

**California Green Building Advocacy Day**  
**May 3, 2023**

## **Who We Are**

USGBC-LA is a 501(c)(3) membership-based, nonprofit organization on a mission to sustainably transform the greater Los Angeles region. Our mission is to accelerate all aspects of sustainability in the built environment to create a more sustainable region for all. For more than 20 years, [U.S. Green Building Council-Los Angeles](#) (USGBC-LA) has fostered a community of enthusiastic thought leaders, sustainability professionals, subject-matter experts, students, educators, and advocates who are passionate about inspiring and accelerating change that achieves a greener, more equitable built environment. At USGBC-LA, we're about people and our members are at the heart of the work we do.

## **USGBC-LA Priority Issues Areas**

At USGBC-LA, our advocacy is focused on advancing policy topics that leverage the built environment to accelerate action, engagement, and education to fight climate change.

Underscoring the imperative need for community empowerment and equity in the clean energy transition, we collaboratively and inclusively engage our local communities through accessible, educational, and impactful programs and resources. Pulling from the expertise of our community, as well as the lessons learned from our own program implementation and resources, the following recommendations for state legislature to act upon would support sustainable, cost-effective, and energy-saving policies:

- **Building Decarbonization**
  - Buildings responsible for 40% emissions
  - All-electric buildings are more healthy, comfortable, and safe.
  - All-electric buildings have similar or lower costs to construct and operate
  - Natural gas is a fossil fuel that contributes to air pollution and climate change
  - Use of materials with reduced embodied carbon
  - Embrace different pathways for building decarbonization for new and existing buildings. This is an environmental justice issue, and will require greater support for low-wealth communities.
- **Environmental Justice & Equity**
  - Climate change is an environmental justice issue. Buildings and their landscapes provide a tangible, centralized starting point to improve occupant health, community resiliency, and reduce long term operating costs.
  - Support for a critical mass of locally-supported sustainable interventions and training in the areas of our region into areas that currently (and historically) experience environmental racism and injustices.
  - Incorporation of expertise that comes from local community groups on the type of resources and assistance that will meet their needs for social resilience, well-being, and healthy neighborhoods. Centering such expertise in policymaking at all government levels is essential to fostering equitable outcomes.
- **Green Housing and Healthy Buildings**
  - Cross-sector and cross-agency communication and initiatives
    - Multidisciplinary approaches that consider geographical, economic, socioeconomic, cultural, and other factors ([systems thinking approaches](#)) can yield multiple benefits as part of one intervention.

- Integration of embodied carbon and whole life-cycle assessment methodologies as solutions to reduce and/or eliminate carbon in State buildings codes (Note: we have supported existing State-level initiatives).
- Behavior change in communities through occupant education on new building technologies (e.g., smart appliances, occupancy sensors, automated thermostats and controls, etc.).
- Ongoing communication & coordination with regional and local public agencies on building code reform promoting zero energy and water use.
- **Water Conservation / Drought Resilience**
  - Ongoing & updated resources to support education, innovation, and solutions for drought resilience such as native landscaping, climate-adaptive tree planting, real-time water monitoring, water reuse, and efficiency.
  - Sustained efforts to keep State drought restrictions intact permanently, regardless of seasons of lush rainfall.
  - Encouragement of [innovative technologies](#) and efforts to support water recycling and greywater reuse in buildings and sitescapes.
  - Support for continued investment in high-performing green infrastructure and rainwater capture systems as paramount to facilitate periods of heavy rains to reduce flooding and use of potable water.
- **Wildfire Resilience**
  - The State faces a 365-days-a-year fire season with devastating and potentially deadly consequences. There are steps communities across California can take to protect properties, mitigate the region's fire danger, and increase the city's resilience. Architects, builders, developers, urban planners, and landscapers have critical roles to play.
  - Amplification of programs such as our [Wildfire Defense Education and Tours](#), which not only certifies construction professionals and landscapers, but also promotes awareness and resources to empower communities, property owners, designers, and managers to proactively reduce wildfire hazards and minimize losses.
- **Workforce Training & Development**
  - Lift up people just as much as we invest in quality infrastructure. Encourage more [training and talent development](#) across the labor sectors to prepare the workforce for a more sustainable future.
  - Fostering a healthy ecosystem for market transformation. Green building solutions and climate-resilient interventions must be supported by a trained, green workforce with prioritized investment in low wealth neighborhoods and historically underserved communities.
    - Our [Green Janitors Program & Native Landscaper Certificates](#) are examples of such offerings that can be modeled to reach communities across California.
  - Promotion of a just transition model that results in high-road, green jobs and offers comprehensive services (e.g., needs assessments, capacity building, and in-depth skills training) as pathways for wealth creation and thriving livelihoods.
    - Our Professional Directory & [Career Center](#) showcases comprehensive offerings for those looking to build skills, advance within, or transition into green jobs.

Everyday is Advocacy Day for USGBC-LA and we welcome an ongoing dialogue with you on items related to green building and sustainable development. Our partnership can bring awareness on how bills in the Legislature may impact the community on the ground and collaboratively and inclusively influence State-level policymaking.

Please visit <https://usgbc-la.org/advocacy/> for more information on USGBC-LA's Advocacy + Policy (A+P) Initiatives.

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