



# **Transformative Climate Communities**

## **Community Vision And Principles For A Successful Program**

**California Environmental Justice Alliance**

## About the California Environmental Justice Alliance

The California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) is a statewide, community-led alliance that works to achieve environmental justice by advancing policy solutions. We unite the powerful local organizing of our members in the communities most impacted by environmental hazards – low-income communities and communities of color – to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We build the power of communities across California to create policies that will alleviate poverty and pollution. Together, we are growing the statewide movement for environmental health and social justice.

Our core members and partners are:

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN); Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCA EJ); Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE); Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment (CRPE); Communities for a Better Environment (CBE); Environmental Health Coalition (EHC); People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER); Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability; Pacoima Beautiful; Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles (PSR-LA); and Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE).

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**For more about CEJA, please visit: [www.caleja.org](http://www.caleja.org)**  
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# Introduction: A Community-Led Vision For Transformative Climate Communities

Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) is a groundbreaking new program that will develop comprehensive, cross-cutting, and transformative climate investments at a neighborhood scale to achieve multiple greenhouse gas, public health and economic benefits in our state's most vulnerable communities.

To maintain California's global climate leadership, we must ensure that the communities most impacted by multiple sources of pollution can directly benefit from investments to address climate change, environmental health issues, and barriers to equitable economic development.

Community-based organizations are leading the way by crafting sustainability plans that address long-standing environmental health and justice challenges, and by catalyzing equitable economic development at the neighborhood level. These plans draw from deep resident engagement and advance solutions led by the people most impacted, in partnership with other important stakeholders.



The TCC program can support the development and implementation of such plans. It can foster an integrated, collaborative approach to reducing climate change while comprehensively addressing a legacy of environmental pollution and disinvestment in the most highly impacted communities.

## Background On Transformative Climate Communities Program

AB 2722 (2016) authored by Assemblymember Autumn R. Burke and Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula created the Transformative Climate Communities program to be administered by the Strategic Growth Council (SGC). The Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) program will award large grants to develop and implement neighborhood-level climate sustainability plans. CEJA was a proud co-sponsor of AB 2722 along with the Greenlining Institute.

Eligible entities can apply for a competitive grant to fund a range of projects that have climate, public health, economic and pollution reduction benefits. Eligible entities include community-based organizations, local

agencies, and community development institutions, among others. Any plan must include multi-stakeholder collaborations and strategies for community engagement. All investments must be located within disadvantaged communities as defined by the California EPA's CalEnviroScreen tool.

The program received an initial, one-time allocation of funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) of \$140 million in 2016, to be awarded in 2017. The first year of grants will focus on the most disadvantaged communities, specifically the City of Fresno, the City of Los Angeles and a third region. Future funding for the program will depend on additional budget allocations.

# The Need: An Environmental And Climate Justice Crisis In California

Low-income communities and communities of color are on the frontlines of pollution and climate change in California. The communities where CEJA's members and partners work face a lack of basic infrastructure to meet their community needs, industrial facilities with multiple emissions, contaminated drinking water, close proximity to freeways and major transportation corridors, and many other sources of pollution.

These exposures are compounded by a lack of positive amenities such as open space and public transit, and socioeconomic stressors such as high unemployment and poverty. These cumulative impacts lead to negative health outcomes such as higher rates of asthma, birth defects, and cancer, as well as a host of other social and economic burdens.

## Green Zones And Transformative Climate Communities: A Shared Vision

CEJA's work on the Transformative Climate Communities program grows out of our Green Zones Initiative. Green Zones are a place-based strategy that use community-led solutions to transform areas overburdened by pollution into healthy and thriving neighborhoods. Green Zones predominantly consist of low-income communities and communities of color where residents are organizing to reduce industrial pollution and cultivate new, coordinated opportunities to implement community-based solutions.

While each Green Zone reflects the unique needs, priorities, and environmental justice issues of each community, all share common roots. They have all developed out of decades of organizing by groups working directly in low-income communities and communities of color to address the over-concentration of polluting facilities and the cumulative impacts of toxic emissions in their area. All Green Zones are comprehensive, collaborative, community-led, and solution-oriented.



According to a California Environmental Protection Agency analysis, almost 7.5 million people or roughly 20% of the state's total population lives in areas that are burdened with high concentrations of pollution and socioeconomic vulnerabilities. These same communities are the most vulnerable to climate change and have the fewest resources to adapt to changing conditions.



We recognized early in our Green Zones work that in order for these place-based models to be successful, communities need to have the power to guide development and investments. Green Zones require closely coordinated and leveraged public spending targeted to our most overburdened communities, with deep resident engagement to direct investment.

The Transformative Climate Communities program is this vision come to life. The TCC program can catalyze neighborhood-level shifts away from pollution-based economies and create local economic opportunities that support the wellbeing of families, empower communities, clean the environment, and prevent further climate change.

For such a transition to be successful, community leaders must have the opportunity to identify and lead the solutions. The significant public investments being made through the TCC program must not only reduce

greenhouse gas emissions, they must also remedy the already-existing environmental health and justice disparities.

Through its community-level planning and investments, the TCC program can help to achieve a just transition away from inequitable and polluting development patterns that have plagued so many communities. It can move us toward a new future that weaves together environmental and climate sustainability, economic opportunities, and strengthened local democracies.

## Key Principles For The Transformative Climate Communities Program

**The following principles are critical to ensuring the long-term success of the TCC program:**

- 1. Direct And Extensive Community Engagement.** Community leadership and resident partnerships should be at the heart of all plan development and implementation. Plans must include clear criteria and strategies for inclusive and meaningful community engagement to ensure that local residents and community-based organizations are involved and have a voice in the decisions that are transforming their neighborhoods.
- 2. Equity For Most Impacted Residents.** The TCC program must uplift communities on the frontlines of climate change, pollution and poverty in California. TCC must address long-standing environmental health and justice inequities, tackle the crisis of climate change, and ensure benefits to reach the most vulnerable residents in plan areas.
- 3. Multiple, Integrated Benefits.** The TCC program breaks out of the siloed approach to funding by supporting integrated projects that can accomplish multiple goals to achieve truly transformative impacts. It maximizes our investments, not only by addressing the urgent need to stop climate change, but also by creating additional environmental benefits and local economic opportunities.
- 4. Showcase Equitable, Sustainable Land Use Planning.** In order to meet the challenge of climate change, our patterns of urban and rural development must fundamentally shift. TCC investments can demonstrate the potential for new land use planning strategies that are more resilient, equitable and healthy. In doing so, it can serve as a model throughout the state and the country.



- 6. Catalytic, Leveraged Investments.** The TCC program is intended to leverage one source of investment – the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund – to secure increased federal, state, and private funding. No one funding source can meet all of the needs of a particular community, and by making these large-scale, multi-year investments we can start to bring in additional public and private resources to assist in the ongoing development and long-term sustainability of these plans.
  
- 7. Investment Without Displacement.** Without effective anti-displacement policies in place, large-scale investments could push out local residents and small businesses as a result of increased property values. TCC must include strategies to prevent displacement and develop a methodology to track local resident and small business changes over time.
  
- 8. Creating A Pipeline Of Communities.** Many of the communities that struggle with the highest environmental burdens have also faced chronic disinvestment in their neighborhoods for many years. While they have great potential to successfully demonstrate the TCC model, they need planning support. The TCC program should help prepare communities for full investments through extensive Technical Assistance and Planning Grants.

# What Does Neighborhood Level Transformation Look Like?

## Indicators Of Change In Communities

Inside our broad vision for program implementation, we offer some elements for what neighborhood-level transformation could look like. Not every TCC plan or project will encompass all these indicators, and this list is not exhaustive. However, they provide a guide to the type of change that community-based organizations hope to achieve over time in a TCC neighborhood.

### Environmental Transformation

<b>Reduced Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions</b>	Reducing GHG emissions is paramount to the health and sustainability of communities across California, and is core to the TCC vision.
<b>Improved Air Quality</b>	GHG emissions go hand-in-hand with other co-pollutants that have created persistent air quality issues throughout the state. Measurable decreases in particulate matter, toxic air pollutants and criteria air pollutants from both mobile and stationary sources are needed.
<b>Improved Water Supply and Quality</b>	Access to safe, clean, affordable drinking water is a human right in California, and TCC investments must ensure this basic need is being met locally. This means requiring that all homes and schools have drinking water that is in compliance with state drinking water laws, ensuring water delivery infrastructure is safe and sanitary, and reducing or mitigating groundwater threats.
<b>Increased Access to Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</b>	Access to affordable renewable energy and energy efficiency programs provides many multi-scale benefits, such as an overall reduction in greenhouse gases, lower household energy bills, and even shared community ownership over clean energy production and distribution. Specific outcomes to incorporate in TCC plans include: reductions in energy use and lower costs for residents, increased energy efficiency in buildings within investment areas, adoption or expansion of clean energy technology in TCC neighborhoods.
<b>Increased Mobility, Connectivity and Public Transit</b>	Transportation related emissions are a leading driver of climate change and the source of multiple health issues in environmental justice communities. The ability to safely and affordably move between work, homes, commercial centers, and civic spaces is a critical component to a healthy, thriving neighborhood. TCC plans should support robust public transit infrastructure that is transitioned to zero emission technology, and help transform heavy emission transportation infrastructure such as freight and goods movement corridors. Plans should encourage active transportation such as bicycle routes, transit mode sharing and non-motorized mode share to improve mobility while reducing environmental impacts.
<b>Increased Green Open Space</b>	Accessible and green open spaces are important for promoting physical and mental well-being, while fostering physical activity and social interaction. They create more beautiful and livable areas for residents while providing environmental and climate benefits. TCC plans should expand community access to parks, community gardens, and green ways.
<b>Increased Use Of Green Infrastructure</b>	Green infrastructure can manage and reduce stormwater runoff, and can also improve air quality and help lower temperatures. TCC plans should increase green infrastructure, including the installation of bioswales, green roofs, rainwater catchment, and other features.
<b>Improved Land-Use Planning</b>	Poor land-use planning remains a leading cause of environmental inequities and is an underlying driver of climate change. TCC projects should encourage zoning changes and local development decisions that remedy long-standing patterns of residential exposure. Projects should also encourage development patterns that do not situate toxic land uses near homes and schools, ensure basic infrastructure needs for all residents, and create more compact and climate-smart commercial and residential development that reduce vehicle miles traveled.

## Health Transformation

<p><b>Improved Health Outcomes</b></p>	<p>Development is an important driver of health, from land use planning to transportation and housing. Numerous studies show that having diverse transit options, active transportation, safe and stable housing, and access to green space all affect the health conditions of individuals - from decreasing stress to reducing asthma and obesity. TCC plans should achieve improved health outcomes that address particular issues within a community. Possible indicators for change include decreases in health problems related to environmental stressors, such as asthma or heart disease.</p>
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## Socioeconomic Transformation

<p><b>Improved Economic Outcomes</b></p>	<p>Climate planning and local economic development must go together to achieve the comprehensive transformation that disadvantaged communities need. Economic health in TCC plans can be measured through reductions in poverty and increases in employment.</p>
<p><b>Increased Job and Workforce Development Opportunities</b></p>	<p>Residents need living wages and sustainable economic opportunities. TCC plans should strive to generate year-round employment opportunities, jobs with health care and benefits, and training programs that create a pipeline to sustainable career paths and other good jobs with benefits.</p>
<p><b>Stabilized and Increased Affordable Housing</b></p>	<p>Access to stable, affordable and quality housing improves both community and individual health and reduces mental and physiological conditions such as stress, depression, and anxiety. TCC plans should help to stabilize the existing affordable housing stock, increase the number of affordable units accessible to all income ranges, create location-efficient housing near transit, and encourage the construction of affordable housing that promotes public health and meets the highest environmental standards.</p>
<p><b>Continued Presence of Long-time Residents And Small Businesses</b></p>	<p>Displacement negatively impacts residents, creates health stressors, and generates additional environmental impacts such as increased vehicle travel. TCC neighborhoods should utilize strategies that prevent long-time residents, renters, and local businesses from being priced out, such as measures that increase tenant protections and limit rapid rent increases.</p>
<p><b>Incubation of Ecologically Sustainable Local Businesses</b></p>	<p>Showcasing the development of local businesses that promote environmentally sustainable goods and services can create new models for equitable and climate-related economic opportunities. TCC plans can accomplish this by providing various business-related support services such as technical assistance, identifying ways to green up business practices, and by providing information on how to develop and sustain cooperative ownership structures.</p>
<p><b>Increased Investments</b></p>	<p>A range of public, private and philanthropic investments will be needed to realize the full potential of all TCC plans. TCC stakeholder collaboratives should demonstrate efforts to seek additional sources of funding for plan implementation.</p>
<p><b>Increased Community Ownership</b></p>	<p>Local ownership of businesses and resources is essential to ensuring that assets are being managed and sustained with the community's needs in mind. TCC plans should proactively incubate alternative ownership models such as land trusts and cooperative ownership structures for businesses.</p>

## Community And Political Transformation

<p><b>Increased Community Engagement</b></p>	<p>Strong community engagement is necessary to ensure transformation in environmental justice communities and to cultivate the leadership that's needed to sustain the wellbeing of neighborhoods over time. TCC plans should include resident engagement strategies such as community advisory groups, regular meetings, community inclusion in decision-making, and innovative tools such as participatory budgeting.</p>
<p><b>Increased Collaborative Partnerships</b></p>	<p>Collaboration across community groups, nonprofits, academics, development institutions, workforce development groups, unions, businesses, and local and state agencies will be crucial to achieving a truly transformative impact. The range of these partnerships - and the organic creation of new ones through the TCC process - should be one indicator of success in a neighborhood.</p>



CALIFORNIA  
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# TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE COMMUNITY

Building Neighborhood-led Climate Equity



# Transformative Climate Communities On The Ground: Examples From Across The State

Community-led plans for place-based transformation will look different depending on the needs of each region. Drawing from CEJA's members, partners, and allies, we provide a snapshot of what Transformative Climate Communities could look like in both urban and rural environmental justice neighborhoods across California.

## Neighborhood-Led Change in San Diego County

### Anchor Organization: Environmental Health Coalition



**Residents working on community land use plans in Barrio Logan and National City celebrating their success.**

According to CalEnviroScreen, Barrio Logan and Old Town National City are two of the most impacted communities in San Diego County. For decades, land use planners have treated the predominantly Latino/Chicano neighborhoods as dumping grounds for polluting industries and warehouses. Not surprisingly, asthma rates in both neighborhoods are disproportionately high while green spaces and affordable housing are scarce.

Through people-led planning, EHC and residents in partnership with the Port of San Diego and the City of National City have influenced the plans for the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal expansion and have developed the 2010 Westside Specific Plan for their respective communities. Residents actively engaged to limit the 600% terminal expansion and develop a land use plan that includes comprehensive community visions. The process resulted in the integration of health-promoting policies such as meaningful greenhouse gas reduction mechanisms, mitigation strategies with the expected Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal expansion, and the phase out of incompatible land uses in Old Town National City.

In the neighborhood of Barrio Logan, the following projects are proposed or underway:

- Approval of a Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal Sustainable Expansion that will require clean, zero emissions trucks, equipment and ships; air pollution reduction; and the installation of renewable energy generation on the terminal.
- The installation of air filtration systems and renewable energy in the nearby surrounding community. Since Perkins Elementary is within a one-half mile of the proposed expansion, the school will need air filters, solar panels, and support for the development of the Perkins/Community joint-use park.

Local community groups are also working on the following plans for Old Town National City:

- The phase out of industrial businesses away from homes and schools via the city's amortization ordinance. Old Town residents will be actively involved to determine the best uses for newly vacated properties, while also integrating anti-displacement strategies to promote neighborhood stabilization.
- The Green Industrial Auto Park that will provide an innovative, environmentally-sound and economically viable destination for auto repair businesses that are phasing out of Old Town. This Auto Park will serve as a hub for the paint and auto body industry, allowing them to maintain their businesses in National City while protecting resident health in Old Town.

# Transforming Goods Movement Corridors in San Bernardino County

## Anchor Organization: Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice

More than a third of all cargo imported into the U.S. by ship will enter through the Los Angeles and Long Beach Ports, while 70 percent of that cargo will be transported through various Inland Valley communities to arrive at clusters of warehouses and rail yards before being distributed to the rest of the country. In total, the Inland Valley is home to a combined 52.3 percent of Southern California's primary freight network, causing extreme air quality problems and related health issues for local residents. The Building Green and Healthy Communities Coalition focuses on transformative projects in San Bernardino, where many low-income, predominately Latino residents live next to major transportation corridors. These projects will increase climate sustainability, address long-standing public health and air quality issues, spur transformation to a green logistics industry and ultimately generate climate-smart jobs in the region. Two notable coalition projects include the Valley Corridor Specific Plan and the Green Warehousing Project.

The Bloomington Valley Corridor Specific Plan created by the County of San Bernardino utilizes a community-driven process to craft a comprehensive vision for the neighborhoods situated on the frontlines of the warehousing and logistics industries. The community development plan for this unincorporated area includes:

- A much-needed affordable housing project;
- Improved access to transit and transit passes;
- The relocation of a community park that is currently situated next to a freeway;
- A logistics study to assess mitigation approaches and address health issues that arise when warehousing and related logistics businesses are situated in close proximity to residential uses.

The Green Warehousing Project is an innovative plan that will reduce greenhouse gases and co-pollutants by employing strategies that demonstrate that creating jobs



**Homes next to the BNSF Railyard in Westside San Bernardino with the highest cancer risk of all railyards in the state.**

in the logistics industry can go hand-in-hand with promoting healthy communities.

The project will:

- Identify strategies for the electrification of transportation and freight networks through electric plug-ins, solar panels, and zero emission trucks/on-site equipment.
- Address housing shortages by providing workers with affordable workforce housing and electric shuttles that facilitate their commute to and from homes.
- Providing workforce development centers, ESL classes, and other important on-site services located within housing developments to uplift local workers and facilitate advancements in the industry.

By collaboratively developing a set of best practices for improving and implementing facility operations, the project will serve as a model for other industrial developers.

# Green Corridor in South Los Angeles, Los Angeles County

Anchor Organization: T.R.U.S.T. South LA



Members of T.R.U.S.T. South LA with Councilman Curren D. Price at a community event in South Los Angeles.

Community-based organizations in South LA are coming together to develop a comprehensive, resident-driven, and green neighborhood-scale plan that is anchored by incoming and existing investments along the Slauson Avenue Corridor. By leveraging partnerships with various CBOs, CDFIs, City and County departments, affordable housing developers and the regional transportation agency, South LA has the opportunity to develop and implement a plan that can advance a community vision for environmental transformation in South Central LA. The Plan advances the model of Development without Displacement by proactively creating community assets that are essential to keeping existing residents in place while avoiding economic displacement.

The Slauson Avenue Green Corridor Plan can leverage TCC funds with other sources, as the area is part of the federal Promise Zone designation SLATE-Z. Core components of the plan thus far include:

- Modeling climate resiliency and water conservation strategies that can serve as living laboratories to educate frontline communities. Key projects include the Slauson & Wall Village, a 120-unit affordable housing and 4-acre park Project and LA Metro's Rail-to-River active

transportation corridor connecting the Blue, Silver and LAX/Crenshaw lines;

- Coordinating existing and planned investments to improve mobility connections and maximize greenhouse gas reductions;
- Acquiring land for community stewardship. By purchasing land in advance of transformation, the plan stabilizes the existing low-income community, guaranteeing true community benefit from environmental transformation;
- Addressing heavy and light industrial point sources of pollution through small business education, TA, and leveraging models for transformation, such as Climate Resilience Hubs

The plan leverages housing, open space, and transportation investments to gain further investment. It also connects residents to affordable housing, jobs centers, educational institutions, retail, services, and recreation opportunities. By proactively advancing anti-displacement initiatives, core transit users are more likely to stay in the neighborhood, increasing both the use of new active transportation infrastructure and the ridership of transit infrastructure, while allowing them to benefit from neighborhood greening.

# Climate Resilience Hub in South Los Angeles, Los Angeles County

## Anchor Organization: Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education

Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE) and the US Green Building Council-LA (USGBC) are working to create a Community Resilience Hub that will be at the epicenter of a broader “Green the Block” initiative to create a green infrastructure corridor in South LA. The first phase of this project will focus on transforming SCOPE’s South Los Angeles facility into a resilience-focused demonstration and educational space.

The new Community Resilience Hub will be a major catalyst for locally-led development and will strengthen the communities disproportionately impacted by climate change, pollution and other socioeconomic stressors (such as poverty, poor health, and unemployment) by offering the following services and resources:

- A state-of-the-art living laboratory of green and resilient technologies;
- A centralized hub for residents, job seekers, students, and small business owners to obtain information on a variety of important services (such as cost-saving efficiency and retrofit programs, job opportunities, small green business incubation services, training opportunities, resources for implementing targeted climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, and seismic safety and emergency preparedness);
- Community-building and educational activities that create opportunities to connect, engage and empower residents

The “Green the Block” initiative’s ultimate vision is for SCOPE and its surrounding neighborhood to be transformed into a green corridor that can support small business development and local job and training opportunities in the clean energy sector. The Corridor will also serve as an innovative model for building community cohesion, climate resilience, and public/private investments that can be replicated in other underserved and disenfranchised communities. The project has been a



**SCOPE organizer Ben leads a workshop for South Los Angeles residents on new job opportunities in the growing green economy, the city's plan to create 5,000 new jobs, and concrete steps to navigate hiring and training processes.**

key case study of the USGBC Los Angeles Chapter’s Building Resilience-LA Initiative, which is developing a scalable, replicable model to help both for-profit and nonprofit organizations incorporate resilience strategies into ongoing facility maintenance and operations.

# Urban Greening in Pacoima, City of Los Angeles

## Anchor Organization: Pacoima Beautiful



### **New green open spaces and intersection improvements in Pacoima provide safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings.**

Pacoima's "Urban Greening Plan" addresses environmental and health concerns related to mobility and open space in one of the most park-poor, climate-vulnerable, heat-burdened, and pollution-burdened communities in the San Fernando Valley. The area has been identified as ideal for green infrastructure development since the Northeast San Fernando Valley contains some of the most permeable soils in the region. Through a robust collaboration of stakeholders, Pacoima Beautiful worked with urban planners, landscape architects, environmental scientists, and local city government to address the lack of adequate public infrastructure and resources for its residents.

The plan includes:

- Green Streets that remove impervious concrete or asphalt surfaces on existing thoroughfares and turn them into landscaped permeable green spaces that capture stormwater;
- Green open spaces such as pocket parks that provide an opportunity to incrementally increase the amount of total open space in Pacoima and transform blighted spaces into amenities;
- Green intersection improvements that provide safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings while

- reducing car use for a cleaner environment;
- Green Alleys that transform traditional alleys into shared spaces that prioritize pedestrians and produce open space, often by reclaiming street space to create enhanced and active places for landscaping and seating;
- Plazas where community members can strengthen connections and come together for both casual and formal events, such as farmers markets.

The Urban Greening Plan provides a model for creating a comprehensive vision for increased green infrastructure, open space, mobility and community engagement - all while improving public health, addressing existing environmental burdens and reducing greenhouse gases in communities of color. The plan will also be enhanced through its designation as one of three 'Clean Up Green Up Zones' in the City of Los Angeles, and will gain a new rapid transit line along Van Nuys Boulevard within the next ten years.

## Comprehensive Land Use Planning in Fresno County

### Anchor Organization: Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

By adopting the resident-driven Southwest Specific Plan, the City of Fresno will gain a great opportunity to positively transform one of the state's most disadvantaged and polluted communities that has suffered from decades of neglect. The city's Southwest neighborhoods have historically been saturated with heavy and light industrial facilities that have harmed local health, diminished the quality of life, and negatively impacted air quality. The plan enacts key strategies to transform these conditions and includes a multi-stakeholder committee of residents, developers, community advocates, schools, and other local institutions to develop and implement the plan.

Core components of the Southwest Specific Plan include:

- Rezoning areas to create more healthy and compatible land uses - such as allowing more

commercial, retail, and office opportunities;

- Encouraging a variety of housing so that people and families from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds can rent an apartment or condo, or purchase a single family home;
- Increasing the amount of parks and green spaces in the area already concentrated with industrial facilities;
- Preventing additional industrial development in the areas covered by the Southwest Specific Plan

Securing investments for Fresno's Southwest communities and providing connectivity to other neighborhoods will be essential to achieving the goal of one healthy Fresno.

## 100 Percent Renewable Energy in Arvin, Kern County

### Anchor Organization: Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

In the small San Joaquin Valley city of Arvin, located in the midst of Kern County's fracking fields, residents have set a goal of making the city 100 percent fossil fuel-free. Community members have identified several interconnected components to this project:

- Zoning that restricts oil and gas production in Arvin;
- Renewable energy solutions for both public and private buildings;
- Electrification of the city vehicle program and the public transit system;
- A workforce development program that will be housed in a local community center

The vision was developed through a partnership between community-based organizations, the City, job training providers, unions, and renewable energy companies. The



**Arvin resident working in the local community garden, part of their just transition plan.**

project sets out to demonstrate that working directly with impacted communities and taking a health-centric approach is not only possible, but can also generate local economic opportunities in one of the nation's most poverty-stricken communities.

# Building Community Assets in San Francisco

## Anchor Organization: People Organized to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights



**PODER promoting bicycling to youth in the Excelsior District.**

People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER) has been working with residents in San Francisco's Mission and Excelsior Districts to create new equitable development opportunities that will directly benefit community members. Together, they have been organizing to reclaim public lands for neighborhood assets such as parks and open space, affordable housing, urban agriculture, and worker/community cooperatives. Land use planning policies in San Francisco have often prioritized the development of expensive condominium and retail spaces, pushing out long-time residents and small, locally-owned stores that provide incomes for residents. To counter this, PODER's projects focus on creating innovative, community-based models for meeting people's economic needs while simultaneously cultivating networks of support.

PODER has joined forces with other local community-based organizations through the Communities United for Health and Justice (CUHJ) alliance. In the Excelsior District, CUHJ has been advancing a mixed-use affordable housing development at the Balboa Park BART Station's Upper Yard.

The project includes:

- 80-100 units of affordable housing;
- 8000 square feet of office space;
- A community-based steering committee that includes low-income youth, families and elder leaders from the neighborhood;
- Designs to improve public health, as the city's two major freeways run through the area;
- Environmental sustainability standards that require water and energy efficiency as well as on-site recycling and composting, in order to comply with the San Francisco Green Building Code.

PODER has also worked on transforming public lands into centers of community-driven and climate resilient urban farming. Working with local youth, PODER recently broke ground on a new urban learning farm in the Crocker Amazon Park, where area residents can share sustainable food practices and traditions, and can learn cooperative approaches towards the stewardship of public land.

In addition, PODER together with a broader alliance of neighborhood leaders and community organizations launched a community-based worker center in the Excelsior District. The new worker center, named Excelsior Works!, is a direct response to implementing bottom up solutions that combine services, education, policy, and organizing to meet peoples' needs.

The Upper Yard, Crocker Amazon Farm, and Excelsior Works! projects work to counter the gentrification pressures that have been impacting the Mission and Excelsior neighborhoods by fostering people-powered, equitable development that benefits local residents while nurturing a healthy, local, living economy.

# Community-Led, Just Transition in Richmond, Contra Costa County

## Anchor Organization: Asian Pacific Environmental Network

The City of Richmond has a long legacy of environmental racism, blight, and economic disinvestment that has lasted for decades. With the second highest concentration of heavy industry in the state (including the 3,000 acre Chevron Oil Refinery), Richmond's residents have suffered from extremely high pollution burdens and severe health and safety consequences as a result.

The Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) in partnership with Urban Tilth, Rich City Rides, New Hope Farms, Richmond Progressive Alliance and other community-based organizations have united to form "Cooperation Richmond." The mission of Cooperation Richmond is to serve as "a one-stop-shop for the incubation, education, training, mentorship and capital support that is necessary to create, convert, and develop successful cooperative enterprises in Richmond that build community-controlled wealth by and for low-income communities and communities of color in Richmond."

Together, the collective will provide the following services and resources to the Richmond community:

- A cooperative business incubator that provides coaching, assessment, and "matchmaking" services for prospective cooperative starters that are looking to partner on enterprises;
- Outreach and education on community-led and owned cooperative business models;
- A "Just Transition Loan Fund" that will financially support projects that reduce climate change and support community-led enterprises;
- Capital credit development and financial literacy support for low-income residents in the area

The innovative planning efforts of Cooperation Richmond exemplify the type of community-led, climate resilient planning that is needed to create a truly Transformative Climate Community.



**APEN members at a community event in Richmond promoting the benefits of solar.**

APEN is also taking proactive steps to promote local, living economies by developing and implementing a community-owned renewable energy installation. This solar energy cooperative will serve as a demonstration project that can be replicated by other communities and groups that want to achieve a Just Transition off of fossil fuels and increase local ownership over energy sources.

APEN has been partnering with the Energy Solidarity Cooperative (ESC) to gain technical expertise, assess the viability of potential installation sites, engage in ongoing training and technical assistance for their staff and members, design the system, and identify the finance models that are the best fit for their sites. Together with local residents, APEN and ESC are working to create a community-owned and -controlled solar project that will be a part of a larger plan to develop local clean energy infrastructure at the neighborhood level.



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