

CLIMATE ACTION
CAMPAIGN

2023 POLICY AGENDA

Priority Campaigns to Advocate for Our Communities and Reach a Zero Carbon Region

Table of Contents

01 Mission, Vision, Focus Area for 2023

02 All-Electric Ordinances in Irvine and San Diego

03 Course Correct Orange County Power Authority

04 Fund and implement the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan

05 Grant matchmaking

06 Irvine Climate Action Plan

07 San Diego's Regional Climate Table

08 San Diego’s Regional Decarbonization Framework

09 San Diego Community Power’s Community Power Plan

10 San Diego Unified School District Climate Action

11 Update SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan

12 Thank You

MISSION

Climate Action Campaign's (CAC) mission is to stop the climate crisis through effective policy action. We organize this vital work into our Five Fights: 100% clean energy; all-electric homes; walkable, bikeable neighborhoods; world-class transit; and resiliency—all through the lens of equity and justice.



VISION

Within the next ten years, Climate Action Campaign will implement a replicable and scalable regional model for an equitable transition to zero carbon. Cities are leading the way on climate solutions, which is why we focus on creating effective climate policy at a local and regional level, which can then be scaled and replicated around the world.

CAC's ground-up theory of change puts communities, municipalities, small business, nonprofits, health care professionals and workers at the epicenter of climate action and solutions. Collaborating across sectors, we're leading the region to achieve zero emissions by 2035, in line with what climate science says is necessary to protect our health and future.

FOCUS AREA

Climate Action Campaign's annual policy agenda outlines our priority campaigns to advance our five fights for the year, including:

- Building Electrification Ordinances in Irvine and San Diego
- Course Correct Orange County Power Authority
- Fund and implement the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan
- Grant matchmaking
- Irvine Climate Action Plan
- Regional Climate Table
- San Diego's Regional Decarbonization Framework
- San Diego Community Power's Community Power Plan
- San Diego Unified School District Climate Action
- Update SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan

Please note that this agenda is not an exhaustive list of our campaigns or policy areas, but an overview of where we will invest the most time in 2023.

All-Electric Ordinances

City of San Diego, City of Irvine | Advocacy | All-Electric Buildings

PROBLEM

Our increasing reliance on toxic fossil fuels in our homes and buildings continues to threaten the health and safety of our communities. Children living in homes with a gas stove have a 42% increased risk of experiencing asthma symptoms (reference). Southern California is significantly behind neighboring jurisdictions in the state on decarbonization.

A new-construction all-electric ordinance is a vital effort to decarbonize our region. The City of San Diego and the City of Irvine are significantly behind their neighbors, with over 70 other jurisdictions adopting an all-electric ordinance. Every day we delay adopting our ordinances, more permits are approved to build out gas infrastructure in the buildings and homes where we live and work.

SOLUTION

New-construction all-electric ordinances are not a novel climate solution, so the Cities of San Diego and Irvine know what steps are necessary to adopt these ordinances. CAC will continue to push hard to bring these ordinances to council and advocate for their passage. We'll put pressure on these cities to encourage them to take action, stop dragging their feet, and deliver on their climate and public health goals. We have all the information and plans we need, let's get started on getting dangerous fossil fuels out of our buildings.



Course Correct the Orange County Power Authority

County of Orange County | Advocacy | 100% Clean Energy, All-Electric Buildings

PROBLEM

We've fought long and hard for clean energy in Orange County. After years of inaction, the Orange County Power Authority, a community choice energy (CCE) program, was finally established in 2019. The OCPA is Orange County's only chance at 100% clean energy, but it's currently plagued with corruption. To safeguard our families and communities, we must transition away from dangerous and dirty fossil fuels. We've seen other CCEs effectively bring clean energy to neighboring regions, such as in San Diego cities, and we know that this can be the future of Orange County. The problem is that corruption is rife within the OCPA. We need new board and council members dedicated to equitable and fair clean energy.

SOLUTION

We know the capacity of the OCPA and its importance in bringing 100% clean energy to Orange County. We've spent endless hours advocating for this community choice energy program, and will continue to double down and work hard to bring the OCPA to the forefront of effective and equitable clean energy. In the last few months, we've helped call out the corruption within the OCPA, and these efforts have not gone unnoticed. In January?, the general council resigned. This year, we're rectifying the corruption within the OCPA by helping appoint an interim council, bringing a new CCE-qualified legal council, and creating an equitable voting system.



Fund and Implement San Diego Climate Action Plan

City of San Diego | Advocacy | All Fights

PROBLEM

The City of San Diego made national news for its groundbreaking Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2015, becoming the largest City in the United States to make a legally-binding commitment to achieving 100% clean electricity by 2035. Yet, in the last seven years, the City has fallen behind, with 90% of the strategies outlined in the previous CAP going unimplemented. Last year, the City finally updated its CAP, listing bold climate goals that would once again put San Diego on the map for climate action. However, with the City's history of not committing to implementation, there is little community faith in seeing these bold goals come to life.

SOLUTION

This year, the City of San Diego is developing an implementation plan to pair with its updated CAP. In early 2023, CAC will advocate for an effective and detailed implementation and funding plan, with a clear cost analysis and key measures that pair with the goals listed in the CAP, including a master mobility plan and building electrification ordinances. We know that goals without action are meaningless, as goals alone don't create the tangible change our communities need. It's time for the City to seize the opportunity for unprecedented state and federal funding and fulfill its promises to its residents by protecting our communities from climate impacts.

Grant Matchmaking

City of San Diego | Project | All Fights

PROBLEM

Unprecedented federal and state climate funding is up for grabs, but many local governments lack the capacity to research and apply for this funding. The inability to fund and implement climate policies and programs is stalling progress throughout the region.

We created CAC's quarterly funding newsletter to address this problem and help city staff learn about and apply for federal, state, and private funding, but there's still work to do as grant writing processes can be unclear and difficult to navigate.

SOLUTION

In 2023, CAC will partner with CivicWell on a grant matchmaking pilot program. This program will help smaller, under-resourced cities apply for and secure climate funding. To start, CAC and CivicWell will identify two small or mid-sized cities with more than 10% of residents at or below the poverty level. We're excited to bring resources and investments back to our communities and hope to scale and replicate this program's successes.



Irvine Climate Action Plan

City of Irvine | Advocacy | All Fights

PROBLEM

Orange County is significantly behind neighboring California regions in climate action, with less than 20% of Orange County cities adopting a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The City of Irvine has delayed creating its CAP for the last six years. Irvine has spent over half of the money allocated to their CAP on consultants, and yet, a year later, Irvine has still not adopted a CAP. Every time Irvine delays acting on climate, it puts families and communities at risk for climate-related health impacts, increasing natural disasters, and damage to roads and buildings.



SOLUTION

Irvine is the fastest-growing city in California, with ever-increasing populations, housing needs, and development. To protect and provide for its developing communities, Irvine needs to develop a strong Climate Action Plan. With an effective, legally-binding CAP, Irvine could become a national model of bold, equity-centered climate action. As the most fiscally-sound city in the United States (resource), this is Irvine's opportunity to become a recognized climate champion. We know we have the community and political will to adopt a CAP, so this year CAC is capitalizing on this support by mobilizing our communities to advocate for a ground-breaking, legally-binding Climate Action Plan in Irvine.



San Diego's Regional Climate Table

County of San Diego | Advocacy | All Fights

PROBLEM

For the past seven years, local governments created groundbreaking plans, such as the County of San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF), that could place San Diego on the map for bold climate action. We've also seen these plans fall through the cracks because they lack effective implementation.

Our cities' attempts to meet their climate goals are met with roadblocks because every path to an equitable and sustainable San Diego requires us to work together. It's time to forgo our current, siloed approach to climate action by relying on regional collaboration to reach our zero carbon vision.

SOLUTION

In 2023, CAC will advocate for an equitable Regional Climate Table of all relevant regional actors, including the County's 18 cities and unincorporated areas. We're pushing for regional collaboration because climate solutions, like clean transportation and clean energy, cross jurisdictional boundaries.

The Regional Climate Table will act as a central hub for best practices, funding opportunities, and facilitating the equitable implementation of key climate strategies. We all deserve to live and work in clean and healthy communities free from pollution, natural disasters, and climate-related health risks. Regional collaboration is how we get there.

San Diego's Regional Decarbonization Framework

County of San Diego | Project | All Fights

PROBLEM

We must work together as a region to address climate impacts on our communities. Last year, CAC helped pass the County of San Diego's first-in-the-nation Regional Decarbonization Framework and Just Transition Plan. This report maps our regional opportunities for collaboration on transportation, energy, electrification, and housing.

The RDF's analysis will enable the county to create a suite of solutions that businesses, households, and local cities can reference as they work to be more sustainable, but more community members must know about this valuable resource.

SOLUTION

In 2023, CAC is partnering with the County of San Diego to educate our community and raise awareness about the solutions in the Regional Decarbonization Framework in Supervisorial Districts One, Two, Three, and Five.

This year, CAC will host monthly workshops and quarterly regional convenings exploring local climate impacts and highlighting the solutions in the Regional Decarbonization Framework. These in-depth conversations will allow community members to provide feedback on the programs, projects, and policies they would like to see implemented in the San Diego region.



San Diego Community Power's Community Power Plan

County of San Diego | Project | 100% Clean Energy, All-Electric Buildings

PROBLEM

Fossil fuels pollute our communities, causing life-threatening health issues and damaging our neighborhoods. This is why we advocate for clean energy alternatives. Our advocacy helped launch Community Choice Energy (CCE) programs across Southern California. CCE programs have the opportunity to mitigate the dangerous risks associated with fossil fuels by facilitating the transition to 100% clean energy.

Climate change and the impacts of dirty fossil fuels harm our communities, so our communities need to be at the forefront of climate solutions. For the switch to clean energy to be effective, we must prioritize an equitable transition and uplift climate solutions in communities of concern, which are hit first and worst by the climate crisis.

SOLUTION

In 2015, CAC won our fight for a 100% clean energy Climate Action Plan and CCE, creating San Diego Community Power (SDCP). As SDCP develops its Community Power Plan this year, we're advocating for a plan that includes community feedback and focuses on local decentralized energy projects.

We're pushing for SDCP to fulfill its mission to serve communities with clean energy opportunities at affordable rates by prioritizing and implementing the projects listed in the Community Power Plan that are equity-centered and uplift communities of concern. The projects with the most impact will prioritize communities of concern and distributed energy resources such as rooftop solar, battery storage, and microgrids. San Diegans deserve a choice in their local energy choices, which is why we're helping SDCP focus on projects that prioritize the voices of our families and communities.

San Diego Unified School District Climate Action

County of San Diego | Advocacy | 100% Clean Energy, All-Electric Buildings

PROBLEM

Youth is one of our most vulnerable populations, yet we're exposing them daily to the toxic and harmful impacts of methane gas, diesel from buses, and fossil fuel pollution. Emissions from school HVAC systems are roughly equal to the emissions of 5 million gas-powered cars (reference). Schools are learning hubs for innovation, where kids can learn and bring messages back home to their families and communities. Creating change within the schools will encourage communities to take steps to bold action and decarbonization efforts.



SOLUTION

An abundance of state and federal funding is going to schools for clean energy and electrification efforts. SDUSD is the second largest district in the state, so this is a key opportunity to demonstrate effective and equitable climate action through decarbonization efforts. CAC will advocate for SDUSD to capitalize on these funding opportunities and to determine which projects to prioritize. CAC will help maximize available resources and funding to bring these goals across the finish line. Once SDUSD can successfully work towards decarbonizing its buildings and fleet, the district will become a model for effective decarbonization that can be replicated across districts and jurisdictions.



SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan

County of San Diego | Advocacy | World-Class Transit

PROBLEM

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in San Diego County, with emissions hurting our communities and reducing our resilience in the face of the challenging climate crisis. The 2021 SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan was meant to provide a path to lower transportation-fueled GHG emissions. Yet, this plan is still in flux after the SANDAG Board of Directors voted in 2022 to remove the Road Usage Charge (RUC) from the already approved plan.

In 2023, not only will SANDAG begin the process of creating the 2025 Regional Plan, they will also be resubmitting the amended 2021 plan for new approval to determine whether the amended plan meets state mandates.

SOLUTION

In 2023, as SANDAG begins creating their 2025 Regional Plan, we're advocating for safe and reliable connections within our San Diego region that provide robust public transportation and active transportation options. People deserve convenient, safe, clean, reliable, and affordable ways to get to their jobs, schools, stores, and homes. This year, we're working with our communities to build community and political will to create a bold 2025 Regional Plan that not only meets, but exceeds our climate goals and state mandates.

THANK YOU FOR MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous individual, corporate, and foundation donors, along with our Leadership Circle members. Your support helps us fight for a climate-safe and climate-ready , Zero Carbon future.

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