (Required)

For the CCAP's inventorying, GHG emissions and sinks must be collected on an economy-wide scale. This means that this inventory will include the prioritized sectors from the PCAP, but it will also include the following sectors:

- Industry
- Electricity generation and/or use
- Transportation
- Commercial and residential buildings
- Agriculture
- Waste
- Materials Management

In this analysis, we will also account for carbon sinks, as they will impact the amount of GHGs emitted by the region as well. This inventory will show emissions annually, by sector. CMRPC staff will complete this additional analysis in-house and will utilize a private contract with the same data scientist to help perform the analysis.

3.2 GHG Emissions Projections (Required)

Not required in the PCAP, the CCAP will include GHG Emissions Projections in the CCAP as well. CMRPC will utilize the GHG inventory as the baseline for emissions and create three different pathways into the coming ~25 years based on scenarios with Rigorous GHG Reduction Measures, Some GHG Reduction Measures, and Business as Usual for the MSA. CMRPC will work with the outside consultant to utilize the Quantified Emissions Reductions Factor Tool created in the PCAP to identify these three summary pathways for the future of GHG emissions for the MSA.

3.3 GHG Reduction Targets (Required)



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The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) strives for Massachusetts to achieve at least 85% GHG reductions by 2050.⁴ The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection strives for the state to reduce state-wide GHG emissions by 80% below 2001 levels by 2050.⁵ For the Worcester-Connecticut MSA, CMRPC is setting the reduction targets will be in-line with those of the State of Massachusetts, at an 85% reduction by 2050, because it is the more ambitious goal between the two states. We will also consider an even more ambitious goal of reaching a 100% reduction in emissions by 2050 at the latest, depending on actual and forecasted emissions numbers.

3.4 Quantified GHG Reduction Measures (Required)

Like that completed for the PCAP, CMRPC will work with the outside consultant to create GHG reduction measures that can be quantified. This will allow planners to curate which of the measures are most impactful to their community, and to create a combination of measures to meet both local and MSA-wide GHG reduction goals. Having quantified GHG reduction measures for proposed projects will be incredibly helpful when it comes time for communities within our MSA to apply for action grant funding.

3.5 Benefits Analysis for the full geographic scope and population covered by the plan (Required)

As staff start to review potential action items and take note of additional funding opportunities for project implementation, our private data scientist contractor will work on conducting a cost-benefits analysis to aid in action item prioritizations. It is the intention of the plan to highlight and prioritize projects with the highest benefit to cost ratio, particularly where actions benefit EJ communities, and the cost does not fall on those individuals.

3.6 Low Income/ Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis (Required)

For the LIDAC Benefit Analysis for the CCAP, CMRPC will utilize the plan we have set forth in section 3.6 in Section A of this document. In addition to the actions outlined in Section A, CMRPC will ensure that all RPAs add new information that we acquired throughout the community engagement processes since the PCAP LIDAC Benefits Analysis, as well as information regarding updated GHG and air pollution data, qualitative data on disadvantaged communities and climate change impacts and mitigation effort costs.

3.7 Review of Authority to Implement (Required)

To assess the authority to implement the many measures outlined in these plans, CMRPC will perform the actions outlined in section 3.7 under Section A of this report.

⁴ MA Decarbonation Roadmap available online at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/ma-decarbonization-roadmap#:~:text=EEA%20has%20developed%20a%20roadmap,pathways%20to%20net%2Dzero%20emissions.>

⁵ CT DEEP Press Release available online at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/News-Releases/News-Releases---2023/New-CT-GHG-Inventory-Report-Shows-Overall-Emissions-Decline-but-Need-for-Further-Faster-Reductions#:~:text=The%20state%20first%20set%20targets,below%202001%20levels%20by%202050.>



3.8 Intersection with Other Funding Availability (Required)

CMRPC will also keep a constant awareness of current funding availabilities and opportunities that will bolster or complement the work proposed in the CCAP. CMRPC will identify funding opportunities that will progress the short and long-term GHG reduction goals. For example, CMRPC will be sure to monitor opportunities through the federal Inflation Reduction Act, as well as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This supplemental funding will be instrumental in furthering the goals outlined in the PCAP and CCAP, so CMRPC will ensure we are keeping in tune with opportunities as they open. We will ensure that any funding gaps are added to the Status Report.

3.9 Workforce Planning Analysis (Required)

The CCAP will include an analysis of how our planning efforts will contribute to job production for clean energy, clean technology, and environmental protection for workers within the MSA. CMRPC will also assess the need for high quality training within these sectors that will eventually lead to GHG reductions. CMRPC will create a sector-by-sector assessment of job positions that have been created because of the planning efforts under the CCAP and will work with both Workforce Development offices between Massachusetts and Connecticut to do so. Overall, CMRPC will seek advice from the other RPAs, as well as state and local labor force entities between Massachusetts and Connecticut to assure that workforce training needs for workers are being met.

C. Status Report

1. Status Report Development Approach

For the final deliverable, we plan on continuing the planning process used for the first two deliverables with a modified timeline. As was the case for the CCAP, this planning process will begin with an internal discussion of the successes and challenges of the previous phase and will devise an updated process to minimize any ongoing issues. Staff will look at projects implemented from the PCAP and CCAP and, utilizing the toolkits developed for the previous plans, conduct a thorough analysis to understand the full impact and scope of the emissions reduction efforts for the region. Along with providing an update on the GHG reduction measures, the status report will focus on the benefits of these reductions in the MSA.

2. Execution of Status Report Deliverables

2.1 Status of Quantified GHG Reduction Measures (Required)

As part of the Status Report, CMRPC will report on the progress of implementation of the quantified GHG reduction measures in the MSA. CMRPC will organize guidelines for a report for each RPA that has towns within the MSA to complete, to measure the status of the GHG



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reduction measures being implemented within the NECOGG and MRPC regions. CMRPC will also create a status report for the GHG reduction measures being implemented.

2.2 Updated Benefits Analysis for the full geographic scope and population covered by the plan (Required)

Using GIS, we will examine municipalities where projects were implemented, and assess how Environmental Justice communities have responded to these goals. This will allow CMRPC, partnering RPAs, and our private data scientist contractor to understand who and what needs to be done in the future to ensure that all vulnerable groups can benefit from climate resiliency projects.

2.3 Updated Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis (Required)

CMRPC recognizes that to provide equitable climate planning, a LIDAC analysis cannot simply be performed once. It needs to be repeated throughout the process to accurately assess the progress for low-income and disadvantaged communities. Therefore, a LIDAC Benefits Analysis will be performed to provide an update of progress in the status report. This will take on the form used for the previous LIDAC analyses, in sections 3.6 A and 3.6 B in this workplan above.

2.4 Updated Review of Authority to Implement (Required)

To assess the authority to implement the many measures outlined in these plans, CMRPC will perform the actions outlined in section 3.7 under Section A, and section 3.7 under Section B of this work plan.

2.5 Review of Intersection with Other Funding Availability (Required)

CMRPC staff will consistently review local, state, and federal funding opportunities along with non-profit grant programs that can be used to continue to fund projects from the PCAP and CCAP. These additional funding opportunities will significantly help ensure emissions can continue to decline in the region as we move towards the emissions targets set by Connecticut and Massachusetts officials.

2.6 Updated Workforce Planning Analysis (Required)

CMRPC will perform a workforce planning analysis during the status report to track how these planning efforts have influenced job production and the labor force in the MSA. This analysis will use similar structure as that performed during section 3.9 of Section B, CCAP.

2.7 Next Steps/Future Budget/Staffing Needs (Required)



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The status report will be a great way to understand the work that has been achieved in the region. It will also serve as a study of successes, of challenges that RPAs have faced throughout the planning process, and of what needs to continue or change in the future.

IV. Outputs

The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Overall, the three main expected outputs from the CPRG planning grant will include the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), and Status Report. CMRPC also expects to hold at least one community engagement event per sub-region (12 total events) in the fall of 2023 to assess community needs for the Priority Climate Action Plan. Following these outreach events, we will distribute a survey that will ask for community feedback regarding the development of proposed climate pollution reduction projects. We will hold at least 1 more outreach event per sub-region after the survey has been distributed and analyzed to discuss survey results and updates to the development of the PCAP. To aid in the development of the PCAP and CCAP, CMRPC will also assemble a steering committee of representatives from all 12 sub-regions within the MSA to meet monthly throughout the duration of the grant process to guide the planning process. We will have 12 representatives, (one person from each of CMRPC’s six sub-regions, one from each of NECCOG’s two sub-regions, and one from each of MRPC’s four sub-regions). In addition to the steering committee, CMRPC also plans to assemble a technical advisory committee made up of state and local stakeholders from across the region: urban, suburban, and rural community leaders, Environmental Justice community leaders, local climate advocacy groups, academic leaders from local colleges, as well as representatives from State environmental, energy, transportation, housing, and utility agencies. This committee will meet quarterly, and we will have at least 25 representatives in this committee. CMRPC also plans to conduct regional tabling sessions in conjunction with other RPAs in the MSA region (at least two sessions per sub-region during the fall months, and at least one event per sub-region will be in an Environmental Justice/vulnerable population-designated area within the MSA). CMRPC also plans to develop an Emissions Reduction Quantifier Toolkit with a private consultant as another output - this tool would measure the amount of air pollutants being removed from the atmosphere based on the scope of different climate actions outlined in the PCAP. This toolkit will be an effective way of measuring several of the outcomes that are listed in the “Outcomes” section below, including Tons of pollution reduced over a lifetime, Tons of pollution reduced annually, and Tons of pollution reduced with respect to Environmental Justice, low-income and disadvantaged communities. CMRPC also plans to work with MRPC, NECCOG, other MA and CT State agencies, and with our technical advisory board to disseminate information about CPRG progress at every key milestone via stakeholder websites, social media and/or listservs. CMRPC will also submit quarterly performance progress reports which will include grant fund reporting elements and summaries of the project activity and status of outputs during the reporting



period. Finally, the final report will include a detailed summary of activities completed during the grant project period, copies of all deliverables, a synopsis of outputs and outcomes achieved, and a financial summary of expenditures during the grant period.

V. Outcomes, Metrics, Performance Measures

Expected outcomes from the projects to be funded under the EPA CPRG grant program will generally include the following, (with additional information provided in a table that follows):

- Tons of pollution (GHGs and co-pollutants) reduced over the lifetime of the measures identified in the PCAP and the CCAP;
- Tons of pollution (GHGs and co-pollutants) reduced annually;
- Tons of pollution (GHGs and co-pollutants) reduced with respect to Environmental Justice, low-income and disadvantaged communities;
- Expanded staff capacity to implement policies to address climate change;
- Enhanced community engagement;
- Improved ambient air quality;
- Health benefits achieved; and,
- Increased public awareness of climate action projects and associated results (primarily through the creation and dissemination of a webpage that will further engage members of the public and interested stakeholders about PCAP deliverables, to showcase the emissions toolkit, and to serve as a way for community members to provide additional feedback throughout the process)

Additional information about how this project will achieve all environmental outputs and outcomes as described and measured is in the table below.

Outputs	Output Metric	Outcomes	Outcome Metrics
Priority Climate Action Plan	Finalization of plan.	Reduce pollution over the lifetime of measures	Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutants) reduced over the lifetime of measures identified in the PCAP and CCAP.
Benefits analysis	Completion of analysis for PCAP and CCAP	Reduce co-pollutants out to a certain year (the year is to be determined upon initial review of data for PCAP); increase	



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		health and economic benefits	
Low Income/Disadvantaged Communities (LIDAC) Benefits Analysis	Completion of analysis for PCAP and CCAP	Reduce co-pollutants and estimate benefits for low-income and disadvantaged communities where possible.	Number of meetings LIDAC residents engage in
Comprehensive Action Plan	Finalization of plan	Reduce pollution during one defined period.	Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutant) reduced annually.
Status Report	Finalization of plan	Reduce pollution for low-income/disadvantaged communities.	Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutant) reduced with respect to low income and disadvantaged communities.
Emissions Reduction Quantifier Toolkit	Completion of toolkit	Calculate project emissions reductions	Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutants) reduced over the lifetime of measures identified in the PCAP and CCAP.
Community surveys	Completion of draft surveys	Enhance community engagement	Number of survey responses received
Stakeholder & community engagement	Number of outreach events held, number of stakeholders engaged, number of state and federal departments/agencies engaged, number of visits to CPRG website.		
Engage low-income disadvantaged community members by	Number of low-income disadvantaged community	Reduce pollution at lowest cost for each State	Tons of pollution (GHG and co-pollutant) per dollar of state investment.



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participating in climate planning meetings.	members participating in meetings		
Webpage(s)	Completion of webpage(s)	Increase public awareness of climate action projects.	Number of tabling events held; number of social media posts circulated; number of visits to website
		Improved ambient air quality	Air Quality Index (EPA measurements)
		Increased capacity for climate action planning	Number of collaborative projects created
		Increase public health benefits	Number of deaths/total population (mortality rate)

V. Reporting

CMRPC will act as the Responsible Entity consistent with the requirements of grant submission under grants.gov, including completion of all grant deliverables. CMRPC will also rely on MRPC and NECCOG for completion of quarterly program reports. CMRPC will also maintain the project reporting worksheet template as developed by US EPA. A private contractor will be hired to assist with data collection needs, with development of the emissions reduction quantifier toolkit, and in the completion of the written deliverables. CMRPC is an experienced manager of State and federal funds and has enough capacity to monitor the progress and compliance of grant reporting and administration.

VI. Schedule

Please see Appendix – CMRPC CPRG Timeline.

