



# CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL

**To:** California Strategic Growth Council Members  
**From:** Lynn von Koch-Liebert  
**Re:** Executive Director Report to the Council – November 16, 2021

## Organizational and Staffing Updates

- SGC's 2020 - 2021 Annual Report will be released in November 2021 and will be available on our website.
- Chief Deputy Director Jessica (Jessie) Buendia has joined Green 4 All as their National Director.
- Emily Breslin has joined SGC and OPR as Deputy Director of Communications and External Affairs.
- CACE Program Manager Kirin Kumar has been promoted to Deputy Director of Equity and Government Transformation.
- Ena Lupine has been promoted to CACE Program Manager.
- Sarah Risher has been promoted to CACE Program Analyst.
- SGC welcomed two Health and Equity Program (HEP) staff, including a Manager, Jazmine Garcia Delgado, and Analyst, Alexandra Gallo.

## Investment Program Updates

### Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC)

Staff: Saharnaz Mirzazad, Marc Caswell, Shep Wilbun, Jessica Lopez, and California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Staff Team

- Round 6 continues to move forward on-schedule. On Wednesday, September 29, 2021, AHSC HCD staff sent Initial Score Letters to the 53 projects eligible for funding. *(Note: As of last Council meeting, there were 54 applications, however, one project applicant withdrew from the process.)* In total, 44 projects submitted appeals to the Initial Score by the response deadline. The AHSC team (SGC, HCD, and CARB) reviewed and responded to all appeals throughout October and sent Final Score Letters to applicants on October 28, 2021. Agency staff is now working through Final Scored projects for financial feasibility and award goals including tribal applicants, geographic equality, and DAC funding goals. Council will receive Staff Recommendations for Awards at the in January, 2022 meeting.
- Following the Council's approval of Round 6 awards, SGC staff will follow up with unsuccessful applicants to offer feedback and inform them of upcoming technical assistance opportunities for future rounds.
- Staff has begun work on identifying areas for updates to the guidelines, instructions, and application process for Round 7 and beyond. Later in the meeting, the Council will be asked to provide guidance on three key focus areas to help guide staff in their development of the guidelines. A timeline and stakeholder engagement strategy is currently in draft form and will be shared

with the Council at the January 2022 meeting, launching the public-facing update process.

- SGC continues to work with Enterprise Community Partners as technical assistance providers for future rounds of AHSC, and will also utilize the contract to support outreach for guidelines updates.
- AHSC has received five project extension requests since the previous Council meeting. The following lists the projects and the current status of the requests.
  - Round 2: Lakehouse Connections (Oakland) was granted an extension
  - Round 2: The Park (Fresno) was granted an extension
  - Round 3: PATH Villas (Los Angeles) was granted an extension
  - Round 2: Renascent Place (San Jose) was granted an extension
  - Round 2: St. James Station TOD (San Jose) was granted an extension

## Transformative Climate Communities Program (TCC)

Staff: Saharnaz Mirzazad, Sophie Young, Jerry Rivero, and California Department of Conservation (DOC) Staff Team

- The Legislature appropriated \$420 million over three years to the TCC Program in the Climate Budget in September 2021. This year, TCC will award \$105 million to 3-5 implementation grants and additional planning grants.
- Draft TCC Round 4 Guidelines: Staff will release a draft of the TCC Round 4 Guidelines for public comment on November 15. Updates include improvements to the displacement avoidance and workforce development policies; alignment with HCD's Pro-Housing Designation Program; and additional eligible project funding for microgrids, brownfields redevelopment, and air pollution mitigation. TCC staff will host virtual public webinars in English and Spanish on November 19, and the public comment period will close December 15.
- TCC Application Technical Assistance Request for Proposals: On November 5, Staff will release a multi-year technical assistance RFP, made possible by the multi-year funding allocation to TCC in the Climate Budget. This will enable technical assistance providers to work on capacity building and project pipeline development between application phases. The RFP will also include explicit set-asides for working with disadvantaged unincorporated communities and tribal communities. TCC staff will host an RFP webinar on November 15, and the RFP will close December 9.
- Grantee Milestones:
  - *Better Neighborhoods, Same Neighbors* in East Oakland (Round 3 Implementation Grant) broke ground on the affordable housing development on 95<sup>th</sup> and International in Deep East Oakland on September 20, 2021. The housing development will include 55 affordable units and a new non-profit health clinic on the ground floor, an innovative partnership resulting from TCC Oakland's community-driven design process. SGC Executive Director, Lynn von Koch-Liebert, gave remarks alongside local political representatives and the long-time organizers of the project.

- *Transform Fresno* in Downtown, Chinatown, and Southwest Fresno (Round 1 Implementation Grant) held a grand opening fair on October 9, 2021 for the Annadale Mode Shift bike and sidewalk improvements project that will connect Southwest Fresno residents to nearby schools and community centers. Transform Fresno also used the community fair as an opportunity to provide resources on homeownership, health services, and active transportation to local residents.
- *SIMPL: Sacramento Integrated Multi-Modal Place-Based Living* in Sacramento's River District (Round 2 Implementation Grant) hosted their first project milestone event on October 23, 2021 – an inaugural tree planting event at the Mirasol Village housing development and Mirasol Village City Park. The River District NeighborWoods project will plant over 1,000 trees and host community tree care events to combat the urban heat island effect in the neighborhood.

## Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)

Staff: SGC partners with Virginia Jameson and her Department of Conservation Staff Team

- **SALC Round 7 Grants:** Final applications were due September 10, 2021. SALC received 20 acquisition pre-proposals totaling \$66,311,444 and 5 planning grant proposals totaling \$1,321,487 in requested funding. The interagency committee met October 21, 2021, to develop award recommendations. Of the applications received, staff recommend awarding \$65,989,363 in FY20/21 funds for 19 easement projects and three planning projects.
- Projects received this round raise policy questions related to whether and in what circumstances the program should fund the permanent protection of properties held by conservation organizations and how fee-title acquisitions might be used to address equity goals.
- Following the program's racial equity public workshops last spring, SALC Staff has held two working group meetings comprised of workshop participants who were interested in helping develop the Round 8 program guidelines. During the workshops, participants are taking a deeper look at improving program elements in pursuit of improved racial equity. Staff will bring forward policy recommendations in the spring.

## Climate Change Research Program (CCR)

Staff: Elizabeth Grassi and Nicole Hernandez

- The program is positioned to serve a key role in California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment, which funds two new staff positions focused on lifting the CCR's Program model of community and partner-driven research to inform engagement.
- Because the 2021 State Budget did not include funding for a new round of CCR grants, staff will delay updating the Program's Research Investment Plan until

2022. Staff's past efforts collaborating with OPR and CNRA as they conducted engagement to inform the California State Adaptation Strategy and staff's work with the Assessment team will inform the updated Plan.

- The CCR team is working to closeout four CCR Round 1 research grant projects. As part of this process, CCR staff has hosted six exit presentations with more than 50 staff participants from SGC member agencies at each event. Presentations focused on coastal impacts and adaptations for local communities, extreme heat and wildfire impacts on vulnerable communities, and strategies to increase environmental resilience and improve socioeconomic opportunities in the San Joaquin Valley. Additionally, staff is conducting exit surveys with grantees and partners about their experiences participating in the program.

### Tribal Government Challenge Program (TGC)

Staff: Elizabeth Grassi, Coral Abbott, Ena Lupine, and the California Energy Commission (CEC) Staff Team

- SGC, in partnership with the California Energy Commission (CEC), continues to administer \$2.35M in funds that support eight (8) Tribal Planning Grants and a contract to conduct a statewide California Tribal Gap Analysis.
- SGC and CEC staff continue to support the California Tribal Gap Analysis' lead contractor, Prosper Sustainably, as they conduct outreach to Tribes and encourage participation in a gap analysis survey, resulting in responses from 66 Tribes.
- SGC and CEC have also helped coordinate State agency speakers for Prosper Sustainably's biweekly California Tribal Energy and Climate Exchange (TECX) meetings where they promote participation in the Gap Analysis, provide space for discussion on climate and energy related opportunities, and feature State resources relevant to Tribes.

### Wildfire Resiliency and Recovery Planning Grant Program (WRRG)

Staff: Clay Kerchof (OPR), Elizabeth Grassi, Department of Conservation (DOC) Staff Team

- The Proposition 84 Wildfire Resiliency and Recovery Planning Grant (WRRG) team successfully executed grant agreements with four California communities.
- Grantees submit quarterly progress reports indicating that all projects are underway and progressing well, although some are behind schedule due to another intense fire season.

### **Technical Assistance and Capacity Building**

#### Community Assistance for Climate Equity (CACE)

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Ena Lupine, Coral Abbott, and Sarah Risher

### **Regional Climate Collaboratives and Partners Advancing Climate Equity:**

- The Partners Advancing Climate Equity (PACE) project team launched Phase 2 of the program, which will focus on providing individualized TA to PACE cohort members to advance goals identified in the community needs assessments developed in the first phase of the program. Phase 2 support will include: support identifying and pursuing grants, network and partnership development, building the capacity of PACE leader's networks to engage in climate action, technical and policy trainings, and continued support building out community needs assessments. By the end of Phase 2, we envision PACE leaders will be working in collaboration with their partners to advance climate equity priorities by forming coalitions, engaging decision-makers and funders, and conceptualizing a pipeline of collective impact projects.
- The CACE team has launched a robust engagement process to inform the RCC Guidelines following the appropriation of program funding in the current State budget. Program staff has planned a series of listening sessions, key informant interviews, and focus groups aimed at hearing from stakeholders how the RCC program can be designed to build capacity of under-resourced communities in a way that centers community vision. Program staff are taking extra consideration to ensure engagement reaches key regions and populations that are under-represented in SGC grant programs, including rural and Tribal communities.
- The CACE team has convened an RCC Guidelines work group composed of State agency staff with expertise in supporting local capacity building, who will inform program design as staff develop program guidelines.
- CACE Team staff anticipate releasing an initial draft of the RCC Guidelines in early 2022 for public comment, with a final draft brought to Council for adoption in April 2022.

**California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program:**

- On August 9, 2021, the CACE team launched a second round of BOOST with the release of an application survey. SGC has selected seven disadvantaged and/or low-income communities to receive capacity-building support in the form of trainings, partnership development, community engagement planning and implementation support, grant application assistance, and communications support. The seven finalist communities are the Cities of: Barstow, La Puente, Maywood, McFarland, Needles, Rialto, and South San Francisco.
- Staff continues to implement the Technical Assistance Guidelines by hosting conversations with State agency partners interested in creating a new technical assistance program and/or expanding their current offerings. In these conversations, staff provide thought partnership and support on getting started, and explore potential inter-agency partnerships on future TA programs.
- Staff is working with Harder+Company Community Research and ChangeLab Solutions to evaluate the California Climate Investments Technical Assistance (CCI TA) Program and uplift effective technical assistance strategies. As a part of this evaluation, the evaluation team is carrying out geo-spatial analysis of the communities benefiting from TA, conducting interviews with CCI TA providers and recipients, and surveying previous CCI TA recipients for feedback on the program. The evaluation team is currently in the process of analyzing the survey results.

- Staff continue to manage and support a variety of technical assistance contracts and activities including assistance for applicants to AHSC, SALC, CARB's Sustainable Transportation Equity Project (STEP), and CDFA's Climate Smart Agriculture Programs, in addition to the ongoing implementation of the California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program Evaluation.

### **Collaborative Policy Initiatives**

#### **Health and Equity Program (HEP)**

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Jazmine Garcia Delgadillo, Alexandra Gallo, and Michael Jimenez

- HEP staff participated in a 2.5 day, data-focused training hosted by the Government Operations Agency, titled "Designing Rigorous Evaluations of Government Programs."
- Staff hosted a monthly virtual culture share event for staff to share stories and experiences of current cultural events they celebrate or observe. The September event centered on Hispanic Heritage Month.

#### **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 approximately 20 agencies to integrate health and equity into programs and policies that advance State priorities.

- The Strategic Growth Council, Public Health Institute, and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) co-hosted a virtual convening on September 28th titled "Racial Equity and Health in All Policies: A meeting to explore connections, opportunities, and challenges for California state government." Building on discussions from the Capitol Collaborative on Race & Equity (CCORE), this event focused on racial equity as an essential facet of a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach. Guest panelists represented CDPH, California Arts Commission, Caltrans, and Empowering Pacific Islander Communities, a non-profit organization. Over 185 State government staff attended this two-hour session.
- On October 26, HEP hosted a presentation on HiAP Task Force stakeholder engagement results in partnership with the UC Berkeley Othering and Belonging Institute. This presentation highlighted findings of a multi-phase stakeholder engagement process, including a survey and four listening sessions conducted among stakeholders from January to June 2021. The presentation was recorded and shared with stakeholder participants and State government contacts of the HiAP Task Force.

#### **Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP)**

Staff: Kirin Kumar, Jazmine Garcia Delgadillo, Alex Gallo, Michael Jimenez, and SGC Program and Administrative Managers

- The SGC Council approved recommended actions for 2021-2022 REAP implementation cycle, at the September 8 meeting.

- SGC facilitated two Racial Equity Working Group meetings in alignment with the SGC Racial Equity Resolution. Meeting topics covered SGC Executive Director Strategic Priorities for racial equity and interagency updates on racial equity activities.
- HEP staff facilitated briefings and onboarding activities focused on SGC's racial equity work with incoming SGC and OPR leadership and staff.

### **Capitol Collaborative on Race and Equity (CCORE)**

Staff: SGC partners with the Public Health Institute (PHI) to host a racial equity capacity-building Program for California State government institutions and employees. CCORE brings together approximately 30 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.

#### Sessions/Learning Year Updates

- On October 27, the Public Health Institute, in partnership with Race Forward and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, convened the 18th and commencing session of the 2020-2021 CCORE Learning Cohort. This session concluded the 15-month training cohort by giving participating departmental teams a chance to showcase their accomplishments and describe commitments for building and implementing their draft organizational Racial Equity Action Plans.
- At the CCORE Commencement, SGC and OPR staff presented on their key takeaways, competencies gained, and actions developed throughout the CCORE Learning Year. OPR-SGC leadership provided virtual, recorded remarks presented at the October 27<sup>th</sup> commencement.
- PHI staff hosted a final CCORE Learning Cohort Team Coordinator Training on October 12, 2021, where CCORE team leads shared experiences guiding their agency or departmental teams through the CCORE curriculum arc.
- On September 29, 2021, the Learning Cohort continued its progress on the Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP) training module. September's session focused on guiding participants to begin drafting a REAP using the tools gained through the CCORE curriculum. This module builds off previous work to identify desired racial equity results and outcomes, data collection and analysis, and community engagement. On October 13, 2021 each participating team presented draft action plans at an Applied Learning and Peer Exchange.
- PHI staff are working to finalize CCORE offerings for 2022-2023 and are planning to host another CCORE Learning cohort for CA State entities without REAPs and also host a CCORE Implementation Cohort for the CA State entities that have draft REAPs in order to continue to build their capacity. For more information, email [CCORE@phi.org](mailto:CCORE@phi.org).
- The California Legislative Staff Education Institute (CLSEI) hosted a panel, curated by PHI, to share important work and lessons learned from CCORE with almost 100 legislative staff. PHI, CDPH, SGC, and Caltrans provided information highlighting the ways in which government entities are operationalizing racial equity and creating organizational change that centers diversity, racial equity, and inclusion.

## Land Use Planning and Economic Development

Staff: Emily Tibbott, Egon Terplan, and Bo Chung. Partnership with High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA)

- Staff are partnering with HSRA to support project delivery, specifically reviewing site and station community planning activities in the Central Valley.
- Staff is coordinating with HSRA on exploring immediate projects to work with Fresno partners on station area site beautification, site activation, and community engagement.
  - Staff coordinated with local stakeholder Central Fish Co. of Fresno to support the “559 Night Market” event supporting local Fresno Chinatown businesses with food, entertainment, and family activities.
- Staff is exploring the potential to work with a more rural station community – possibly Madera or Hanford – regarding integrated planning scenarios that address development and agricultural lands protection needs.
- Staff continues work with HSRA's Environmental Services staff to support ongoing conservation community partnerships, particularly in the Northern Region, in order to effect better design and mitigation practices.

### **Land Conservation Initiatives:**

- As part of an inter-agency policy team, staff has supported the implementation of EO N-82-20, including the release of the draft CNRA-led Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy in October.
- As part of a steering committee composed of leadership staff at the California Department of Conservation (DOC), California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), and CARB, staff continues to advance a series of agency-targeted educational workshops on conservation and housing. The purpose of the series is to break down silos between conservation and housing programs, planning, and policy, such that efforts in both arenas better support cross-sectoral needs and on-the-ground outcomes in service of State planning priorities.
- Staff is involved in inter-agency leadership efforts regarding the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), including how to minimize local economic impacts, and how to support regional land use planning. As one result, staff have helped embed SGMA considerations in SALC Program guidelines.

### **Regional Planning Initiatives:**

- The final California Comeback Plan included a \$600M investment in augmenting the existing Regional Early Action Planning Grant (REAP) funds. The proposed new program focuses on implementing regional plans in ways that reduces vehicle miles travelled (VMT) and meets infill housing goals. The current REAP program (initiated in 2019) was focused on helping regions meet their higher RHNA targets. This proposed augmentation would also expand to allow for both planning and infrastructure investments across housing and transportation. The expanded REAP program is being managed by a joint team across HCD, SGC,

OPR and CARB. Staff are currently developing a concept paper that will be shared publicly. SGC will also add one staff person on the AHSC team to support bringing best practices and lessons learned from AHSC Program to REAP team and provide coordination support. OPR will have three positions, including a program manager.

- Staff are continuing to administer a contract with the UC Institute of Transportation Studies to produce a report assessing transportation planning and funding activities pursuant to AB 285 (Friedman, 2019). The team kicked off work in June 2021 with researchers from UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC Davis. The final report will be submitted to the Legislature in 2022.
- Staff continue to manage the State/MPO work group that consist of the planning directors of the 18 MPOs and members of key state agencies (SGC, OPR, HCD, BCSH, CalSTA, CTC, Caltrans, CARB).

## Media Clips

### California Strategic Growth Council

#### [National CORE is Leading the Field in Sustainable Affordable Housing](#)

October 21, 2021

Source [EIN Presswire](#)

#### [Job Opportunity: California. OPR & SGC are Hiring for Climate Positions! Spread the Word](#)

October 20, 2021

Source [Black Emergency Managers Association International](#)

#### [Race Equity Champions: SGC Participation with Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#)

October 20, 2021

Source [Policy & Practice](#)

Market United Kingdom

#### [Equity is key to resilience — three ways make it a priority](#)

September 21, 2021

Source [The Hill](#)

Author Louise Bedsworth, opinion contributor

### Climate Change Research

#### [Mudança Climática Limita Papel Do Ecossistema Na Remoção De CO2](#)

September 17, 2021

Category Blog

Source [Meio Ambiente](#)

Market Brazil

Language Portuguese

### **Transformative Climate Communities**

#### **[Construction begins on Acts mixed-use complex in Oakland, California](#)**

October 19, 2021

Source [Construction Review Online](#)

#### **[Defining issues of our time.' California housing crisis tour makes stop in Fresno](#)**

October 8, 2021

Source [Fresno Bee](#)

#### **[Bakersfield pursues millions in state grants to 'transform' Old Town Kern, nearby communities](#)**

October 8, 2021

Source [The Anson Record](#)

#### **[Renovation project at The Hotel Fresno nearly complete](#)**

October 7, 2021

Source [NewsBreak](#)

Author [Jason Oliveira](#)

#### **[Fresno received millions for past planning sins. So, why does it keep repeating them?](#)**

October 3, 2021

Source [Fresno Bee](#)

#### **[Affordable Housing Project to Bring 55 Units to East Oakland](#)**

September 21, 2021 4:52 AM PDT

Source [The Registry SF](#)

#### **[California Budget: Funding for Fish, Water, & People](#)**

September 14, 2021

Source [California Trout](#)

### **Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities**

#### **[Work begins on housing project to address homelessness](#)**

September 30, 2021

Source [Park Labrea News](#)

#### **[Governor Newsom Signed 31 Affordable Housing Bills Into Law](#)**

September 30, 2021

Source [The Lakeside News](#)

#### **[Garcetti, Politicians Break Ground On Weingart Towers In Skid Row](#)**

September 29, 2021

Source [Hollywood Patch](#)

#### **[LA's Largest Homeless Housing Development Breaks Ground in Skid Row](#)**

September 28, 2021

Source [Los Angeles Sentinel](#)

**[Key federal, local legislators tour next phase of Greater Arrowhead Grove  
Neighborhood Revitalization](#)**

September 28, 2021

**Source** [El Chicano Weekly](#)

**Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation**

**[American Farmland Trust joins call to preserve conservation funding](#)**

October 12, 2021

**Source** [AGDAILY](#)