

*Date:* February 24, 2022

**Subject:** Item 3 | Strategic Growth Council November Meeting Minutes

**Reporting Period:** January 2022 – February 2022

**Staff Lead:** Kimberly Davila, Executive Fellow

## **Recommended Action**

Approval of the January 26, 2022, Strategic Growth Council Meeting Minutes.

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## Strategic Growth Council January 26, 2022 - Meeting Minutes

### ***Agenda Item #1: Call to Order***

Chairman Assefa called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

### ***Agenda Item #2: Roll Call***

#### **Council Members and Representatives Present:**

Samuel Assefa, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR);

Jared Blumenfeld, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA);

Lourdes Castro Ramírez, Secretary, California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH);

Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)

Darwin Moosavi (Designee), Deputy Secretary, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), on behalf of Acting Secretary Elissa Konove;

Nicole Capretz, Public Member;

Mike Flad (Vice Chair), Public Member;

Virginia Jameson (Designee), Deputy Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), on behalf of Secretary Karen Ross;

Chancellor Juan Sánchez Muñoz, Public Member;

Mark Starr (Designee), Deputy Director, California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), on behalf of Secretary Mark Ghaly;

### ***Agenda Item #3: ACTION: Approval of Minutes***

Motion was made Chancellor Munoz and seconded by Castro Ramirez and Crowfoot to approve the November 22, 2021 meeting minutes. **Motion passes (10-0-0\*; x abstain).**

\*Marks abstention or absence from vote

#### **Public Comment:**

No public comment.

## ***Agenda Item #4: Council Member Update***

### **Council Comment:**

Assefa (OPR): This month we will be discussing opportunities for council collaboration within the Governor's California Blueprint for 2022 and 2023 which was released on January 10, 2022. This will give us significant opportunity for collaboration as the budget was pulled together connecting a lot of issues all of us are trying to address. The budget outlines historically significant cross-cutting investments in climate, housing, transportation, equity, healthcare, and more. Given the scale and significance of this historic budget, I'd like to invite the fellow council members first to highlight a few key budget priorities that provide opportunities for collaboration and then second, reflect the council's shared priorities. We've organized around three key buckets on the budget: reconnecting communities, climate smart land use, and housing as a climate strategy.

Moosavi (CalSTA): Thank you for allowing us to speak to the investments in the transportation package that relate to reconnecting communities. As you mentioned, the California Blueprint includes numerous investments and one that I wanted to highlight here today is, a \$9.1 billion transportation package focused on increasing transportation options for Californians and equity related and safety related investments. There's specifically a \$150 million investment for a new program called the Reconnecting Communities Highways to Boulevards pilot program. This proposal was first called for in CAPTI, the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure. This investment would allow us to be competitive for a new federal grant created through the infrastructure bill. The Reconnecting Communities pilot program will improve equity and remove transportation barriers by investing in the transformation or capping of key underutilized highways to transform them to serve existing residents and develop affordable housing, particularly in disadvantaged communities. We are excited to work with HCD, OPR, SGC, and other interested agencies and stakeholders to develop this program. This is a great opportunity for SGC to take an all-government approach to transform our communities.

Assefa (OPR): Great opportunity and timely given the interconnected issues that we're looking at and incredible work from CalSTA.

Crowfoot (CNRA): I believe that this climate proposed budget by the Governor is truly historic. Consider these facts: the \$15 billion the Governor and the legislature made last year combined with the \$22.5 billion proposal by the Governor this year would take almost \$40 billion of our state budget and put it towards climate action, both to combat climate change and reduce pollution in ways that are equitable. The scale and orientation of resources towards equity which has been present in many climate programs but not across all climate investments. This year the overview of the climate budget included 10 secretaries and department heads reflecting how well distributed these climate investments are in housing, education, public health, and workforce development. This is the moment to shed any silos that have existed in the past that prevent us from creating truly comprehensive programs. I'm excited about partnership with CalSTA on part of its budget focused on climate resilience transportation

infrastructure and working with many of you on climate research budget focused on UC and CSU system. This SGC has never been more important because this is the one place many of our agencies come together in a public venue to talk about our shared work.

Assefa (OPR): I would encourage everyone to read the budget. It's not only historic, but a once in a lifetime opportunity to take advantage of these resources.

Castro Ramirez (BCSH): I love Wade's energy and the way he synthesized the three pillars of the Governor's Blueprint. From a housing perspective, housing is climate and housing is connected to addressing the climate challenges in our communities. I'm very excited to continue to work across state agencies and departments to be more nimble and more integrated to further increase housing affordability, housing opportunities, and increase climate change. Also, to create more resilient integrated neighborhoods that allow children and elders to live in a neighborhood that is walkable, has good access to transportation, healthcare, banks, groceries, schools, to the things that we know are vital to neighborhoods. From a housing perspective, I'm excited to see how these move the momentum of the California Comeback plan. We are also looking at greater integration between housing and health and human services. In the California Blueprint, one specific investment is \$1 billion to reduce the impact of climate change including funds for infill infrastructure program. This has been a successful strategy that enables state to unlock opportunities for affordable housing in target areas. We're to see additional funding to be able to scale and continue to support communities. Another element is a \$100 million for adaptive reuse projects. This will enable us to support projects where local communities are converting commercial buildings into residential use. Another project is accessing state lands to use for affordable housing. I thank you Sam for joining me when we rolled out the housing budget with our stakeholders, we had nearly 400 individuals. We must continue to demonstrate how we're co-investing and collaborating and being on the ground listening to communities.

Assefa (OPR): We often look at housing in isolation and we need to connect the dots. It is really a complete plan and budget proposal, and we have great opportunity to coordinate across agencies here.

Starr (CHHS): It has impacts on health as well. There's also a lot to celebrate from a health equity perspective. I'll mention a few things specific to our agency. We have a one-time program to support our local health department colleagues, as well as tribes and community-based organizations to collaborate to develop regional climate and health resilience plans. Ten million to track health impacts of climate sensitive impacts, whether it's smoke or air pollution related. We're also really excited to work with others regarding the proposal for 25,000 new community health workers to reduce to impacts of climate change across communities by recruiting, training, and certifying these workers to address homelessness, dementia, and other aspects of climate. I also want to compliment the presenters before me and we're looking forward to collaborating. To comment on housing budget, applaud governor's housing as a climate strategy and housing is also a health and equity strategy. We also applaud the emphasis on income inequality.



Assefa (OPR): Again, it points to interrelated challenges that this budget is trying to address. It's also responsive to the challenge of today, which Mark, you mentioned extreme heat. It is also an investment in human infrastructure. SGC and OPR are working collaboratively with CDFA to create resources for communities. There is so much in this package, and it's well thought out in terms of connecting the dots. I have not seen a budget proposal of this magnitude and scale. It falls on us to do the work and coordinate with regional and local governments.

D'Souza (CalEPA): I'll echo how incredibly groundbreaking this budget truly is. This budget really shows the administration's focus on equitable climate action. I'll mention the zero-emission vehicle package, \$10 billion dollars and a deep focus on equity. It also brings a deep focus on the heavy-duty sector, transitioning transit buses, school buses, drainage vehicles. Transportation is the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions and also the greatest source of criteria pollutants that are sickening low-income communities across the state. There's also a real need and opportunity to ensure community members, especially disadvantage community members, are able to access the incentive programs that are part of this budget. The interagency is already doing a lot of thinking about improving access to state programs. Secretary Blumenfeld and I would like SGC to convene relevant agency partners to think through how to ensure community members have access to state programs in the new climate budget.

Assefa (OPR): That's great feedback from Shereen. This is an issue that always comes up with community organizations that are having a hard time going through the maze of government documents or access to grants. In the new budget, the Governor has proposed the new Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications to connect with organizations to make sure they have easy access to connect with state programs. It is a critical issue to structural barriers that exist, especially in the climate world.

Jameson (CDFA): I really appreciate you mentioning the resiliency centers. CDFA is excited to collaborate with all of you on solutions that address climate smart land use strategies like infill and land conservation. We're excited to bring agriculture into our urban areas through our Urban Ag Program. We also have additional funding for supporting healthy eating habits for children to our Farms to Schools Program, and then outside of the city, continuing to work with our agency partners on technical capacity building. We're looking forward to implementing some of our nature-based solutions we've talked about in our various documents.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment.

***Agenda Item #5: Executive Director's Report***

*Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC*



CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC  
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**Council Comment:**

Chancellor Munoz: I'm very encouraged about the process we're making on the Racial Equity Hub. I think this is a step in the right direction and I want to acknowledge the leadership in developing this resource that will be taken advantage of.

**Public Comment:**

Anita Lopez, SoyLopez Consulting

**Agenda Item #6: ACTION: Approve Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities Round 6 Awards**

*Saharnaz Mirzazad, Deputy Director of Community Investment & Planning, SGC*

*Marc Caswell, AHSC Program Manager, SGC*

*Recommended Action: Award \$808,303,114 from FY 2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021 cap-and-trade revenues and funds unused in previous rounds to 37 projects in accordance with the staff recommendation contained in this report and in Attachment A.*

**Council Comment:**

Munoz: Appreciates the thoughtfulness exercised in developing award recommendations, especially the focus on equity while also being mindful of limited resources to distribute across the State.

Capretz: Appreciates the work put into developing award recommendations and the recent change in guidelines to allow for factoring geographic distribution. Expresses concern that Southern California, especially San Diego, is less competitive because their transit lines are primarily buses, not rail.

Asks the Council to adopt a motion that asks SGC and CARB to work together in finding solutions for making bus-oriented transit more competitive.

Starr: Suggests considering more health equity concerns in the next round of awards with a special attention to groups most at risk for health issues.

D'Souza: Asks that SGC work with Key Staff to revisit scoring criteria. Notes that Round 7 guidelines should be grounded in statute.

Castro Ramirez: States that it is important to see changes made in the state's financing system so that projects receiving AHSC awards can secure further financing.

Capretz: Again, raises motion.

Crowfoot: Desires motion be framed in neutral terms.

\*Discussion about adequate language for the motion that captures Capretz's concerns while also remaining neutral\*

Munoz: Suggests making two motions: one to accept award recommendations; another to reflect Capretz's suggestion.

Motion from Munoz to accept award recommendations, motion seconded by Secretary Crowfoot

Capretz: Would like to direct SGC and CARB staff to continue to work together to find new ways to score AHSC projects including evaluating new transit modes such as buses.

D'Souza: Would like to see policy recommendations and guidelines brought to Council before finalizing the next round of guidelines.

Motion from Capretz to direct the AHSC Team to evaluate scoring and quantification methodologies to reflect regional differences and; to report back to the Council, prior to the finalization of the methodology of the next round. Motion seconded by Secretary Crowfoot.

**Public Comment:**

Moira Topp, City of San Diego

Claudia Monterrosa, Office of Mayor Garcetti, City of Los Angeles

Michael Antwine, City of Compton

Veronica Beaty, California Coalition for Rural Housing

Keith Key, Keith Key Enterprises

Sally Greenspan, Enterprise Community Partners

Violet Flocks, Carpenter's Contractors Cooperation Committee

Allison Wood, San Diego Association of Governments

Stephen Russell, San Diego Housing Federation

Jovana Morales-Tilgren, Leadership Council

Arnulfo Manriquez, MAAC Project

David McCormic, City of Santa Cruz

Motion passes (10-0-0).

***Agenda Item #7: ACTION: Council Priority 2 Resolution***

*Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC*

*Kirin Kumar, Deputy Director of Equity & Government Transformation, SGC*

*Daniela Flores, Harder & Co.*

*Theo Leeman, Change Lab Solutions*

*Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution to further promote and integrate capacity building across Strategic Growth Council and member agency initiatives.*

**Council Comment:**

Jameson: (Speaking on behalf of Secretary Ross) Expresses desire to expand technical assistance and to find ways to make technical assistance longer lasting. Is interested in supporting under-resourced communities. Puts forward that Secretary Ross would like SGC to convene a technical assistance summit.

Crowfoot: Puts forward the following recommendations on technical assistance: 1. ensuring funding; 2. internalizing best practices; and 3. institutionalizing technical assistance with a specific lens toward equity. Would like to do work on technical assistance outside of council meeting.

Flad: Champions technical assistance directed to under-resourced communities.

Castro Ramirez: Supports expansion of technical assistance and capacity building.

Starr: States that staff at HHS and CDPH would be pleased to work on technical assistance to overcome barriers.

**Public Comment:**

Emi Wang, Greenlining Institute

Victor Beas

Natalie Hernandez, Climate Resolve

Byrn Lindblad, Climate Resolve

Anita Lopez, SoyLopez Consulting

Starr moved motion, seconded by Flad.

Motion passes (10-0-0).

***Agenda Item #8: Discussion: Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program's Policy Direction***

*Keali'i Bright, Division Director of Land Resource Protection, DOC*

**Public Comment:**

Nancy Schafer

Jeanne Merrill, California Climate and Agricultural Network



Charlotte Mitchell, California Farmland Trust

Nicole Capretz left the meeting at 4:11 p.m. and Sasha Kergan took over for Sec. Castro Ramirez at 4:15. Moosavi left the meeting at 4:43. Sam Assefa left at 4:36 and Nuin-Tara Key took over for Chair Assefa at 4:36.

**Council Comment:**

Crowfoot: Says SGC needs to streamline criteria. Suggests doing this by creating project portfolios and increasing flexibility in scoring.

Flad: Cautions that increased discretion also means increased accountability.

D'Souza: Supports using additional metrics to assess impact on travel behavior.

Jameson: Points out that the way risk is evaluated is wrapped up in qualification methodology. Suggests that there will need to be significant coordination with CARB when looking at different factors (such as broadband.)

Kergan: Reiterates importance of program access. Notes that accessibility does not only mean awareness that the program exists, but also that scoring criteria allow for a range of projects that meet program goals. Suggests considering rising property values that signal displacement.

Starr: Notes that potential health benefits can also be weighted and incorporated, as well as other factors.

Jameson: Says that Secretary Ross wanted to check in on telecommuting and development pressures, and wonders if it's too soon to tell.

Lynn: Too uncertain to determine relationship between telecommuting and development pressures.

***Agenda Item #9: Public Comment***

**Public Comment:**

Richard Sadowski

***Agenda Item #10: Meeting Adjournment***

Meeting adjourned at 4:55pm