

24 February 2025

Laguna Beach City Council  
505 Forest Avenue  
Laguna Beach, CA  
via Email



Dear Members of the Laguna Beach City Council,

Climate Action Campaign is a nonprofit climate policy watchdog with a mission to end the climate crisis through equitable and effective policy action. We are deeply committed to supporting local governments in adopting and implementing bold climate solutions to create a sustainable, equitable future for all.

We would like to commend the City of Laguna Beach for drafting an updated Climate Action Plan (CAP). Laguna Beach has long been a leader in Orange County, setting an example with one of the region's earliest CAPs. This forward-thinking approach reflects your community's shared commitment to addressing the climate crisis while safeguarding Laguna Beach's cherished natural beauty and quality of life.

As you move forward with this critical initiative, we urge the City to adopt and fully implement an updated CAP that is CEQA-qualified, legally binding, equitable, and aligned with the latest climate science and California's ambitious climate laws. Such a plan would not only enhance public health and resilience to climate impacts, but also position Laguna Beach to capitalize on the billions of dollars in state and federal funding available for climate-related projects in the coming years.

We are encouraged by the breadth of strategies outlined in the draft CAP, which demonstrates the City's serious commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and addressing the climate crisis holistically. By tackling emissions from multiple sources, including transportation, building energy use, and waste, the City is laying the groundwork for meaningful and sustained progress. We are particularly heartened to see the inclusion of measures to support vulnerable communities—efforts that will contribute to a healthier, more equitable future for all Laguna Beach residents.

Furthermore, we are pleased to see that the City is considering joining a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program. Orange County's existing CCA, the Orange County Power Authority (OCPA), has demonstrated the significant emissions reduction potential of transitioning to cleaner energy sources. By joining a CCA, Laguna Beach can take a major step toward achieving its climate goals while offering residents and businesses access to cleaner

energy with stable rates and a reliable funding source that will provide tens of millions of dollars each year for programs to decarbonize Laguna Beach homes and businesses. We strongly encourage the City to pursue this opportunity as part of its climate strategy.

However, while we applaud the draft CAP's ambitious vision, **we believe there is room for improvement to ensure successful implementation and accountability.** Tables 8 and 9 provide valuable details about GHG emissions reductions and lead departments for each strategy, but the plan would benefit greatly from specific timelines and measurable targets for implementation. A previous version of the plan including phrases such as “immediate,” “near-term,” “medium-term,” and “long-term”, which were vague and did not provide the clarity needed for effective action. The current version of the plan presented on the website does not even include that, presenting no timelines which could hinder “effective implementation of the CAAP” as that “requires clear timeframes” as Page 109 of the Draft CAAP states. Assigning concrete deadlines—such as specifying completion years or target ranges—would give the community and stakeholders a clearer sense of urgency and progress.

Specificity in implementation timelines also facilitates better tracking of progress and ensures that interim milestones can be celebrated, while course corrections can be made when necessary. This transparency fosters trust and accountability while enabling the City to better communicate its climate efforts to residents and attract potential funding partners.

We encourage the City to approach this CAP update as a chance to showcase leadership and innovation. With Laguna Beach's unique coastal location and reputation for environmental stewardship, you're well-positioned to set a new standard for climate action in Orange County and beyond. A bold and fully implemented CAP will not only reduce emissions but also inspire other cities to follow, creating a ripple effect of climate leadership across the region.

In closing, we extend our gratitude to the City of Laguna Beach for your dedication to addressing the climate crisis and for the opportunity to provide input on this critical initiative. Climate Action Campaign stands ready to support your efforts to finalize and implement an ambitious CAP that reflects the values and aspirations of your community. Together, we can build a climate-safe, climate-ready Laguna Beach that thrives for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Martinez  
Orange County Climate Equity Advocate and Organizer  
Climate Action Campaign