ACTION

Agenda Item #7

Oct. 28, 2026

Subject:	**Tribal Capacity Building Program: Round 2 Award Recommendations**
Reporting Period:	April 2025 – October 2026
Staff Lead:	Hoi-Fei Mok, Deputy Director of Equity and Government Transformation

Recommended Action

Tribal Housing and Capacity Building Initiative (THCBI) staff recommend the Council award a total of $8,539,440.96 to the 21 top-scoring applicants of the Tribal Capacity Building Program, Round 2.

Summary

The California Strategic Growth Council's (SGC) Tribal Housing and Capacity Building Initiative addresses longstanding barriers to affordable housing development and organizational capacity for tribes through two grant programs: the Tribal Capacity Building Program and the Tribal Housing Pre-Development Fund. The funds support activities for tribal entities interested in affordable housing and related projects that implement land use, housing, transportation, and agricultural land preservation practices.

This Staff Report provides an overview of Round 2 of the Tribal Capacity Building Program (TCBP), including a summary of the Program Guidelines development process, application process, and staff award recommendations.

The Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) made about $8.6 million available for grants ranging from $350,000 to $420,000. The Program was significantly oversubscribed, receiving 61 applications (all passing threshold review) with a total request of about $25 million. Nearly all applicants requested the maximum amount of funding. Staff recommend the 21 top-scoring applications for award at this time. Grantees will complete grant terms of three (3) years.

Background

About the Tribal Capacity Building Program

The Tribal Capacity Building Program is a grant program that provides funding and technical assistance to California Native American tribes, enhancing staff capacity to advance tribes' climate- and housing-related work. TCBP staff developed the Program in response to consistent feedback from tribes that their sovereign status and historical relationship with the State of California necessitate a dedicated capacity building program. Administered by SGC, the goal of the Program is to help tribes develop long-term capacity to secure funding and implement tribal-led climate and housing projects. The Program objectives are to build tribal staff capacity

to advance and sustain climate and housing action; secure funding to develop and implement tribal-led climate and housing projects; and enhance peer learning relationships among tribes.

The Tribal Capacity Building Program funds staff salaries and activities that advance tribes' climate- and housing-related work. Activities may include planning, securing funding for, and implementing housing projects and related efforts to advance climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. Tribes will work with a technical assistance provider and receive no-cost, flexible support that will respond to each tribe's needs. The capacity building and technical assistance services offered include, but are not limited to, the following: trainings and workshops; grant application and management support; planning support; implementation assistance; staff and economic development; partnership building; peer learning.

The Tribal Capacity Building Program is funded through a combination of FY24-25 and FY25-26 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) disencumbered funds and continuously appropriated funds. As such, it is part of California Climate Investments and furthers the purposes of AB 32 (Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) and SB 32 (Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016) by investing in tribal projects related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In working directly with tribes, the Tribal Capacity Building Program also advances the State's commitment to build relationships with tribes in California as mandated in Executive Orders B-10-11 (Brown, 2011) and N-15-19 (Newsom, 2019).

Program Timeline

- April 30, 2025: SGC Council allocated $30 million of AHSC funds to create the Tribal Housing and Capacity Building Initiative, which is made up of two programs, the Tribal Capacity Building Program and the Tribal Housing Pre-Development Fund.
- July – August 2025: THCBI staff held 10 key informant interviews with tribal members, tribal-serving organizations, and State agency partners to inform program development.
- Late 2025: Staff created Draft Guidelines for Round 2 of the Tribal Capacity Building Program.
- Jan. 5 – April 6, 2026: Round 2 Draft Guidelines were posted for a 90-day public comment and tribal consultation period.
    - Staff mailed over 170 letters and sent emails to request formal tribal consultation from every entity listed on the State's Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List.
    - Staff held eight (8) workshops, both in-person and virtual, and more than 500 people participated.
    - Staff held nine (9) tribal consultations, both in-person and virtual, with federally and non-federally recognized tribes.
    - Staff received written public comments and verbal feedback through the workshop series and tribal consultations.
    - Over 500 new people subscribed to SGC's Tribal Newsletter.

- April 29, 2026: SGC Council adopted the Round 2 Program Guidelines.
- May 11 – Aug. 11, 2026: Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) released, and Application released for a 90-day period.
    - Staff mailed over 170 letters and sent emails to inform every entity listed on the State's NAHC Contact List of the NOFA and funding opportunity.
    - Staff held one (1) application workshop and six (6) bi-weekly office hour sessions.
- Aug. 11, 2026: Program received 61 applications, all passing Threshold Review.

Outreach and Engagement

Key takeaways from engagement with tribes:

- Tribes were in support of both programs in the Tribal Housing and Capacity Building Initiative, consistently reporting the need for a capacity building program and housing pre-development funds.
- The Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity continues to be a barrier to advance pay.
- Non-federally recognized tribes expressed a continued need to be eligible for funding.
- Tribes expressed concerns regarding the limited amount of funding available.

Background on the Application Process

Application Review

Program staff conducted a threshold review after receiving Tribal Capacity Building Program, Round 2 applications to ensure applications met the threshold criteria specified in the Program Guidelines. Applicants were notified if their application was incomplete and were given two (2) business days to resubmit any incomplete or missing materials. All applications met threshold requirements. Program staff and an interagency review panel reviewed all 61 submitted applications and provided written comments on the scored components of their application.

Program staff assembled an interagency review panel of 10 reviewers from across five (5) State agencies to score applications. Each application was randomly assigned and reviewed by three (3) reviewers from the interagency panel. Reviewers used the scoring criteria rubric in the Program Guidelines to score applications. Reviewers scored applications individually and attended a reviewer orientation and deliberation session to come to a consensus on application scores. The 28 top-scoring applicants were invited to participate in finalist interviews.

The finalists were invited to 45-minute interviews with a panel of three (3) SGC staff to dive deeper into the application materials and clarify any questions reviewers raised related to their application. The interview panel members were the same for each applicant. The interviews were not scored but could result in scoring adjustments of up to five (5) points based on responses regarding the applicant's vision, capacity needs, proposed activities, and budget. The

21 top-scoring applicants that also reflect statewide geographic and tribal diversity are recommended for awards.

The five (5) State agencies represented on the review panel include:

- CA Air Resources Board
- CA Department of Food and Agriculture
- CA Department of Housing and Community Development
- CA Energy Commission
- CA Strategic Growth Council

Summary of Applications Received

For the Tribal Housing and Capacity Building Initiative:

The THCBI illustrates the substantial need and potential for transformative investment in tribal communities across California. Across both programs in the Initiative, SGC received 117 applications from more than 80 tribes across California; more than 40% of all tribes in California applied to one or both programs.

The total funding requested exceeds $170 million and has the potential to benefit more than 70,000 tribal members. Applicants varied significantly in size, ranging from six (6) to 6,500 enrolled tribal members. Several tribes reported having little to no paid staff members, underscoring the capacity constraints many tribes face in pursuing funding opportunities.

For the Tribal Capacity Building Program:

SGC received a total of 61 applications to Round 2 of the Tribal Capacity Building Program, including 43 from federally recognized and 15 from non-federally recognized California Native American tribes and three (3) from Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHE). The applications varied across focus areas that include, but are not limited to, the following: affordable housing; aquaculture, habitat, and watershed restoration; cultural burning; invasive species removal; land-back and rematriation; land stewardship; native tree planting and plant propagation; and youth education and outreach. Applications came from all regions of the State, covering eight (8) regions (see Table 1). SGC has a total of up to $8,661,097.02 to award for Round 2, and the total amount requested across all applicants was nearly $25 million. The average amount requested was $409,705.94.

Table 1: Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 Applicants by Region

Region	Number of Applications
North State & Sierras	35
Sacramento Area	2
San Francisco Bay Area	5
Central Coast	5
San Joaquin Valley	4

Coastal SoCal	1
Inland SoCal	2
San Diego Area	7

Recommendations

Staff recommend the Council approve Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 awards to the 21 top-scoring applications (see Table 2). The recommended awardees represent:

- 7 regions from across the State: North State & Sierras (8), San Francisco Bay Area (3), Central Coast (3), San Joaquin Valley (3), Coastal SoCal (1), Inland SoCal (1), San Diego Area (2)
- 12 federally recognized tribes
- 8 non-federally recognized tribes
- 1 Tribally Designated Housing Entities

Table 2: Staff Recommendations for Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 Awards

Applicant Name	Tribal Designation	Region	Funding Requested
Amah Mutsun Tribal Band	Non-federally recognized	San Francisco Bay Area	$420,000.00
Bridgeport Indian Colony	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$362,425.00
Cahuilla Band of Indians	Federally recognized	Inland Southern CA	$420,000.00
California Valley Miwok Tribe	Federally recognized	San Joaquin Valley	$400,000.00
Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians of California	Federally recognized	San Joaquin Valley	$420,000.00
Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$350,062.42
Esselen Tribe of Monterey County	Non-federally recognized	Central Coast	$420,000.00
Fort Bidwell Indian Community of the Fort Bidwell Reservation of California (Gidutikad Band of Northern Paiute)	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$350,000.00
Gabrieleno Tongva Tribal Council	Non-federally recognized	Coastal Southern CA	$382,800.00
Inaja Band of Diegueño Mission Indians	Federally recognized	San Diego Area	$420,000.00
Indian Cultural Organization (Winnemem Wintu)	Non-federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$420,000.00
Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria	Federally recognized	San Francisco Bay Area	$419,945.28

Manzanita Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Manzanita Reservation	Federally recognized	San Diego Area	$395,856.00
Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$420,000.00
Mono Lake Kootzaduka'a Tribe	Non-federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$420,000.00
Muwekma Ohlone Preservation Foundation (Muwekma Ohlone Tribe)	Non-federally recognized	San Francisco Bay Area	$420,000.00
Pit River Tribe	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$419,888.26
Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties	Non-federally recognized	Central Coast	$419,940.00
Sherwood Valley Rancheria (Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians)	Federally recognized	North State and Sierras	$420,000.00
Tule River Indian Housing Authority (Tule River Indian Tribe of California)	Tribally Designated Housing Entity (TDHE)	San Joaquin Valley	$420,000.00
yak titʸu titʸu yak tiłhini Northern Chumash Tribe	Non-federally recognized	Central Coast	$418,524.00

Next Steps

Upon Council approval of the Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 Awards, the Program will issue grant agreements to the 21 top-scoring applicants recommended for award. Program staff will also continue the process of getting the Technical Assistance Provider Team under contract to support the tribal grantees throughout the grant term.

Program staff have offered to hold debrief calls with all unsuccessful Tribal Capacity Building Program applicants, in which staff will offer feedback on applications and share additional funding opportunities if they are interested. Program staff are exploring opportunities for future funding rounds.

Council Recommendation

Tribal Capacity Building Program staff recommend the Council award a total of $8,539,440.96 from the FY24-25 and FY25-26 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities disencumbered funds and continuously appropriated funds for Round 2 of the Tribal Capacity Building Program to the 21 top-scoring applications.

Should the Council agree with Staff's recommendation, the following motion language is suggested:

"I move that the Council approve Staff's recommendation of awarding the 21 top-scoring applicants for Tribal Capacity Building Program Round 2 awards."

Attachments

Attachment A: Tribal Capacity Building Program R2 Applicant Project Profiles Recommended for Funding

Attachment B: Tribal Capacity Building Program R2 Applicant List

Attachment C: Tribal Capacity Building Program R2 Applicant Map