
November 17, 2020

Subject: Strategic Growth Council August Meeting Minutes

Reporting Period: August – November 2020

Staff Lead: Fabiha Zaman, Special Assistant

Recommended Action

Approval of the August 26, 2020 Strategic Growth Council Meeting Minutes.

Strategic Growth Council

August 26, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order

Chair Gordon called the meeting to order at 1:04pm.

Agenda Item #2: Roll Call

Council Members and Representatives Present:

Kate Gordon, Chair, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR);

Julie Souliere, Assistant Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS);

Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA);

Jared Blumenfeld, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA);

David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA);

Lourdes Castro Ramirez, Secretary, California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH);

Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA);

Nicole Capretz, Public Member – absent;

Mike Flad, Public Member – absent

Agenda Item #3: **ACTION**: Approval of Minutes

Motion was made (Blumenfeld) and seconded (Crowfoot) to approve the [June 25, 2020 Meeting Minutes](#). Motion passes 5-0-0*

* Secretary Ross absent during approval of minutes, joined at 1:12pm

Agenda Item #4: Council Member Updates

Kim: Update on racial equity and justice. 16 staff members from CalSTA and various Cal State departments participating in Capital Collaborative on Race and Equity (CORE Training). This is a racial equity capacity training made possible in partnership with SGC racial equity programs. Assisting California Advisory Committee on geographic names to identify transportation facilities named after individuals tied to acts of racism, discrimination, or oppression. Implementation of N-19-19: Conducted survey gaining insights from stakeholders and worked with 200 partners to find out what the executive order can mean for California. Looking at surveys right now to implement stakeholder input into N-19-19 implementation and fall workshops will offer additional opportunities to weigh in.

Blumenfeld: Significantly better auction (\$475 million), positive outlook for funding programming. California Air Resource Board setting standards for NOx emission standards for heavy duty vehicles, if adopted would save \$37 billion in health care costs. Regulation tightens shore power requirements for vessels docking at California ports also will lead to public health and environmental benefits. Elevated poor health quality standards around the state indicate importance of resilience efforts.

Ross: Conducting Partnership for Soil Health workshops. Allows state to figure out right balance of verification partnership program for healthy soils that helps get totality of on the groundwork to sequester carbon and improve soil health. Provides opportunity to see scaling up of Healthy Soils. Working group for on-farm composting: Healthy soils projects – applications from every county and on farm composting appears to be an important answer to that. California Range Land Trust Report reveals benefits of ecosystem services from 4000 acres of conserved land that produced benefit of \$990 million – \$1.4 billion. CORE program going very well.

Souliere: New Census flyers available (in English and Spanish)

Castro Ramirez: Project Room Key- opportunity to work with local s to convert hotels and motels to permanent housing for homeless Californians and those impacted by COVID-19. Priority deadline 138 applications for just over \$1 billion in funding requests (only \$600 million available). Expect to be able to make announcements on first few sets of awards in the next week or so. Within BCSH, recently released local guidance on utilizing federal and state dollars to provide support, services, and permanent housing on BCSH website. Involved and engaged in identifying families at risk of being evicted and solutions to respond. Coordinate comprehensive communication campaign for resources and protections available for these families. Priority: in relation to accelerating affordable housing production, initiated effort to bring all housing departments together and strengthen alignment in coordination and better understand affordable

housing finance system. Will help developers as they apply for various affordable housing funds.

Crowfoot: Underscore the fact that we are in the midst of an emergency. Need to continue reducing emissions and go beyond responding- need to build resilience into California. Moving towards co-management of resources with Native Tribes. Instating first ever assistant secretary for tribal affairs- will focus on institutionalizing tribal consultation and partnerships across our agency. California is a biodiversity hotspot, in partnership with CalEPA and others looking to build more cohesive approach towards protecting that biodiversity before species are on the verge of extinction.

Gordon: Put out beta version of mapping tool to make it easier to build affordable housing: Site-Check. Will help developers identify place in the state that are the most streamlined under CEQA goals and guidelines. Full release around January 2021. Diversifying economies, just transition, and high road economic development: working with Labor department providing resources and technical assistant to Kern county for a data driven, regional economic development/recovery.

Agenda Item #5: Executive Director's Report

Louise Bedsworth, SGC

The [Executive Director's Report](#) can be found on the SGC website.

Council Discussion:

Crowfoot: Can planning grants that can be awarded, what can they be focused on?

Bedsworth: Regarding, tribal planning grants is the focus specifically on energy and climate, mitigation and resilience. Think about them in a systemic way.

Castro Ramirez: Funds for implementation?

Bedsworth: Only available for planning, meant to position tribes well for other programs.

Castro Ramirez: Recommend looking then at federal resources too. Important as part of overall assessment and analysis to look at what has happened at federal level.

Gordon: Agree with looking at federal assessments and opportunities

Amanda Hansen steps in to serve in Crowfoots capacity [1:59]

Public Comment: No Comments

Agenda Item #6: ACTION: SGC Racial Equity Action Plan Update and Resolution

Introduction by Jessica Buendia, Deputy Director, SGC and Holly Nickel Public Health Institute

Panel Discussion: Race & Equity Best Practices by EPA, CDPH, and Caltrans

- Yana Garcia, Deputy Secretary for Environmental Justice, Tribal Affairs, and Border Relations, California Environmental Protection Agency
- Rhiannah Gordon, Racial Equity Program Manger, California Department of Transportation
 - Jeanie Ward-Waller: Standing in for Rhiannah Gordon
- Lazaro Cardenas, Racial Equity Specialist, Office of Health Equity, California Department of Public Health

Recommended Action: Adopt the California Strategic Growth Council Racial Equity Resolution

Panel/Council Discussion:

Q: Best practices related to developing racial action plan in departments and agencies. EPA, Cal Trans, CDPH.

Garcia: Normalize racialize equity and conversations about it, have a foundation of folks on the same page about what we mean, comfort with talking about race. Key to developing any racial equity plan is having meeting of minds of key leadership, executive sponsor teams, to build high level leadership for this type of work. Makes the difference to have leaders at highest level start normalizing conversations about race. Develop rapport you need to look at racial equity issues. Second, uplift leadership envisioning from communities of color, which can come from within your own staff. Referring back to the ground work that has been laid and leadership from communities of color is critical to addressing power dynamics that underlie racial inequities and disparities in the first place. There are staff in agencies for whom these topics and dealing with these issues are not new- they may be leaders already working on these issues who would also contribute critically to the development of these programs. Third, work with other agencies and leverage the partnerships across government.

Ward-Waller: Second Garcia's comments. Strong executive buy in and normalizing conversations has been critical. CalTrans having conversations regarding history of transportation development allowing them to push forward towards addressing the ways this history negatively impacts communities of color

and low income communities. Be ready to commit the resources towards doing this work, implementing these plans requires resources (i.e. dedicated staff to ensure these things happen, stakeholder engagement, etc). CalTrans has a new office with 10 state agents to do this work for this large agency.

Cardenas: Tone and visibility of leadership on these issues is key. Released glossary of terms to help their employees communicate in conversations about race. Prevents fundamental misunderstandings that block connection and productive discourse. CDPH has a Can We Chat? series- twice a month sit down discussions facilitated by contractors to build community understanding regarding these topics and materialize an inclusive workplace culture. Anticipate and plan for the resources to create sustainable strategies

Q (Ross): Take the time to do internal staff training before engaging externally?

Ward-Waller: For CalTrans, racial equity and community engagement was not explicitly part of building highways. This is why executive level and internal training has been their focus.

Garcia: A balance needs to be struck between need to affirmatively state that there is commitment from leadership to do this and build time and space to build internal capacity over time. Racial inequities didn't begin in June and they won't be solved in a matter of months. At CalEPA, setting short term and long term goals/metrics to reach those goals, consistency of messaging to staff about how these things need to be integrated into all they do is critical. On everyone to identify opportunities to progress. Opportunities to have the public eye hold us accountable are also key

Q (Hansen): We have a large and distributed organization, curious about any other strategies or tools to driving home that this is critical in such large organizations

Ward-Waller: Only had Sacramento employees participating first year, and second year brought in district staff. Challenge bringing people together. Having conversations constantly with districts about these topics. Aiming to build training curriculum specific for CalTrans, drawing from existing resources. Need trainings specific to engineers, planners, etc. Key to long-term success is embedding equity into strategic management plan.

Cardenas: Lots of audiences in a large state agencies and levels of leadership. Important to present this information to multiple audiences (ie Can We Chats are open to absolutely anyone in the agency). Targeted strategies also key: Building upon existing training curriculum to target supervisors, engaging senior leadership often about these topics. Bringing in partners and core programs that may not see themselves as in the role of equity is important (i.e. legal folks, HR, etc). Important to bring them into the conversation early.

Q (Moosavi for Secretary Kim): What do you see as additional roles or opportunities that SGC, the council, or staff could fill to support the work you're all doing?

Crowfoot returned onscreen 2:50 p.m.

Garcia: Finding opportunities where leadership from multiple agencies can come together are key to dealing with tougher challenges. Dealing with diffuse agency structures requires collaborative work and reaching out across leadership levels. Together, strategic partnerships would allow agency level issues to be tackled by agencies that may not be able to tackle them on their own

Ward-Waller: Council can uplift key policies that impact intersectional issues that all these agencies need to work on together. See the council be a forum for these policy discussions

Comment (Blumenfeld): Highlighting institutionalization of these efforts into official duties of these agencies. This takes daily focus from people who work in our organizations, we need to continue to prioritize these efforts and require a single place to have these conversations. Supports ideas that these kinds of efforts enter the council's mandate.

Q (Crowfoot): Are you three an informal network of leaders within state agencies or is there something more institutionalized that helps you all share best practices?

Holly Nickel: We serve as the hub to connect people to one another, assist with coordination. Not as formalized as they might like but it does function to assist in collaboration.

Break at 3:02

Return at 3:10

Council Discussion (on Resolution):

Blumenfeld: On Item 4, is there anything to be done to clarify the regularity of item 4.

Bedsworth: Can add in language such as "regular", mandated to do annual update.

Blumenfeld: Suggests having at least 2 Council Meetings committed as a forum to speak on these issues.

Gordon: Any objections (None). Note that the vote on resolution will be accompanied by Blumenfeld's suggested amendment.

// Topic Change

Castro Ramirez: Recommendation on keeping track of the work, as we further our commitment as council members, shall we also establish a goal for ourselves where each of us will establish strategic equity action plans within each of our agencies. Ensure institutionalization of tracking and monitoring, not sure if it belongs in the resolution.

Buendia: Can certainly make sure monitoring, development of racial equity plans, etc. Section 2 can involve stronger language

Ross: Mindful of resources, give ourselves some space and flexibility with this seeing as some agencies would need more time than others due to resource availability.

Gordon: For section 2, given Castro Ramirez and Ross' comments, possible need for greater flexibility what monitoring, and tracking could look like depending on each agency, may not necessarily look like a strategic action plan format from every agencies

Castro Ramirez: Acknowledge that it probably will take other departments more time to do this. Comfortable leaving language for Item 2, stands that it would be helpful to report back on our progress and hold one another accountable/as for assistance. Add component into actual plan to be reviewed once a year.

Gordon: Strong recommendation that progress monitoring be part a component of all our organizations taking concrete steps

Bedsworth: If resolution does pass, we can work with key staff on follow up and implementation of the resolution

Public Comment:

Justin Rausa, Berkeley Food Institute at UC Berkeley

Emi Wang, Greenlining Institute at Oakland

Shireen Malekafzali, San Mateo County Health

Ashley Horne, Government Alliance on Race and Equity

Elena Santamaria, Next Gen Policy

Emily Lam, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Linda Tenerowicz, California Pan-Ethnic health network

Gordon Acknowledges that Blumenfeld has stepped out, Lauren Sanchez stepped in [3:42 p.m.]

Motion was made (Ross) and seconded (Castro Ramirez) to adopt the California Strategic Growth Council Racial Equity Resolution with the discussed amendment of Item 4. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Agenda Item #7: **ACTION:** Technical Assistance Guidelines

Recommended Action: Approve the Technical Assistance Guidelines as directed by SB 1072 (Leyva) Legislation

Council Discussion:

Ross: Small investments in technical assistance leads to great impacts, commend this work

Gordon: Operational question, 1072 did no provide for ongoing support for administrative functions, how are you thinking about consistent updates

Lupine: Working on BCP to see how to continue funding our team and CCI TA work, whoever continues in this role would be able to continue working on TA guidelines.

Bedsworth: Seeking to continue funding through BCP, have applied for some federal funding and continuing to seek other opportunities

Public Comment:

Emmy Wang, Greenlining Institute

Natalie Hernandez, Climate Resolve

Christine Viterelli, City of Arbon

Gordon Acknowledges Amanda in place for Crowfoot

Motion was made (Ross) and seconded (Moosavi) to approve the Technical Assistance Guidelines as directed by SB 1072 (Leyva) Legislation. Motion Passes 7-0-0.

Agenda Item #8: **ACTION:** Technical Assistance Program Update and Expenditure Request for Technical Assistance

Recommended Action: Approve a \$2 million expenditure of FY 2019-2020 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program continuous appropriation funds to support continued Technical Assistance activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions through projects that implement

land use, housing, transportation, and agricultural land preservation practices.

Public Comment:

Chandler VanScott, Senior Planner Town of Mammoth lakes

Motion was made by Sanchez and seconded by Hansen to approve a \$2 million expenditure of FY 2019-2020 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program continuous appropriation funds to support continued Technical Assistance activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions through projects that implement land use, housing, transportation, and agricultural land preservation practices. Motion Passes 7-0-0.

Agenda Item #9: Public Comment

No public comments

Agenda Item #10: Meeting Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned 4:25pm