

June 21, 2019

**Subject:** Informational Update: California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program

**Reporting Period:** June 2018 – June 2019

**Staff Lead:** Ena Lupine, Community Assistance Program Manager

**Summary**

The State of California has committed to investing a significant portion of the California Climate Investments (CCI) in the communities that bear the heaviest pollution and socioeconomic burden in the state. However, many of these impacted communities lack the resources and staff capacity needed to successfully apply to competitive CCI grant programs. The Strategic Growth Council's (SGC) CCI Technical Assistance (TA) Program tackles this challenge by assisting low income and disadvantaged communities in applying for CCI programs through both capacity building strategies and direct application assistance.

Through partnerships with CCI administering agencies and outside organizations with expertise in each program's focus, the SGC has designed TA programs that are tailored to the needs and desired outcomes of each program. To date, the SGC has funded a total of 22 contracts to provide technical assistance for applicants to 12 CCI Programs (see Table I for detail).

The CCI TA Program strives to achieve three main objectives:

- **Direct Assistance** - Increase the number of successful applications from disadvantaged and low-income communities to CCI programs by providing direct assistance in preparing applications and quantifying greenhouse gas reductions.
- **Capacity Building** - Strengthen the capacity of disadvantaged and low-income communities to identify potential projects, create cross-sector partnerships, and find appropriate CCI programs to meet community needs.
- **Integrating CCI Programs** - Align technical assistance efforts to facilitate an understanding of the full suite of programs available under the CCI umbrella and provide the services necessary to create multi-faceted projects that integrate more than one CCI program.

Since the program was launched through an initial allocation of \$500,000 in the Budget Act of 2015, SGC's CCI TA Program has grown significantly. The program received an additional \$2 million through the Budget Act of 2016, which was used to support TA for ten CCI programs. Building on the success of the first two years of the program, an additional \$2 million was designated for the CCI TA Program in the Budget Act of 2018, and the Council also allocated \$5 million of its continuous appropriation to support and expand the program in June 2018.

The CCI TA Program is currently in a time of reflection and transition, as a number of pilot TA programs come to a close and SGC staff begin to launch new initiatives that draw upon lessons learned. Staff is supporting the continuation and institutionalization of these pilot TA programs in their home agencies, while also exploring opportunities to expand TA to support agencies and programs that have not yet benefited from such assistance. Meanwhile, the legislature has also directed the SGC to launch two significant new initiatives.

The Budget Act of 2018 directed the SGC to partner with the Institute for Local Government (ILG) to create a pilot program to “provide technical assistance to cities and counties to help them take actions to address climate change.” Through this new initiative, ILG will work with 10 cities and 2 regions to build local capacity through one-on-one coaching that will include staff trainings, stakeholder engagement, and development of a realistic and sustainable implementation plan. Each engagement will support local capacity building and a broad suite of local goals and will not be tied to a single CCI program.

Additionally, Senate Bill (SB) 1072 (Leyva, 2018) directs the SGC to create a Regional Climate Collaboratives Program to provide “capacity building services to assist in building the community-driven leadership, knowledge, skills, experience, and resources to identify and access public funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects within the under-resourced community.” SGC has submitted a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) to staff the program, but as of this report writing, no grant funding has been allocated to implement this program. SGC staff are engaged in laying the groundwork to support the development of this program in preparation for designated funding and staff.

SB 1072 also directs the SGC to develop Technical Assistance Guidelines for State agencies by July 1, 2020, building upon the SGC’s role as a resource to counsel and assist other agencies in designing, developing, and implementing effective TA, especially in under-resourced communities. The past few years have seen a rapid proliferation of interest in and funding for TA, and SGC Staff see these TA Guidelines as a significant opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned with agencies in a way that will maximize the effectiveness and impact of new TA Programs.

In addition to these new initiatives, SGC staff is building upon lessons learned from past TA activities to continue to improve and deepen the impact of TA. First, in keeping with the goals of SB 1072, staff are considering ways to develop more place-based, integrated approaches to TA that are more responsive to diverse local needs. To that end, SGC staff is currently exploring opportunities build local capacity more broadly and to assist in communities in applying to multiple CCI programs in a more seamless way. Secondly, in order to maximize the efficiency of the SGC’s CCI TA funding and to advance the institutionalization of TA, SGC staff plan to pilot a leveraging program with partner administering agencies in which the SGC will share TA costs with administering agencies. The SGC is also looking to develop more formal partnerships with administering agencies to maximize the effectiveness of TA for all new contracts. Over the coming year, the SGC will be exploring opportunities to partner with CCI administering agencies to provide TA for programs that have not yet benefitted from these services.

## Background

### Appropriations for Technical Assistance

Launched in 2016, following an original allocation of \$500,000 in the Budget Act of 2015, the Strategic Growth Council's California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program has grown significantly over the past few years. Each appropriation is described below, followed by a table that describes each program that has been funded through the CCI TA Program.

The Budget Act of 2015 (Chapter 321, Statutes of 2015) appropriated \$500,000 to SGC for a pilot technical assistance program for the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program. Staff contracted with three regional technical assistance teams to provide direct application assistance to select disadvantaged community applicants. A proportion of funds were also directed to invest in capacity building activities for the AHSC program.

AB 1613 (Chapter 370, Statutes of 2016) appropriated \$2.0 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) for SGC to provide technical assistance to disadvantaged communities. This technical assistance funding was intended for a broad range of assistance efforts to increase the capacity of applicants in disadvantaged communities to successfully compete for CCI program funds.

SB 856 (Chapter 30, Statutes of 2018) appropriated \$2.0 million from the GGRF for SGC to provide technical assistance to disadvantaged communities. This legislation also directed the SGC utilize up to \$1.0 million of this appropriation to partner with the Institute for Local Government (ILG) to "provide technical assistance to cities and counties to help them take actions to address climate change."

In order to build on the successes of the CCI TA program and to support its continuation and expansion, the Council made the decision in June 2018 to allocate \$5 million from the SGC's continuous appropriation to the CCI TA Program. This decision was supported by Health and Safety Code Section 39719 (b)(1)(c), which provides a continuous appropriation from the GGRF for the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program of twenty percent of the annual proceeds of the GGRF to the SGC. The California Air Resources Board's (CARB) "Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments" (Funding Guidelines) allow for the funding of technical assistance for the purpose of implementing CCI programs.

### Technical Assistance Activities to Support CCI Programs

Each California Climate Investments program has its own set of goals and intended outcomes, meaning specific technical expertise is often required. In many cases, technical assistance is provided through a partnership between state agencies and outside organizations with expertise in each program's focus. In order to provide assistance that is tailored to each program, the SGC has worked closely with program staff and stakeholders to design TA activities that meet their needs. A description of the TA activities that are in progress or have been completed are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program Activities

Agency	CCI Program	Approach to TA	Funding Amount	Funding Source
Caltrans	Active Transportation Program (ATP)	<i>Localized assistance to five disadvantaged communities to prepare bike lane/sidewalk projects, cultivate partnerships between community and local jurisdictions, and prepare to apply for ATP and/or various CCI funding sources.</i>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>
Caltrans	Low Carbon Transportation Operations Program (LCTOP)	<i>Conduct ten statewide convenings to educate communities on formula-based transportation funding and conduct strategic discussion on LCTOP projects that meet community-identified needs.</i>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>
CalSTA	Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP)	<i>Assistance to four TIRCP awardees, and coordination with local community based organizations, in preparing key transportation and transit station access provisions that serve disadvantaged communities.</i>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>
CSD	Community Solar	<i>Phase I – Community engagement sessions focused on partnership development to prepare for future solar projects. Phase II - Assistance in implementing community solar that addresses community needs.</i>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>
CARB	Low Carbon Transportation Investments (LCTI)	<i>Community engagement and strategic convenings to build necessary partnerships to submit competitive LCTI applications.</i>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act</b>
SGC	Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC)	<i>Direct application assistance and capacity building activities directed at disadvantaged communities to prepare competitive AHSC applications.</i>	<b>AHSC Round 2: \$500,000 AHSC Round 3: \$600,000 AHSC Round 4: \$600,000</b>	<b>2015 Budget Act (\$500,000) 2016 Budget Act (\$2 million) 2018 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>

Agency	CCI Program	Approach to TA	Funding Amount	Funding Source
SGC	Deep Dive Technical Assistance	<i>Education on all CCI program opportunities for three jurisdictions, followed by direct application assistance to programs of interest to each jurisdiction.</i>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act</b>
SGC	Transformative Climate Communities (TCC)	<i>Project development and application preparation services to develop TCC concept and full applications, as well as assistance with implementation of the project.</i>	Round 1 Application Assistance (Phases 1-2): <b>\$300,000</b> Round 2 Application Assistance: <b>\$150,000</b> Implementation TA (Rounds 1&2): <b>\$400,000</b>	<b>FY 16-17 TCC Appropriation 2017 Budget Act (\$10 million)</b> <b>2018 Budget Act (\$40 million)</b>
SGC	Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)	<i>Focus on 2-3 communities in SJ Valley and SoCal to build capacity around ag land preservation and provide direct assistance for SALC planning grant applications.</i>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>FY 18-19 Continuous Appropriation (\$5 million)</b>
CDFA	CCI Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Programs:  - SWEEP - DDRDP - AMMP - HSP	<b>Application Assistance:</b> <i>Services provided in the scope of this TA will include holding workshops, GHG quantification, grant writing, and providing computer and internet assistance to applicants.</i>  <b>Partnership with UC ANR:</b> <i>Increase the adoption of science-based climate smart farming and ranching practices.</i>	2017 Application Assistance: <b>\$125,000</b> 2018-2019 Application Assistance: <b>\$200,000</b> Partnership with UC ANR: <b>\$1.1 million</b>	<b>2016 Budget Act</b> <b>FY 18-19 Continuous Appropriation (\$5 million)</b>
SGC	Institute for Local Government Capacity Building	<i>Through its Beacon Program, the Institute for Local Government will work with 10 local governments and 2 regions to build the local capacity by strengthening local coordination, leadership, knowledge, skills, expertise, and access to resources with the ultimate goal of developing competitive funding proposals.</i>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>2018 Budget Act (\$2 million)</b>