




air pollution control district  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: H-2  
Agenda Date: March 21, 2024  
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Continued Item: No

## Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

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SUBJECT: Update on the Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5)

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### RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file an update on the activities of the Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition.

### BACKGROUND:

#### ***U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities and Communities Partnership***

Clean Cities and Communities is a United States Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) partnership to advance clean transportation nationwide. Clean Cities and Communities coalitions work locally in urban, suburban, and rural communities to strengthen the nation's environmental, energy security, and economic prosperity. As partners with the U.S. DOE's Vehicle Technologies Office, coalitions deploy affordable, efficient, and clean transportation fuels, energy efficient mobility systems, and other fuel-saving technologies and practices. There are more than 75 U.S. DOE-designated coalitions across the nation, and they are comprised of businesses, fuel providers, vehicle fleets, state and local government agencies, and community organizations. In February 2024, the U.S. DOE partnership, previously known as Clean Cities, was officially rebranded as Clean Cities and Communities to convey the diversity of areas coalitions serve across the country. To compliment the new tagline, U.S. DOE also unveiled a new logo to reflect the partnership's clean transportation focus; more information can be found at [cleancities.energy.gov/about](https://cleancities.energy.gov/about).



#### ***Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5)***

C5 was initially formed in 2002, and on August 25, 2006, C5 was officially recognized as a U.S. DOE designated coalition in the Clean Cities and Communities partnership with a celebratory

ceremony at Hearst Castle. Initially, C5's boundaries only included San Luis Obispo County and in 2020, C5 officially expanded to include Santa Barbara County as well. C5 has been actively receiving grant funding to implement key components of its mission ever since its initial designation.

C5's goals include but are not limited to:

- Accelerating the transition to alternative fuels, alternative fuel vehicles, and emerging transportation technologies to improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and displace petroleum consumption;
- Increasing awareness by sharing reliable information about alternative fuels and funding opportunities available to support the transition to alternative fuel vehicles;
- Identifying local fleets and educating stakeholders of the federal and state mandates regarding alternative fuel vehicle requirements; and,
- Improving the clean fuel corridors between Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the San Joaquin Valley by increasing the number of alternative fuel vehicles and expanding the alternative fuel infrastructure in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.

More information about C5 can be found at [www.c-5.org](http://www.c-5.org).

In 2020, the District was asked by C5's Board to provide oversight to the coalition due to its unique position to leverage the resources of many different groups and individuals throughout the Central Coast region to build on the coalition's work and further its goals. In May 2020, the District Board approved an initial Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with C5 that recognized the District's lead role in the coalition and provided financial support for staff's time devoted to this effort. The District Board has approved three subsequent twelve-month MOAs since May 2020, and the current MOA's term is set to be renewed April 1, 2024.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### ***Implementing the C5 Program***

Since the District began its lead role in administering C5 in 2020, the coalition has hosted a multitude of in-person, virtual, and hybrid events. Recent events have included Green Car Shows at the Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Earth Day Festivals as well as the 2023 Central Coast Sustainability Summit, ribbon-cutting events for electric vehicle (EV) and infrastructure deployments, various in-person and virtual events during National Drive Electric Week, and an educational webinar on the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) for state-certified electricians. In addition, the District has led C5's alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) incentive coordination efforts and AFV corridor and infrastructure planning efforts, such as participating on the advisory committee for the recently adopted Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy and steering committee of the Electric Drive 805 (ED805) coalition. Over the last several years, the coalition has also facilitated several listening sessions with stakeholders to gain feedback on various alternative fuels and transportation technologies and has organized several stakeholder meetings to encourage regional collaboration on clean transportation efforts.

C5 is dedicated to working with its regional partners, such as ED805, to host more in-person and virtual events and trainings throughout 2024. Building off previous years, C5 will continue to be

engaged in activities to expand the network of alternative fueling infrastructure in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties and will track and conduct outreach for local, state, and federal incentive programs. C5 is currently in the process of forming a Steering Committee to support the development of the coalition's annual work plan and ensure activities align with stakeholders' priorities. The District will continue to expand the reach of C5 across Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties by issuing C5 newsletters, maintaining an active presence on social media, and continuing to engage new and existing stakeholders. C5 manages a student intern through U.S. DOE's Clean Cities University Workforce Development Program, which has greatly helped to bolster the coalition's outreach and engagement efforts.

### ***2024-2027 Coalition Strategic Plan***

In 2023, U.S. DOE tasked each coalition to develop a multi-year strategic plan specifying objectives and activities to be undertaken to achieve yearly increases in gasoline-gallon equivalent displacement by 16% and greenhouse gas emission reduction by 20% across the coalition's territory. To help guide the development of the coalition strategic plan, C5 formed a working group composed of three board members and seven local stakeholders with diverse experience across the transportation sector. A series of working group meetings were held from July 2023 to January 2024 to refine strategic goals, actions, and measures of success to ensure their alignment with regional priorities. Throughout the development process, working group members submitted feedback on strategic plan materials, and their input was used to revise C5's mission and vision statements, core values, and strategic goals.

Consistent engagement and collaboration with the working group resulted in the prioritization of five strategic goals for 2024-2027, including to: 1) achieve financial sustainability; 2) strengthen coalition governance; 3) increase coalition awareness; 4) strengthen stakeholder engagement; and 5) expand the regional network of zero-emission vehicle infrastructure. Specific strategies, actions, and performance measures were outlined for each goal to provide a roadmap for the implementation, tracking, and revision of strategic plan over the four-year period. After finalizing the strategic plan, C5 received positive feedback from U.S. DOE staff regarding the decision to engage coalition board members and stakeholders in the strategic planning process. C5 will continue engaging stakeholders in the implementation of the strategic plan by developing a Steering Committee that will provide feedback on strategic goals and coalition activities.

### ***Clean Cities and Communities 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***

In 2023, the U.S. Department of Energy celebrated the [30<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) of the Clean Cities and Communities partnership. Every year, U.S. DOE hosts a National Workshop to provide training for coalition directors around managing successful coalitions, as well as opportunities to share expertise, success stories, and lessons learned. To commemorate 30 years of Clean Cities and Communities, the 2023 National Workshop, hosted in McClean, Virginia, featured the first-ever Stakeholder Summit. U.S. DOE encouraged coalitions to invite key stakeholders to attend the Summit to exchange ideas, receive national recognition for efforts to advance clean transportation technologies, and capitalize on the collective expertise of the Clean Cities and Communities network. At the Stakeholder Summit, two local stakeholders – the County of Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (SBMTD) – received “Alternative Fuel Vehicle Leadership” awards for their commitments to reduce petroleum consumption by adopting alternative fuels and promoting energy-efficient mobility systems across C5's territory.

Representatives from both the County of Santa Barbara and SBMTD traveled to Virginia to attend the Summit and accept the awards in-person on behalf of their respective organizations.

At the 2023 National Workshop, the C5 Director and Co-Director accepted an “Innovative Project” award on behalf of the coalition for supporting the “[Protecting Blue Whales & Blue Skies](#)” program, a voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) Program along the coast of California which incentivizes shipping companies to travel at a speed of 10 knots or less. Protecting Blue Whales & Blue Skies aligns with the mission of Clean Cities and Communities as it reduces fuel usage and regional greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in significant air quality improvements across California.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

District staff time spent implementing the C5 program was included in the District’s adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The District’s labor and expenses to conduct C5 activities are supported through the 2023-2024 MOA with C5, which allocated \$100,000 from C5’s operating budget to cover this expense during the term of the MOA. The District will need to execute a new MOA with C5 in April 2024. At the March 2022 Board meeting, the District Board delegated authority to the Air Pollution Control Officer to execute future MOAs with C5. Thus, the 2024-2025 MOA with C5 will not need District Board approval.