

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

RPC Task: EPACPRG

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is seeking qualified professional services for the completion of a regional Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) funded by and compliant with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. The CCAP will include multiple analyses to identify the sources and impacts of greenhouse gasses (GHGs) and co-pollutants, describe specific measures that will reduce emissions, and offer recommendations for implementation.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Authorized by the Inflation Reduction Act, CPRG provides funding to the RPC for the development of ambitious plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. The CPRG requires three primary deliverables: a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), the CCAP, and a Status Report. The RPC completed the PCAP on March 1, 2024, and the CCAP must be submitted to the EPA by September 1, 2025. The Status Report will be completed and submitted to the EPA by September 1, 2027.

The PCAP represented the first major effort to conduct climate action planning across the metropolitan region, and included a GHG inventory, quantified emissions reduction measures, a low income and disadvantaged community (LIDAC) benefits analysis, and a review of authority to implement. The plan also considered and incorporated the recommendations of previous efforts such as the Louisiana Climate Action Plan and the City of New Orleans' Net Zero by 2050 strategy. The CCAP will include updates to the PCAP as well as additional elements as described further in this scope and in [EPA Guidance](#).

PROJECT NEED

Completion of the CCAP will not only satisfy the requirements of the CPRG but also assist the region in understanding and addressing the sources of emissions and their impacts. It will set the stage for future climate action through innovative and bold policies that address decarbonization and emissions reductions. It will also provide local governments and their partners data and decision-making tools to scale regional efforts to the local level. Finally, the CCAP will address the disproportionate effects climate change has on overburdened and underserved people and communities.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to develop the CCAP and its associated analyses and recommendations, including:

- GHG Inventory
- GHG Emissions Projections
- GHG Reduction Targets
- Quantified GHG Reduction Measures
- Benefits Analysis
- Low Income / Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis
- Review of Authority to Implement
- Intersection with Other Funding Availability
- Workforce Planning Analysis

GEOGRAPHY

The geographic scope of the CCAP will include the entirety of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, and Tangipahoa Parishes.

CONSULTANT SCOPE OF SERVICES

TASK 1 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT

1-A. Kickoff. The consultant team will organize a project kickoff to be held within two (2) weeks of the Notice to Proceed. The purpose of the kickoff will be to introduce the consultant team to RPC staff and discuss logistical details for the conduct of the project including contract management, project goals, proposed project schedule, and any other pertinent project details. In preparation for the kickoff, the consultant shall familiarize themselves with CPRG program requirements, RPC work to date including the PCAP, and all contract deliverables in this scope of work. The consultant will prepare a detailed project schedule, including anticipated completion of major project milestones, to be submitted and reviewed at the project kick-off meeting. The schedule should include at least five business days for the RPC to review and comment on all deliverables, except for the draft CCAP (Task 7-A), which will require a review period of ten business days.

1-B. Regular updates on CCAP progression. The consultant team will provide ongoing updates on the progression of the planning process and development of key deliverables, keeping staff current on issues, metrics for tracking engagement, timelines, and milestones. It will ensure that all task assignments are being developed as defined and delivered on time.

1-C. Collaboration with Project Advisory Team. The consultant team will support the RPC staff in preparation of reports, updates, and presentations to the Project Advisory Team, who is established to guide development of CCAP. The consultant team shall record all meeting minutes and track all advisory opinions and recommendations of the PAT. The consultant will participate in no less than four (4) PAT meetings over the course of the project.

1-D. CPRG requirements and guidance. The consultant shall stay up to date on CPRG-related announcements and publications from EPA, including FAQs and program guidance, inform RPC staff of any program clarifications or changes, and make changes to deliverables as necessary. The consultant shall be responsible for ensuring project deliverables are consistent with EPA's CPRG programmatic requirements as well as the RPC's submitted Workplan.

Task 1 Deliverables:

- Detailed project schedule
- Project updates
- PAT meeting materials

TASK 2 – ANALYSIS AND DATA PREPARATION

2-A. Review of Prior Work: The consultant team will review existing state, regional and local plans, programs, and ongoing efforts related to climate action. Throughout the course of the project, all attempts will be made to ensure alignment between the CCAP and other efforts. Alignment includes avoiding duplication of efforts and conflicting recommendations, as well as identifying opportunities for coordination between efforts.

2-B. Analysis Workplan: This project requires multiple analyses to be completed and described in the CCAP. Prior to initiating analyses, the consultant will review the requirements of Tasks 4-6 and develop a workplan for

completing the analyses, including proposed methodologies, tools to be used, data requirements, and timelines for completion. Analyses to be included in the workplan include:

- GHG Inventory (Task 4-A)
- GHG Targets (Task 4-B)
- Quantified GHG Reduction Measures (Task 4-C)
- GHG Projections (Task 4-D)
- Community Benefits Analysis (Task 5-A)
- Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities Analysis (Task 5-B)
- Workforce Planning Analysis (Task 6-C)

Development of the workplan will consider the current state of the practice, potential costs of tool and/or data acquisition, accuracy of results, complexity/difficulty, and EPA guidance. A strong preference should be placed on analyses that can be scaled down from the regional level to individual local jurisdictions (parishes and cities) or that can be replicated at the individual jurisdictional level, particularly for the GHG Inventory. The analysis workplan must be approved by the RPC prior to initiating analyses.

2-C. QAPP Review and Update: The EPA requires that quality assurance procedures for all analyses using environmental data throughout the project must be described in a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Prior to completing any analyses using environmental data the consultant will review the existing QAPP and determine if it should be revised. The consultant will update the QAPP as necessary and the RPC will be responsible for submitting the revised QAPP to the EPA for approval.

2-D. Data Collection: The consultant will collect all data identified in the Analysis Workplan as early as possible. Changes to the data initially identified in the Analysis Workplan must be approved by the RPC. Any purchases of data or tools must be approved by the RPC.

TASK 3 - OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

3-A. Outreach and Engagement Strategy. The RPC has developed a draft outreach and engagement strategy for the CCAP process. The consultant will be responsible for refining, finalizing, and implementing the strategy. Under Task 3-A the consultant will finalize the draft strategy based on input from the RPC and PAT. The strategy will be implemented through completion of Tasks 3-B – 3-D. At a minimum the written strategy will describe: (1) the goals and desired outcomes of outreach and engagement; (2) key stakeholder groups targeted for engagement with specific contacts as available; (3) methods and tools (i.e., online tools, in-person meetings, etc.) used to facilitate engagement and feedback loops; (4) the roles of consultant team and RPC staff in facilitating engagement; (5) a method for tracking engagement metrics and reporting on engagement performance to RPC; (6) a comprehensive schedule of meetings and events, including convening of Community Leadership Teams; (7) strategies to ensure clear and consistent messaging across all engagement activities; and (8) methods for documenting input received and ensuring it is incorporated into the CCAP. Additional requirements and expectations for engagement are described in Tasks 3-B – 3-D. The strategy must be approved by the RPC prior to commencement of any engagement activities.

3-B. Intergovernmental/Institutional Coordination. It is important that all governmental stakeholders including but not limited to representatives of RPC’s member parishes and the municipalities thereof, representatives of tribal governments, as well as public officials from both local and state agencies with responsibilities or regulatory authority in environmental protection, energy, utilities, transportation, housing, waste management, and land use planning, contribute to the development of the CCAP. The RPC will lead intergovernmental/institutional engagement with support from the consultant, including attendance at meetings and documentation of input received.

3-C. Public and Stakeholder Involvement. The consultant shall lead a robust public and stakeholder outreach process with the overarching goal of providing ample opportunities for communities to be involved in the development of the CCAP, and to have their priorities included in the action plan. The outreach process should prioritize engagement of low-income and disadvantaged communities (LIDACs), as they are most vulnerable to current and future climate change impacts. It should result in an increase in community awareness of GHG emissions, where they stem from and the measures to reduce them. Additionally, the consultant shall apply targeted outreach to stakeholders with authority or relation to the highest emitting economic sectors in development of the GHG reduction measures. Stakeholder outreach should also include relevant non-profit and community advocacy organizations as well as institutes of higher education. Public and stakeholder outreach should foster a spirit of collaboration, mutual trust, confidence and openness.

The consultant will lead all public and stakeholder outreach activities and meetings, including preparation of meeting materials, scheduling, securing venues, meeting facilitation, and reporting of input received. Public outreach methods must include digital and face-to-face components and should be coordinated with existing community meetings to the extent possible. See [EPA’s guidance for meaningful engagement](#) for best practices.

3-D. Documentation of Results. At the conclusion of the outreach and engagement process the consultant shall prepare a memo summarizing the process and its results. The input received from all parties during the process will also be incorporated into the CCAP as described in the outreach strategy.

Task 3 Deliverables:

1. Final outreach and engagement strategy.
2. Intergovernmental / Institutional Engagement support, including meeting attendance and documentation of input received.
3. Public and Stakeholder engagement leadership and materials.
4. Outreach and engagement summary memo; incorporation of results into CCAP.

TASK 4 - GHG ANALYSES

4-A. Emissions Inventory. The consultant will complete a comprehensive emissions inventory for the nine-parish region including all GHG emissions and sinks by emission source and sink category following commonly accepted protocols for the following sectors: industry, electricity generation and/or use, transportation, commercial and residential buildings, agriculture, natural and working lands, and waste and materials management. The inventory will also include estimates of co-pollutant emissions, including criteria pollutants/precursors and air toxics. As appropriate the consultant may update the inventory completed by the RPC for the PCAP to include co-pollutant emissions, updated data, new data sources, and

other requirements as described in CPRG guidance. Prior to beginning the inventory, the consultant will review the existing inventory and determine which aspects may be reused or replicated, which components must be updated, and which new elements must be added. This includes reviewing the tool used to complete the inventory (EPA's Local Greenhouse Gas Inventory Tool (LGGIT)) and determining whether it is appropriate for the CCAP inventory. If LGGIT is not determined to be appropriate the consultant will recommend alternative tools, taking into consideration analysis accuracy, time constraints, and cost-effectiveness. The consultant will also review the input data used in the previous inventory and determine (1) whether the data is sufficiently up to date and accurate, and therefore able to be used in the CCAP inventory; (2) which data sources must be updated or replaced; and (3) which data sources must be added. The consultant will also recommend a base year for the inventory based on best practices and data availability. In addition to creating a regional inventory, all attempts should be made to develop an inventory that provides emissions data at the parish and municipal level. If the inventory cannot be scaled down to the local level, the consultant shall identify and describe methods for local agencies to replicate the inventory for their jurisdictions.

4-B. Near-term and Long-term GHG Reduction Targets. In consultation with the RPC, PAT, stakeholders, and the public, the consultant will develop economy-wide near-term (2030-2035) and long-term (2050) GHG emission reduction targets on a net GHG emission basis. The targets should not be inconsistent with any pre-existing local or state targets, as well as the United States' formal commitments to reduce emissions 50-52% relative to 2005 levels by 2030 and to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Sector-based emissions reduction targets should be set for the highest priority sectors as determined by the GHG Emissions inventory and consultation with the RPC and PAT.

4-C. Quantified GHG Reduction Measures. The CCAP must include a full suite of GHG reduction measures that will help achieve the GHG reduction targets identified in Task 4-B. The consultant will develop a methodology for identifying GHG reduction measures and will create criteria for selecting and prioritizing measures for inclusion in the CCAP. Measures may include, but should not be limited to, the measures previously identified in the PCAP. The final list of measures must include those that address the following GHG emissions sectors: industry, electric generation and/or use, transportation, commercial and residential buildings, industry, agriculture, natural and working lands, and waste and materials management. GHG reduction measures may include both measures that reduce GHG emissions and/or measures that enhance carbon sinks.

Projected emissions reductions from identified measures should be quantified to the extent possible. The quantified emissions reductions shall include GHG emissions as well as co-pollutants, including criteria pollutants/precursors and air toxics. Additionally, the description of each measure must include key implementing agency or agencies, implementation schedule and milestones, expected geographic location if applicable, milestones for obtaining implementing authority as appropriate, identification of funding sources if relevant, metrics for tracking progress, and cost information.

4-D. Emissions Projections. The consultant will develop near-term (2030-2035) and long-term (2050) projections of GHG emissions. This task will include projections of GHG emissions in the absence of plan

measures (e.g., “business as usual”) and a projection of GHG emissions under a scenario where the plan is fully implemented. To the extent possible, sector-based projections will be provided.

Task 4 Deliverables:

1. Emissions inventory
2. GHG reduction targets
3. Quantified GHG reduction measures
4. Emissions projections

TASK 5 – BENEFITS ANALYSES

5-A. Benefits Analysis. The consultant will develop a benefits analysis for the full geographic scope of the CCAP that includes both base year estimates of co-pollutants and anticipated co-pollutant emission reductions as plan measures are implemented and GHG reduction goals are met. The benefits analysis shall also describe broader benefits associated with GHG reduction measures such as air quality improvements, improved public health outcomes, economic benefits, increased climate resilience, or other environmental benefits. The analysis must also include any potential disbenefits resulting from implementation of GHG reduction measures, as well as methods to track, minimize, and mitigate disbenefits. In developing the benefits analysis the consultant should consider co-pollutant benefits analysis [guidance from EPA](#).

5-B. Low-income and Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis. The consultant will evaluate the extent to which GHG reduction measures will deliver co-pollutant emissions reductions and other benefits to LIDACs. Prior to developing the analysis the consultant will review the LIDACs identified in the PCAP and update the data as necessary. It is anticipated that the consultant will update the LIDAC benefits analysis completed in the PCAP, but additional quantitative analysis will be added as required by the CPRG guidance.

Task 5 Deliverables:

1. Benefits Analysis
2. LIDAC Benefits Analysis

Task 6 - Implementation Recommendations

6-A. Review of Authority to Implement. For each identified GHG reduction measure the consultant will identify which entity or entities are responsible for implementation and whether they have existing statutory or regulatory authority to implement the measure, or whether such authority still must be obtained. As applicable the consultant will develop a schedule of milestones for actions needed by key entities for obtaining any authority needed to implement each listed program or measures. It is anticipated that the consultant will update the review of authority to implement for GHG reduction measures carried forward from the PCAP, and will complete a new review for measures newly introduced in the CCAP. The review of authority to implement may be included in the list of measures or as a separate section of the CCAP.

6-B. Intersection with Other Funding Availability. The CCAP requires an assessment of funding programs that are available or that have been secured to pursue the objectives of the CCAP. The RPC will complete

this analysis and provide the results to the consultant. The consultant will incorporate the information into the final CCAP document.

6-C. Workforce Planning Analysis. The consultant will provide an analysis of workforce development activities needed to implement GHG reduction measures included in the plan. The analysis should identify skilled labor shortages, impacts on existing jobs and industries, opportunities for the creation of high-quality jobs, and expanding economic opportunity to underserved workers through activities in the plan. The analysis should reference and support the regional Comprehensive Economic Development strategy and describe how activities or policies will lead to the creation of high-quality jobs in alignment with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Good Jobs Principals.

6-D. Implementation Approach. The consultant will develop a strategy for implementing the recommendations of the CCAP, including timelines, costs, and means of reporting and monitoring the effectiveness of the plan. The implementation approach will also provide recommended actions and timelines for completing the CPRG Status Report due in September 2027.

Task 6 Deliverables:

1. Review of Authority to Implement
2. Workforce Planning Analysis
3. Implementation Approach

TASK 7 - CCAP DOCUMENT

7-A. Draft Plan. The consultant will create a draft CCAP that includes each of the elements described above. The draft will include narrative discussions of each element as well as maps, graphics, tables, and photographs as appropriate. The draft must be clearly written and understandable by the general public, and should be visually appealing. Data sources should be appropriately cited. The RPC and PAT will review the draft CCAP and provide feedback as necessary. At a minimum, the document shall include:

1. Introduction / Background including an overview of the region and CPRG program.
2. Review of prior work including the PCAP and all other plans reviewed in Task 2A.
3. Description of outreach and engagement, including a summary of input received and description of how input was incorporated into the CCAP.
4. Results of GHG analyses, including the inventory, targets, and projections.
5. Quantified GHG reduction measures.
6. Benefits analysis and LIDAC benefits analysis.
7. Review of authority to implement
8. Intersection with other funding availability
9. Workforce planning analysis
10. Implementation approach
11. Conclusions / next steps
12. Appendices as necessary (methodologies, data summaries, notes, etc.)

7-B. Final Plan. Once feedback from the RPC and PAT has been addressed, the consultant will prepare a final version of the plan for publication. The consultant will provide five (5) hard copies of the final plan (including appendices), as well as a digital copy with all accompanying data. The final CCAP must be completed and submitted to the RPC no later than August 23, 2025.

Task 7 Deliverables:

1. Draft CCAP
2. Final CCAP

Budget: \$335,000

Timeline: 13 months