



# CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council Members

**From:** Lynn von Koch-Liebert, SGC Executive Director

**Re:** Executive Director Report to the Council – August 30, 2023

## Investment Program Updates

### Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC)

Staff: Marc Caswell, Jessica Lopez, Shep Wilbun, Justin DeWaele, Brianne Logasa, and California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Staff Team

- After careful consideration and review of all submitted applications for AHSC Round 7, staff is recommending the Council award funds to 21 projects for a total of \$757,471,361. These funds will support the creation of 2,552 new homes that will be subject to a recorded covenant ensuring affordability for a duration of at least 55 years. In addition to creating housing in 16 jurisdictions across the state, these projects will also support the purchase of 150 new Zero Emission Transit Vehicles, as well as the construction of more than 50 miles of bikeways and dozens of curb ramps, crosswalks, and miles of sidewalk repairs to create safe, accessible walkways. The projects will also fund the installation of dozens of bus shelters, trees, lighting, and other public improvements to minimize exposure to inclement weather (i.e., heat exposure), improve safety, and beautify communities across California. These projects will reduce 807,404 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> of greenhouse gases through green building investments and transportation improvements.
- Council adopted AHSC Round 7 Guidelines on December 15, 2022. HCD released AHSC Round 7 NOFA on January 30, 2023, which was amended on March 15, 2023, to reference the Department's updated Negative Points Policy. Applications were due April 4, 2023.
- All 53 applicants were considered through a competitive process, beginning with a threshold review. Of the fifty-three (53) submissions, fifteen (15) projects were disqualified as they did not submit a complete application to assess the proposed project's feasibility and compliance with the AHSC Program and application requirements. One applicant withdrew from consideration during the review process and one project was deemed ineligible for award based on project feasibility analysis. This brought the total amount of eligible projects available for consideration to thirty-six (36) applications. Of those projects, 21 were selected for award and have undergone detailed financial feasibility to confirm their potential to succeed.
- As the team completes our work for Round 7 AHSC Awards, we have already embarked on efforts to update the guidelines and processes for Round 8. Staff is working with our partner agencies and stakeholders to finalize the schedule for Round 8, with NOFA and Application window in 2024. More details will be announced on the AHSC Program webpage and program newsletter in the coming months.

### Transformative Climate Communities Program (TCC)

Staff: Jerry Rivero, Jennifer Kim, Sarah Newsham, Anna Jane Jones, Rebecca Avilés, Jessica Ison, and California Department of Conservation (DOC) Staff Team

- Round 5 TCC Application Window Closes:
  - Summary of applications received:

- 6 Implementation Grant Applications
  - 10 Project Development Grant Applications
  - 16 Planning Grant Applications
- Total Available Award Funds for Round 5 TCC:
  - \$88,500,000 available for 3 Implementation Grant Awards; up to \$29,500,000 each
  - \$9,800,000 available for multiple Project Development Grant Awards; up to \$5,000,000 each
  - \$900,000 available for 3 Planning Grant Awards; up to \$300,000 each
- Staff continue to work with Round 4 awardees through the post-award consultation process. To date 6 of 7 Planning Grant Agreements and 1 of 3 Implementation Grant Agreements have been awarded.
- Upon execution of Round 4 Grant Agreements, staff will begin to run a pilot Advance Pay option with Round 4 awardees.
- Staff celebrated project milestones with TCC Implementation Grant Sites:
  - Palm Desert: July 21, 2023: Eastside Climate Collaborative (TCC Round 3 Implementation Grant, \$9M) participated as a panelist during the SGC Catalyst Roundtable Discussion highlighting community engagement and ways to replicate local work at a Statewide scale.
  - Fresno: August 4, 2023: Transform Fresno (TCC Round 1 Implementation Grant, \$66.5M) SGC leadership along with TCC staff attended a reception at the West Fresno Campus of Fresno City College. TCC grant funds supported the development of a satellite campus that will provide students with workforce training and educational pathways leading to high demand quality jobs.
  - Oakland: August 5, 2023: Better Neighborhoods, Same Neighbors (TCC Round 3 Implementation Grant, \$28.2 M) was highlighted during the SGC Catalyst Roundtable Discussion. BNSN Grantee and community partners discussed implementation of TCC projects and ways to replicate local work on a Statewide scale. Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)

Staff: Shanna Atherton-Bauer (DOC) and Department of Conservation Staff

- SALC staff closed three easement projects between June 8<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>. These projects have resulted in the permanent conservation of approximately 1,740 acres of agricultural land in three counties.
- SALC's acquisition pre-proposal window closed June 16, 2023. We received 60 pre-proposals (50 easements, 10 fee acquisitions) requesting over \$208 million in funding and representing over 95,000 acres of agricultural land. Of the 60 pre-proposals, 3 were submitted by tribes, 1 by a tribal non-profit, and 1 by a non-profit with a tribe as a co-applicant. Out of 20 current SALC capacity grantees, 15 submitted pre-proposals this round. 12 applicants have never submitted an acquisition application to us before, 4 of which are current SALC capacity grantees. 31 projects were deemed eligible; 20 projects were deemed eligible within conditions; and three projects were deemed ineligible as proposed. Projects deemed eligible with conditions or ineligible as proposed will need to provide additional information in their application or revise their project structure for their applications to be considered for funding. Six projects were deemed ineligible; of those, two have requested reconsideration. One of those was evaluated and determined to still be ineligible; the other is under review.



- SALC's capacity application deadline was July 21<sup>st</sup>. We received 22 applications totaling just over \$4.1 million in request. Of those, 4 applications were from tribes or non-profits with majority indigenous boards, and at least 3 additional applications are from organizations looking to create pathways to secure land tenure for new/Veteran farmers and ranchers or farmers and ranchers who live in priority populations.
- SALC received and provided feedback on 10 planning pre-proposals totaling just under \$4.2 million in request. Planning pre-proposals are optional; the total number of applications may vary. Applications are due September 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### Climate Change Research Program (CCR)

Staff: Elizabeth Grassi, Montrai Spikes, Emely Anico, Natalie Obaldia, Diana Zamora-Reyes, and Bella Barbosa

- The CCR Team hosted a presentation at the California Adaptation Forum entitled “Community Perspectives an Engagement Model for Climate Change Research.” The Session outlined SGC’s Participatory Research to Policy Model. Followed by conversations with panelists. The panel consisted of three CCR Grantees and they will share tangible outcomes and best practices for incorporating meaningful engagement, capacity building, and technical assistance into State-funded research.
- The CCR Team has been approved to host a Town Hall and an e-Lightning Session at the 2023 American Geophysical Union. The Town hall will outline SGC’s Participatory Research to Policy Model. Followed by conversations with panelists. The panel will consist of three CCR Grantees and they will share tangible outcomes and best practices for incorporating meaningful engagement, capacity building, and technical assistance into State-funded research. The e-Lightning session will collect researchers throughout the nation to share their experiences adopting community based participatory research through 3-minute “flash” talks. This will be excellent opportunity to share best practices and networks with colleagues in the research engagement space.
- The CCR Team is finalizing synthesis reports of the research projects funded in Round one and two.
- The CCR and 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment teams continue to meet quarterly with research leadership from the University of California and California State Universities. Next meetings are scheduled for mid-September where we will discuss the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) California Climate Action research grants awarded earlier this month to learn more about how we can provide state agency coordination and support to the grantees.
- The CCR Team is organizing kickoff meetings for our two newest contracts with UCOP and CSU-WATER. Dates are TBD. The goal of these meetings is to uplift lift the work of our contractors and build natural connection with state agencies that might further enhance this work.
- Montrai Spikes is participating on the steering committee for OPR’s Resilience event that will occur on November 13-14<sup>th</sup> in Riverside. Trai will help organize the research presentations at this event, examining how the SGC’s Participatory Research to Policy Model supports state efforts such as the state’s 5<sup>th</sup> Climate Change assessment.
- The CCR team continues to lead the engagement efforts of California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment:
  - On June 6<sup>th</sup>, the Fifth Assessment team released the [RFP for Core Climate Research](#), led by CNRA, to fund original climate research aligned with the [26 priority topics](#) identified as gaps



in the scientific literature. As of July 17<sup>th</sup>, 86 research proposals have been submitted as part of this RFP.

- The Fifth Assessment team hosted two sessions at the California Adaptation Forum entitled, “California's Climate Change Assessment: Informing Local and Regional Action” and “Foundational Processes for Sustaining the Adaptation Journey”.
- During July and August 2023, the Fifth Assessment team hosted seven in-person regional workshops across the Assessment regions to invite the public to review the draft framework for the Regional Synthesis Reports, identify local priorities that can be addressed through the Fifth Assessment, and connect potential author teams.
  - To date, the Fifth Assessment team has hosted in-person workshops in the following regions: Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, San Francisco Bay Area, Sierra Nevada, Inland Deserts, Central Coast, and the North Coast.
  - The Los Angeles and San Diego workshops will be held respectively on September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - Additionally, the Fifth Assessment team will host three virtual workshops this October to allow tribes, tribal-serving organizations, community-based organizations, local governments, businesses, and others throughout the State to provide input on draft framework for the regional reports, identify local priorities, and connection potential author teams.

### Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Program

Staff: Coral Abbott, Lisa Hu, Dora Monterroza, Jess McCool, and Jessica Cervantes

- The CRC Program Round 1 Application for all 3 grant types was publicly launched on July 18th on the Submittable Platform. To date, over 150 applications have been started across all 3 grant types.
- Applications for all 3 grant types are now due on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. PT. The CRC Program Round 1 NOFA has been updated to reflect the new application deadline.
- Program staff and Application TA provider Civix sorted through over 150 requests for TA received by the June 23<sup>rd</sup> priority deadline for TA, to select 50 TA recipients for Round 1 Application TA. Civix has begun working with applicants to support proposal development. Staff had initially intended to leave the TA request form open through the application period should any TA recipients drop out of the application process, but given the overwhelming demand decided to close the TA request form in early August.
- Staff have provided feedback on the first group of pre-proposals submitted by Implementation Grant Applicants. The pre-proposal feedback is intended to ensure applicants understand eligibility and other requirements as Applicants develop their Full Application. As of August 7<sup>th</sup>, over 60 pre-proposals have been submitted. Pre-proposals were due August 25<sup>th</sup>, with a priority deadline of August 4<sup>th</sup> to receive feedback from staff on submitted pre-proposals.
- Staff have recorded and posted a series of application webinars for each of the 3 CRC program grant types. Each webinar gives an overview of the requirements for each grant type, followed by an overview of how to access the application on Submittable. The webinars have been posted to the [CRC Application Webinar Series playlist](#) on the SGC Youtube Channel.
- Staff are holding a series of Application Office Hours for attendees to join and ask questions on the CRC program as they develop their applications. Staff will continue to hold Office Hours until



the Full Application deadline, with a subset of Office Hours geared towards rural and tribal communities. Staff are also developing a Question and Answer document with broadly applicable questions and answers.

- Staff have developed a CRC Program Channel hosted on the Community Infrastructure Center that will allow potential program applicants to find project partners and additional program information, and share knowledge with each other.
- Staff continue to coordinate closely with SGC teams and OPR staff on ICARP’s Adaptation Planning Grants, Regional Resilience Grants, and Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Grants programs to share best practices, public input, and align funding.

## Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

### Community Assistance for Climate Equity (CACE)

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Ena Lupine, Blanca Escobedo, Markie Price, Nancy Cheng, Sarah Risher

- **Regional Climate Collaboratives Program Round 2:** Staff brought the final RCC Round 2 Guidelines to Council for approval at the June 29 Meeting and posted the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) on July 6, launching the RCC Round 2 application process. Staff conducted robust outreach on the launch of Round 2 and held an audience-specific workshop series focused on tribes, rural communities, and general audience applicants July 13-26. Staff continues to conduct outreach and respond to applicant questions during weekly office hours that are open to all applicants July-September. Pre-proposals will be due September 6 and Full applications will be due December 6. Staff plan to bring proposed awards to the February 2024 Council Meeting.
- **Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program:** This new pilot program will provide funding and tailored technical assistance to tribes, assisting them in advancing their climate objectives. The goal of the program is to support tribes build long-term readiness to secure grant funds to implement tribal-led climate solutions. CACE staff released a Request for Information (RFI) on May 22 to inform the development of the program. The RFI includes Draft Grant Guidelines and questions to inform the development of a technical assistance provider solicitation for the Tribal Capacity Building Program. The public comment period will be open for 90 days, until August 22. Staff held Tribal workshops throughout the month of June, and held two additional workshops in August. Staff plan to bring a final version of the program guidelines to Council for approval at the October Council Meeting.
- **Technical Assistance Guidelines Update:** Throughout 2023, CACE staff have conducted outreach with State agency staff to inform the development of an update to the Technical Assistance Guidelines. Taking into account feedback from State agency staff, the 2023 Technical Assistance Guidelines update includes new sections on securing funding for TA, selecting TA providers and recipients, making the case for TA, reducing barriers within grant programs, and more. The web-based platform has also been redesigned and new case studies, templates, checklists, and other tools have been added to help program staff effectively design and implement TA. Staff will be taking the new version of the Technical Assistance Guidelines to Council at the August 30 Meeting.



- **Partners Advancing Climate Equity:** Staff is working on the development of a solicitation for TA Providers to implement Round 2 of the PACE program, which will be released later this year.

## Collaborative Policy Initiatives

### Health and Equity Program (HEP)

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Jazmine Garcia Delgadillo, Michael Jimenez, and Kimberli Davila.

#### *Health in All Policies (HiAP)*

- Staff: SGC partners with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Public Health Institute (PHI) to staff the Health in All Policies Task Force. The Task Force brings together almost 30 agencies, departments, and commissions to integrate health and racial equity considerations into programs and policies that advance State priorities. **HiAP Task Force Quarterly Meeting.** The next HiAP Task Force Quarterly Convening is scheduled to be in-person, on August 31. Members will revisit the CA HiAP Task Force background and approach, as new members have joined since the Task Force was relaunched in February 2022. Given that this will be the first in-person HiAP Task Force Quarterly Meeting since the Task Force was relaunched, members will spend more time learning about each other's work, hearing relevant updates, and building community with one another.
- **HiAP Task Force Workgroups Convene Monthly.** The [Grant Program, Contract, and Funding Equity](#) and [Equity in Data and Access to Information](#) workgroups that are hosted within the HiAP Task Force have continued to meet monthly. Workgroups finalized action plans and have continued to work on short-term actions. During the Grant Program, Contract, and Funding Equity meeting in July, the HiAP Task Force heard presentations from the Community Assistance for Climate Equity Program on the [Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program](#) and their outreach and engagement process with tribes and tribal-serving organizations to inform the program. Meanwhile, the Equity in Data and Access to Information Workgroup heard a presentation from the SGC Climate Change Research Program on the [SGC Participatory Research to Policy Model](#). Workgroups also had an opportunity to continue discussing action plans and relevant efforts from across members' agencies and departments.
- **Technical Assistance to California Initiative to Advance Precision Medicine (CIAPM).** HEP provided technical assistance to the CIAPM team within the Governor's Office of Planning and Research on embedding health and racial equity concepts in their request for information on community needs for mental health, particularly the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of depression. HEP will also be supporting with crafting a health and racial equity statement in their request for proposals to help guide applicants and the development of projects around these issues.

#### *Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP)*

Staff: HEP and SGC Program and Administrative Managers

- **SGC Publishes the 2023-2025 Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP).** At the October 27, 2022, Council meeting, SGC HEP led a conversation to discuss progress and close out SGC's inaugural 2019-2022 REAP. HEP developed a cross-programmatic process to update the REAP following input from the Council, external audiences, and emerging work across SGC. This resulted in the 2023-2025 REAP, which further operationalizes racial equity-driven strategies across SGC via



goals and actions that are tailored to each program, their unique scopes, and their diverse priority communities. The updated 2023-2025 REAP will be available on SGC's [Health & Equity Program webpage](#) in the coming weeks.

- **2023-2025 Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP) Implementation.** SGC programs have continued implementing commitments within the updated 2023-2025 SGC REAP, with facilitation, technical support, and tracking led by HEP. Programs are using a cross-programmatic tracking tool hosted by HEP to track REAP implementation progress across topics, which includes a spreadsheet that integrates all REAP goals, actions, metrics, and timelines. In late July and early August, HEP coordinated bimonthly implementation check-ins with SGC program teams. Many strategies are already in progress, with select highlights between June 30 and August 30 below:
  - Teams are hosting a variety of virtual and in-person sessions for priority communities, with outreach and engagement approaches guided by REAP commitments (such as targeting outreach to priority communities, hosting in-person and remote engagement opportunities, and gathering demographic data on event attendees);
  - Select programs have begun reviewing applications for grants they host, informed by a REAP goal to ensure diversity in agencies, departments, and staff levels involved in or recruited to join the application review process; and,
  - Select programs have seen an increase in applications from priority communities, including Native American tribes, after implementing targeted outreach to tribes, allowing tribes to be lead applicants for grants, and more.
- **2023-2025 REAP Working Groups.** Staff convene within three internal working groups on the following racial equity advancement topics: Technical Assistance and Contract Equity; Workforce Equity and Organizational Culture; and Engagement and Coordination with Tribes. In August 2023, the Workforce Equity Working Group drafted and disseminated a staff Demographics and Identities Survey in alignment with the organization's REAP commitments. The survey results will be analyzed following staff completion in mid-August. Survey results will be presented to Council when the team presents an update on the Racial Equity Action Plan later this year.

#### *Racial Equity Resource Hub*

Staff: HEP and the Communications Team

- **Updates to the Racial Equity Resource Hub.** The HEP Team continues to collect resources from State entities as directed by Council to host on the Hub. Additionally, the HEP team is continuing to update past resources to ensure all resources are up to date and are accessible to users. This month, the Racial Equity Resource Hub will be hosting a blog post from the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

#### *Capitol Collaborative on Race and Equity (CCORE)*

Staff: SGC partners with the Public Health Institute's (PHI) State of Equity program to host a racial equity capacity-building program for California State government institutions and employees. CCORE brings together approximately 40 agencies, departments, boards, and offices to build a people-power movement inside of California State government to advance racial equity by deploying organizing principles inside and outside of the system.

- **CCORE Learning Cohort<sup>24</sup> Updates.** The 2022-2023 cohort completed commencement, with each team presenting on progress and next steps to the cohort at the August 23 virtual event. Commencement also featured racial equity leaders from across state government sharing



learnings and inspiration from their work transforming government. Following commencement teams will be continuing to apply the racial equity tool towards development of racial equity action plans while sustaining their racial equity teams. The State of Equity is in initial planning stages for a CCORE Learning Cohort in 2024, to learn more email [CCORE@phi.org](mailto:CCORE@phi.org).

- **CCORE Transformative Leadership Cohort.** CCORE Transformative Leadership Cohort enrollment concluded, and orientation launched on August 3, supporting participants from 14 state entities and 2 community groups in a 7-month learning and leadership growing journey centering Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

**CCORE Learning Cohort 2022-2023 background.** The participants for the CCORE Learning Cohort include seven teams, each with up to 12 people from the following California state entities: California Conservation Corps, Department of Finance, Department of Health Care Access and Information, Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Parks & Recreation, Department of Social Services, and California Health and Human Services Agency (including Departments of Public Health, Aging, Developmental Services, Healthcare Services, Rehabilitation, and State Hospitals, the Office of the Surgeon General, Center for Insights and Innovation, and the Medical Emergency Services Agency).

## Natural and Working Lands

### Land Equity Task Force

Staff: Sean Kennedy

- On August 1, Sean Kennedy presented an update and overview of the California Agricultural Land Equity Taskforce to the California Board of Food and Agriculture. The Board's meeting focused on opportunities and resources for small and disadvantaged farmers in California.
- In April 2023, the SGC Council approved SGC staff recommendation to appoint Lorena Iniguez, a small organic farm operator based in Goleta, CA, to the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force. On July 31, Lorena advised SGC staff that she is no longer able to serve to the Task Force. SGC staff will work with the CDFA Farm Equity Advisor (Thea Rittenhouse) and SALC Program Manager (Shanna Atherton) to identify a replacement member from the initial pool of nominees. SGC staff will submit the nomination for approval on the consent calendar at the October Council meeting.

## Regional Planning Initiatives

Staff: Marc Caswell, Justin DeWaele, and California Air Resources Board and HCD staff

- The final California Comeback Plan included a \$600M investment in augmenting the existing Regional Early Action Planning Grant (REAP) 2.0 funds. The program focuses on implementing regional plans in ways that reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT), accelerate infill housing development in furtherance of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals, increase housing supply at all affordability levels, affirmatively further fair housing, and reducing vehicle miles traveled. The REAP 2.0 program is managed by a joint team across HCD, SGC, OPR and CARB. The \$600M is spread across three allocations: a non-competitive \$510 million MPO allocation, a \$30 million competitive rural and Tribal allocation, and a \$30 million competitive high impact/transformational (HIT) allocation.





- The Governor’s Office announced the first tranche of REAP 2.0 awards on July 5, totaling \$352 million across 12 MPOs, local governments, and transit agencies. The final application reviews are wrapping up, and the remaining \$218 million of awards should be announced soon.
- The OPR/SGC Regions Working Group is shifting to a quarterly cadence and will have a ‘lunch and learn’ format with topics covered by presenters.

### Council Priority 3: Housing, Climate, and Equity

Staff: Sean Kennedy

- Prior to the October 2023 Council Meeting, SGC staff will convene a practitioner workshop focused strategies for local and regional coordination to advance Priority 3 objectives around strategic growth.
- During the October Council Meeting, a panel of local and regional planners and community partners will discuss successful strategies and opportunities for accessing and utilizing State funding and other resources to simultaneously meet housing and climate goals at the local and regional scale.

### Media Clips

#### Transformative Climate Communities

- [The Bakersfield Californian] “[City submits application for up to \\$29.5M for Southeast Strong Initiative](#)” Aug 5, 2023: “The city of Bakersfield has submitted a Transformative Climate Communities grant application for up to \$29.5 million for projects under the umbrella of Southeast Strong.”
- [LegalPlanet] “[Are California Cities Ready for an Equitable EV Transition?](#)” June 29, 2023: “California policymakers calling for a transition to all zero-emission vehicle sales by 2035.... How ready are California cities to ensure equitable charging access? [W]e can start to assess readiness by tracking a few relevant data points such as.... Does the city have a Transformative Climate Communities project (a state-funded program focused on equitable and resilient local investments) with EV-related components?”

#### Community Resilience Centers program

- [LAist] “[How Resilience Hubs Can Help Communities Face The Heat And The Climate Emergency](#)” Jul 31, 2023. “In 2021, the state launched the Community Resilience Centers program to support and speed up resilience hub efforts. This year it’s set to fund a first round of projects.”
- [The Independent] “[Budget Deal Cuts Funding for Community Resilience Centers](#)” July 2, 2023 “The budget deal reached last week between Gov. Gavin Newsom and California lawmakers cut \$50 million from a program to upgrade public buildings with clean energy technologies, according to the Building Decarbonization Coalition (BDC), a national advocacy group. The deal eliminates previously approved funding for Community Resilience Centers, according to the BDC.”

