

To: ClimatePlan Steering Committee
From: Nailah Pope-Harden, Policy Advocate; Christopher Escarcega, Network Engagement Manager; Amy Hartman, Policy Associate
Re: Listening Sessions Report
Date: March 19, 2020

Background

ClimatePlan's 2019 - 2022 [Strategic Direction](#) has three priorities:

1. **Drive Transformative Policy Change:** advance ambitious policies to reshape California's housing, land use, and transportation systems.
2. **Amplify Community Voices:** work at the local and regional levels to increase community engagement and power at the intersection of climate, housing, land use, and transportation.
3. **Build Bridges Across Issues and Geographies:** creating a space where advocacy organizations and leaders from other sectors can come together to find common ground

To achieve these priorities, it is essential that ClimatePlan's network is connected and aligned to create healthier, more sustainable and equitable communities. California is facing complex and immense challenges in its efforts to create these types of communities; ClimatePlan can help California address those challenges by bringing different communities together to develop integrated solutions.

One way we are bringing different communities together to create integrated solutions was by hosting regional listening sessions. These listening sessions were an opportunity to get feedback—and ensure alignment—from our local and regional partners on ClimatePlan's [Emerging Policy Actions](#). For the listening sessions, we developed three goals:

1. Elevate community voices
2. Build greater network cohesion and connection
3. Better understand local and regional needs to provide greater support

Our statewide and regional work must connect to our partners' work on the ground. We also know that it is essential for community voices to be elevated in a way that deepens connections across the network and elevates the specific—and collective—needs of regions across California.

Quick Facts on ClimatePlan Listening Sessions

In February and March, ClimatePlan hosted regional listening sessions in:

1. San Diego
2. Sacramento
3. Oakland
4. Fresno
5. Modesto
6. Los Angeles

For each listening session, ClimatePlan staff worked closely with key local and regional partners to collaborate on agendas, and invite lists. With strong partnership at the local and regional level, each listening session highlighted the unique needs and opportunities of that region.

In terms of statistics, ClimatePlan talked to 58 organizations across the state. ClimatePlan also created a survey, where 34 organizations shared their regional priorities. For a full list of all the organizations that participated in a listening session and/or filled out the survey, see Appendix A.

Regional Highlights

Each listening session included an opportunity for local and regional partners to share out their organizational priorities, and identify the top priorities for their region. Below, we share each region's top priorities around transportation, land use, climate, and housing, as well as key highlights from each region's listening session.

San Diego

Top Regional Priorities:

- Transportation:
 - Create a strong Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Community Strategy
 - Developing a regional local Green New Deal
 - Changing our car-centric culture through measures like e-bike incentives

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- Labor has an important voice; center their concerns around workforce development and just transition.
- San Diego local and regional organizations are very focused on identifying how to change the culture of car dependency.
- Incentives around e-bikes and/or other active transportation (scooters, etc) for commuters could be one way to start shifting how people get around.

Sacramento

Top Regional Priorities:

- Community Engagement:
 - Robust, consistent community engagement is the goal
 - What does community engagement look like?
 - How do organizations ensure that community engagement is done well?

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- Several grassroots organizations from the Sacramento region attended; these organizations represented various issue areas and sectors, including faith-based groups.
- Once the listening session was finished, organizations continued the dialogue about how to work together to create better, more robust community engagement.

Oakland

Top Regional Priorities:

- Transportation:
 - Bay Area mega measures (FASTER Bay Area and Voices for Transportation)
- Climate:
 - Climate Resilience bonds at the state level (including SB 278)
- Housing
 - Upzoning and value capture solutions

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- There was a lot of diversity in the room, both in terms of issues and race.
- Organizations seemed to have shared goals around transportation, housing, and climate.

Fresno

Top Regional Priorities:

- Transportation:
 - More must be done to uplift the needs and concerns of rural communities
- Land Use:
 - Sprawl development is still a challenge in this region; need to work together to address it
- Natural and working lands:
 - Higher prioritization on agricultural mitigation in general plans, along with stronger justice lens on farm work and efforts to shift power

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- There is a lot of opportunity in the Central Valley, but also significant challenges; coordinated community-driven technical assistance could be beneficial.
- The Central Valley is more rural than other regions; it is important to be inclusive and elevate the needs of rural communities at the state level.

Los Angeles

Top Regional Priorities

- Housing:
 - Developing more funding programs (or providing more funding) to programs like the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities Program or Transformative Climate Communities that fund integrated housing, climate, and transportation projects
 - Invest in solutions that elevate integrated planning, build transit oriented development, and create equitable upzoning.
 - Strong, coordinated implementation of Measure W (safe clean water program), H (homeless initiative), A (safe, clean neighborhood parks) and M (LA County transportation sales tax measure)

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- It was good to see existing partners face-to-face, and also meet new partners.

Modesto

Top Regional Priorities:

- Land Use:
 - Create a strong, community-driven general plan in the City of Modesto
- Community Engagement:
 - Build robust local leadership, and increasing community capacity to engage on local and regional boards and commissions

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) data in the region brought a well-rounded perspective to the listening session.
- The listening session was a great opportunity for deepening and strengthening relationships between ClimatePlan and local partners.

Sacramento (for statewide partners)

Top Statewide Priorities:

- Transportation:
 - Restructuring transportation funds to implement [Executive Order N-10-10](#) and create free transit ridership for everyone
 - Developing more environmental justice and equity-focused policies and practices at the California Transportation Commission
 - Implementing the findings from [California Air Resources Board 2018 SB 375 Progress Report](#)

Key Highlights and/or Takeaways:

- There was collective agreement from statewide partners that a significant shift in transportation funding and policy need to happen if California wants to meet its climate, equity, and health goals.
- Statewide partners were interested in long-term visioning and collective messaging efforts.

Strengths-Opportunities-Aspirations-Results (SOAR) Analysis of ClimatePlan's Listening Sessions

After conducting the regional listening sessions, we wanted to take a step back to use the information from the listening sessions to better assess our strengths as a network, the opportunities ahead of us, and identify results that we could implement. We used a SOAR analysis as a way to recognize the potential of our network and identify how the ClimatePlan network can move forward with the information from the listening sessions.

Strengths: What does ClimatePlan do well? What are ClimatePlan's key assets, resources, capabilities, and accomplishments?

1. ClimatePlan has built strong relationships with non-profit organizations, as well as regional and state agencies, across the state. These relationships are diverse and represent a wide variety of issue areas.
2. Through workgroups, webinars, and convenings, ClimatePlan has increased knowledge-sharing and connection with partner organizations in the five regions that ClimatePlan is working in, as well as at the statewide level.
3. The regional listening sessions provide ClimatePlan with new ideas on ways to increase local and regional engagement in the network.
4. The regional listening sessions provided ClimatePlan with a way to meet partners where they live, and develop networking and relationship-building opportunities across the regions.

Opportunities: What circumstances can ClimatePlan leverage for future success?

1. **Convening:** ClimatePlan can continue to identify strategic opportunities (similar to our Commitment to Investment without Displacement) where ClimatePlan can facilitate dialogues with traditional partners as well as new entities such as unions and faith-based organizations.
2. **Messaging:** Through listening sessions and/or mini-retreats, ClimatePlan can bring the entire network together to develop visionary messaging strategies that advance our programmatic work and help implement our Strategic Direction.
3. **Funding:** ClimatePlan can work with local and regional partners to identify types of funding programs that actually work in communities (e.g., Transformative Climate Communities or Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities Program) and work at the

state level to replicate those programs on a larger scale and/or make sure these programs get more funding.

4. **Mobilizing:** ClimatePlan can partner with grassroots organizations to build support for statewide initiatives that will provide clear benefits to their base, including low-income communities and communities of color.

Aspirations: What vision can ClimatePlan build based on the strengths and opportunities?

1. ClimatePlan will use its Strategic Direction as a guide and vision to build upon the strengths and opportunities. Key aspirations based on the Strategic Direction include:
 - a. Identifying strategic opportunities to convene partners around key issues to implement the vision in the Strategic Direction.
 - b. Connecting regions to each other around regional issues (e.g., county transportation sales tax measures, local and regional affordable housing funding) to share knowledge and best practices.
 - c. Developing better communication tools and messaging tactics to communicate the importance of complex policy positions and helping create a cultural shift away from cars as the primary mode to get around.
 - d. Work closely with regional and statewide partners to ensure that regional and statewide agencies are more transparent in their planning and funding efforts, as well as building clear mechanisms for greater accountability.

Results: What are the tangible outcomes and measures that demonstrate ClimatePlan has achieved its goals and aspirations?

1. ClimatePlan will make the following changes to its [Emerging Policy Actions](#) to better reflect the input from the listening sessions as well as the aspirations and opportunities listed above:
 - a. **Drive Transformative Policy Change:**
 - i. ClimatePlan will advocate for transformative policies and funding programs at the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans and California State Transportation Agency programs that elevate integrated solutions to address transportation, housing, and climate.
 - ii. ClimatePlan will strengthen its partnership with grassroots organizations to further mobilize communities that are impacted most by the state's car-centric funding programs.
 - b. **Amplify Community Voice:**
 - i. ClimatePlan will identify strategic opportunities to convene partners—both existing and new organizations—to develop platforms, policy recommendations, and/or campaign strategy to advance the network's collective goals around land use, housing, transportation, and climate.
 - ii. ClimatePlan will work with local and regional partners to identify ways to connect local and regional partners to increase knowledge-sharing and best practices.
 - c. **Build Bridges Across Issues and Geographies**
 - i. ClimatePlan has created an [interactive network map](#) that allows partners to identify other organizations working in similar issue areas and connect with them.
 - ii. ClimatePlan will create opportunities for regional and statewide partners to set back and think about the big picture (whether that is communicating a community's needs, technical policies such as SB 743, or identifying the

future we want to live in) and then develop messaging to communicate that shared vision.

Conclusion

These listening sessions were an amazing learning opportunity for staff. Staff had the opportunity to visit different regions and better understand the challenges that local and regional partners are facing. The listening sessions also allowed for relationship building and greater connection between staff and our regional and state partners.

Perhaps most importantly, these listening sessions allowed staff to refine our emerging policy actions to better manifest the vision that has brought all ClimatePlan partners to the table.

Thank you to all the organizations and people that shared their time, work, and ideas—we are excited to partner with you to build a healthier, more vital California for all.

Appendix A: Organizations that participated in ClimatePlan Listening Sessions and/or survey

Organizations that participated in regional ClimatePlan Listening Sessions

San Diego

- [Unite Here Local 30](#)
- [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers \(IBEW\) 569](#)
- [Sierra Club San Diego Chapter](#)
- [Cleveland National Forest Foundation](#)
- San Diego Imperial Counties Labor Council (SDICLC)
- [San Diego County Bike Coalition](#)
- [San Diego County Building Trades Council Family Housing Corporation](#)
- [MARRS](#)
- [Bike San Diego](#)

Sacramento

- [Sacramento ACT Environmental Justice Committee](#)
- [Sacramento ACT Climate Justice Committee](#)
- [Sacramento Housing Alliance](#)
- [Environmental Council of Sacramento](#)
- [Sacramento Climate Coalition](#)
- [Sustainability Transportation Equity Program - CARB](#)
- [Veritable Good Consulting](#)
- [NextGen Policy](#)

Oakland

- [Public Advocates](#)
- [Urban Habitat](#)
- [Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California](#)
- [ChangeLab Solutions](#)
- [East Bay Housing Organization](#)
- [Bay Area Regional Collaborative](#)
- [Greenbelt Alliance](#)
- [Prevention Institute](#)
- [The Greenlining Institute](#)
- [Prevention Institute](#)
- [PolicyLink](#)
- [Council of Community Housing Organizations](#)
- [Bay Area Open Space Council](#)
- [Public Health Institute](#)

Fresno

- [California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc \(CRLA\)](#)
- [Sequoia Riverland Trust](#)
- [Central Valley Partnership](#)
- [American Farmland Trust](#)
- [Central Valley Air Quality Coalition](#)

Los Angeles

- [Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing \(SCANPH\)](#)

- [The Nature Conservancy](#)
- [Enterprise Community Partners](#)
- [Smart Growth California](#)
- [Climate Resolve](#)
- [Active San Gabriel Valley \(SGV\)](#)
- [Move LA](#)
- [Coalition for Clean Air](#)

Modesto

- [Tuolumne River Trust](#)
- [Catholic Charities Diocese of Stockton Environmental Justice Program](#)
- Community Care City Mission Network
- [Valley Improvement Project](#)
- [Health Services Agency](#)

Sacramento (statewide partners)

- [TransForm](#)
- [Western Center for Law and Poverty](#)
- [Coalition for Clean Air](#)
- [California ReLeaf](#)
- [American Lung Association in California](#)
- [Public Advocates](#)
- [California League of Conservation Voters](#)
- [Natural Resources Defense Council](#)
- [California Environmental Justice Alliance](#)

Organizations that filled out the survey

- Central Valley Partnership
- Bay Area Open Space Council
- ChangeLab Solutions
- Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
- North Bay Organizing Project
- Prevention Institute
- Public Advocates
- PolicyLink
- Sequoia Riverlands Trust
- American Farmland Trust
- American Lung Association in California
- TransForm
- Environmental council of Sacramento/Planning and Conservation League
- Coalition for Clean Air
- Public Advocates
- California ReLeaf
- Jobs to Move America
- California Walks
- Move LA
- Prevention Institute
- Investing in Place
- Valley Improvement Projects (VIP)

- 350 Bay Area Action
- California League of Conservation Voters
- Climate Health Now
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Stanislaus County Health Services Agency
- Southern California Association of NonProfit Housing (SCANPH)
- Climate Resolve
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Smart Growth California
- ActiveSGV
- Coalition for Clean Air
- Environmental Center of San Diego