



Build • Organize • Optimize • Strengthen • Transform

About BOOST

In partnership with the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC), the Institute for Local Government (ILG) launched the BOOST Pilot Program in the spring of 2019 to help under-resourced communities build capacity to advance their climate and equity goals. The 18-month pilot was designed to provide flexible and responsive technical assistance to address the varying and evolving capacity challenges of local governments, while also sharing best practices and lessons learned to help inform state programs. ILG and SGC selected ten cities and two regions to participate in the pilot and developed customized work plans with each community based on self-identified needs.

The BOOST Pilot Program provided customized and tailored support to help communities:

- Build awareness of funding opportunities to address climate action;
- Organize projects to be best positioned to meet its goals;
- Optimize existing resources and build more capacity;
- Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders and identify new opportunities for regional engagement and collaboration; and
- Transform their approach to addressing climate action.

Through the BOOST Program, participating communities received a wide range of capacity-building support, including:

- Grant writing assistance
- Project development guidance
- Direct connections to existing state technical assistance and funding programs
- Partnership development
- Climate action and resilience planning
- Community engagement trainings and facilitation services
- Peer-to-peer learning opportunities
- Communications support



BOOST Participants:

- City of Arcata
- City of Arvin
- City of Bakersfield
- City of East Palo Alto
- City of El Centro
- City of Mammoth Lakes
- City of Paramount
- City of Salinas
- City of San Diego
- City of Ventura
- San Joaquin Valley Council of Governments (SJCOC)
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)



Program Highlights

During the 18-month program, the ILG Team:

- Connected BOOST partners to 59 grant opportunities and provided direct application assistance on 23 grants, leading to over \$50 million in new funding. This funding included \$43 million in California Climate Investments and \$6.6 million in SB2/LEAP grants to support planning, affordable housing, equitable transportation and climate mitigation and resilience projects.
- Facilitated discussions between local agency partners, state agency staff and technical assistance providers working on 12 grant programs from 5 different state agencies.
- Provided strategic counsel, allocated funding, secured resources and/or identified expert consultants to help develop 6 Climate Action and/or Resiliency Plans, including the first-ever for the cities of Paramount, Ventura, Bakersfield and Salinas and updates for San Diego and East Palo Alto.
- Trained 72 local agency staff on authentic public engagement strategies through numerous customized capacity-building workshops.
- Strengthened local planning projects by facilitating discussions and building relationships with community-based organizations and advocates that provided valuable input to support more equitable planning to address the needs of vulnerable populations.
- Increased awareness of best practices and effective strategies for more inclusive and authentic public engagement, including the pivot to virtual public engagement.

“We appreciate the BOOST team’s support for the writing and technical support that helped us bring the community’s vision to our successful STEP planning grant application. This is a huge step in the right direction to close the economic gap in Southeast Bakersfield.”

– Arlenea Waller,
Chair/Founder,
ShePower/MLKUnity Project

“By aligning planning processes, funding opportunities and helping with public engagement, ILG’s BOOST team helped us develop new partnerships, innovative projects, and long-term strategies for addressing climate and equity initiatives.”

- David Loya, Community
Development Director,
City of Arcata

The COVID-19 crisis severely impacted under-resourced communities. ILG’s BOOST team supported participating communities by:

- Researching new funding sources to support individual community opportunities and needs.
- Facilitating partnerships with community-based organizations to assist small business and keep vulnerable populations in their homes.
- Keeping climate action, resiliency, and equity projects active while agency staff were busy with acute crisis management.
- Creating peer-to-peer learning opportunities so that BOOST participants could share experiences, lessons learned and problem-solving techniques.
- Providing virtual public engagement training and best practices to help navigate the new realities of social distancing and stay-at-home orders.