



**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Justice and  
External Civil Rights (OEJECR)  
Environmental and Climate Justice  
Sample Community Change Grants Program  
Sample Written Application for Track 1**

*NOTE: includes fictional names and places amongst real locations and needs*

*This sample written application was prepared by Anese & Associates LLC, which is  
a minority, woman-owned, full-service grant writing and resource firm.*

Instructions: This sample written application is intended to assist EPA Community Change Grant– Track 1 applicants with preparing their written application. Applicants are encouraged but not required to follow this outline; applications should address all of the sections (corresponding with the evaluation criteria) outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) (Funding Opportunity Number EPA-R-OEJECR-OCS-23-04).

The Project Narrative for Track I applications must not exceed twenty (20) single-spaced pages and be on letter size pages (8 ½ X 11 inches). Excess pages will not be reviewed. The attachments for Track I described in Section IV.A.4 are not part of the Project Narrative (which does not include the 10-page technical appendix, 10-page budget narrative, optional budget spreadsheet, or GHG calculations spreadsheet.) Please consult Section IV.B. of the NOFO for more information about the project narrative instructions, format, and content and required supplemental materials (i.e., Memorandum of Agreement, if applicable; budget narrative; and technical appendix.) and the evaluation criteria in Section V.B.

Applicants should ensure that their workplans are written clearly using understandable terms. Doing so will help ensure that the evaluation team members understand the project's purpose, expected outputs, and outcomes. Each organization that chooses to use this example should take care to make changes that reflect the individual organization and the specific requirements of the NOFO. Please be aware that each NOFO will differ slightly in its instructions and requirements. Failure to follow NOFO instructions exactly may result in ineligibility.

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Section A. Executive Summary (not to exceed 3 pages)

- **Application Title:** Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone (VCCRZ)
- **Lead Applicant:** Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaborative (VCEJC)
- **Statutory Partner to the Lead Applicant:** Ventura County Air Pollution Control Board
- **Contact information:**

Suzie Sunshine  
[suzie.sunshine@vccrz.org](mailto:suzie.sunshine@vccrz.org)  
(123) 456-7890

- **Eligibility:** Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaborative is a tax-exempt 501c3 organization.
- **Disadvantaged Community to benefit from the projects:** VCCRZ has targeted the following communities in Ventura County: X
- **Grant Award Period and Completion:** May 2024 to April 2027 (3-year max)
- **EPA Funding Requested:** \$20,000,000 ceiling for Track I - expectation is a split between staffing and implementation.
- **Other Sources of Funding:** No match required
- **Resubmission Status:** This is the first submission of this request
- **Executive Summary:**

The Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone (VCCRZ), with lead applicant Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaborative (VCEJC) and Statutory Partner Ventura County Air Pollution Board, propose a project focused on reducing climate risks and pollution reduction in disadvantaged and underserved communities in Ventura County. Both organizations are eligible to apply for EPA funding under this NOFO. Our primary contact is Susie Sunshine - [susie.sunshine@vccrz.org](mailto:susie.sunshine@vccrz.org), or by telephone at (123) 456-7890. The Ventura County EJ Collaborative was founded five years ago and has a broad base of membership and stakeholders in the county.

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VCEJC has strong relationships with Ventura County and local jurisdictions as well as non-governmental organizations to propel a public/private partnership to success through community engagement. The VCEJC reflects a broad coalition of mission-based nonprofits, businesses organizations and government partners. Through its coalition partners, the VCCRZ effort will launch a process to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders to gather their perspectives on priorities, design, and implementation.

The disadvantaged community to be served comprise unincorporated areas in Saticoy, El Rio, Piru, and Del Norte and populations in the cities of Oxnard and Santa Paula, . The communities are characterized by limited income and economic opportunity with a variety of health, social, and educational challenges. Our collaboration will transform disadvantaged, overburdened communities into a model for climate resilience and justice.

Grant Award Period will be: May 2024 - April 2027 - 3 Years.

EPA Funding is requested for the Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone in the amount of \$15,000,000 over three years.

Other VCEJC Sources of Federal Funding: HUD Section 4 Planning Grant - \$300,000; USDA NIST Food Hubs - \$400,000; DOT Transportation Equity Grant - \$1,500,000; FEMA BRIC Award - \$3,500,000

### **Section B. Project Workplan**

#### **Part 1. Community Driven Investments for Change - 80 points total**

##### **1.1 Community Overview - 10 points**

##### **1) Community Description:**

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The Project Area for the proposed project includes the following communities:

The communities in Ventura County targeted for the project suffer from low levels of household income, educational achievement, and family wealth than the county as a whole. The communities are populated by working class families, many of them immigrants or second-generation families who also confront language and cultural barriers to success. The cities, villages and rural areas of Ventura County have low-density populations, limited access to good jobs or employment, and topography that is widely variegated from coastal shorelines, mountains, valleys and highly populated centers like Oxnard or Thousand Oaks.

### **2) Community Resources:**

Our Environmental Justice Network is the cornerstone of the project and beacon of dedication and strength in the community. The Ventura County EJ Network and the Climate Resilience Zone represent a partnership of dozens of local institutions in the target area including: civic organizations, urban farmers, businesses, human services organizations, and advocacy groups who have broad-based membership and participation from community residents and stakeholders.

The City of Oxnard and Ventura County have comprehensive Climate Action Planning underway in cooperation with the State of California and Federal Emergency Management Agencies. The public/private partnership with our elected and appointed officials is a crucial community resource we seek to activate. The Ventura County Air Pollution Board is our Statutory Partner in this project.

- Community Assets - Special Amenities - Channel islands,
- Transportation Hubs - Oxnard Airport, Rail, Bus and Micro-transit in target area
- Employment Hubs - JM Smucker, Baxter Healthcare, Proctor and Gamble
- Health Care and Clinics - Ventura County Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente, Oxnard Medical Center
- Schools K-24 - Hueneme High School, Ventura College, Oxnard College, Colleges of Law,

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- Parks, Beaches and Recreation - Point Hueneme Beach, Santa Clara River
- Open Spaces/Green Spaces - Olivas Park, Ojai Valley Trail, Arroyo Verde Park
- Human Care Organizations - HSA Children and Family Services, Community Action Ventura (CAA), Vocational Skills Services, Catholic Charities
- Commercial Districts - Pacific View Mall

- **Community Characteristics:**

Compared to median incomes, educational achievement, and health outcomes, the targeted communities are all experiencing more challenges. Here are a few indicators:

Household Income

Educational Achievement - High School Graduation Rate, BA/BS, Advanced Degrees Percentages

Speakers of Languages Other Than English

Reduced or Free School Lunch Percentages

Poverty Level Populations - Children, Youth, Seniors and Families

Chronic Illness - Diabetes, Heart Disease

Respiratory Disease - Asthma

Life Expectancy

Homelessness Info

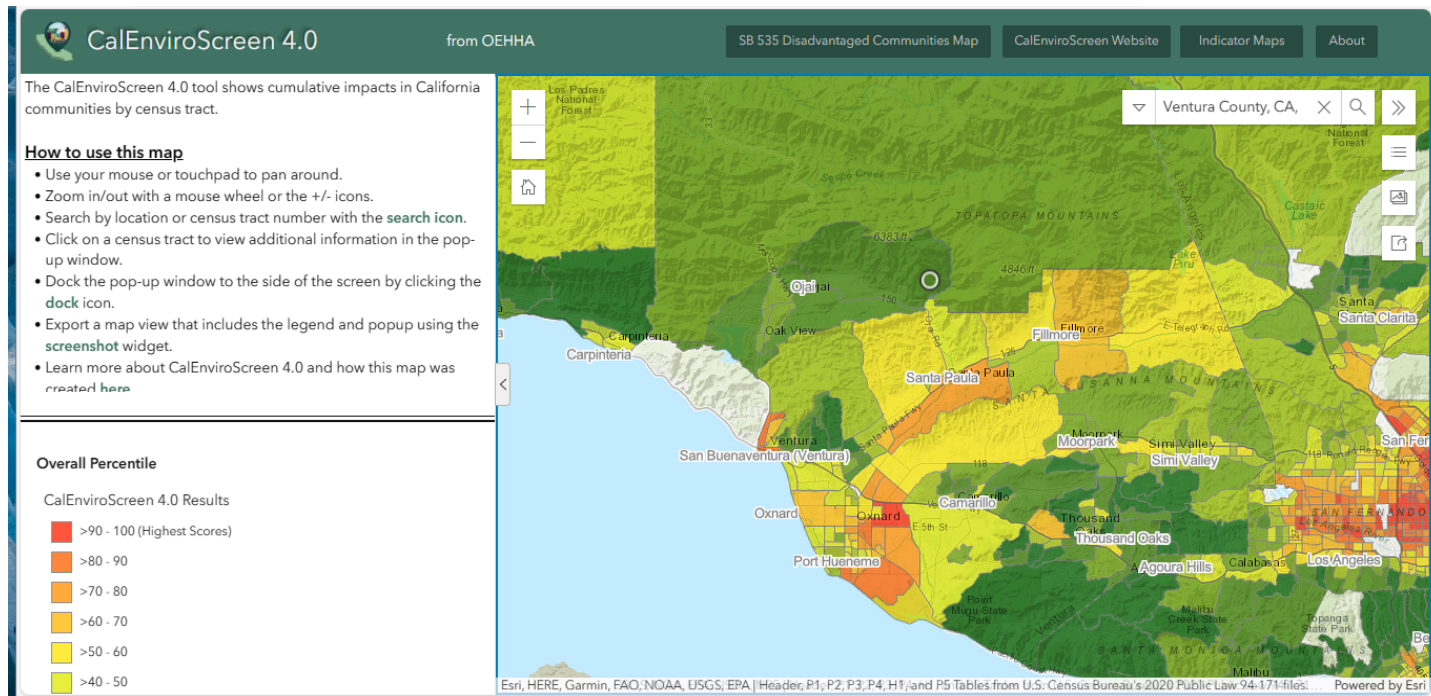
Addictions Levels/Overdose Deaths

The community is characterized by Cal EnviroScreen 4.0 as economically disadvantage and environmentally disadvantage, including contaminated sites, air pollution, high heat risk, wildfire impacts, and flooding risk,

Image 1 and 2 depict the results from CalEnviroScreen:

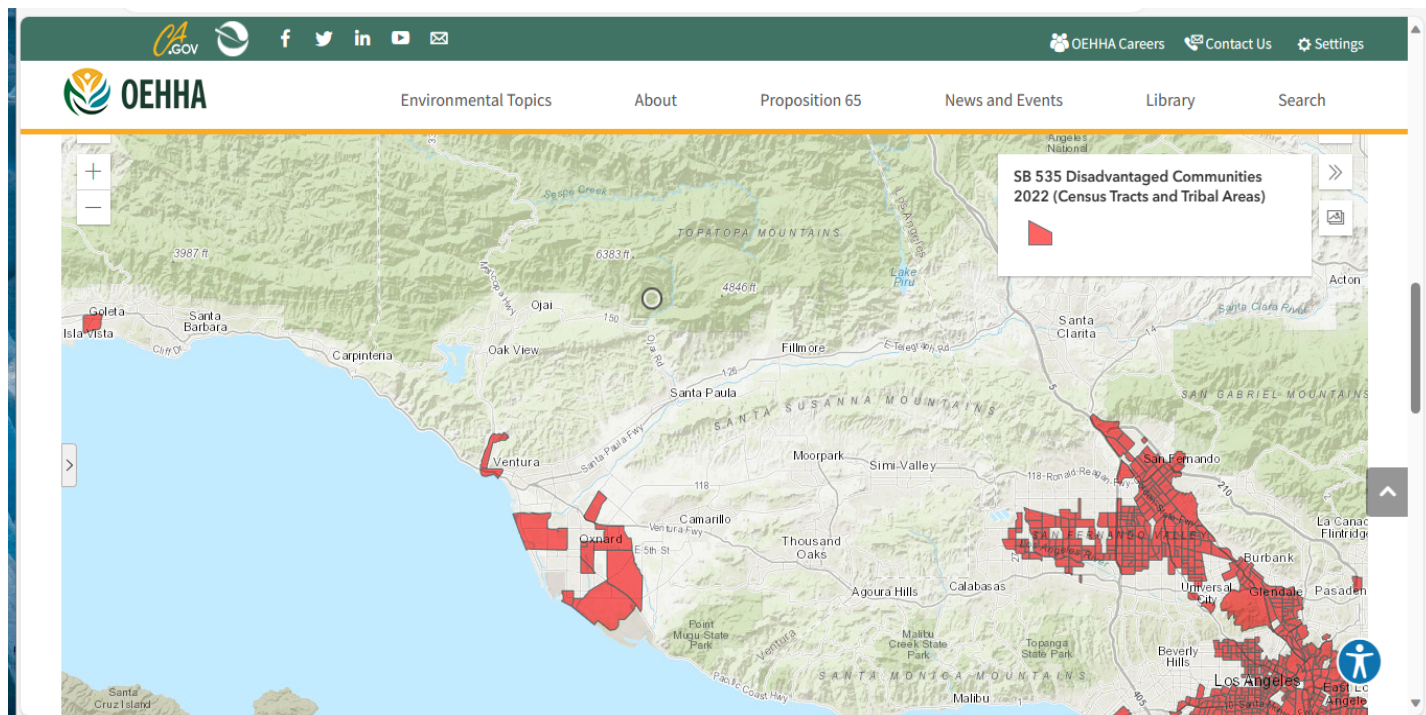
*Image 1: Overall Screening Results*

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*Image 2: Disadvantaged Communities*

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### Project Benefits to Disadvantaged Residents:

A combination of staff and direct investments in implementation of climate resilience measures like green spaces, green roofs, green infrastructure, traffic calming, recreation, and economic opportunities for residents. All of these benefits brought to the VCCRZ in the three-year project will accrue to the current community residents, many of whom are disadvantaged. Our anti-displacement work in this project and beyond will assure that the benefits are long-term and stabilizing. To ensure that the project benefits flow to disadvantaged residents in our community, we are integrating a broad employment and employment training program into all of our work. We plan to create employment opportunities through Community Resilience Team Stipends paid to 10-12 disadvantaged community residents who will serve as Ambassadors and Community

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Leadership for the VCCRZ. The project will collaborate with the local Workforce Development Board in Ventura to connect community residents to job training opportunities, adult basic education, and supportive services to sustain training and work.

We imagine a feeder system of residents who participate in our programs with the EJ Collaborative serving on the Climate Resilience Team as a jumping off point into new careers. A larger base of participants who become active in the community engagement process we are planning, will receive stipends for their attendance and leadership. We are seeking to create roles for community residents by forming a Community Resilience Coordinating Council of 8-10 members who help make decisions about the project and hold us all accountable to the vision and mission. This is a leadership development project at root that is building off the energy that the EJ Collaborative has built in Ventura County that will make informed decisions and deploy \$12,000,000 in implementation and measures to improve climate resilience.

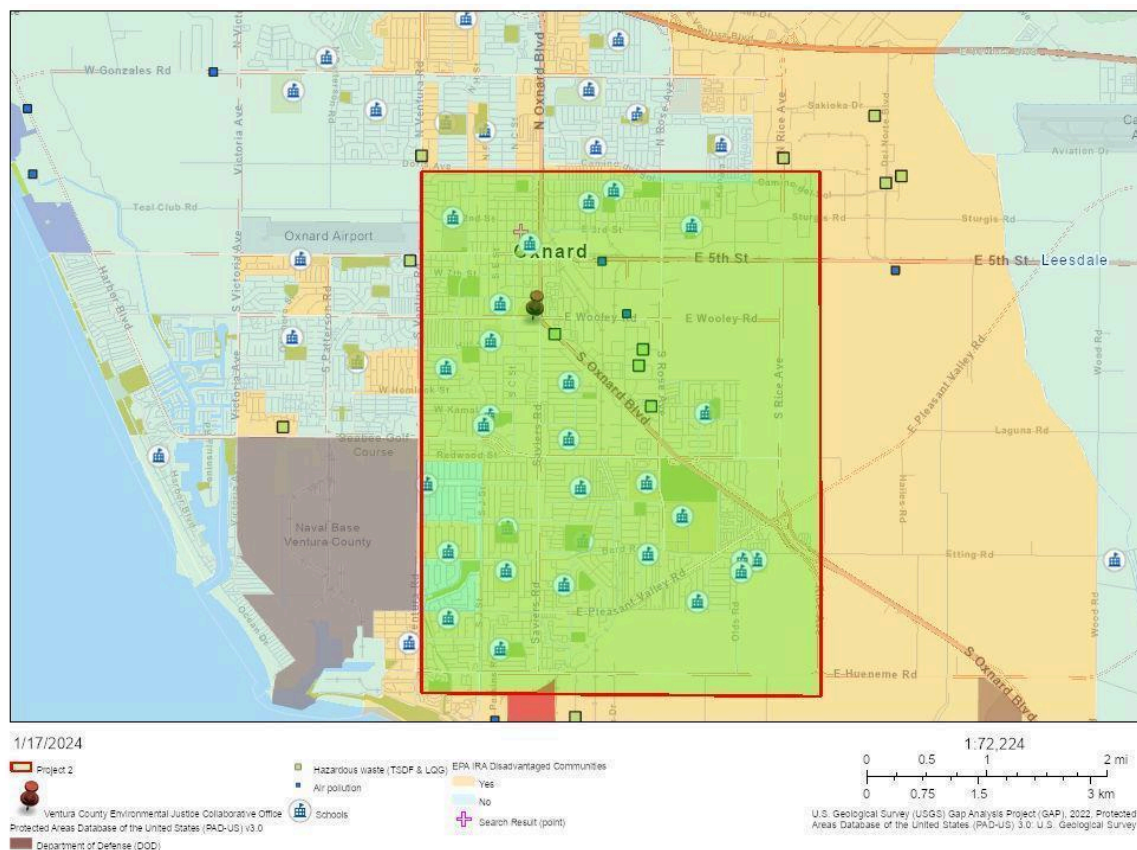
**Community Challenges: Describe the challenges and needs the residents of the disadvantaged communities in the Project Area, as defined in Appendix A, are facing, including climate impacts, climate change risks/exposures, and/or localized pollution, and the impact these challenges have on priority populations within the Project Area who are acutely exposed to and impacted by climate, pollution, and weather-related threats and/or who exhibit acute vulnerabilities or susceptibilities to the impacts of environmental pollution. (3 points)**

The Climate Resilience Zone and contiguous community areas have a wide range of environmental challenges and generations of exposure to risks, toxins, pollutants, and a dearth of community assets. Our team has utilized the EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities Mapping System to identify community areas in Ventura County that are eligible as disadvantaged. The map below highlights those areas including the VCCRZ.

*Image 3: EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map - Ventura County*



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Weather-related threats to our communities are numerous and include heat emergencies, flooding disasters, high wind events, wildfires and more as we learn the deep impacts that the climate disaster has wrought. In the past 3 years, we have had almost one dozen extreme weather events and have had to develop emergency preparedness for climate resilience. All of the measures planned in the VCCRZ are

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designed to address and mitigate the impacts of the identified climate risks (e.g. green roofs, rain gardens, tree plantings, traffic calming).

Source-point pollution or localized pollution impacts from factories, oil/gas refineries, logistics hubs, dump sites and toxic sites. Major freeways and streets can also be sources of air pollution and high levels of particulate matter.

Our target community has cross-cutting challenges from poverty and housing instability that create negative impacts on family and personal health. We call these factors the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) - where people are born, live, learn, work, play and age affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality of life outcomes or risks. Our community residents in the target community have negative impacts on their health due to structural racism, income disadvantage, limited language skills, low literacy levels, high rates of community violence, and limited access to healthy foods or recreation. Pollution of air and water, particularly particulates and lead pollution. The SDOH contributes to health disparities and inequities.

**Community Vision: Applications will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they articulate an overall and clear vision for the impacts and benefits the grant would have on the residents of the disadvantaged communities in the Project Area as defined in Appendix A in the near and long term (3 points)**

Our vision is to create a 1.5 square mile Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone (VCCRZ) in the heart of Ventura County. The plan is part of a larger justice strategy to promote EJ and build a sustainable and supportive community. Taking a community-driven whole-systems approach, the VCCRZ is rooted in a set of interconnected initiatives focused on building resilience against climate change and mitigating the risks and hazards of future natural disasters such as extreme heat, drought, and flooding. In developing the vision, great care has been taken to apply values and principles essential to the health and well-being of all the 37,621 residents of this 1.48 square mile area. The Climate Resilience Zone vision is also aligned with the

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city's climate change and disaster preparedness plan.

The Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone is focused on transforming the target communities from a neighborhood of displacement and economic decline to a thriving, prosperous, vibrant, and environmentally healthy cultural center. The project vision recognizes the importance of integrating the essential environmental, economic, employment, health, housing, food, and cultural systems that lead to and sustain thriving communities.

## **1.2 Selected Strategies - 45 points [Section I.G](#)**

- **Strategy Overview**

Based on the Community Vision and the environmental justice work by our partnership, we have determined that the following strategies will be implemented over the 3-year project period of performance. Ultimately, we seek to remain flexible on implementation measures and strategies until community engagement and input is garnered and understood. We plan to pivot any implementation to priorities identified by community residents, stakeholders, public partners and our Community Coordinating Council. The process of engagement and decision-making will also help us to develop implementation measures that are integrated, complementary and decisive. The amount or proportion of funding directed to each measure will be determined through our process and coordinated closely with the public commissions and public works projects already projected and scheduled in the target community. We made informed decisions about the scale and scope of our work and the balance between staffing and implementation measures based on input from stakeholders, in consultation with EPA Technical Assistance Providers and with county leadership. All of these groups endorsed the measures selected as well as the community engagement and leadership process needed to make decisions on measures, scope and price.

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- • Community Voices, Engagement and Ownership: Mobilizing 25 community forums, virtual public interactions, 1-1 meetings with Stakeholders, and engage 1,500 residents to gather resident, business and other stakeholder input on VCCRZ priorities, design and implementation
- • Reduce Auto Traffic and Gain Public Spaces: Converting streets to pedestrian safe and friendly spaces for walking and gathering through auto slowing measures. Create amenities in public spaces: pergola, seating, plantings, rain gardens, bioswales, recreation, play and fun.
- • Urban Greening: Planting over 1,500 trees that will sequester carbon and mitigate the formation of heat islands, also creating jobs for community residents and participants.
- Other Nature-Based Solutions to mitigate climate impacts, better manage water, improve the air quality and make the quality of life better for everyone. Examples are Green Roofs, Bioswales, Rain Gardens, Healing Plantings of sunflowers and other measures.
- • Solar Installation, Energy Efficiency Installations, and Green Roofs: Installing grid alternatives like solar arrays and green roofs for over 100 single family, multi-family homes and newly launched small businesses. Energy Efficient Home Conversion - 100 households converted from gas to electric heating and water systems, including appliances.
- • Ecological Knowledge-based Farms & Green Spaces: 2-3 locations near transportation hubs, producing traditional food and plants for families annually and providing land stewardship jobs.
- • Food Distribution and Reclamation Hub: Providing nutritious food boxes to underserved individuals and families annually with food rescue capacity for waste reduction.

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- • Small Business Revitalization and Cultural Preservation Corridor: 15 commercial properties purchased for community small business ownership, 25 new environmentally-friendly businesses established.
- • Workforce Development: Pre-Employment Training, VCCRZ Part-time Employment Opportunities, Apprenticeship Placement for Good Jobs “earn and learn” model, job and career training referrals.

#### Climate Action Strategies

Greenhouse Gasses (GHG) are the six gasses identified in the Kyoto Protocol: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). GHGs are expressed in metric tons (MT) of CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalents). Individual GHGs are converted to CO<sub>2</sub>e by multiplying values by their global warming potential (GWP). Global warming potentials represent a ratio of a gas’ heat trapping characteristics compared to CO<sub>2</sub>, which has a global warming potential of 1. Quantification of GHG emissions and verification of that reduction are critical to climate resilience and disaster mitigation. Our work quantifying and verifying GHG reduction will be at the project-level. There are four general ways to create emission reductions for mitigation projects: (1) the operation or activity can be avoided so that emissions are not created in the first place; (2) the operation or activity can be changed so that it creates fewer emissions; (3) emission control technology can be added to the activity or operation that prevents the release of emissions that are created; and (4) emissions that have been released can be sequestered in the environment. Our work is focused on # 1, 2, and 4. Moreover, our mitigation projects will improve air quality by mitigating GHG emissions and will count or estimate direct emissions that are avoided such as walking or taking transit instead of driving by car.

Building Energy Use: The emissions associated with building energy use come from power generation that provides the energy used to operate the building. Power is

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typically generated by a remote, central electricity generating plant. These emissions can be reduced by lowering the amount of electricity and natural gas required for building operations. This can be achieved by designing a more energy efficient building structure and/or installing energy-efficient appliances. Replacing high-emitting energy generation with clean energy will also reduce emissions. Outdoor Water Use: Energy use associated with pumping, treating and conveying water generates indirect GHG emissions. The amount of energy required depends on both the volume of water and energy intensity associated with the water source. Indoor Water Use: Similar to outdoor water use, indirect GHG emissions from indoor water use can be reduced by decreasing water demand or using a less energy-intensive water source. Vegetation: vegetation incorporates carbon into its structure during its growth phase, and thereby can remove a finite amount of carbon from the atmosphere. The sequestration capacity of on-site vegetation is determined by the area available for vegetation, and the types of vegetation installed. A project can increase the area available for vegetation by converting previously developed land into vegetated open space. Sewerage and Run-Off Mitigation: measures to reduce rain and run-off particularly in extreme weather events such as green infrastructure, rain gardens, bioswales and permeable pavement.

The decisions on Climate Action Strategies to move associated projects and measures forward are driven in large part by the specific climate and pollution challenges that the residents and communities face. The reduction of GreenHouse Gas Emissions and the mitigation of climate impacts caused by heat, water, fire or wind are the central focus of the proposed project. Resilience in the face of the next climate emergency is the top priority expressed by community leadership and stakeholders that informed this application. There is far less concern with air pollution among residents and leadership partly because of the long-term reality of those impacts compared to the rushing of feet of water through the houses and streets of Ventura County. Our job in the project is to develop better understanding and consciousness of the interconnected nature of climate crisis and air/water pollution. The Community Vision that has been enunciated

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closely mirrors the proposed measures the VCCRZ seeks to implement.

### **Pollution Reduction Strategies (15 points)**

Selected measures that address pollution reduction are central to our community vision and the project. Working closely with our Statutory Partner at the Air Pollution Board, we have established an understanding of the baseline conditions in the target community: local sources of air and water pollution that range from factories, plants to streets, trucks and cars. Reducing particulate pollution and water runoff that creates flooding or combined sewer overflows is a combination of fewer cars/trucks on the roads; more pedestrian friendly and accessible communities that are walkable; greater recreational opportunities in mini-parks, skate zones, bike and walking trails; denser vegetation, rain gardens and green roofs that provide cooling and also absorb water to prevent flooding; and lower source-point pollution by holding manufacturers accountable and pressing for enforcement of laws and regulations.

A critical community resource will be developed in the course of this project that the Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration has been investing in for 5 years: trained, capable climate resilience community leaders. Leadership that learns by doing how to identify, address and report on climate or pollution threats. We also have leadership that is comfortable working with public officials, business owners, engineers and all manner of professionals to achieve local approvals, buy-in and to implement pollution reduction measures. Leadership development in disadvantaged communities requires a large investment of time, energy and spirit. Our project budget reflects this priority and represents a blend of community staff, community stipends, Coordinating Council and measures. We also invest heavily to create meetings and virtual public interactions that feature child care, refreshments, honoraria for attendance and meetings that start and end on-time.

### **1.3 Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan - 15 points**

- **Past Community Outreach and Engagement Conducted: How the applicant's past engagement with the Project Area community impacted the**

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**Strategy and associated project selection and implementation approach included in the application, including the outreach and engagement methods used for the Project Area and specific neighborhoods or groups within the Project Area (4 points)**

- **Community Engagement Plan Implementation: The specific community engagement methods used by the applicant, as well as how they will mitigate barriers and involve relevant governmental stakeholders necessary to support overall project implementation (6 points)**
- **Collaborative Governance Structure: The details regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Applicant, Collaborating Entities, and community residents and/or community-selected representatives for implementing, managing, and overseeing the application's project activities, including how regularly they will meet to discuss project implementation (5 points)**

VCEJC has been facilitating community outreach and engagement for over five years in the County in the area of Climate Action, Emergency preparedness and Economic Development. Our past experiences have informed our decision to launch this initiative and to promote community input through a variety of media: in-person meetings, surveys, virtual public interactions, the design and development of a Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone Community Dashboard, social media, flyers, and PSAs. We have learned that meetings require a number of ingredients to make a success: centralized, transit-accessible meeting space, strong audio systems, translation of materials and presentations for speakers of languages other than English; child care; small stipends to honor participation and facilitate transportation to the meeting; a written, posted agenda also translated into languages required; authoritative meeting facilitation; mutual introductions of all who are present is essential; listening is highly valued.

Over the past 24 months, VCEJC has intensified stakeholder conversations with organizations and the government sector to explore the development of the Climate Resilience Zone. The response to our outreach and dialogues has been overwhelming



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and positive. We decided to intentionally partner with Latino community-based organizations to enhance the cultural diversity of our team and match the community demographics where Spanish-language services and materials are a way of life.

To mitigate all possible barriers to community participation, our Lead Applicant and collaborators will: 1) assess our capabilities and possible address deficiencies: technical language too dense, translate materials and simplify information for lay consumption, dedicate time and agenda in all meetings to build relationships and trust; 2) materials, information, and decisions are transparent and available in a variety of media: print, on-line dashboard, social media, emails; 3) leverage other public meetings and agendas to present Climate Resilience Zone materials; 4) be open to criticism and deficiencies by holding open evaluations of each and every activity with the community; and 5) seeking those who are often not part of the conversation (e.g. youth, elders, non-English speakers, disabled) by looking for referrals and recommendations at all times.

Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone will embrace informal and formal collaboration in governance and decision-making. Collaboration is defined as the act of working with one or more people to achieve Collaboration Design - Convening community and making commitments, Build relationships, Collectively define the problem, Establish objectives and ground rules, Define process and facilitation,, Communications, Evaluation of Design.

- 1) Shared Learning/Consensus: Identify key values and interests, Identify criteria for success, Development of alternatives and strategies, Group analysis, Create the best answer together, Evaluate Shared Learning with debrief and evaluation of all work and actions.
- 2) Implementation: Draft written agreements, Draft implementation plans, Assign key roles and responsibilities, Outreach and community education, Evaluate Implementation and back to Shared Learning/Consensus - Identify key values and interests, Identify criteria for success, Development of alternatives and strategies, Group analysis, Create the best answer together, Evaluate Shared

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### Learning

- 3) Implementation: Draft written agreements, Draft implementation plans, Assign key roles and responsibilities, Outreach and community education, Evaluate Implementation and back to

Implementation of Collaborative Governance and Decision-Making in VCCRZ - The Lead Applicant, VCEJC is the primary facilitator of all community engagement. VCEJC staff and partners have experience in community engagement and collaborative governance. Training for facilitators will be provided prior to launching public outreach and engagement based on these universals: Willingness, Openness, Civility, Humility, Spirit of Partnering. The conversation and dialogue is the centerpiece to:

- Build Shared meaning
- Listen deeply
- Pay attention
- Identify common ground
- Explore impasses

In order to succeed, Cooperative Governance requires a large investment of time and energy: planning agendas, preparing leadership for roles, internal meetings, public meeting rehearsals and then Community Engagement with Break-Out Small Groups to deepen participation. We have a layer of professional staff, another team of community leaders employed as Trainers and another team of community leaders as Ambassadors. Each will play key roles in community engagement meetings and the evaluation/debrief process. something. Collaboration is the bedrock of democratic decision-making and permits: Conflict Resolution is Solved Peacefully in Discussion; Cooperation Across Differences Occurs; Inclusive Agendas are Prepared; Community Participation is Welcomed.

### Process of Collaboration Characteristics and Actions:

- Relationships: Respect for all, Allow and Dedicate time to learn about each other, Build Trust, Uncover Shared interests.

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- Cooperation: All key parties engaged, Everyone understands problem, Work together with focus on solving the problem
- Shared Learning: Everyone understands each other, Everyone understands the problem, All information is transparent, Participatory development and analysis of options
- Transformational Thinking: Not just compromise, Creative thinking, Unanticipated solutions, Integration of interests
- Sustainability: Full range of stakeholder interests, Ownership by stakeholders, Design for the real world, Flexibility in implementation, Clear roles and responsibilities for participants.

#### **Collaborative Governance:**

Collaborating entities and partners will have defined roles and responsibilities for outreach and community engagement as we plan to hold Monthly Stakeholder Summits ten (10) times per year, will host 24 community engagement and action planning meetings annually and coordinate an Annual Celebration of the Climate Resilience Zone. Planning, organizing, marketing and facilitating the meetings is an opportunity we look to share with partners, Trainers, Ambassadors and Professional Staff to maximize roles for the community to lead. We will build capacity for community residents who are Trainers and Ambassadors to grow their experience by leading and facilitating public meetings and break-out groups of larger gatherings. Our Collaborators and their leaders will also have key roles for facilitating public and virtual public engagement.

The Coordinating Team is our decision-making and project accountability mechanism. The Team is made up of 8-10 community leaders: public sector representatives, collaborators, partners, staff and community members. Residency requirement - 51% of VCCRZ Coordinating Team Members shall reside or work in the Zone.

#### **1.4 Community Strength Plan - 10 points**

- **Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects:** How the projects included in the application are intended to provide economic benefits for individuals in

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**the Project Area, including priorities populations as defined in footnote 3 (5 points)**

- **Displacement Avoidance: The measures for mitigating potential near-term and long-term risks associated with the proposed projects to residents, small businesses, nonprofits, and other community members, the vulnerability the community faces to rising costs attributable to their proposed project, and the potential project impacts to households, small businesses, and other existing groups (5 points)**

On a practical level, our Community Strengths Plan is the first step in Community Engagement for the Climate Resilience Zone. VCEJC and our partners will begin with a simple scan of institutions and stakeholders to initiate convenings of public gatherings, 1-1 meetings with key stakeholders, surveys and identification of Strengths, Where they are located and What they can be used for. This series of four community meetings held in distinct locations, including on the streets at least once will surface additional strengths, names and recommendations. Our Community Engagement Facilitator and project staff will assemble an organic document or map of the strengths to include key data and categories which will be published on an online Climate Resilience Zone Dashboard maintained by VCEJC. Two Virtual Public Interactions will be scheduled to offer residents and stakeholders an opportunity for non-contact input. Our goal is to engage over 1,500 community residents in this process including meetings, surveys and on-line activity.

Strengths-based or asset-based community engagement recognises that communities have many strengths that can help achieve a wide range of objectives. There are numerous resources about strengths-based community development but not all community engagement focuses on community development: (Stewart, Sustaining Communities Blog). The strengths perspective focuses on strengths and aspirations rather than problems and deficits. This isn't to say we ignore problems and needs, but the way we respond to them is by building on what is already working. If we see communities as being full of strengths and resources, it makes sense to involve them in our work and we are more likely to want to engage community members. The processes we use encourage a focus on individual, family and community strengths.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

As community engagement professionals we have a responsibility to act in ways that build social capital. VCEJC uses community engagement processes that help build or strengthen relationships. While community engagement is often about vertical community engagement, we can do it in ways that promote horizontal community engagement as well. Having introductions, working in small groups, having tea and coffee are very basic ways we can promote relationship building.

Rather than coming in as an expert with the answers, we can come in with a spirit of curiosity where we hope to learn as well. We are seeking solutions and innovations and the best means of getting new ideas surfaced is by asking great, open-ended questions and allowing community visioning.

Communities are not homogeneous – there are differences and competing interests. We need to be willing to explore areas of contention and disagreement. Once again we can create processes (e.g., design charrettes) that promote a cooperative approach to differences rather than processes that encourage argument from entrenched positions.

While the term community suggests cohesion and equality, this is not necessarily the case. In planning community engagement we need to think about power imbalances and to think about how we can ensure that some people do not dominate.

Community engagement is an art, not a science. There is no way to prove what will be the best approach in a given situation. Essentially community engagement is a complex problem and VCEJC doesn't just follow a recipe to ensure a positive result. Community engagement takes creativity, intuition, and experience.

Community voices have been silenced for many of us, so we think about who is not at the table – whose voices are not included. In particular we need to think about how to involve marginalized groups. We make an extra effort to ensure they can have input. VCEJC and our statutory partner have years of experience with community outreach, marketing and engagement. We engage with patience and respect with each of our neighbors and slowly build trust and relationships over time and experiences. VCEJC is currently working on community engagement campaigns and processes with two other projects in Ventura County. Both of these engagement campaigns target communities contiguous or located inside of the proposed Climate Resilience Zone. Our process is

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based on welcoming, hospitality and active listening. We also believe that having a light snack and a beverage at all convenings is a means to better convenings and fellowship. The current community engagement work is built on a foundation of 5 years of service and communication with our neighbors new and old, from 0-100 years of age all are welcome and find a place at our table.

In order to build from strengths and assets, we will create a mapping process for the geographical area. Our work draws heavily on the efforts of John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann and we want to acknowledge their pioneering work that changed community mapping from an external research project that identified many deficits or social problems: crime, homelessness, lack of recreation, broken families, unemployment and despair to a new reality of strengths and assets. We appreciate community strengths from the individual, family and institutional level and seek to survey each level to map our Climate Resilience Zone Strengths. The levels and areas of focus are as follows:

1. The assets of individuals - These are their skills, knowledge, networks, time, interests and passions. They can be described as skills of the heart, head and hands.
2. The assets of associations - This is not just formal community organizations or voluntary groups. It includes all the informal networks and ways that people come together: sports teams, community gardens, workplaces, and so on.
3. The assets of institutions - This is not just the services that organizations deliver locally, but also the other assets they control or that are publicly owned. For example, parks, community centers, Child care centers, congregations and civic groups.
4. The physical assets of an area - What open spaces, landscapes, street layouts, transportation infrastructure, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, historical sites and buildings are in the area? Mapping these assets helps people to appreciate their value and to realize their other potential uses.
5. The cultural assets of an area - Everyday life is full of creativity, culture, heritage and history. This involves mapping the talents for music, drama, art, cultural performance, ethnic groups, and the opportunities for everyone to express themselves in ways that reflect their values and identities, improve understanding and promote their voices.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

6. The economic assets of an area - Economic activity is at the heart of community resilience. What skills and talents are or are not being used in the local economy? How do local organizations or groups contribute to the local economy by attracting investment and generating jobs and income?

In order to make the process more streamlined, our staff will design a set of helpful templates or tools for the Community Strengths Mapping. :

A Personal and Organizational Contact Form:

Organization, Contact, Suggested Community Strengths, and Community Referrals

Debrief Form - A standardized debrief form and experience at all gatherings:

What Worked, What Did Not, What Else Needs to be Addressed, Who Else Needs Input? Rate the meeting or VPI on a scale of 1-10, why that number...a discipline of reflection and learning. If it is worth doing, it is worth evaluating.

Climate Resilience Zone Mapping Deck, and Community Survey Tool - a basic slide deck or powerpoint presentation with some images, questions and next steps indicated will be designed, field-tested and refined for showing at gatherings, posting to the dashboard and for transmission to anyone interested. The deck will follow this pattern: Date of Meeting, Agenda, Introductions of All Participants, Climate Resilience Zone Vision and Guiding Principles, Questions to Garner Input, Next Steps and Evaluation or Debrief.

Our meeting and gatherings facilitators will all receive specific training on running effective meetings from setting agenda, garnering agenda approval, soliciting input from all present, avoiding the over-sharing by the few and hearing from the many, effective meeting debrief and follow-up after meetings. A few simple rules will be observed: we start and end on-time, meetings have agendas planned by at least 3 persons, everyone signs in and is introduced at every meeting, there is always informal time before and after every meeting, meeting facilitators will summarize input, only the meeting facilitator can interrupt and may call on attendees, all disruptions are handled outside the meeting room, and meeting facilitators will rotate so the gavel is held by many.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Some community members are more vulnerable than others. Groups that may need assistance include people with physical or cognitive challenges, single parents with young children, elderly persons, those who live without a network of social support or who are economically disadvantaged. We are seeking traditional strengths information and also more vernacular, popular strengths that may be critical resources in the community, but which will not appear in a standard directory or neighborhood analysis.

To provide the highest level of transparency and public accessibility, data collected will be published weekly to the on-line VCCRZ dashboard. The Community Strengths Map will also be informed by research conducted by the Climate Resilience Zone professional staff and consultants. We plan to utilize American Fact Finder (US Census), City Data, Healthy City and HealthData.Gov as sources for information. The strengths research information will be collected, analyzed and prepared for uploading as a report to the dashboard and available for distribution electronically or in hard copy. The research is organic and evolutionary in practice changing as circumstances and events occur or as additional information is uncovered.

#### **Part 2. Program Management, Capability, and Capacity - 35 points total**

##### ***2.1 Performance Management Plan, Outputs/Outcomes - 6 points*** [Section I.I and Appendix F](#)

- **Whether the application describes an effective plan, with associated timeframes, for tracking and measuring progress in achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs including those identified in Appendix F, as appropriate, and any additional ones identified in the application (2 points)**
- **The quality and specificity of the proposed outputs and outcomes and how they will lead to improvements to the environments to the environmental conditions and public health of the disadvantaged communities in the short and long term (2 points)**
- **Whether, and how, the applicant has incorporated program evaluation activities (e.g. utilizing proper evaluation tools and personnel/organizations with experience in evaluating program and project progress/success) from project initiative through project completion to meaningfully document and**



EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

**measure their progress towards achieving projects goals and how they will use the results of the evaluations to meet the project goals within the required timeframes (2 points)**

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, VCEJC will describe the environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under this award. Below are quantitative and qualitative project targets that will contribute to the goals and objectives of the Community Change Grants program.

*Table 1: Track I Outputs and Outcomes*

Climate Action Strategies	Outputs	Outcomes
Strategy I: Green Infrastructure and Nature-based Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coastal green infrastructure projects, including blue-green rails (#)</li> <li>- Green/complete streets, sidewalks, bus stops (#)</li> <li>- Green/cool roofs (#)</li> <li>- Area of impermeable surfaces replaced with vegetation (acres)</li> <li>- New parks and/or public green space developed (acres)</li> <li>- New shade tree canopy (square</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased green space as measured by square footage of added greenspace</li> <li>- Increased resilience to extreme weather and climate conditions as measured by reduction in flash flooding events, improved groundwater recharge, and cooler ambient temperatures during heat waves</li> <li>- Increased</li> </ul>

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	<p>footage, # of shade trees planted)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Area under implementation of low tillage/composting practices (acres)</li> <li>- New community gardens and greenhouses (#)</li> </ul>	<p>community resilience as measured by reduced damage and recovery costs for infrastructure. Property, cultural resources</p>
<p>Strategy 2: Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New EVs, bikes/electric bikes, and other low-and-zero emissions vehicles that are available via car sharing/bike sharing programs (#)</li> <li>- Streets improved to encourage walkability, bikeability, and transit use (# miles)</li> <li>- EVs that can be used as a backup power in lieu of diesel generators (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced air pollution from transportation (e.g., GHG reductions, reduced number of days with unsafe air quality for vulnerable populations)</li> <li>- Increased use of public transportation services and programs that promote electric vehicles, car sharing, and bike sharing</li> </ul>

# EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Strategy 3: Energy-efficient, Health, Resilient Housing and Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Home energy audits performed (#)</li> <li>- Air sealings completed (#)</li> <li>- Homes insulated (#)</li> <li>- Natural gas appliances replaced with electric equivalents (#)</li> <li>- Mobile homes retrofitted with solar panels and storage (#)</li> <li>- Electrification, weatherization, and HVAC upgrades/replacements of low-income houses, apartments, small businesses, and other community buildings (#)</li> <li>- Energy efficient home-heating appliances installed (#)</li> <li>- Homes or units converted to electric heating (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower consumption of home heating fuels (propane, heating oil, natural gas, and wood) and reduction in associated climate pollutants (e.g. black, carbon, methane, CO2), as well as ambient and indoor emissions of Hazardous Air Pollutants and PM2.5</li> <li>- Decreased incidence of asthma</li> </ul>
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EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Strategy 4: Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewable energy capacity installed (MW)</li> <li>- Battery storage installations (MWh)</li> <li>- GHG emissions reductions (ton CO2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced resilience during extreme weather events as measured by fewer power disruptions</li> <li>- Increased number of homes connected to a resilient power source</li> </ul>
Strategy 5: Community Resilience Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Space built or converted into a community resilient hub (square ft)</li> <li>- Disaster preparedness trainings delivered (#)</li> <li>- Stormwater management flood preparedness training delivered (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced physical safety during natural disasters as measured by the number of hospitalizations and lives lost among vulnerable populations</li> <li>- Increased community awareness of emergency preparedness</li> </ul>
Strategy 6: Brownfield Redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impervious surface reduced (square footage)</li> <li>- Community meetings to involved impacted residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Square footage of space redeveloped for resilience purposes, such as heating-reducing shade</li> </ul>

# EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(#)</li> <li>- Green demolition activities to support adaptive reuse or new construction (#)</li> <li>- Shade trees planted (#) and new vegetation (square footage)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New economic opportunities created through the redevelopment of previously polluted land (e.g., number of business or low-income housing units)</li> </ul>
Strategy 7: Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waste diverted from landfills (pounds/tons)</li> <li>- Waste recycled (pounds/tons)</li> <li>- Food waste composted (pounds/tons)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaner communities with less trash/waste on land and in waterbodies as measured by litter surveys</li> <li>- Reduced food waste and associated emissions as measured by weight of compost diverted from landfills</li> </ul>
Strategy 8: Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individuals in disadvantaged communities that participate in workforce training in sectors related to GHG emissions and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased literacy among community members about environmental sectors and skills required to pursue these jobs</li> </ul>

# EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

	<p>air pollution reduction who are currently unemployed, underemployed, or face employment barriers (#)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People in disadvantaged communities hired and retained into high-quality jobs to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions based on participation in a workforce training program (#)</li> <li>- Individuals who receive wages/stipends and supportive services delivered to enable community members' training programs (# individuals receiving such wages/stipends)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased number of high-quality workforce training programs, such as pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship, in disadvantaged communities</li> <li>- Increased wages, benefits, job quality, and job security for participants in workforce training programs</li> </ul>
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EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

<b>Pollution Reduction Strategies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Strategy 1: Indoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Type of trainings implemented (#)</li> <li>- Classrooms with air cleaners (#)</li> <li>- Houses/schools with upgraded/improved HVAC systems (#)</li> <li>- Homes in which moisture issues have been addresses (#)</li> <li>- Wood appliance upgraded or replaced (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased public and environmental health literacy</li> <li>- Decreased incidence of asthma symptoms as measured by doctor visits or school nurse visits for asthma symptoms</li> <li>- Reduced exposure to radon and risk of developing radon-induced lung cancer</li> </ul>
Strategy 2: Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean air zones or low-emissions zones created (#)</li> <li>- Abandoned oil/gas wells plugged (#)</li> <li>- Toxic play surfaces replaced (#)</li> <li>- Community monitoring and alert systems installed to alert households to increasing pollution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased public and environmental health literacy</li> <li>- Reduced exposure to PM, carbon dioxide, VOCs, ozone, nitrogen dioxides, and toxics</li> <li>- Increased skill development and improvements in community capacity</li> </ul>

EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>levels (#)</li> <li>- Wildfire smoke preparedness trainings delivered (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to independently assess air pollution reduction options</li> </ul>
Strategy 3: Clean Water Infrastructure to Reduce Pollution Exposure and Increase Overall System Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean water foundations installed in schools/parks (#)</li> <li>- Full lead service lines replaced for low-income homes (miles)</li> <li>- Private wells tested for PFAS (#)</li> <li>- Storm management/flood preparedness trainings delivered (#)</li> <li>- Water efficiency systems installed (e.g., drought mitigation systems, rain capture installations) (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decreased levels of water contamination and pollution as measured by boil water advisories, lead poisoning, or water quality monitoring results</li> <li>- Increased availability of clean, safe, drinking water</li> </ul>
Strategy 4: Safe Management and Disposal of Solid and Hazardous Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lead paint remediations completed (#)</li> <li>- Tired diverted from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decreased exposure to toxics and hazardous chemicals</li> </ul>



# EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

	<p>landfills/the environment to disposal facilities (#, weight)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighborhoods/cities/residents served through residential waste composting/chipping program (#)</li> <li>- Waste transfer, material reuse, and/or recycling stations installed in underserved communities (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced odors and pathogens</li> <li>- Increased residential waste composting</li> </ul>
Strategy 5: Eliminate Harmful Chemicals through Product Replacements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conventional products replaced with Safer Choice-certified or other EPA recommended products (#, volume, customers impacted)</li> <li>- Units of PFAS food contact materials replaced (#)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced exposure to hazardous chemicals for those who live and work in and near places with chemical use and application</li> </ul>

## EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

### **2.2 Project Linkages to the EPA Strategic Plan - 4 points** [Section I.I.](#)

- **The extent and quality to which the proposed project activities support and advance EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights), Objective 2.1, (Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels).**
- **The quality and extent to which the projects also support and advance the following EPA Strategic Plan Goals as applicable: [EPA Strategic Plan](#)**
  - **Goal 1 - Tackle the Climate Crisis**
  - **Goal 4 - Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities**
  - **Goal 5 - Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities**
  - **Goal 6 - Safeguard and Revitalize Communities; and**
  - **Goal 7 - Ensure Safety of Chemicals for People and the Environment**

The proposed project activities support and advance EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance EJ and Civil Rights, Objective 2.1, (Promote EJ and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels) by X. The project also supports and advances the following EPA Strategic Plan Goals: # by X.

A climate resilient community is one that is able to cope, adapt, and evolve in the face of current and future climate conditions—ensuring that all residents have access to healthy, safe housing, recreation and outdoor amenities, health care, food sovereignty, clean water, strong workforce opportunities, energy sovereignty, and the opportunity to thrive.

The VCCRZ The proposed project activities support and advance EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance EJ and Civil Rights, Objective 2.1, (Promote EJ and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels) with the following means and methods:

- Proactive

We do not have all the answers, but we have spirit, energy and talents to engage the

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

community on climate resilience. The Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone will be a place where neighbors are safer from climate risks, cascading climate impacts and where we work to account for the most fragile and vulnerable members like the unhoused, elderly and very young. Nature-based Solutions at the core of our mitigation work are the best solution wherever and whenever possible because they are permanent and ecologically beneficial on multiple levels aligned to EPA Strategic Goals 1 and 4-7.

- Whole-System.

The Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone is an urbanized and hardscape environment. Resilience measures and interventions we propose will be closely analyzed for downstream, knock-on impacts on neighboring communities. Working with the city and numerous public departments and commissions will help us to coordinate and synergize our work with macro- and regional-level resilience efforts in Ventura County and the entire Valley. This aligns to the scale needed to impact EPA Goal #1.

- Equitable and Just.

VCCRZ approaches EPA Community Change as a healing process addressing historic inequities and disparities with climate measures to promote cleaner air and flood/heat resilience, recreation and amenities to achieve healthy lifestyles. This aligns to EPA Strategic Goal #6.

- People-Centered.

Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone partners and collaborators represent the historically marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, families and community. We stay grounded and accountable to the community because of shared experience. Community conversations and listening is the core of our work in environmental justice for our many years of service. This advances Strategic Goal #2 and #6.

- Collaborative and Inclusive.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

VCCRZ will activate over 40 Community Change organizational partners starting with our Statutory Partner Ventura County Air Pollution Board and many others from the non-governmental sector, public sector, faith-based communities, civic organizations and more. This work of many partners addresses EPA Goals 1 and 2.

- Durable.

The Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone is a massive investment in resilience, but also in the community through workforce development, active participation and organizational capacity-building. Successfully completing complex, long-term projects will build connectivity, alignment and production experiences to bind our community members and organizations more closely. Goal #2 advancing broad-based environmental justice is the reason our organization is formed.

- Multi-Benefit

Climate Resilience and improvements are the product and outcome of much of our work in the CRZ but there are multiple areas of focus: Cultural Focus, Immigrant Focus, Healing Focus, and Strengths Focus. Communities that work together through institutional networks are prepared for the climate crisis, but also form a base of interconnectivity and trust that promote economic and social growth. .

The Workforce Training Component Workforce will provide high-quality, good jobs, paid training at Living Wage levels that connect to long-term career ladders, apprenticeship opportunities with the Ventura Workforce Development Board and many trade partners.

#### ***2.3 CBO Experience and Commitment - 5 points***

**CBO(s) that are either the Lead Applicant and/or Statutory Partner for the proposed grant will be evaluated based on their history and experience as a CBO and the depth of their commitment, connections, and relationships with the disadvantaged communities the application is intended to benefit.**

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Ventura County Environmental Justice Council (VCEJC) has a long history and experience working on climate education, outreach, advocacy and installations of new amenities. VCEJC has been in operation since 1993, with 24 community partners, 4 Full-Time and 14 Part-Time staff members, and a corps of 200 active volunteers. Include geographic reach, programs, and how many people served annually in and with disadvantaged communities.

VCEJC commits to maximizing the breadth and diversity of communities served in Ventura County while prioritizing the most disadvantaged and low-income households in the communities the program is designed to serve. VCEJC will develop their priorities to ensure equitable access. There are no federally recognized tribes in Ventura County; however, there are six state recognized tribal nations, including: the Chumash, Fernandeano, Tataviam, Kitanemuk, Gabrieleno, and Serrano. VCEJC has relationships with X tribal nations. We will ensure these tribal entities are included in outreach, and therefore, made aware of the opportunities under this grant.

VCEJC will coordinate with relevant stakeholders and partners including local and state governments, utilities, nonprofit community-based organizations, labor organizations, etc. as evidenced by milestones in the Workplan. VCEJC has extensive letters of support from X and will partner with X. These partnerships will help streamline the process and make possible the use of the expertise of consultants to reduce the burden on community members and reduce administrative burden and associated costs. VCEJC will establish an X Committee to ensure that all county stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the planning process of the overall program. The committee will meet bi-monthly or more frequently as the planning of the program requires.

#### ***2.4 Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources - 15 points***

**The Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete, oversee, and manage the award considering:**

- **Their organizational experience and capacity related to performing the proposed project(s) or similar activities (e.g. experience in managing projects and activities like those in the application (4 points))**

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

- **Their resources, capacity, capabilities, staff (e.g. project manager and other key personnel), expertise, and skills to perform and manage the award activities effectively during the three-year award period. For Lead Applicants submitting two applications under this NOFO, this includes how they demonstrate they have the above attributes to perform, manage, and oversee two awards effectively within the three-year award period (4 points)**
- **The milestone schedule for the proposed projects (up to three years) including the breakout of the project activities into phases and timeframes for completion of tasks, and the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that the award funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner while ensuring that costs are eligible, reasonable, and allowable (3 points)**
- **Their financial stability, controls in place, and capacity to manage taxpayer dollars ethically and efficiently as well as the policies and controls for project oversight and program risk. This includes the extent and quality to which the application includes controls to identify waste, fraud, and abuse and reduce the potential for waste, fraud, and abuse by including plans and policies for program oversight, including confidential reporting (e.g. whistleblower protections) (4 points)**

VCEJC has a long history of helping Ventura County residents, especially low-income and disadvantaged community members, reduce climate risks and pollution, increasing positive environmental public health outcomes. VCEJC successfully complies with grant reporting requirements and demonstrates its ability to submit accurate and complete data within established timeframes. VCEJC plans for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed program. Key staff experience/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources are included below. Salaries of positions are based on the established salary scale of VCEJC. Proposed salaries are consistent with those paid to other personnel engaged in similar work within VCEJC. Levels of effort budgeted are based on the scope of the program proposed. Following is a brief description of the positions proposed and their duties within the program:

## EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

### Lead Applicant Ventura County Climate Resilience Zone (VCCRZ) Staff

Selena Santiago, Program Manager, VCCRZ will coordinate all program activities and assist with all aspects of the project including supervising all staff and workers, providing transformational leadership to staff and participants and be responsible for oversight of reporting, communications, impact assessment and administration. Selena is currently the Program Manager for the Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration with 4 years of service to the community and organization. A Masters degree in Community Planning and Bioethics and experience working for the California Environmental Protection Agency make Selena the perfect candidate for the proposed project. Selena is also bilingual/bicultural Latinx bringing critical cultural competencies and shared lived experience to the VCCRZ.

Kwame Bediako, Training and Workforce Coordinator, VCCRZ will assist project participants and community residents to access employment opportunities the project implementation measures will create and other community employment opportunities. Kwame will link participants to workforce training, adult education and employment placement through the Ventura County Workforce Development Board - Workforce Ventura County! where Kwame was employed previously in client supportive services and Job Boost Services.

To Be Hired Program Administrator, This position is responsible for all administrative responsibilities including coordination of weekly staff meetings, planning, participant and community communications, assists with all elements of program delivery and works to support the Program Director, Training and Workforce Coordinator, and Media and Communications Coordinator. A Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience/work history) - Minimum 1-2 years experience in an administration-related role or equivalent combination of education and experience - Strong editorial and writing skills; ability to work on Microsoft Office Suite- experience with social media and works to maintain content on the VCCRZ Dashboard.

To Be Hired, Media and Communications Coordinator to manage external and internal communications as part of the work on Community Engagement, Governance,

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Coordinating Council and Project Implementation A Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience/work history) - Minimum 3-5 years demonstrated experience in a communications-related role or equivalent combination of education and experience - Exceptional editorial and writing skills; strong design skills; experience with graphic design applications including InDesign and Photoshop, and maintaining websites; experience with social media particularly Tik Tok, Instagram, and X platforms; proven ability to strategically and creatively use technology to achieve departmental objectives - The VCCRZ candidate will have the patient capacity to maintain a professional demeanor in stressful situations.

**To Be Hired, Community Engagement and Support Coordinator** The Community Engagement Specialist will be responsible for the development and implementation of project initiatives that build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including public and private organizations, non-profits, and local community residents. The successful candidate collaborates with a wide range of community partners to implement action plans that offer forums for community voices to be heard from small public meetings, faith community events, civic organization meetings, cultural events and more that help the VCCRZ to effectively solicit community input and governance.

**Fiscal Monitor:** This is an existing position that will add EPA CCG to their responsibilities. The Fiscal Monitor ensures subrecipients are operating in compliance with the Federal Fiscal requirements and provides training as needed. .20 FTE of \$75,000 annual salary.

**Administrative Specialist:** This position will support the VCEJC team with processing grant draws and payments, scheduling and communications. One FTE of \$40,000 annual salary.

VCEJC commits to reducing waste, fraud, and abuse by including plans and policies for program oversight, including confidential reporting and managing conflicts of interest. VCEJC's internal control process is as follows:



## EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

After an award has been made, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Verify the specifications of the grant or contract. The Fiscal Monitor shall review the terms, time periods, award amounts, and expected expenditures associated with the award. A Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number shall be determined for each award. All reporting requirements under the contract or award shall be summarized.
2. Create new general ledger account numbers (or segments). New accounts shall be established for the receipt and expense categories in line with the grant or contract budget.
3. Gather appropriate documentation for grant/award establishing a master file to be maintained by the Program Manager. The Finance Unit also receives budget information to setup grant/award in the Project Cost subsidiary ledger for grant accounting purposes.

VCEJC recognizes that as a recipient of federal funds, it is responsible for compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants. To ensure that VCEJC meets this responsibility, the following procedures apply with respect to every grant or contract received directly or indirectly from a federal agency:

1. For each federal award, an employee within the department responsible for administering the award will be designated.
2. Each Program Manager shall attend a training on grant management prior to beginning his or her role as a Program Manager.
3. The Program Manager shall take all reasonable steps to identify applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of each grant and contract. This process will generally include the following:
  - a. Read each award and prepare a summary of key compliance requirements and references to specific laws and regulations.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

- b. Review the 2 CFR Part 200 Appendix XI, Compliance Supplement (updated annually) published by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for compliance requirements unique to the award and for compliance requirements common to all federal awards.
  - c. Review the section of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance applicable to the award.
4. The Program Manager and/or the Fiscal Monitor shall identify and communicate grant requirements to the responsible parties.
5. The Program Manager will review subsequent grant and contract renewals, annual revisions to the 2 CFR Part 200 Appendix XI, Compliance Supplement, and communications with federal awarding agency personnel.
6. The Program Manager shall work with the Chief Financial Officer to communicate to the independent auditors the applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants.
7. The Program Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Fiscal Monitor will communicate to the auditors all known instances of noncompliance with the laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants.
8. VCEJC shall disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with applicable Federal awarding agency policy (2 CFR 200.112).

#### ***2.5 Past Performance - 5 points***

- **Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.B. (3 points)**
- **History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.B. including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and**

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

##### **outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not (2 points)**

A list of federally funded assistance agreements that VCEJC performed within the last three years of no more than five agreements as well as a brief history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including VCEJC's process towards achieving the expected outpost and outcomes is included below. All federally funded assistance agreements are currently in progress and final technical reports will be completed under the agreements.

1. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Section 4 Planning Grant awarded VCEJC \$300,000 per X Act. The period of performance is X through X.
2. U.S. Department of Agriculture, NIST Food Hubs awarded VCEJC \$400,000 per X Act. The period of performance is X through X.
3. U.S. Department of Transportation, Equity Grant awarded VCEJC \$1,500,000 per X Act. The period of performance is X through X.
4. Federal Emergency Management Agency BRIC Award awarded VCEJC \$3,500,000 per X Act. The period of performance is X through X.

#### **Part 3. Readiness to Perform, Feasibility, and Sustainability - 40 points total**

##### ***3.1 Readiness Approach - 8 points***

**Applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability and readiness to proceed with grant performance for the projects in the application, based on the Readiness Approach Requirements described in SEction I.G, upon receiving an award, or generally no later than 120 days after the award, to ensure that the projects can be completed within the statutory three-year grant period. As appropriate, this may include evaluating the description of the completed project planning and design phases related to the project(s) as well as demonstrating that the applicant has obtained and/or complied with the necessary approvals, permits, permissions, and any other applicable requirements, to commence project performance upon award, and if not generally within 120 days of award.**

## EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

### ***3.2 Feasibility - 9 points***

**Applications will be evaluated based on whether it is demonstrated that all the projects in the application can be successfully and effectively performed within the three-year grant period of performance, and the degree of risk that they cannot be. This includes also evaluating how the strategies and associated projects can individually and collectively be completed within three years.**

Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration has conducted a feasibility analysis for the proposed project in cooperation with our partners and impact assessment team. We determined that a full 3-year grant period will be required to complete the planning, team-building, community engagement and implementation. We are relying extensively on community participants to provide their leadership and talents to the development of the Climate Resilience Zone. Public-Private partnerships with the Ventura County departments and commissions require approvals and reviews which can be time-consuming. We have designed a schedule of expectations and response systems to mitigate this potential issue. VCEJC is dedicating time, energy and resources to building a cohesive team of EPA, Statutory Partner Staff, County Officials, and Climate Resilience Zone staff and ambassadors.

In consultation with the public sector and with EPA technical assistance contacts, we determined a blend of measures that are feasible, doable, and worth doing within the budgetary constraints. The measures are also interconnected and leverage against one another, for example green roofs reduce water runoff and also keep everyone in the household drier and more comfortable, while reducing heat island impacts.

### ***3.3 Sustainability - 5 points***

**Applications will be evaluated based on whether it is demonstrated that the benefits and outcomes from the projects in the application can be sustained after the three-year grant period of performance based on factors including but not limited to whether (i) the Applicant will leverage funding and/or resources from other sources to ensure the sustainability of the projects beyond the three year grant term and (ii) the description of an operations and maintenance approach**

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

**including the plans and commitments to ensure there is continued funding available for operation and maintenance activities of infrastructure activities for the projects after the grant term is over (e.g. are there demonstrated commitments for continuing operation and maintenance funding/resources from the appropriate parties after the three year grant term is over) including coordination with appropriate responsible parties.**

The sustainability and maintenance of implementation measures in the VCCRZ will be the responsibility of the city, county and other public authorities in the case of public easement locations. The implementation measures on private property shall become the operations and maintenance responsibility of the owner. Our project will work to establish a small fund that can assist with extraordinary or unanticipated maintenance, but our measures for the most part are confined to activities like tree plantings and green space development that are maintained by the State of California. Any implementation measures that community and stakeholders propose will require approvals from owners and covenants with these owners and the VCCRZ will be executed.

#### ***3.4 Program Budget Description - 8 points***

- **The reasonableness of the budget and allowability of the costs for each component/activity of the projects in the application. This includes evaluating whether funding is well balance and equitably distributed to project partners, including sub-awardees, commensurate with their role in the project, and whether funding is categorized into the proper budget categories providing clarity, accuracy, and granularity on the applicant's planned use of the grant funds during the project period. (4 points)**
- **The cost effectiveness of the budget/project in terms of maximizing the share of funds used for the delivery of benefits to disadvantaged communities (both the direct costs of funds passed through for financial assistance as well as associated indirect costs to the greatest extent practicable). (4 points)**

EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

VCEJC is requesting \$15,000,000 for a three-year program upon final approval by the EPA. VCEJC will be responsible for programmatic and financial management of the program. A description of each budget line item is detailed below:

Personnel - please include Grants Manager/Reporting, Sufficient Administrative staff, Community Engagement Specialist, Construction/Implementation Manager. Salaries of positions are based on the established salary scale of VCEJC. Proposed salaries are consistent with those paid to other personnel engaged in similar work within VCEJC. Levels of effort budgeted are based on the scope of the program proposed. Following is a brief description of the positions proposed and their duties within the program:

Project Manager, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Administrative Coordinator, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Grants Manager and Communications, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Outreach Engagement Specialist, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- List each position here

Total Personnel: \$X

Fringe Benefits of 30% of salary

*Fringe Benefits include: KPERS, FICA, Workers Compensation – Office, Workers Compensation – Field, Workers Compensation – A&E, Unemployment Insurance KPERS, Death/Disability Insurance from VCEJC, Employee Parking (Annual), Health Insurance (Single Coverage/Month), Employer Portion Health Insurance (Family Coverage/Month), and Employer Portion Longevity Pay (After 10 Years of Service).*

- List each position's fringe benefits, totaling \$X here

Total Fringe Benefits: \$X

Project Manager, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X .30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Administrative Coordinator, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X .30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Grants Manager/Communications, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X .30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Outreach Engagement Worker, 1.0 FTE X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X .30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Detail

Training and Technical Assistance Workshops: Travel for X staff to attend EPA training.

- Airfare:
- Travel to Airport and Parking:
- Per diem:
- Hotel:
- Local Mileage and Toll(s):

Total Travel: \$X

Equipment Detail

Lap Tops

Mobile Telephone

Portable Projector

Total Equipment: \$X

Supplies Detail

Technology:

Office Supplies:

Total Supplies: \$X

Statutory Partner Contract

Ventura County Air Pollution Board contract for monitoring, analysis and coordination efforts

Total Contract: \$X

Contractual Detail

Advertising/Community Outreach: Project Dashboard, Social media, press releases and news advertisements and other communications related program expenses, totaling \$X

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Interpretation Services: \$X

Workforce Training Contract (staff, subrecipients, contractors):

Impact Evaluation Consultant: \$X (at least \$50,000 per year to design/implement evaluation).

Total Contractual: \$

#### Other Direct Costs

Total Other: \$X

Total Direct: \$X

Indirect Costs - 10% de minimis rate if no negotiated rate established

Total Indirect Costs: \$0

Total All Project Costs Non-Construction: \$3,000,000

Implementation Measures: \$12,000,000 for construction activities including all labor, materials, permits and soft costs including project management fees, overhead and general conditions.

Total Funding Request: \$15,000,000

#### **3.5 Compliance Plan - 10 points**

**Applications will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the Compliance Plan addresses the elements for the Compliance Plan described in Section I.G.**

Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaborative (VCEJC) implements best practices developed internally that conform to federal and EPA requirements and will ensure compliance with all grant terms and conditions including 2 CFR § 200.302(b)



#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

(financial management), 2 CFR § 200.303 (internal controls), and 2 CFR § 200.332 (requirements for pass-through entities); and (2) manage broader legal and compliance risks described in more detail below.

Current staff at VCEJC has over 10 years of nonprofit financial management experience in managing grant-funded and community projects. Using QuickBooks for Nonprofits, the VCEJC will set up a separate EPA account that can manage payroll, and track and report line item expenses related to EPA expenditures outlined in the budget. The software can produce monthly and quarterly reports as required by EPA. VCEJC will create and follow a policy for making subawards and executing contracts, and all subaward recipients or contractual partners will receive instructions on how to submit program and financial reports to VCEJC. **Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration** employs a bookkeeper and receives guidance from a Certified Public Accountant. These measures ensure the capacity to manage the grant funds internally and attain expected outcomes.

#### GENERAL PURPOSE

The purpose of these policies is to establish guidelines for **Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration** in developing financial goals and objectives, making financial decisions, reporting the financial status of the Agency, and managing the Agency's funds.

#### FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the **Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration Board of Directors and CEO** to formulate financial policies and review operations and activities, on at a minimum, an annual basis.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

The Board of Directors delegates this oversight responsibility to the Treasurer of the Board. This responsibility is shared through **delegation with the Agency CEO and the Internal Accountant**.

The **Agency CEO acts as the primary fiscal agent**, implementing all financial policies and procedures. The Agency CEO, with the assistance and oversight of the Treasurer and Internal Accountant is responsible for the coordination of the following:

- Annual Budget Presentation;
- Management of Fund Investments and Current Accounts;
- Selection of the Independent Auditors; and
- Approving and Adjusting Revenue and Expenditure Objectives/Performance in accordance with the Board of Directors discretion and their approved long-term plans.

The CEO and Internal Accountant with oversight by the Treasurer has the day-to-day operations responsibility for managing Agency funds, ensuring the accuracy of the accounting records, internal controls, financial objectives and policies, financial statement preparation, and bank reconciliation review and approval.

**The Internal Accountant is directly supervised by the CEO and Treasurer and is responsible for the preparation of the Chart of Accounts**, Reporting Formats, Accounts Payable Processing, Accounts Receivable Processing, Payroll Input and Payroll Processing, Cash Receipts Input, Journal Entries for General Ledger, Form 1099 reporting, Form 5500 reporting, and Form 990 reporting as well as Bank Reconciliations.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the VCEJC Board of Directors are prohibited from activities that might present conflicts of interest. The powers of directorship may not be used to personally benefit the Director at the Agency's expense. If a Director has a financial interest in an

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

Agency transaction, the Director must fully disclose the interest and abstain from voting. Loans to Directors are prohibited.

BUDGETING PROCESS (The Board of Directors review, discuss, move and approve the Agency annual budget)

The Agency's CEO, Internal Accountant, and the Treasurer shall be responsible for presenting to the Board of Directors an **annual operating budget draft** sixty (60) days prior to the end of the fiscal year.

The **Board of Directors shall review and approve the recommended fiscal year budget revenues, expenditures and cash flow**. The budget shall contain revenues and expenses forecasted by month and by program. A chart describing monthly cash flow shall be included.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Agency's Financial Statements shall be prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP").

The presentation of the Financial Statements shall follow the recommendation of the Financial Accounting Standards No. 117, "Financial Statements of Not-For-Profit Organizations" (SFAS No. 117).

**Under GAAP, net assets and revenues, expenses, gains, and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, the net assets of the agency and changes shall be classified as Unrestricted, Temporarily Restricted and Permanently Restricted.** Separate from Unrestricted Funds, resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and maintained for each fund. Several funds are in place for this purpose including but not limited to: Operating Fund, Restricted Funds, Long-Term Cash Management Fund, and Building Fund(s).

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

**The Internal Accountant shall prepare and present Monthly Financial Statements to the Agency Board of Directors** in a format approved by the Agency CEO and Board of Directors. The statements shall be presented to the Agency CEO and Treasurer monthly and prior to regular Agency Board of Directors meetings.

#### **AUDIT**

The **Agency will have an independent audit of its financial statements annually**, within 6 months of the end of each fiscal year. The audit shall be completed by a firm of Independent Certified Public Accountants. **The Agency CEO and the Internal Accountant shall have direct responsibility in overseeing the implementation of the Annual Financial Audit.** The Treasurer and Board of Directors shall have oversight

The Agency CEO and Internal Accountant shall recommend to the Treasurer and Board of Directors for approval the selection of a firm to perform the annual audit. In addition, the Treasurer shall assist, when necessary, in the audit preparation, and report the results to the Board of Directors. A representative of the audit firm shall be invited to attend the annual presentation to the Agency Board of Directors and shall be required to make a comprehensive presentation to the Board if the audit report is other than unqualified, or if the auditor reports material weaknesses in internal controls or reportable conditions.

**The Internal Accountant and the Auditor shall prepare the Form 990 and it shall be reviewed by the Agency's CEO and Board of Directors before submission to the IRS.**

#### **REVENUE AND INCOME PROCEDURES**

The Agency CEO in conjunction with the Director of Development, and the Internal Accountant, develops and proposes revenue goals and objectives and submits them to the Treasurer and Board of Directors prior to Board discussion and approval.

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

All contributions shall be recorded in accordance with GAAP, with specific attention to standards of the non-for-profit sector. Contributions are recorded as pledged or received in accordance with GAAP, and must be credited to the appropriate revenue lines as presented in the annual budget and coded with the appropriate account number as designated in the Agency's Chart of Accounts.

Budgeting and the Active Monthly Budget Adjustments are critical functions of the Agency CEO working closely with the Director of Development, Internal Accountant and Treasurer..

#### **COMPENSATION AND PAYROLL**

**Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration** Payroll is executed periodically. Paychecks or direct deposits will be provided to each employee by the Internal Accountant. Monthly Agency payroll expenses shall be verified by the Internal Accountant against payroll reports and direct deposit reports and reconciled with checking account reports.

The compensation of the Agency's CEO shall be determined by the Board of Directors and that compensation is based on a board-approved process that considers comparable competitor data and CEO's performance. The salaries of all other employees shall be determined by the Agency's CEO and Executive Leadership Team. Compensation ranges for all staff positions shall be approved by the Agency's CEO. No employee of the Agency may be compensated outside of the approved range, without the approval of the Agency CEO and Internal Accountant.

The CEO will approve the issuance of a company-issued credit card for employees. Employees must utilize that card only for business expenses or travel. Employees must submit a voucher that explains the business reason for items purchased using the credit card. The CEO must approve the voucher, which is then submitted to the Internal Accountant for recording and reconciliation.

## EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

### **PURCHASING**

Any Agency expenditure in excess of \$20,000, an amount determined by the VCEJC Board of Directors for the purchase of a single item, should have bids from three (3) suppliers if possible. These bids are reviewed by the Internal Accountant and the bid award must be specifically approved in advance by the Agency's CEO. Purchase of less than the approved amount may be made at the discretion of the Agency's CEO or Internal Accountant without competitive bids. However, for fixed assets, reasonable diligence should be exercised to comparatively shop for available sources.

Any purchase made by an Agency Board Member on behalf of the Agency will require prior approval by the Agency President.

### **BANK ACCOUNTS AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Internal Accountant shall maintain and oversee Bank and Investment accounts, and ensure the Agency's day-to-day financial operations. Several accounts may be maintained by the Agency as follows: **1. Checking Account (s) 2. Money Market Account 3. Certificates of Deposit 4. Brokerage Account**

These accounts may be changed as the Agency's financial conditions and requirements change. All bank account and investment account activity is reported monthly to the Agency Treasurer and Board of Directors.

### **CHECKING ACCOUNT**

All checks, cash, money orders, and credit or debit card deposits, are reviewed by the Internal Accountant and deposited in the appropriate Agency Accounts. Checks require a minimum of two signatures and are written weekly, or as-needed to meet obligations, or ongoing operational expenditures.

### **BANK RECONCILIATIONS**

#### EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS SAMPLE

**Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration Bank Reconciliations shall be completed monthly by the Internal Accountant and cross-referenced with the cash and receipts logs and the monthly Financial Statements.** The Financial Statements shall be compiled by the Internal Accountant. The Statements shall be then reviewed by the Agency CEO and presented to the Treasurer.

#### **INSURANCES**

Reasonable and adequate coverage will be maintained to protect the Agency's interests as well as the Board of Directors and the Agency's employees. **The following insurance policies shall be kept on a yearly basis: Commercial Property and Casualty Policy, Property Contents and Computer Policy, General and Professional Liability Insurance, Directors and Officers Liability Insurance, Employee's Dishonesty Bond Insurance, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Employees Health Insurance.** Insurance Policies shall be carefully reviewed by the Agency's CEO and Internal Accountant before renewal each year.

#### **TAX REPORTING**

**Ventura County Environmental Justice Collaboration is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended.** Accordingly, no provisions for income taxes shall be reflected in the financial statements. The Agency also receives the State of California Sales Tax Exemption under statute. The Agency Internal Accountant is responsible for all required filings with the State of California and Internal Revenue Service. The CEO shall review these filings prior to submission.