



**Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative
Regional Implementation Guidance**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline expectations for regionally coordinated implementation of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.

2. Background

Thurston County and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater (the Parties) worked with Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) to develop the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP) with actions to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change. As part of the first phase of this project, the Parties adopted a mutual emissions reduction goal, which is to:

Reduce net communitywide greenhouse gas emissions 45% below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85% below 2015 levels by 2050 to ensure that our community does its part to keep the global average temperature from rising more than 2° Celsius (3.6° F) above historic levels.

Along with the emissions targets, the TCMP includes a set of 12 regional goals that emphasize the co-benefits of climate action in supporting the strength and resilience of the broader community. The TCMP set a regional framework to achieve those goals and describes:

- A shared vision for the alignment of climate action with community goals
- Data on greenhouse gas contributions from various sources
- Strategies and actions to reduce emissions
- Emissions reduction estimates based on the strategies and actions
- A strategy for implementing climate mitigation actions

The four Parties agreed that regionally coordinated implementation of the TCMP is essential to the most efficient and effective deployment of the plan's actions. In 2022, staff from the four Parties met to outline expectations for regionally coordinated implementation of the TCMP, with greater clarification of roles and responsibilities. This document outlines the outcome of those discussions and forms the basis for an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) that defines a collaborative framework for implementing the TCMP and establishes the following goals for ongoing partnership:

- Maintain momentum for local climate action.
- Develop efficient regional solutions for reducing sources of greenhouse gases in ways that support all partner jurisdictions.
- Provide accountability on progress toward achieving regional climate targets.
- Build public awareness of climate mitigation activities across the region.

The ILA establishes the **Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative** (Collaborative), a consortium of local government partners working together to significantly reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions and achieve mutually adopted communitywide emissions reduction goals. The Collaborative provides a mechanism through which the Parties can learn, explore, collaborate, incubate, coordinate, and communicate policies and best practices that the Parties can decide to advance collectively or singularly. The Collaborative is made up of Jurisdiction Parties, an Executive Committee, a Staff Team, and a Community Advisory Workgroup.

3. Acronyms

Acronyms

- CAW – Community Advisory Workgroup
- ILA – Interlocal Agreement among Thurston County, City of Lacey, City of Olympia, and City of Tumwater to support regionally coordinated implementation of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, approved in 2023.
- TCMP – Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan
- TCMC – Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative

4. How Implementation of the TCMP Works

Implementation of all actions included in the TCMP is led by individual Jurisdiction Parties. Although the initial (2020) version of the TCMP identifies different approaches (Legislative Agenda, Regionally Coordinated, Individual Jurisdictions, Supporting Partner), these categories do not limit whether or how individual jurisdictions choose to implement actions in the TCMP.

The Parties believe that regionally coordinated implementation of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan is essential to the most efficient and effective deployment of the plan's actions. This document outlines expectations and mechanisms for regionally coordinated implementation.

- The **Interlocal Agreement (ILA)** among Thurston County, City of Lacey, City of Olympia, and City of Tumwater establishes a framework for ongoing, regionally coordinated implementation of the TCMP.

The ILA is not comprehensive of all climate mitigation activities being conducted in the region. It only identifies a limited set of activities that are coordinated among the jurisdictions on a regional level. Individual jurisdictions lead implementation of most climate mitigation actions through their own local programs, including other regional activities not included in the ILA. This agreement reflects discussion and decisions among staff and elected officials in 2022 and 2023 and replaces a previous ILA, signed 03/01/2022.

- Each jurisdiction has the authority to act on any actions in the TCMP, and decides individually what strategies and actions to implement, including actions in the TCMP and/or other climate-related actions. **Jurisdiction Parties** allocate appropriate staff and resources according to their own priorities and on their own timelines.

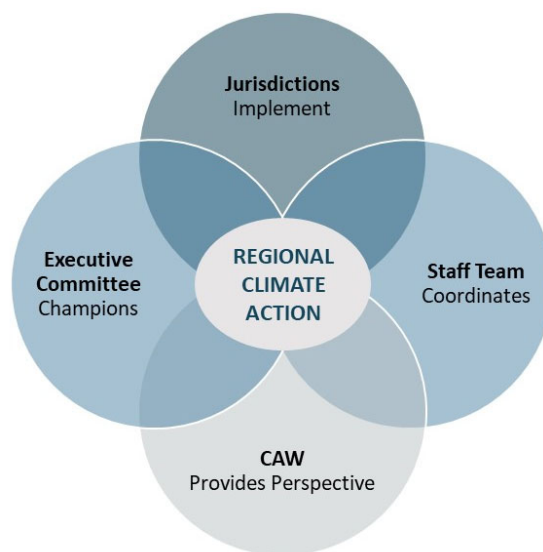
Jurisdiction plans may be shared through the optional **Jurisdiction Work Program** – an optional document describing annual activities that will be undertaken by an individual jurisdiction in that year to advance implementation of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.

- **Staff Team** meets monthly to share information and facilitate coordination across jurisdictions.
- **Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW)** meets regularly (up to 12 times a year) to provide community perspectives and feedback on climate mitigation progress and priorities to the Jurisdiction Parties, Staff Team, and Executive Committee.
- **Executive Committee** champions implementation of climate mitigation actions and meets quarterly (public meetings) to review progress and build partnerships to support implementation of the TCMP. One of these meetings is the Annual Retreat, described below.

The Executive Committee may be convened for additional meetings to review proposed amendments to the TCMP.

- An **Annual Retreat** serves as a strategic planning session for the Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee to discuss climate mitigation progress and needs, with an emphasis on regional coordination and selection of a regional initiative.
- The Staff Team will lead an annual process to select **Regional Initiatives** to advance in a coordinated way in the coming year. Once selected, the initiatives will be considered by all jurisdictions for potential inclusion in their work plans and budgets.
- The Collaborative will conduct a regular **Greenhouse Gas Inventory** to quantify emissions by sector and track progress toward meeting TCMP emission targets.
- The Collaborative will engage a third-party partner for **Administrative Support Tasks** including committee and workgroup facilitation, annual progress reports, and website hosting.
- The Collaborative will begin a **comprehensive update to the TCMP** every six years, beginning in 2028. Minor administrative updates will be evaluated every other year, beginning in 2024.
- **Annual Progress Reports** will communicate highlights of climate mitigation activities and outcomes over the past year, including regional work as well as activities conducted by Jurisdiction Parties.
- Some climate mitigation actions identified in the TCMP require or are best addressed by state action. The Staff Team or Executive Committee may recommend **Legislative Priorities** that would support implementation of the TCMP. Any recommendation will be provided to each jurisdiction to include in their list of legislative priorities for the session. Advocacy for these priorities is only done by individual Jurisdiction Parties if they so choose, and not by the Executive Committee.

TCMP Collaborative Structure



Jurisdictions: Each jurisdiction's policymaking body decides which strategies and actions to implement and what resources to dedicate toward TCMP implementation.

Staff Team: Comprised of staff from each Jurisdiction Party. Coordinates at a staff level on behalf of their jurisdiction.

Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW): Comprised of community members appointed by the Staff Team. Provides community perspectives to the Jurisdiction Parties, Staff Team, and Executive Committee.

Executive Committee: Comprised of elected officials of the Jurisdiction Parties. Identifies regional initiatives for consideration by jurisdictions and champions implementation by staff and partners.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Jurisdiction Parties (Jurisdictions)

Members: Signatories to the ILA. As of 2023, the Jurisdiction Parties include the legislative bodies of:

- Thurston County
- Lacey
- Olympia
- Tumwater

Role: Jurisdictions have ultimate decision-making authority over the implementation of climate mitigation activities, including, but not limited to, work conducted under the ILA. Each City Council and the Board of County Commissioners will make independent decisions on which strategies and actions to implement and how to resource and tailor implementation to work best for their jurisdiction. Parties may undertake climate mitigation activities beyond those strategies and actions identified in the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.

Responsibilities:

- Approves ILA, and any amendments;
- Approves budgets to support work identified in the ILA, including Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Updates, Greenhouse Gas Inventories, and Administrative Support services;
- Assigns staff members to the Staff Team;
- Appoints representatives to the Executive Committee;
- Determines budgets, staffing, and work programs for implementing climate mitigation actions, including:
 - Strategies and actions identified in the TCMP;
 - Other climate-related actions not identified in the TCMP;
- Receives and considers recommendations from the Staff Team and Executive Committee, including amendments to the TCMP and legislative priorities; and
- Advocates for legislative priorities, which may include climate priorities identified through regional collaboration.

Meeting Frequency:

- Jurisdiction parties do not meet collectively on a regular basis. Their designees may meet informally to discuss ILA updates.

How to Contact:

- Members of the public can direct comments to each of the jurisdiction's legislative bodies (Board of County Commissioners or City Council)

Staff Team

Members: Staff representatives from each of the Jurisdiction Parties

Role: The Staff Team meets on a regular basis to share information on the climate mitigation activities of individual jurisdictions and actively facilitate cross-jurisdictional coordination on TCMP implementation. Staff members bring back information and recommendations from and to the decision-making bodies in their individual Jurisdiction Parties.

Responsibilities:**Executive Committee and CAW Meetings**

- Approves meeting frequency and agendas, in collaboration with the Executive Committee and CAW;
- Identifies items that require discussion or review by the Executive Committee and CAW, including items for discussion at the Annual Retreat;
- Prepares presentation and discussion materials and coordinates external presenters, as needed, for Executive Committee and CAW meetings; and
- Appoints members of the CAW.

Collaborative Activities

- Develops contracts and scopes of work to support work identified in the ILA (Thurston Climate; Mitigation Plan Updates, Greenhouse Gas Inventories, and Administrative Support Services);
- Plans and develops agendas and materials for the Annual Retreat;
- Facilitates the selection of an annual regional initiative, following the regional initiatives process;
- Identifies and recommends amendments to TCMP, based on emerging information;
- Assists in development of the Annual Progress Report;
- Shares information on jurisdiction-led climate mitigation implementation activities;
- Coordinates on opportunities for regional collaboration, including funding; and
- Identifies and recommends legislative priorities.

Meeting Frequency:

- Monthly

How to Contact:

- Contact information for individual staff is posted on the Collaborative website.
- Staff Team meetings are not open to the public, but meeting summaries will be posted to the Collaborative website.

Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW)

Members: Up to 15 interested community members representing a variety of perspectives on climate mitigation actions. Members are appointed by the Staff Team for three-year terms or on a rolling basis to fill vacancies. The Staff Team will develop a document detailing the process for recruiting and appointing members of the CAW. This guidance document will be posted on the Collaborative website and reviewed annually for potential updates by the Staff Team and Executive Committee.

Role: The Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW) meets regularly to provide community perspectives and input on climate mitigation progress and priorities to the Jurisdiction Parties, Staff Team, and Executive Committee.

Responsibilities:

- Reviews and provides feedback on climate mitigation actions led by Jurisdiction Parties (can make recommendations to individual jurisdictions on climate implementation priorities)
- A rotating representative attends Executive Committee meetings
- Identifies comments or perspectives for the group facilitator to report out to the Executive Committee and Staff Team

- Requests agenda items for consideration at future CAW meetings
- Reviews the annual report
- Other tasks as requested by the Executive Committee or Staff Team

Meeting Frequency:

- 10-12 times per year

How to Contact:

- CAW meetings are not open to the public, but meeting summaries are posted to the Collaborative website.
- Written comments sent to the committee facilitator will be circulated to the full workgroup.

Executive Committee

Members: Appointed policymaker representative and alternate from each of the Jurisdiction Parties

Role: The Executive Committee champions implementation of climate mitigation actions by the Staff Team, Jurisdiction Parties, and other community partners. The Executive Committee meets quarterly to share information on local climate mitigation activity, review progress toward achieving emissions targets, and build partnerships to support implementation of the TCMP. The Executive Committee identifies regional initiatives for consideration by the Jurisdictions and makes recommendations to the Jurisdictions on amendments to the TCMP. The Executive Committee cannot make requests of the Staff Team outside activities specified in the ILA. The Jurisdictions do not delegate jurisdictional decision authority to the Executive Committee.

Responsibilities:

- Reviews progress toward achieving emissions targets;
- Approves any items for potential regional focus, identified by consensus at the Annual Retreat;
- Receives updates on any regional items identified at the Annual Retreat; and
- Reviews and recommends proposed amendments to TCMP, based on emerging information.

Meeting Frequency:

- Quarterly. One meeting is timed to align with the Annual Retreat
- May be convened more frequently to review proposed amendments to the TCMP.
- May be convened less frequently than four times a year, if the Staff Team determines there is not sufficient content for a regional discussion.

How to Contact:

- Executive Committee meetings are open to the public, and meeting summaries are posted to the Collaborative website.
- An opportunity for public comment is provided at each Executive Committee meeting. Written comments sent to the committee facilitator will be circulated to the full committee.

6. Activities

Annual Climate Mitigation Retreat

Purpose: An annual retreat will serve as a strategic planning session that brings together members of the Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee to have deep and meaningful discussions on climate mitigation progress and needs, with an emphasis on strategies that would most benefit from regional coordination. The Annual Retreat will be planned by the Staff Team and hosted by individual Jurisdiction Parties, rotating on an annual basis.

Content: The agenda for the annual retreat may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Jurisdiction updates on past and planned climate mitigation activities
- A discussion of potential regional initiatives for focus over the following year
- Discussion on trends and findings from the most recent GHG Inventory and Annual Report

How to Learn More:

- The Annual Retreat is open to public attendance, but does not include an opportunity for public comment or active participation. Members of the public may provide written comments to retreat attendees through the means noted for each group.

Regional Initiatives

Purpose: An annual process to identify priority strategies and/or actions that would benefit from regional coordination, and propose as a focus of regional work. **Note:** The identification and selection of a regional initiative through this process does not guarantee that it will be implemented by the Staff Team. Jurisdictions must approve the necessary staff, resources, and budget for this work to occur.

Content:

Step 1

The Staff Team prepares options for regional initiatives.

- The Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee submit proposals for regionally coordinated initiatives.
- The Staff Team evaluates proposals and identifies a short list for discussion at the Annual Retreat.

Step 2

The Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee discuss options.

- Staff Team presents options for regional initiatives at annual retreat.
- Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee discuss proposals.
- Executive Committee selects regional initiative at post-retreat meeting.

STEP 3

The Staff Team develops a project plan.

- Staff Team develops budget, plan, and timeline for regional initiative.
- Jurisdictions propose regional initiative for inclusion in respective workplans and budgets.

STEP 4**Jurisdictions allocate resources.**

- Executive Committee members advocate for allocation of staff and budget resources.
- If jurisdiction partners allocate necessary staff and resources, Staff Team proceeds with work on regional initiative.
- Work may proceed immediately or be delayed to accommodate staff and budget resources.

STEP 5**The Staff Team develops work product.**

- Staff Team begins work on regional initiative.
- Staff Team provides updates on project progress at regular Executive Committee meetings.
- Executive Committee champions completed work product.

How to Learn More:

- All steps in the Regional Initiative selection process will be documented in notes from the Retreat and meetings of the Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee. Meeting summaries will be posted to the Collaborative website.

Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Updates

Purpose: Periodic evaluations and updates to the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.

Content: The TCMP will be re-evaluated and updated, as needed, based on the best available science, monitoring data, and new or evolving conditions. Plan updates will be recommended by the Staff Team and CAW, approved by the Executive Committee, and adopted by the Parties. The Staff Team may recommend minor administrative updates every other year, beginning in 2024, with a comprehensive plan review and update every six years, beginning in 2028. Each Party will contribute equally to the costs of updating the plan.

How to Learn More:

- The Staff Team, CAW, and Executive Committee will all engage in TCMP updates with meeting summaries posted to the Collaborative website.
- The TCMP update process will include opportunities for public comment.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Purpose: An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in Thurston County over the course of a year, used to quantify emissions by sector and track progress toward meeting TCMP emission targets.

Content: A countywide Greenhouse Gas Inventory will be conducted for the calendar year 2022 along with a review of prior inventories for accuracy, completeness, and methodological consistency. After the 2022 inventory, future inventories will be conducted at least every three years. Each Party will contribute equally to the costs of each Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Thurston County will be responsible for administrative tasks including maintaining software subscriptions, coordinating data collection and analysis, and procuring and managing third-party contractors to support the completion of the inventory.

How to Learn More:

- Greenhouse Gas Inventory Reports will be posted on the Collaborative website and presented at Executive Committee meetings, which are open to the public.

Administrative Support Tasks

Purpose: The Collaborative will engage a third-party entity to provide annual Administrative Support services for the Collaborative.

Content: Administrative Support Tasks may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Coordinating and facilitating the Executive Committee and Community Advisory Workgroup
- Producing an Annual Progress Report
- Hosting and maintaining a website for the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative

Each party will contribute equally to the costs of the Administrative Support services. The City of Lacey will be responsible for procuring and managing third-party contractors to provide Administrative Support services.

How to Learn More:

- The agreement with the Administrative Support contractor will be posted to the Collaborative website.