

Regional Early Action Planning Grants (REAP) Annual Report for 2021 (Jan-Dec)

<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/reap.shtml>
[March 2021 template]



Instructions

The following form is to be used for satisfying the annual reporting requirements of Health and Code section 50515.04. The annual report utilizing this form must be submitted to HCD by April 1 of the year following receipt of funds and annually thereafter until funds are expended. Applicants must submit the annual report to HCD by email at reap@hcd.ca.gov. Safety

Applicant Name: Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG)

Overall Context:

The REAP project in Humboldt County will supplement the planning resources of all seven local cities and the unincorporated county, which collectively serve a population of 135,500 people over an expanse of 3,500 square miles. The smallest incorporated city has 324 residents, the largest (Eureka, the county seat) has 26,966; the median city population is 3,373. The seven cities, by and large, cluster around the "Greater Humboldt Bay Area," which has the most access to jobs, housing, and services. The unincorporated County area is expansive and has more than half of the population (67,700). Unincorporated McKinleyville has the third largest population with approximately 17,200 residents.

The small cities do not have staff dedicated to housing, and it is not unusual for staff who work in Community Development Departments to also do duty for other departments. Three of the seven cities contract their planning and engineering functions to professional private firms. The county's staff are stretched to deal with issues from the most remote residences on large acreages, to the fastest-growing area that is car-centered and tends to sprawl. County community plans are varied, limited, or non-existent.

Humboldt County has not been able to build housing apace with demand and affordability due to: lack of buildable parcels due to geography (e.g. Almquist Priolo Zone), wastewater and stormwater infrastructure constraints, limited fire-protection service, land use and/or zoning ordinances that prohibit or constrain mixed-use or higher density development; insufficient access to funding for pre-

development; political and/or public resistance to infill development. Some jurisdictions have lagged behind in updating their General Plans, Local Coastal Plans, or Housing Elements. The aging housing stock also limits, and eventually decreases, the housing inventory in Humboldt.

Humboldt County is experiencing increasing challenges in supplying enough housing. In recent years, Humboldt has become a magnet due to its more mild climate (drawing “climate refugees”), and relatively lower housing prices. The COVID-19 pandemic led to more people relocating to Humboldt while working remotely. When these transplants earn higher salaries from outside the area, and/or have sold houses in markets with higher prices, they can afford to pay more for a house in Humboldt and out compete residents who make wages in the lower-paying Humboldt job market. The local housing market is now also responding to Humboldt State University transitioning to Cal Poly Humboldt, which is expected to double student enrollment within seven years.

The solutions include approaching land use and transportation planning at the regional level, to plan housing cooperatively to maximize jobs-housing balances and minimize escalating household vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Along these lines, the jurisdictions have joined together to develop a regional climate action plan (CAP), which will be a guide for each jurisdiction building out housing and transportation in ways that will help meet the State’s goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. REAP funds will be allocated for CEQA streamlining for the CAP, with a Program EIR that the County of Humboldt will take the lead on, and all cities can tier off of. The REAP funds also created the timely opportunity to develop the regional CAP environmental document and VMT analysis in tandem, allowing for a more efficient and effective regional approach to VMT analysis and setting a regional baseline. The goal is to have 100% of the jurisdictions adopt the Regional Climate Action Plan and VMT analysis, with a certified environmental document pursuant to CEQA.

HCAOG is able to promote, support, and advocate more expressly for accelerating housing in infill areas after the HCAOG Board updated and adopted the Regional Transportation Plan (January 2022). The new RTP has “Safe and Sustainable Transportation Targets” that are ambitious and call for reducing VMT, increasing infill residential development, increasing multi-modal and equitable access, creating “30-minute communities,” and expanding active transportation project funding, among other climate-friendly targets.

HCAOG submitted a full application in January, and HCD asked us to revise the housing-production indicators. HCAOG consulted with the local REAP planning group to identify new metrics.

While waiting for the amended contract during the rest of 2021, the year’s accomplishments included: continued education and outreach to stakeholders; convening monthly meetings with the local REAP planning group (city and county planning staff and others) and other multi-agency working groups; giving presentations on the REAP program; following jurisdictions’ progress on General Plans; helping residents understand the RHNA process and its role in their city’s Housing Element updates; disseminating HCD/MPO/RTPA resources made available through REAP (and SB2, etc.) (e.g. Housing Hub, webinars (SCAG, ILG), templates (MTA), FAQs, etc.).

Project Highlights, Best Practices and Recent and Anticipated Achievements:

In 2021, HCAOG has continued to convene the local REAP planning group, which guides the REAP program activities by reaching consensus on priority activities, tasks, and funding suballocations. (This local REAP planning group includes County, City, Housing Authorities, and Cal Poly Humboldt staff, plus housing advocacy organizations and planning consultants.) The group members helped determine the activities and the Indicators of Housing Production for the full (“75%”) REAP application. HCAOG also continued to participate in the statewide REAP Group facilitated by CALCOG.

HCAOG released an RFQ for a consultant bench (for suballocations to cities and the County). One firm sent qualifications, and they are now on HCAOG’s list of qualified consultants. No services started during 2021, as HCAOG was waiting for the amended contract from HCD. (HCAOG is not able to advance other funds to pay for the consultants and must wait for REAP funds to be available before commencing the contract services (i.e., suballocating funds). Similarly, the Cities do not have fiscal capacity to advance payments and be reimbursed. Although the County can work for reimbursement, the departments cannot encumber funds until HCAOG has the executed contract with HCD.)

While awaiting the amended contract, the planning group continued to define and refine priorities for suballocations to jurisdictions, equitable distribution, and how to prioritize and evaluate needs (including meeting and giving feedback for the Regional Technical Assistance Plan). The group accomplished getting agreement that the County of Humboldt will serve as the regional GIS portal for housing sites inventories for all the Cities; this will especially help the Cities that do not have GIS/mapping staff (five of the seven), and will create a central, public, online source.

HCAOG participated in two new regional collaboratives involving housing. One group focuses on addressing the housing crisis; it includes City Councilmembers and upper-level management from economic development, major employers (e.g., Cal Poly Humboldt, Open Door Clinic), realtors, and government planning staff. The group has asked HCAOG to advise them on housing leadership training and the RHNA process. The other group is a “hub” for “supporting transitions to decarbonized and resilient communities,” which includes better integrating transportation and land uses.

Upcoming achievements that we expect are (once the executed contract and up-front funds are received): to start disbursing suballocation funds to jurisdictions; to start awarding small grants for multi-media education projects; to release the RFP for services for CEQA compliance; to assist jurisdictions with Prohousing Designation Program; to strategize for training opportunities apart from what will be covered with the *HCAOG Regional Technical Assistance Plan* (RTAP) from the North State Team.

Status of Activities:

Note: The activity categories are from the Advance Allocation Request

Activity Category	General Description	Amount Allocated	Amount Expended in 2021	Timing	Status & upcoming milestones	Regional impact on housing
(II) Review local housing elements, GP, LCPs [REAP Activity #2]	Review regional climate action plan SOW; survey cities' GPs, LCPs, code updates, new ADU ordinances, affordable housing proposals.	12,000	\$1,569.44	Sept 2020 thru 2021	In progress/continuing.	n.a.
(III) Identify best practices; outreach and education [REAP Activity #1, #3, #4]	Disseminate resources, best practices, HCD Hub, and Pro-Housing Designation info. Attend local agencies' and multi-agency housing meetings. Develop multimedia public outreach program. Survey tribal entities and housing service providers. Correspondence w/ planning constituents.	8,000	\$4,892.86	Apr 2020–2023	In progress/continuing. Award small grants for multi-media educational-outreach materials.	Increase professional knowledge in pro-housing & AFFH policies; increase staff access to templates and sample ordinances (increase staff efficiency); increase adoption of pro-housing policies; increase acceptance/ promotion of infill development. Enhance public discourse on housing (YIMBY, NIMBY, etc.).
(IV) Preliminary outreach to municipalities, housing service providers [REAP Activity #1, #2, #3, #5]	Introduce program, establish roles and organize group(s) for informing full grant application. Contact agencies, colleges, CBOs, special districts. Present to councils, commissions, etc. Plan collaborative mtgs.	4,000	\$2,000		Completed	Increase collaboration on a regional approach to increasing housing and jobs/housing balances
(V) Develop scope of work for full project application [REAP Activity #3]	Collaborate with and convene stakeholders to identify program needs, activities, tasks. Survey local planners for T.A. consultant planning needs.	18,000	\$5,690.75	Jan-April 2021	Completed. Final RTAP from HCD/North State Team.	Increase agency/staff capacity for meeting needs in planning and permitting processes; more streamlined permitting; more pro-

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					Up-front funds to be received.	housing policies in Housing Elements, zoning, codes
(VI) Estimate suballocations; consensus on budget [REAP Activity #1, #2]	Work with stakeholders to devise budget for full project activities and scope-of-work for consultant bench. Convene planner meetings for consensus on suballocation.	4,000	\$3,084.90	Dec 2020–Sept 2022	In progress/continuing. Subcontracts for jurisdictions using consultant bench services.	Apply a regional approach to prioritize shared funding for accelerating housing.
(VII) Education and outreach strategies for 6 th cycle [REAP Activity #5]		5,000	\$0	June 2020–Sept 2023	Not yet started.	increase number of jurisdictions trying new land use designations and incentive programs to accelerate housing production
(1a) Administration costs [REAP Activity #6]	Participate in statewide REAP group; prepare REAP applications and reports; overall project management.	4,100	\$7,262.15	Jan 2020–Oct 2023	In progress.	n.a.

Total expended by fiscal year:

FY 19-20 \$3,497.19

FY 20-21 \$32,502.85

FY 21-22 Q1&Q2 (July-Dec 2021) \$10,582.45

To 12/31/21 \$46,582.49 [Advance approved = \$60,000]

Summary of Indicators of Housing Production:

Self-reported data by cities and counties is available on HCD's [Housing Element and Implementation and APR Data Dashboard](#)
HCD post-submission corrections

Housing Production Indicator	Baseline Year 2019	Current Year 2021	Cumulative Change	Notes
Building Permits	179 357	238 275	417 - 82	(baseline year # corrected from 1 st annual report)
Certificates of Occupancy	109	54	- 55	
Completed Entitlements	8	54 90	62 +82	
Housing development applications received by local governments (proposed units)	632	266	898	
Housing units constructed (completed)	128	159	287	
Other				

Additional Information: