AHSC Round 10 Narrative Rubric Instructions | Feb. 2026

AHSC narrative reviewers will use this document to score applications. Applicants may use this document in conjunction with the Narrative Prompts and Required Materials to respond to the outlined prompts. Applicants may also use the Supplemental Narrative Resource for further support in identifying how strategies may connect to the Narrative Prompts and equity subsections. Please see AHSC Round 9 Guidelines page for the Narrative Prompts and other narrative related materials at:
https://sgc.ca.gov/grant-programs/ahsc/resources/guidelines.html

Reviewers will use this rubric in conjunction with Narrative Prompts and narrative related attachments to score each Project's narrative. It is incumbent on the applicant to ensure the content is correct and consistent throughout all application materials. Inconsistent or demonstrably false statements may result in reviewers issuing a score of zero on any or all portions of the application review process. Reviewers will use differentials of no less than 1.0 to differentiate scores between projects.

This rubric has four sections for each of the scoring subsections. Under each category there is also an equity consideration table. Please follow the respective instruction for that table.

Community Benefits and Engagement – 6 Points Maximum

Table 1. Community Engagement & Leadership (3 points)

Scoring Considerations	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
In the General Context responses, how much of the requested background information needed to contextualize the project was provided?	All needed information	Most of the needed information	Some of the needed information	None of the needed information
What are the developer's or development team's ties to the community? "Development team" can include a co-developer, outside entity with site control, or a Joint Venture partnership, so long as the partnership will result in a meaningful learning experience for the co-developer.	Has **Strong Ties** to the **community immediately around** the Affordable Housing Development (AHD). If including a Joint Venture, the "local" developer is from the immediate or surrounding community, with significant ties.	Has **Some Ties** to the **community immediately around** the AHD. If including a Joint Venture, the "local" developer is from the broader community, with some ties.	Has **Some Ties** to the **broader community**. If including a Joint Venture, the "local" developer is from the same region and has some ties to the community. Has **Limited Ties** to the community	
How involved were community residents and/or local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in visioning for the AHSC proposal (Pre-AHSC Process)?	There was **significant involvement (or leadership) prior to, or from the initial visioning,** of the AHSC proposal.	There was **some involvement in visioning** for the AHSC proposal.	There was **limited involvement in visioning** for the AHSC proposal.	There was no involvement prior to the AHSC process.
If a project has limited or no involvement and has certain contextual factors (e.g. by-right or proposed in communities that may not be supportive of affordable housing or sustainable transportation projects): Did the applicant make, or plan to make, an effort to compensate for a lack of pre-AHSC involvement and/or AHSC process engagement, through a combination of the following?	**2 or more** alternative strategies and a clear, detailed plan for how CBOs or other interested parties will be engaged and/or future residents will be supported.	**At least 1** alternative strategy and a clear plan for how key parties and participants will be engaged and/or future residents will be supported.	**1 alternative** strategy OR a clear plan for how interested parties will be engaged, and future residents will be supported	**No alternative** strategy OR a minimal plan for how interested parties will be engaged, and future residents will be supported
How involved were local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) **during** the AHSC process?	They had a **strong influence** on Project components.	They had **some influence** on Project components	They had **limited influence** on Project Components	They had no or **minimal influence** on Project components
Is there a plan for continued/future engagement with CBOs and other interested partners?	There is a **clear, detailed plan** for how Collaborators will be engaged and/or involved moving forward; **includes a strong "Community Needs" or "Future Engagement" upload.**	There is an **adequate plan** for how Collaborators will be engaged and/or involved, moving forward.	There is a **limited plan** outlined for how Collaborators will be engaged or involved in future engagement	There is no plan outlined future engagement.

Table 2. Addressing Community Needs (3 points)

Scoring Considerations	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
In the General Context responses, how much of the requested background information needed to contextualize the project was provided?	All needed information	Most of the needed information	Some of the needed information	None of the needed information
The Community Engagement Tracker includes:	Information that is **relevant and clearly tied** to the proposed AHSC Project components	Information that is **relevant and somewhat tied** to the proposed AHSC Project components	Information that is **generally relevant and somewhat tied** to the proposed AHSC Project components	Information that is **not relevant or minimally related** to the proposed AHSC Project components
Relevant needs expressed in community visioning or planning engagement efforts conducted prior to the AHSC process were:	**Integrated** into the AHSC visioning process and built upon in the project proposal	**Considered** in AHSC visioning and partially Integrated into the project proposal	Given limited consideration through the AHSC visioning process	Not considered in the AHSC Process
Themes and/or needs identified through community engagement are:	**Strongly Supported** by Community Engagement Tracker	**Mostly Supported** by Community Engagement Tracker	**Generally Supported** by Community Engagement Tracker	**Not Supported** by Community Engagement Tracker
Project Area* residents were involved: *Note: If a Project is permitted by-right or proposed in communities that may not be supportive of affordable housing or sustainable transportation project, outreach can be focused on potential residents within the community and near-by low-income communities instead of Project Area residents.*	**Prior to AHSC Process** through a community-driven effort OR **from initial visioning** of the Project (as evidenced by Community Engagement Tracker)	**During** the AHSC Process for **Project components selection** (as evidenced by Community Engagement Tracker)	**After** AHSC **Project components selection (No to Limited** evidence found in Tracker)	Minimally (**No to Limited** evidence found in Tracker)
Project addresses the needs identified by the community:	Clearly for **ALL** housing and transportation and **includes needs beyond housing and transportation**	Clearly for **ALL** housing and transportation; **minimally beyond those**	Clearly for **MOST** housing and transportation **(Nothing beyond)**	Clearly for **SOME** housing and transportation **(Nothing beyond)**

During the AHSC process, applicant and project partners made opportunities for community involvement that:	Demonstrates **significant** effort and those efforts include **area's most vulnerable populations**, in addition to approaches that are **considerate of community context** and **culturally appropriate**.	Demonstrates **sufficient** effort and those efforts include approaches that are **considerate of community context** AND/OR **culturally appropriate**	Demonstrates **limited** effort and those efforts include approaches that are **somewhat considerate of community context** AND/OR **culturally appropriate**	Demonstrates **minimal** effort
Is there a plan for continued/future engagement and does it include the engagement or support of future residents?	There is a **clear, detailed plan**, which includes the engagement of potential residents and/or community members **AND/OR** how they will be supported based on the needs express previously. Also includes a strong "Future Engagement" upload.	There is an **adequate plan**, which includes the engagement of potential residents and/or community members **OR** how they will be supported with some connection to the needs express previously	There is **a limited plan** outlined, which mentions the engagement of potential residents and/or community members **OR** how they will be supported with limited connection to expressed needs.	There is **no plan** outlined

Table 3. Equity Considerations under Community Benefit & Engagement (Outreach & Feedback)

Equity Considerations	Effort Level: High	Effort Level: Some	Effort Level: Low/None
Outreach extensively considered the access and accessibility considerations for specific population?	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
Did the applicant conduct targeted outreach to underrepresented community members and incorporated feedback received?	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
Were AHSC project components originated by the community (residents, longstanding organizations or other interested parties)?	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
Did the community have a clear and important role in the decision-making processes throughout AHSC visioning or will they have one during implementation? Some examples include: community representation on project advisory team/taskforce/committee; leadership development opportunities made available for vulnerable groups; resident council for future residents	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
Did the project make significant efforts to integrate and build upon engagement and feedback from previous efforts?	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
If the project was by-right : were there still significant efforts made for outreach and engagement throughout the AHSC visioning process? *If the project was not by-right* : did the community engagement involve community residents and/or local CBOs from the start and throughout the planning process?	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
[Other factor unique to project, insert here]	*Yes--Above & beyond*	*Yes--Meets Expectations*	*Does Not Meet Expectations*
For reviewers: select demonstrated effort level for this section's equity considerations	**High level of effort:** Above & Beyond for 2 or more options	**Some level of effort**: Meets Expectations for at least 2 options OR Above & Beyond for at least 1 option	**Low or no effort**: Does Not Meet Expectations OR Meets Expectations for only 1 option

Equity and Transformation – 3 points maximum

Table 1. Equity Considerations under Improving Health Outcomes

Equity Considerations	Effort Level: High	Effort Level: Some	Effort Level: Low/None
Does the applicant display a level of understanding of health concerns, hazards, or impacts faced by the community in the Project Area and future residents AND how well do they describe the ways the project will lead to positive health outcomes/improvements?	**Has at least a sufficient understanding & Fully Describes:** how climate/air pollution measures, and other project aspects will work together to improve health outcomes for AHD residents and low income communities; OR How the selected project aspects positively impact health concerns related to multiple Community Condition categories	**Has at least a sufficient understanding & Partially Describes:** How climate/air pollution measures, and other project aspects will work together to improve health outcomes for AHD residents and low income communities; OR How the selected project aspects positively impact health concerns related to multiple Community Condition categories	Does not display an Understanding or Insufficiently describes either
Does the applicant: 1) identify known sources of air pollution in Project Area; 2)describe how appropriate mitigation strategies are utilized; 3) propose adaptive measures that exceed local & state requirements, and Program expectations?	Yes to 1, 2, & 3--Above & beyond	Yes to 1, 2--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project include physical and programmatic components designed to improve health, or support to AHD residents including those with physical, sensory, intellectual/developmental, and other types of disabilities?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project include programs to improve the health of community members in the Project Area?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the applicant note any related efforts (not funded through AHSC) that the project leveraged or spurred, that will impact resident health? *For example: prior remediation, access to healthy foods, health services/facilities, or park access and development, Safe Routes to School, direct connection to a major active transportation investment.*	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
[Other factor unique to project, insert here]	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
For reviewers: select demonstrated effort level for this section's equity considerations	**High level of effort:** Above & Beyond for 2 or more options	**Some level of effort:** Meets Expectations for at least 2 options OR Above & Beyond for at least 1 option	**Low or no effort:** Does Not Meet Expectations OR Meets Expectations for only 1 option

Instructions for Table 2:

First review the Equity Considerations tables in this document: 1) Community Benefits and Engagement (Outreach & Feedback), 2) Climate Adaptation and Community Resiliency (CACR), 3) Collaboration and Planning (Project Partners), 4) Improving Health Outcomes (IHO). Then select the most appropriate responses for each row.

Table 2. Equity (2 points)

Scoring Considerations	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
In the General Context responses, how much of the requested background information needed to contextualize the project was provided?	All needed information	Most of the needed information	None of the needed information
Does the applicant display a level of understanding of racial, economic, disability, and/or health equity AND how well do they describe the ways the project aspects will lead to equitable outcomes for the community/future residents?	**Has at least a sufficient understanding & Fully Summarizes or Describes:** How the proposed components and program costs work together to address equity OR how the selected components and program costs address multiple equity related concerns	**Has at least a sufficient understanding & Partially Summarizes or Describes:** How the proposed components and program costs work together to address equity OR how the selected components and program costs address multiple equity related concerns	Does not display an Understanding or Insufficiently describes either
Based on the selected scores above and the level of effort selected under each of the four equity consideration tables, select the appropriate total score:	**Above & Beyond** [Demonstrated a "High level of effort" under at least 3 of the 4 equity consideration tables.]	**Exceeded Expectations** [Demonstrates at least "High level of effort" under at least 1 of the 4 equity consideration tables. Has to "Meet Expectations" for the remaining 3 equity consideration tables, on average.]	Does not meet the requirements of the other point categories

Instructions for Table 3:

Select effort level for each of the transformation considerations. After making selections, determine a score:

1 point - Goes above and beyond in at least 1 project aspect OR given its context, meets expectations across a range of project aspects to the extent that, taken together, could be considered transformative.
0 points - Does not exceed expectation

Table 3. Transformation (1 point)

Transformation Considerations	Effort Level: Above & Beyond	Effort Level: Meets Expectations	Insufficient Information	No effort
Does the project bring together unlikely partners?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project leverage an underutilized community resource?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project incorporate innovative preventative health measures?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project build wealth or capacity of the broader Project Area?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
Is the project piloting a new approach to housing or transportation given the local context (e.g. first in the region)?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project address long standing harm in a systemic way?	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations
[Other factor unique to project, insert here]	Above & beyond	Meets Expectations	Prefer Not to Evaluate	Does Not Meet Expectations

Climate Adaptation & Community Resiliency – 7 Points Maximum

Table 1. Climate Adaptation & Climate Resilience (7 points)

Scoring Considerations	7 Points	6 Points	5 Points	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
In the relevant supporting documentation and the General Context responses, how much of the requested background information needed to contextualize the project was provided?	All needed information	Nearly all needed information	Most of the needed information	Enough of the needed information	Some of the needed information	Little of the needed information	Almost none of the needed information	None of the needed information
Applicants display a level of understanding of the vulnerabilities from climate impacts AND how well do they describe the adaptive/mitigation/resiliency measures?	Displays a **comprehensive understanding & fully describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **significant understanding & fully describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **sufficient understanding & mostly describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **sufficient understanding & generally describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **some understanding & generally describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **limited understanding & partially describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Displays a **limited understanding & minimally describes** how adaptation measures work together to address multiple climate risk categories	Does not describe either
Technical aspects of proposed measures in the Adaptive Measures tables in the Climate Matrix are described in:	Comprehensive detail	Significant detail	Meaningful detail	Sufficient detail	Some detail	Limited detail	Minimal detail	No detail
Selected adaptive measures will mitigate the respective vulnerabilities **in the near future** to what degree?	Substantially mitigate	Mostly mitigate	Generally mitigate	Moderately mitigate	Should mitigate some	Minimally mitigate	Might mitigate	Does not mitigate
Selected adaptive measures will mitigate the respective vulnerabilities **in the long term, beyond the near future** to what degree?	Substantially mitigate	Mostly mitigate	Generally mitigate	Moderately mitigate	Should mitigate some	Minimally mitigate	Might mitigate	Will not mitigate
Beyond the most pressing vulnerability, how many other vulnerabilities does the project address? (Measures that go above and beyond for health, sustainability, resiliency, or efficiency, may also be considered)	All noted vulnerabilities	Multiple vulnerabilities	More than one other vulnerability	One other vulnerability	Only addresses the most pressing vulnerability	Only addresses the most pressing vulnerability	Only addresses the most pressing vulnerability	Did not address the most pressing vulnerability
In the narrative response to the "Mitigation Measures and Community Resiliency" prompt, applicants provide which type of explanation for why the adaptive measures were chosen for each applicable hazard?	Comprehensive explanation	A significant explanation	A clear, detailed explanation	A sufficient explanation	Some explanation	Limited explanation	An inadequate explanation	No explanation
In the "Improving Health Outcomes" prompt response, the Applicant describes how climate and air pollution-related measures will improve health outcomes for future residents and/or the community:	In comprehensive detail (including components, project design, and outreach and education on the impacts of air pollution)	In significant detail (including most components, project design, and outreach and education on the impacts of air pollution)	Meaningful detail	In sufficient detail	In some detail	In limited detail	In minimal detail	No details provided

Table 2. Equity Considerations under Climate Adaptation & Climate Resilience (CACR)

Equity Considerations	Effort Level: High	Effort Level: Some	Effort Level: Low/None
Do the adaptive measures benefit surrounding project area residents, in addition to residents of the Affordable Housing Development?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Were the adaptive measures selected based on community (i.e. Project Area specific, if by-right can be broader) input?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Were climate adaptation and community resiliency measures supplemented by programming and outreach to the disadvantaged population(s)?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Was or will education, empowerment, safety, and preparedness prioritized to increase resiliency?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Did the applicant communicate how potential clean energy or greening benefits (financial or otherwise) will be shared or passed along to future AHD residents or vulnerable community members? (For example, reduced energy costs resulting in lower utility bills for AHD residents)	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Does the project incorporate mitigation measures that go beyond AHSC expectations? *For example, addressing unspecified climate or environmental hazards or substantial consideration and planning for long term impacts*	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
[Other factor unique to project, insert here]	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
For reviewers: select demonstrated effort level for this section's equity considerations	**High level of effort:** Above & Beyond for 2 or more options	**Some level of effort:** Meets Expectations for at least 2 options OR Above & Beyond for at least 1 option	**Low or no effort:** Does Not Meet Expectations OR Meets Expectations for only 1 option

Collaboration & Planning – 4 points maximum

Table 1. Housing and Transportation Collaboration (3 points)

Scoring Considerations	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points	0 Points
In the General Context responses, how much of the requested background information needed to contextualize the project was provided?	All needed information	Most of the needed information	Some of the needed information	None of the needed information
Response demonstrates what level of collaboration between *Housing and Transportation* partners?	Provides detailed descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates extensive and meaningful collaboration.	Provides sufficient descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates significant collaboration.	Provides limited descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates limited collaboration.	Provides no descriptions of partners' involvement and does not demonstrate collaboration.
The AHSC proposal accounts for collaboration related to **local needs and priorities** in its visioning process, in a way that is:	Extensive and meaningful	Significant	Some Limited	Limited or None Does not
The AHSC proposal accounts for collaboration related to **specific site needs** in it's visioning process in a way that is:	Extensive and meaningful	Significant	Some Limited	Limited or None Does not
To what degree does the Applicant provide descriptions of *Workforce and Anti-Displacement Activity* partners involvement in prompt response and in "Table 2. Organizational Engagement" of the Narrative Prompts document?	Provides detailed descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates extensive and meaningful collaboration.	Provides sufficient descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates significant collaboration.	Provides limited descriptions of partners' involvement and demonstrates limited collaboration.	Provides no descriptions of partners' involvement and insufficient demonstrate collaboration.
Overall the proposed STI components are a [point descriptor] that will increase accessibility, connectivity, or mobility and backed by [[point descriptor]] credible sources or noted planning priorities. *Consider how proposed STI improvements connect future residents of the AHD and nearby low-income households to an improved transit line, job dense areas, areas with greater opportunity, or substantially improve connectivity and safety for active transportation.*	**Significant improvement** and **backed** by credible sources or noted planning priorities	**Significant improvement minimally backed** by credible sources or noted planning priorities	**Notable Improvement**	Are an **inappropriate improvement**
If applicable, information in "Table 2. Organizational Engagement" of the Narrative Prompts document captures the roles of other notable partners, the level of their input, and when they were involved by providing:	Detailed descriptions of their involvement	Sufficient descriptions of their involvement	Limited descriptions of their involvement	No description

Table 2. Local Plans (1 points)

Scoring Considerations	1 Point	0 Points
Information included in the Local Plans table is:	Relevant, clear, and organized	Irrelevant and dis-organized
"Local Plans" upload contains:	Only relevant and well-organized content	Irrelevant and dis-organized content
The local plans referenced in "Table 1. Description of Local Plans" of the Narrative Prompts document, support:	Information found under General Context and supports claims that specific project components are based on local plans	Does not support applicant claims

Table 3: Equity Considerations under Collaboration and Planning (Project Partners)

Equity Considerations	Effort Level: High	Effort Level: Some	Effort Level: Low/None
Did the project help facilitate tangible connections or coordination that will result in related efforts to provide concrete agreements, improvements, or systems to support or benefit identified populations, or the community broadly?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Is there documentation of the project's role in implementing the public partner's vision, in a local plan specific to an area within the Project Area?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Were there capacity building efforts for project partners or inclusion of community serving organizations, businesses, or other interested parties in a way that will increase their ability to serve the community moving forward?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Did the applicant note Project partners - beyond local government or agencies - with a strong connection to the project community (e.g. reflective of the identified populations, from the community, or organizations focused on community-relevant issues)?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Do the Project partners - beyond local government or agencies - for Anti-displacement and/or Workforce strategies have a long history (e.g. 5 or more years) working with the identified populations or within project community? *Greater weight if the work was focused on the neighborhood in the Project Area*	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Were there notable roles for Project Partners with strong connections to or significant history with the identified populations or within project community?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Did the project make significant efforts to coordinate and embed outreach/engagement in ongoing planning efforts to increase reach? Or, did the project make significant efforts to integrate and build upon engagement and feedback from previous efforts?	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
[Other factor unique to project, insert here]	Yes--Above & beyond	Yes--Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
For reviewers: select demonstrated effort level for this section's equity considerations	**High level of effort:** Above & Beyond for 2 or more options	**Some level of effort:** Meets Expectations for at least 2 options OR Above & Beyond for at least 1 option	**Low or no effort:** Does Not Meet Expectations OR Meets Expectations for only 1 option