



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 – October 26, 2023

Investment Program Updates

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC)

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

- On October 24, 2023, the AHSC Round 8 Draft Guidelines Public Comment period closed. During this period, staff held 3 Public Workshops related to Guideline updates and will now process feedback received and finalize Round 8 Guidelines for adoption at the December 2023 Council Meeting.
- This schedule will place the Round 8 on an annual cycle, designed to align with the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) program to help ensure that AHSC-awarded projects are positioned to close their financing and get projects started quickly and maximize our investments.
- The Technical Assistance (TA) team continues to hold “AHSC 101” workshops across the state, partnering with regional agencies including metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and housing advocacy organizations. These events will continue throughout the year and are designed to build interest and connect interested parties for both the upcoming round and future cycles.
- Round 8 Outreach is in full swing. Below is a list of public events and workshops for Round 8 during the month of October:
 - Monday and Tuesday October 2nd and 3rd: 14 one-on-one debriefs with Round 7 non-awarded applicants to identify opportunities for score improvements for Round 8.
 - Thursday, October 5th: AHSC 101 Webinar (hosted by State TA provider Enterprise Community Partners)
 - Tuesday, October 17th: City of Berkeley-focused AHSC 101 (hosted by State TA provider Enterprise Community Partners)
 - Wednesday, October 18th: AHSC Round 8 Draft Guidelines Workshop – Statewide
 - Monday, October 23rd: AHSC Round 8 Draft Guidelines Workshop – Northern Region
 - Monday, October 23rd: AHSC Round 8 Draft Guidelines Workshop – Southern Region
 - Tuesday, October 24th: Rural AHSC 101 Webinar (hosted by State TA provider California Coalition for Rural Housing)

Transformative Climate Communities Program (TCC)

Staff: Amar Cid, 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 Closed August 1, 2023, and Undergoing Application Review:
 - For all grant types, completeness checks and threshold review has been completed.
 - There are 15 Planning Grant applications, 10 Project Development Grant applications, and six Implementation Grant applications.

- For Implementation Grant Applicants, TCC Program Staff and Interagency Review Panelists will be conducting site visits October 9 – 20.
- For all grant types, TCC Program Staff and Interagency Review Panelists will deliberate rankings during the last week of October and first week of November.
- For all grant types, TCC is on track to recommend awards to the Council on the December 14 meeting.
- Staff is beginning to solicit feedback from TCC applicants and partners, including meeting with the technical assistance team and opening our feedback survey.
- Staff continue to work with Round 4 awardees through the post-award consultation process. To date 6 of 7 Planning Grant Agreements and 3 of 3 Implementation Grant Agreements have been awarded.
- Staff celebrated project milestones with TCC Grant Sites:
 - County of Monterey: On September 5, 2023, Regeneración and the County of Monterey, recipients of a Round 4 TCC Planning Grant, hosted a TCC-program-funded event to kick off grant activities with the Pajaro Valley community and formally introduce the program to the community. Regeneración and the County of Monterey will use their grant to create a coalition in the Pajaro Valley community to do community resilience planning for infrastructure projects.
 - City of Fresno: On September 29, 2023, Transform Fresno, a Round 1 TCC Implementation Grant recipient, officially launched their carsharing network. This project was led by the Clean Shared Mobility Network and Biz-Werx Innovation and Mobility Hub.
- The Connecting Communities Program signed a technical assistance contract with Horne. Horne is expected to provide In-depth technical assistance for 10-20 partners.

Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)

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

- SALC staff closed six easement projects between August 16th and October 4th. These projects have resulted in the permanent conservation of approximately 12,000 acres of grazing and irrigated agricultural land in six counties.
- SALC's acquisition and planning application window closed September 8, 2023. SALC received 8 planning grants totaling nearly \$4 million in request. SALC received 42 acquisition applications (36 easements, 6 fee acquisitions) requesting \$123.3 million in funding and representing over 56,000 acres of agricultural land. Of the 42 applications, 2 were submitted by tribes and 1 by a tribal non-profit. 17 of the acquisition applications received were developed using SALC capacity funds. Awards will be announced at the December SGC meeting. SALC has ~\$122.4 million in available funds this year (\$70.6 million in 22/23 GGRF appropriations and \$51.8 in rollover funds).
- SALC's capacity application deadline was July 21st. SALC 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.



Climate Change Research Program (CCR)

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

- 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. The panel consisted of three CCR Grantees and they shared 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 will begin the closeout process for Round 3 grantees this month.
- The CCR Team is finalizing synthesis reports of the research projects funded in Round one and two.
- The CCR and 5th Assessment teams continue to meet quarterly with research leadership from the University of California and California State Universities. During the most recent September meetings, we discussed outreach to UC networks for potential author team members for the Regional Synthesis Reports.
- CCR Team attended a 4-hour training hosted by CARB in partnership with West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project on Community Partnership and Power Sharing Monday October 2nd.
- The 1st Quarter for the UCOP and CSU WATER Contracts concluded September 30th. CCR will organize check ins as well as collecting and Reviewing Quarter reports.
- The CCR Team is organizing kickoff meetings for our two newest contracts with UCOP and CSU-WATER. 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.
- The CCR team continues to lead the engagement efforts of California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment:
 - 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, received 86 research proposals with award announcements anticipated for October.
 - From July to October 2023, the Fifth Assessment team hosted nine 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.
 - The Fifth Assessment team will host three virtual workshops on October 3rd and 4th for partners who were unable to attend an in-person workshop.
 - Regional Report author teams are expected to be established by January 2024.



Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Program

Staff: Amar Cid, Dora Monterroza, Jess McCool, and Jessica Cervantes

- The CRC Program Round 1 Application, hosted on the Submittable Platform, closed 9/18/23. The CRC Program received a total of 189 Applications Submitted across all three grant types asking for a total of \$ 685,330,873.13.
 - **Planning Grant:** 87 Applications Submitted asking for a total of \$37,820,808.31
 - **Project Development Grant:** 28 Applications Submitted asking for a total of \$69,751,466.50
 - **Implementation Grant:** 74 Applications Submitted asking for a total of \$577,758,598.32
- A total of 148 Pre-Proposals for Implementation Grants were received by the 8/25/23 deadline. CRC Staff provided individualized feedback to 73 pre-proposals which were received by the priority deadline of 8/4/23. An additional 75 responses were submitted after the August 4th priority deadline, to which staff provided general unscored feedback. All pre-proposal feedback provided was intended to ensure applicants understood eligibility and other requirements as Applicants developed their Full Application.
- During the CRC Program Round 1 Application window of 7/18/23 - 9/18/23 staff hosted a total of 16 virtual “Application Office Hours” sessions with over 550 registrants. On average, participation ranged from 15-45 per office hour session. Application Office Hours included general audience sessions, as well as sessions specific for applicants from rural and tribal communities. Four sessions hosted within the final weeks leading up to the application due date were extended to 2 hours each in length to provide additional support.
- In addition to hosting a series of Office Hour sessions during the application window, staff continued to closely monitor the CRC team inbox to field questions and provide clarity on the application process. Staff collected questions from virtual Office Hours and the CRC inbox, along with their answers, and developed a Q&A resource document for applicants to refer to as they developed their full applications.
- Given the high volume of applications received, CRC Program Staff have developed and are finalizing an application review process and timeline for a staggered review and awards approach. This has been informed by best practices shared by other OPR/ SGC program staff who have led application review processes, as well as State grant programs that take a staggered approach to providing awards across grant types.
- Staff are currently conducting Planning Grant Application Completeness and Threshold Review. As well as working with the third-party Implementation Support contractor, Civix, to lay out the scope for support in reviewing application thresholds across all grant types.
- 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.
- Staff are working to identify additional funding sources that align with Resilience Centers projects, which could be provided to unawarded applicants. Staff are also facilitating partnerships with additional external agencies including the CalEPA EJ Action Grants Program for this purpose.



- Staff launched the CRC Networking Hub hosted on Milken Institute’s Community Infrastructure Center platform. This platform will give applicants and prospective applicants an opportunity to connect with each other and relevant subject matter experts throughout the state. The team will be utilizing this channel to share additional and aligned funding opportunities as well as related events and trainings. The CRC Networking Hub will foster a space to continuously form and maintain relationships while building capacity among various partners throughout the state.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

Community Assistance for Climate Equity (CACE)

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

- **Regional Climate Collaboratives (RCC) Program Round 2:** Staff received a total of 43 RCC Round 2 pre-proposals from across the state, including a total of 258 applicant organizations. Pre-proposals came from the following regions: Bay Area (8); Coastal Southern California (8); Inland Southern California (5); North State (7); San Joaquin Valley (7); Sierras (3). Two of the pre-proposals were tribal-led, and seven included tribal partners. SGC staff reviewed all of the pre-proposals and offered detailed feedback to applicants. Staff selected 33 applicants to receive third-party technical assistance based on their readiness and the percentage of under-resourced communities and tribal lands they proposed to serve. Staff will also continue to hold regular office hours until the Full Proposal deadline on December 6 which will be open to all applicants. 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 in building long-term readiness to secure grant funds to implement tribal-led climate solutions. Staff will bring the Pilot Program Guidelines to Council for approval at the October Council Meeting. CACE program staff developed these Program Guidelines through robust public outreach, engagement, and research over the past year, which included a workshop series, tribal consultations, key informant interviews, in-person and virtual tribal events, input from tribal expert consultants, and a 90-day public comment period. Following Council’s adoption of the Guidelines, Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program staff will issue a Notice of Funding Availability and initiate a competitive application process for the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program.
- **Technical Assistance Toolkit Update:** Staff presented the new version of the Technical Assistance Toolkit (formerly “Technical Assistance Guidelines for State Agencies) to Council at the August 30 Meeting. Following the Council meeting, SGC was able to put the finishing touches on the Technical Assistance Toolkit (TA Toolkit) and released a press release and social media posts to promote its release. SGC staff have also presented the TA Toolkit to interagency work groups since its release and plan to continue to promote this resource in the coming months.

Collaborative Policy Initiatives

Health and Equity Program (HEP)

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

Health in All Policies (HiAP)

- **HiAP Task Force Forum on Outreach and Engagement Best Practices.** HiAP Task Force staff hosted a forum on outreach and engagement best practices on September 12. The forum brought together over 100 State practitioners that attended a presentation on best practices for outreach and engagement for State grant opportunities, with an emphasis on equitable engagement with priority communities. In addition, the forum hosted an interagency panel of expert practitioners, including staff from the California Strategic Growth Council, Department of Water Resources, Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California Natural Resources Agency. This forum was not hosted publicly but was made available to all interested State government employees.
- **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. An October highlight for Equity in Data and Access to Information Workgroup included a presentation from PolicyLink on the [National Equity Atlas](#), with a typically-nationwide presentation tailored to California State government practitioners' use of the Atlas.
- **HEP and State of Equity Represent HiAP Task Force at Global Health Network for Health in All Policies (GNHiAP) in Tampere, Finland.** On September 5 and 6, HEP Program Manager Jazmine Garcia Delgadillo attended the Global Network for Health in All Policies (GNHiAP), Towards Sustainable Societies – Health in All Policies and Social Determinants of Health as Building Blocks Convening in Tampere, Finland. Garcia Delgadillo participated in a panel titled, "Country Case Studies – The Four HiAP Pillars Delivering Impact," highlighting California State government's work to sustain multi-sectoral action to support health and equity, and the ways in which different countries and entities approach this work.

Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP)

Staff: HEP and SGC Program and Administrative Managers

- **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 early October, HEP coordinated bimonthly REAP implementation check-ins with SGC program teams. HEP is preparing teams to compile updates for an annual REAP update to the SGC, scheduled for the December 14, 2023, Council meeting.
- **Internal 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.
- **SGC Participates in Tribal-Serving Engagement Venues.** Members of the internal SGC Tribal Coordination and Engagement Initiatives Working Group coordinated SGC's participation in tribal-serving engagement opportunities, including California Native American Day (September 22, 2023, in Sacramento) and the 2023 Tribal EPA and U.S. EPA Region 9 Conference (October 24



– 26, 2023, in Alpine). For both venues, SGC staff compiled information about the tribal-serving elements and/or requirements of their programs and shared responsibilities for signing up and/or participating in each event.

- **2023-2025 SGC REAP Launched via Blog Post on Medium.com.** In collaboration with Communications/External Affairs, HEP published a Medium.com blog post to widely launch the 2023-2025 REAP. The blog includes highlights for the updated 2023-2025 REAP and lessons learned from SGC’s REAP implementation since its first iteration was published in April 2019.
- **HEP Reviews Draft Office of Planning & Research (OPR) REAP.** HEP provided input on the forthcoming, draft OPR REAP. In addition to feedback provided across the document based on lessons learned from SGC REAP implementation and the Capitol Collaborative on Race & Equity, HEP identified opportunities for cross-organizational coordination and support between SGC and OPR’s respective racial equity initiatives.
- **GARE Co-Governance Network.** Building on the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) California Convening earlier this year, HEP is leading an effort to convene a network of government practitioners across California leading racial equity-focused co-governance strategies. HEP led a conversation at the convening on co-governance strategies that advance racial equity, featuring Transformative Climate Communities. HEP will host a convening of this statewide network in November, where practitioners will connect to share about community engagement, cross-sectoral partnerships, co-governance models and best practices, and more.

Racial Equity Resource Hub

Staff: HEP and the Communications Team

- **Updates to the Racial Equity Resource Hub.** HEP continues to collect resources from State entities as directed by Council to host on the Hub, and is continuing to update past resources to ensure they are up to date and are accessible to users. HEP is also working on streamlining the resource posting process to ensure timely updates on critical racial equity resources. This month, the Racial Equity Resource Hub will be hosting a blog post from HEP highlighting the updated Racial Equity Action Plan.

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 Transformative Leadership Cohort (TLC).** The 2023-2024 pilot cohort centering Black Indigenous People of Color, kicked off the first session with the Racial Equity Institute Phase I Workshop Intensive in September. Upcoming sessions will be facilitated by the CCORE TLC Co-Leads and Anti-Oppression Resource & Training Alliance (AORTA).
- The State of Equity is in initial planning stages for a CCORE Learning Cohort in 2024, to learn more email CCORE@phi.org.

Natural and Working Lands

Land Equity Task Force

Staff: Sean Kennedy



- The California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force will host its first public meeting at the Sacramento State Downtown Campus at 2pm on Monday, October 30. This will be a hybrid meeting, and virtual or in-person attendance is encouraged.
- At this first meeting, Task Force members will discuss and approve the body's bylaws and charter and begin to develop a work plan for future meetings. The Task Force will meet quarterly and submit formal recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on or before January 1, 2026.
- On today's consent calendar, SGC staff will nominate James Nakahara, Farm Business Advisor with Kitchen Table Advisors, for appointment on the Task Force. Mr. Nakahara has extensive experience in sustainable and regenerative agriculture, and is a strong advocate for providing greater awareness and support for the hardworking farmers and ranchers in our local communities. If appointed, Mr. Nakahara will assume the position of Lorena Iniguez, who was appointed in April but has since indicated she can no longer serve.

Regional Planning Initiatives

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

- On October 9th, HCD announced the Rural and Tribal awardees for the Regional Early Action Planning Grants (REAP 2.0) program. The awards total \$54 million across 16 projects and include affordable housing development, utilities and active transportation infrastructure development, site acquisition, predevelopment activities and more.
- This follows the first tranche of REAP 2.0 awards announced on July 5th, which totaled \$352 million across 12 MPOs, local governments, and transit agencies. There remains \$104 of awards to announce. Most, if not all, application reviews are completed at this point.
- 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 6th 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 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

- On October 26, SGC collaborated with CivicWell and other State agencies to convene a practitioner workshop focused strategies for State-local coordination to advance Priority 3 objectives around strategic growth. The workshop discussions will inform 2024 updates to [SGC's Housing, Climate, and Equity work plan](#) and ongoing efforts to co-create operational solutions for critical statewide needs or gaps hindering more significant progress on energy and climate action within communities.



- Also on October 26, Councilmembers had the opportunity to visit a St. Teresa of Calcutta Villa, an affordable housing community supported by the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities program. Councilmembers also toured Barrio Logan.
- During the October 26 SGC 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 across the San Diego region. Central to this work is understanding how local and regional implementers engage with State policies and programs, which can then inform State actions to improve access to resources and reduce burdens on local and regional agencies. The panel is intended as an opportunity for local and regional implementers to share their perspectives on these issues, including successful strategies for accessing and deploying State opportunities.

Media Clips

Transformative Climate Communities

- [Santa Cruz Sentinel] "[Regeneracion launches climate resiliency projects in Pajaro Valley](#)" September 7, 2023: "That grant went into effect in July, and local nonprofit Regeneracion went into more detail in an event at the Watsonville Public Library on Wednesday that included screenings of two short movies detailing how the Transformative Climate Communities grants have been implemented in other California communities. The Transformative Climate Communities was established through Assembly Bill 2722 by then-Assemblywoman Autumn Burke, D-Marina del Rey, with the goal of financing the development and implementation of neighborhood-level community projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide economic, environmental and health benefits to communities in need. The program is administered by the Strategic Growth Council and allows communities the opportunity to apply for planning and implementation grants."
- [Laist.com] "[Low-Income Households Are Getting Help From A Free Solar Rooftop Program](#)" September 6, 2023: "But the Zúñigas got their panels for free, as a result of a state program called Transformative Climate Communities."

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities

- [StreetBlogLA] "[California Sustainable Affordable Housing Grants Awarded to Five Local Projects](#)" September 1, 2023. "Earlier this week, the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) awarded nearly \$800 million in Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Round 7 grants going to 21 projects throughout the state. The AHSC program advances state equity and climate goals by supporting projects that connect housing with green transportation. In L.A. County, five projects received AHSC grants totaling \$187 million. Four projects totalling \$156.7 million are in L.A. City. One additional \$30.8 million project is in the unincorporated L.A. County neighborhood of Florence-Firestone."

Community Resilience Centers

- [Lake County News] "[Swearing-in ceremony for new Public Health officer planned for supervisors meeting](#)" "Consideration of the County of Lake acting as lead agency on a planning grant application under the Community Resilience Centers Grant Program from the California



Strategic Growth Council; and b) consideration of resolution approving the application to apply for up to \$500,000 in grant funds under the Community Resilience Centers Program of Strategic Growth Council of the California Department of Conservation; and c) consideration of letter of commitment and authorization for the chair to sign..”