



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 – April 26, 2023

Organizational and Staffing Updates

- Brianne Logasa joined the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities program as Program Associate.
- Sophie Young, Program Manager for the Transformative Climate Communities Program, left SGC for a new opportunity at the World Resource Institute. Sophie is one of the last original members of the TCC team with 5 1/2 years of amazing service to the program! Sophie's last day at SGC was Friday, April 7th.

Investment Program Updates

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC)

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

- Round 7 AHSC applications were due on April 4, 2023, with approximately \$750 million in available funds. In total, AHSC received a total of 53 applications requesting nearly \$2.5 billion in funding requests across the State. However at least 10 of the projects were fatally incomplete in their application and/or represented duplicate submissions. Of the remaining potentially viable projects, the program received applications from at least one tribal applicant and at least one application in each of the eight regions, giving staff hope that we will continue to meet the council-identified priorities for awards.
- The AHSC team (CARB, HCD, and SGC staff) is now confirming projects meet threshold requirements, verifying information and scoring projects. The team will send out a combined Threshold and Initial Score Letter in early June, allowing for a five-day appeal process for applicants.
- Staff will present a list of projects recommended for awards to the SGC Council at the August 30, 2023 Council Meeting, with staff seeking to inform applicants of their award status in time to plan for the Spring deadlines of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee.

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

- Staff released the Round 5 Notice of Funding Availability on March 8, 2023, and revised Application Materials on March 16, 2023.
 - Prospective Implementation Grant Applicants completed the Application Initiation Form by March 31, 2023. Technical assistance (TA) providers have begun connecting with applicants.
 - Implementation Grant Pre-proposals are due May 1, 2023.
 - Final Applications are due August 1, 2023.
- Round 5 TCC Application Outreach and Technical Assistance is underway:

- Staff held three online Application Workshops between March 22-23, presenting materials related to the TCC application processes and requirements outlined in the Round 5 Program Guidelines. The three online workshops were tailored to provide information and resources to diverse audiences: for general audiences, disadvantaged unincorporated communities, and tribal communities. Attendees heard from TCC staff about key components and dates and heard testimonies from past grantees. Application TA providers were present and provided a list of services provided to potential applicants.
- Staff have been hosting weekly TCC Application Online Office Hours starting Tuesday, March 14.
- Staff continue to work with Round 4 awardees through the post-award consultation process. Staff will execute final grant agreements for the seven awarded Round 4 Planning Grants in mid-April.
- Staff celebrated project milestones with TCC Implementation and Planning Grant Sites:
 - Riverside: Saturday, February 25th – The Eastside Climate Collaborative in Riverside (TCC Round 3 Implementation Grant, \$9M) celebrated the graduation of 22 residents from a 10-week Resident Leadership Academy (RLA) with the Riverside Community Health Foundation. The RLA equips residents with the knowledge, tools, and strategies to develop and lead initiatives that improve the quality of life within their neighborhoods.
 - San Diego: Saturday, March 3rd – Environmental Health Coalition (TCC Round 3 Planning Grant, \$200,000) held a groundbreaking event for a forthcoming linear park in the community of Barrio Logan. The TCC Planning Grant supported Environmental Health Coalition’s collaboration with community members to co-design an urban greening project in the community.
 - Fresno: Friday, March 24th - Transform Fresno (TCC Round 1 Implementation Grant, \$66.5M) celebrated the grand opening of the new housing community, The Monarch @ Chinatown, with 55 new affordable units. The Monarch is supported by \$11.8M in TCC funding.

Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)

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

- SALC staff have entered int grant agreement on the 25 easement projects, 20 capacity grants, and one planning grant awarded at the December 15, 2022 Council meeting. Staff are working on grant agreements for the remaining two planning grants.
- Staff have finished and circulated for public comment the Round 9 SALC Program Guidelines. Staff have incorporated public comments into the final Round 9 SALC Program Guidelines.
- SALC staff closed two easement projects between February 6th and April 5th. These projects have resulted in the permanent conservation of approximately 1,393 acres of agricultural land in two counties.
- The Executive Director approved extensions on 25 easement grants (Rounds 3-6) and 6 planning grants (Rounds 5-6). A complete list is available upon request. Reasons for these extensions include delays due to COVID, staffing shortages, changes in project structure, issues acquiring match, and complications arising out of match funder requirements.

Climate Change Research Program (CCR)

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



- The CCR team has begun hosting project Exit Presentations for its four [Round 2 grantees](#). These events are an opportunity for grantees to share project outcomes with executive and legislative staff working on climate policy. The first event took place on April 10th and will continue through May 24th. Each grantee developed a two-page summary sheet describing project outcomes and videos of these presentations will be uploaded to SGC’s YouTube channel for public viewing.
- CCR is executing an Interagency Agreement with University of California’s Office of the President to further facilitate and leverage research partnerships and advance CCR’s Participatory Research to Policy Model in the \$80 million state funded UC Climate Action Seed and Matching Grants. The agreement funds:
 - \$200,000 for ten (10) Community-Engaged Hero Award Supplements that support community engagement methods and techniques, integration of community/end-user knowledge, emphasis on solution-oriented alternatives, and communicating research analysis and findings in ways that can be understood by communities and/or end users.
 - \$50,000 to develop a community engagement in climate action platform, furnishing researchers with a suite of useful tools and resources to enhance community engagement in climate action research across the system and the state.
- The CCR team continues to lead the engagement efforts of California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment:
 - The Fifth Assessment hosted over 15 interviews with authors and advisors of the Fourth Assessment regional and topical reports to glean best practices and lessons learned that can be integrated into the current iteration of the assessment. Key takeaways and recommendations gathered from these conversations will be summarized for internal use.
 - A Request for Information (RFI) was released in April to offer the public an opportunity to provide information on priority themes to address in the regional reports and development processes that prioritize community partnerships. In May, during the RFI submission period, the team will also host four virtual listening sessions where the public, including community based-organizations, researchers, and local governments, can input on the framework for the regional reports.
 - The second [Quarterly Fifth Assessment Briefing](#) (QFAB) was held on April 18th to provide State agencies updates on the Fifth Assessment and information on opportunities for interagency collaboration. Following the QFAB, the team will also be hosting a [working session](#) where State agencies can input on the research approach for the regional reports.

Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Program

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

- Staff reviewed and analyzed over 750 public comments from 100+ commenters on the CRC Round 1 Draft Guidelines. Staff held over 30 discussions with subject matter experts and interagency leads and hosted focus groups on key topics for the CRC Round 1 Final Guidelines. Staff will present CRC Round 1 Final Guidelines for adoption at the April 2023 Council meeting.
- Staff released an RFP for CRC Round 1 Application Technical Assistance and hosted a webinar for interested bidders in March 2023. The recording is posted on the SGC YouTube channel.
- Staff are preparing CRC application materials and templates in preparation for a NOFA release in late Spring 2023, as well as resources for applicants, communications materials, and an upcoming RFI for program evaluation.



- Staff are conducting targeted outreach to ensure diverse CRC applications, including presenting at meetings and events hosted by the CA State Library, CA Association for Coordinated Transportation (CALACT), and the CA Office of Emergency Services' Statewide Access and Functional Needs Community Advisory Committee.
- 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 Draft Guidelines:** Staff released the RCC Round 2 Draft Program Guidelines on March 15 for public comment. The public comment period closed on April 15. SGC held a series of public workshops to gather feedback on the draft Guidelines in late March and early April, and staff will bring the final RCC R2 Guidelines to Council for approval at the June 29 Council Meeting.
- **Tribal Technical Assistance Pilot:** CACE staff is in the process of holding key informant interviews with a variety of Tribes, tribal-serving organizations, State agency staff, and other stakeholders to inform the development of a Tribal Technical Assistance Pilot (Tribal TAP). Tribal TAP 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. Staff aims to launch the pilot program in fall 2023.
- **Technical Assistance Guidelines Update:** CACE staff are working on drafting an update to the Technical Assistance Guidelines and aim to finalize this TA Guidelines update by summer 2023.
- **Partners Advancing Climate Equity Round 2:** Staff are in the process of gathering feedback and gearing up for launching a second round of the Partners Advancing Climate Equity Cohort, which is a capacity-building program for frontline community leaders from across California to connect and learn with peers, take their skills to the next level, and inspire transformative change.

Collaborative Policy Initiatives

Health and Equity Program (HEP)

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Jazmine Garcia Delgado, 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.** HEP, in collaboration with CDPH and PHI, held a virtual interagency HiAP Task Force Convening on Thursday, March 23. During this meeting, HiAP Task Force members heard an update from the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications on their Community Outreach and Education Services Master Agreement.



CDPH shared a presentation on the [Federal Register’s Initial Proposals for Updating the Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\)’s Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards](#). CDPH shared their feedback and encouraged Task Force members to work with their agencies to provide feedback to OMB ahead of the deadline. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also shared an update and request for feedback on their [Reconnecting Communities Handbook](#). Finally, Task Force members convened in smaller groups to share about their agency’s or department’s equity advancement initiatives, their role in implementing these initiatives, and how the initiatives embed and prioritize health equity and racial equity. The next HiAP Task Force Convening is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, June 29.

- **HiAP Task Force Workgroups Convene Monthly.** The [Grant Program, Contract, and Funding Equity](#) and [Equity in Data and Access to Information](#) workgroups have continued to meet monthly. Workgroups are finalizing action plans and have begun to work on short-term actions. During the Grant Program, Contract, and Funding Equity meeting in April, the HiAP Task Force supported the Office of Planning and Research’s Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program in their update to the Tribal Funding Gantt Chart. Meanwhile, the Equity in Data and Access to Information workgroup heard a presentation on the story map, [Race and Stormwater in LA County: Green stormwater infrastructure can address water pollution and unjust urban planning](#).
- **Feedback Provided on Caltrans Reconnecting Communities Handbook.** The HEP team provided feedback on embedding health and equity considerations into the Caltrans Reconnecting Communities Handbook.

Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP)

Staff: HEP and SGC Program and Administrative Managers

- **Programs Begin Implementing the 2023-2025 Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP).** SGC programs have begun implementing the updated 2023-2025 SGC REAP, with facilitation, technical support, and tracking led by HEP. Many programmatic actions to advance racial equity are already in progress within the REAP, including advance pay for grantees, intentional engagement and outreach practices, integration of racial equity in program and grant guidelines, event planning and convenings, and more. The next series of program check-ins will take place in two months. HEP developed a cross-programmatic tracking tool for programs to track REAP implementation progress, which includes a spreadsheet that integrates all REAP goals, actions, metrics, and timelines. This tool was introduced at an SGC All Staff meeting on April 17, alongside a discussion about how staff are operationalizing the REAP in their programmatic work.
- **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 (including federally recognized tribes and California Native American Tribes recognized by the Native American Heritage Commission). Following the SGC Catalyst Conference and Staff Retreat, the Tribal Coordination and Engagement working group is collaborating to carry out best practices to increase tribal engagement and representation at SGC-hosted events that are open to the public or dedicated to priority audiences, including streamlining outreach efforts across programs; in addition, staff from SGC and the Office of Planning and Research attended the Department of Water Resources Tribal Water Summit on April 13 to share about available funding resources for tribes.



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 and non-State entities as directed by Council and will plan to host them on the Hub. This month, the Resource Hub will also host a blog post from the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) including updates from OPR, SGC, California Volunteers, Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications, and the new Racial Equity and Youth Commissions.
- **Presentation to California Air Resources Board (CARB)'s Sustainable Transportation and Communities Division (STCD) Equity Work Group.** The HEP team provided an overview of the Resource Hub and an invitation to share resources to CARB's STCD Equity Work Group on March 21. The overview included a Q&A segment on SGC's REAP development process as STCD is currently developing a Racial Equity Action Plan specific to their programs and regulations development processes.

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 Updates.** As a follow-up to the February 22 CCORE Learning Cohort Executive Convening the State of Equity published a [blog post](#) highlighting the event. In March, the CCORE Learning Cohort teams participated in a peer exchange session including a presentation from the Department of Water Resources on their reflections from developing a Racial Equity Action Plan, focused team time to make progress on their racial equity tool, and time to connect with others across the cohort. In April the cohort convened for a session on the final steps in the racial equity tool and team coordinators convened for additional training to support their leadership. The State of Equity is in initial planning stages for a CCORE Learning Cohort in 2024, to learn more email CCORE@phi.org.
- **CCORE Transformative Leadership Cohort.** CCORE Transformative Leadership Cohort has been in a redirect and refresh phase since pausing the launch of the pilot cohort. We have had two community connections (February & March) with folx who have applied already about organizing for this cohort with our last community connection on April 27th. CCORE TLC is set to launch in the Summer of 2023. To get more base information & apply to be a part of this cohort click [here](#).

Natural and Working Lands

Staff: Emily Tibbott

- Following from EO N-82-20, staff supports CNRA's Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Climate Smart Strategy, including assessment of progress after the first year of implementation. Staff also contributed to the NWL elements of the 2022 State Scoping Plan, recently released in final form.



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 6th Cycle 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.
- All REAP 2.0 applications were due on December 31st, 2022. The Interagency Team is currently reviewing applications and providing TA to applicants as necessary. Awards are likely to be announced sometime in late Spring / Summer 2023.
- SGC Staff, in conjunction with OPR, have reached the decision to wind down the State-MPO Working Group due to a lack of shared goals and shared vision amongst the working group members. The last Working Group meeting was held in February. The interagency partners agreed to continue to meet and left open the possibility to reconvene the working group if a need arises.
- The OPR/SGC Regions Working Group continues to meet each month to improve coordination among regional programs. The Group is currently in the process of assessing its goals for its second year of existence.

California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

Staff: Sean Kennedy, Emily Tibbott

- Following application nomination and review, SGC staff identified seven individuals to serve on the Task Force. An additional six members have been identified through State and State-affiliated entities, per the guidance in the authorizing budget bill language.

Council Priority 3: Housing, Climate, and Equity

Staff: Sean Kennedy

- On March 1, 2023, SGC issued a request for information (RFI) to inform the Council Priority 3 work plan. The primary purpose of the RFI is to identify solutions, education opportunities, and targeted efforts the State can take to leverage and align existing legislative and budget actions with the explicit outcome of making these investments and policy solutions more accessible and usable for local, regional, and community implementers.
- Submissions were accepted from March 1 – March 31, 2023. The RFI was announced on the SGC website and newsletter, with additional targeted outreach to local and regional governments, advocacy groups, and academic institutions.
- The two-year work plan, based on input received in response to the RFI and an analysis of existing State recommendations, will be presented for discussion at the April 26 Council meeting.



Media Clips

California Strategic Growth Council

- [\[The Pew Charitable Trusts\] Community Engagement Helps Drive Much-Needed Infrastructure Investments](#): Through its Breaking Barriers to Better Health for All initiative, The Pew Charitable Trusts' Health Impact Project has supported the *California Strategic Growth Council (SGC)*, a Cabinet-level state interagency body that addresses structural barriers to infrastructure investments in DUCs, such as the availability of accurate data associated with them and funding program processes that have traditionally disadvantaged DUCs.
- [\[CaliforniaCityNews.org\] California Consulting Announces Municipal Grants for March 2023](#): This article lists municipal grant opportunities in spring of this year, including the Community Resilience Centers Program and Round 7 of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program.
- [\[Legislative Analyst's Office\] Crafting Climate, Resources, and Environmental Budget Solutions](#): This report outlines the budgets for California's climate solutions and programs, including the Transformative Climate Communities Program, the Community Resilience Centers Program, and the Regional Climate Resilience Program.

Climate Change Research Program

- [\[Public Policy Institute of California\] The Future of Agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley Policy Brief](#): This policy brief was supported with funding from the California Strategic Growth Council's Climate Change Research Program.
- [\[Redheaded Blackbelt\] Symposium Highlights Clean Air, Energy, and Fire in Rural and Tribal Communities](#): On March 1, students and faculty, Tribal leaders and community members, and representatives from federal and state agencies gathered at the Blue Lake Rancheria for an all-day SAFE symposium on Rural and Tribal Resilience: Strategies for Action. The SAFE project is supported by California Strategic Growth Council's *Climate Change Research Program*.

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities

- [\[California Climate Investments\] New Affordable Housing Opens at Riverside's Mission Heritage Plaza](#): Thanks to \$16.8 million from the Strategic Growth Council's *Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program*, 72 affordable homes for families and veterans are now available in downtown Riverside.
- [\[The Mercury News\] After Bay Area storms, East Oakland apartment complex now a multimillion-dollar crisis](#): Nearly seven weeks after flooding, residents of the 110-unit Coliseum Connections apartment complex still can't return home. The City of Oakland provided a \$12 million capital subsidy for the Coliseum Connections project, while also helping secure nearly \$15 million in funding from California's *Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities* program.
- [\[Long Beach Post News\] City Council approves \\$50M loan application for Downtown affordable housing project](#): Long Beach is applying for a \$50 million loan that could help fund an affordable housing project near St. Mary Medical Center from the state's *Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities* program, which helps finance projects that help lower greenhouse gas emissions and benefit disadvantaged communities.
- [\[Lost Coast Outpost\] Eureka Council Preview: Several Housing-Related Items on Tonight's Agenda, Including an Update on Vacation Dwelling Units in the City](#): The Eureka City Council will consider declaring Eureka a "pro-housing" jurisdiction through the California Department of



Housing and Community Development’s Prohousing Designation Program. These jurisdictions can receive “additional points” and preference in competitive applications for housing and infrastructure funding, such as the *Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant Program*.

Transformative Climate Communities

- [\[The Hill\] The real-world barriers to electric vehicle infrastructure](#): The challenges of building electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure are immense and underestimated. With the *Transformative Climate Communities* program, which “empowers the communities most impacted by pollution to choose their own goals, strategies, and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution,” for example, it took months, sometimes even years, to work through the myriad of community and governmental challenges and implement the projects on the ground.
- [\[California Planning & Development Report\] CP&DR News Briefs March 21, 2023: SGC Funding; S.F. Housing Nonprofit; Progress on Homelessness; and More](#): The Strategic Growth Council (SGC) announced \$99.2 in funding opportunities for neighborhood-serving capital infrastructure projects in historically underserved communities. The funding and program entitled the *Transformative Climate Communities Program* hopes to allocate funds for communities to decide what projects, goals, and strategies best serve their individual neighborhoods.
- [\[The Business Journal\] Program That Pumped \\$66.5M into Fresno Now Taking Applications](#): The *Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Program* has \$99.2 million in funding available for underserved communities to plan and implement capital infrastructure projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve public health and expand economic opportunity for residents.
- [\[Metro: The Source\] Ready, Set, Go GoPass! Students took 10 million free transit rides using Metro’s GoPass Pilot Program in last 8 months](#): Over the past two years, GoPass has been supported by South LA Transit Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z), which included GoPass funding as part of \$35M in approved grant funding for their South LA EcoLab project under the *Transformative Climate Communities (TCC)* grant through the Strategic Growth Council (SGC).
- [\[Equal Times\] Can Rotterdam avoid green gentrification and become a climate-adaptive city for all?](#): Over the next 10 years, Rotterdam will invest €233 million in seven urban projects focused on creating more green spaces across the city. Inspiration flows from other cities. In one of the most vulnerable neighborhoods in Los Angeles, the Watts Rising *Transformative Climate Communities* project develops green spaces, installs clean energy, and creates jobs while preventing displacement.

