



2024

POLICY AGENDA

**Key pathways to win a zero-carbon,
equitable, and sustainable future**



“With Southern California at the epicenter of climate disasters—from crumbling coastlines to devastating floods to the border sewage crisis – we are more determined than ever to make 2024 a year that counts for local and state climate action. The outcomes of elections at all levels—especially federal—will shape the future of our lives. We must double down to protect our health and future.”

NICOLE CAPRETZ, FOUNDER AND CEO



Every year, we publish our policy agenda to let the community know about the campaigns guiding our climate advocacy. Informed by the needs of our community, these campaigns are designed to better protect our region from the harmful impacts of pollution and set us up for a clean, healthy, equitable, and safe future.



We’re partnering with other community organizations, place-based advocates, residents, small businesses, labor unions, and decision-makers to expand the reach and impact of climate policy. Historic funding opportunities from state and federal governments continue to present an unparalleled opportunity, and we’re rallying Southern California to secure these funds. **The message is clear: now is the moment to work together to ensure key investments in our communities, particularly communities on the frontlines of the crisis.**

VISION

Climate Action Campaign (CAC) works to stop the climate crisis through effective and equitable policy action. **We know cities are hubs of innovation leading the way on climate solutions**, so we're creating local and regional policy changes that can be scaled and replicated worldwide. We're putting municipalities, frontline communities, small businesses, nonprofits, academics, healthcare professionals, and workers at the center of climate solutions. **Together, we can create a sustainable and equitable zero-carbon future that protects our communities.**

2024 FOCUS AREAS

- 01 Let's Go, San Diego!
- 02 Switch on Success: Electrifying Schools
- 03 Storm and Flood Resilience
- 04 All-Electric Affordable Housing
- 05 Regional Collaboration
- 06 Regional World-Class Transit
- 07 Local Climate Action Plans
- 08 Expand Orange County Power Authority



LET'S GO! SAN DIEGO

Transit is a faltering lifeline for many low-income San Diegans. With 70% of jobs being inaccessible by public transit in San Diego, it is clear our system is failing to meet the needs of residents. This leaves the 78% of MTS riders who don't have access to a car removed from work, school, and communities across the county. For people to shift their modes of transportation to greener alternatives like biking, walking, or public transit, these options must become safer, quicker, and more accessible.

Everyone deserves access to high-quality, clean transportation that reliably connects us to jobs, education, and communities.

ACTION

We have a plan in place, Let's Go! San Diego, to transition more people out of cars and increase access to safe, alternative modes of transportation. We partnered with local organizations, labor unions, and activists to take this fight to the 2024 ballot box to gain funding for a transportation system that allows people to travel safely with enhanced connectivity. We're working to pass Let's Go! San Diego with a majority vote this November to expand our transit infrastructure, increase high wage and high road union jobs, and meet our local and state climate goals.



SWITCH ON SUCCESS: ELECTRIFYING SCHOOLS

As community hubs and places of learning, schools should be safe, healthy spaces free of indoor air pollution and climate-harming methane gas.

Our dependence on dirty fossil fuels threatens the health and well-being of our communities. Indoor air quality can be up to five times worse than outdoor air, posing severe health risks, including asthma, cancer, and other respiratory issues. Students and faculty spend over 1,000 hours indoors each year, continuously exposed to these threats. It's time we stop putting our students' futures at risk and focus on preparing our youth for a healthy and successful future.

ACTION

Last year, San Diego Unified School District set the standard by committing to an all-electric resolution. Sweetwater Union High School District swiftly followed suit. With sustained state and federal funding, we're harnessing this growing momentum to actualize electrification across California school districts. This year, we're hitting the ground running, collaborating with students to replicate these successes throughout San Diego, Orange County, and Los Angeles. Going all-electric means building a healthier, safer, and more sustainable future.



STORM AND FLOOD RESILIENCE

Less than two months into 2024, Southern California experienced a “thousand-year” storm that left over 1000 San Diegans displaced and 595 homes and businesses destroyed. We are ill-prepared for the challenges posed by our changing climate. These devastating impacts result from aging drainage systems, inadequate flood defenses, and poor urban planning. Our underfunded storm systems are failing, placing the heaviest toll on frontline communities—already traditionally underinvested—that now bear the brunt of the damages.

We deserve updated storm systems that protect our communities, especially communities of concern, against the devastating impacts of flooding.

ACTION

We’re focusing on long-term solutions that protect our communities against future disasters. This year, we’re prioritizing policy that invests in our storm systems, strengthens our water management strategies, and improves urban planning through equity and sustainability. CAC is supporting the creation of regional policies to safeguard our communities, proactively ensuring that all San Diegans will not be left vulnerable in the face of future storms.



ALL-ELECTRIC AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Homes, schools, and buildings should meet the safety needs of our families—we deserve to be safe where we live, study, work, and play.

Methane gas is one of our region’s most significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions and a huge threat to our health and safety. Households with methane gas are exposed to dangerous indoor air pollution, leading to severe health conditions. For example, children living in homes with a gas stove have a 42% increased risk of experiencing asthma symptoms. We must push dirty fossil fuels out of our homes and buildings to protect our communities and stay on track to reach our zero-carbon targets.

ACTION

It’s time to kick dangerous fossil fuels to the curb by transitioning our homes and buildings to all-electric appliances. This year, we’re turning up the heat on our San Diego and Orange County leaders, pushing them to adopt electrification policies for affordable housing, municipal infrastructure, new and existing buildings, and regional plans. Let’s spark change, protect our health, and hit climate targets head-on.



REGIONAL COLLABORATION

San Diego cities struggle to implement their ambitious climate goals due to a lack of resources and capacity, resulting in fragmented action plans. Simultaneously, Orange County cities historically neglected to invest in vulnerable communities and resilience. San Diego's siloed approach and an emerging shift towards climate action in some OC cities highlight the need for regional collaboration to build power, secure funding opportunities, protect our communities, and reach our climate goals. As climate impacts span across jurisdictional boundaries, so should our solutions.

All communities should have the tools and resources necessary to adapt to the challenges posed by climate change, fostering resilience and protecting vulnerable populations.

ACTION

Regional collaboration will be at the forefront of our advocacy in 2024. We're partnering with community-based organizations, businesses, frontline communities, and local governments through SANDAG's Regional Climate Readiness Table, the Orange County Climate Justice Collaborative, and the California Jobs First program. These collaboratives will prioritize regional climate action and resilience projects by attracting large-scale funding opportunities. By coming together to rewrite the rules, we can clean our air, improve our health, and build a climate-safe future for our region.



REGIONAL WORLD-CLASS TRANSIT

Every community deserves access to convenient, affordable, reliable public transportation and safe pedestrian and bike facilities.

With transportation being San Diego County's largest source of emissions, contributing to air pollution and worsening climate impacts, it is clear we need to shift our modes of transportation. SANDAG's draft 2025 Regional Plan needs a bolder approach to cut gas emissions by reducing car dependency through increased active transportation and public transit. The City of San Diego committed to bold mode shift goals, yet recent data shows we are nowhere near meeting these goals. By not reaching its targets, San Diego falls behind in providing access to equitable and just mobility options, continuing generations of unjust land use, and underinvestment in frontline communities.

ACTION

San Diego can champion sustainable and equitable transportation by implementing a robust Mobility Master Plan and 2025 Regional Plan. With under seven years to double our mode shift results in the city, we're advocating for plans that not only meet our targets but surpass state-mandated emissions reductions, promoting alternative and sustainable modes of transportation. We're prioritizing funding infrastructure improvements and detailed implementation to achieve a San Diego where walking, biking, and public transit are safe, quick, and affordable options.



LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION PLANS

Amid increased storms and flooding, scorching heat waves, and deadly wildfires, it is clear that Southern California is facing the impacts of climate change. Climate Action Plans (CAPs) are pathways to protect our communities against these climate impacts. But not all climate plans are equal. Many are ineffective because they aren't legally binding, lack detailed implementation, or leave out key strategies to address equity issues or green job creation.

Our communities deserve strong climate leadership and plans to protect them from climate impacts.

ACTION

This year, we're doubling down on meeting climate goals. CAC will release two report card updates, grading the implementation of Orange County and San Diego Climate Action Plans to ensure that cities act on their promises and prioritize community and climate needs. CAC is capitalizing on historic funding opportunities to advocate for adopting more CAPs in Orange County and more robust implementation and funding in San Diego. It's time for our cities to secure state and federal funding to fulfill their promises to families and protect our health and future.



EXPAND THE ORANGE COUNTY POWER AUTHORITY

Our region needs 100% clean energy for all—where every community has the power to decide their energy future.

California is paying some of the country's highest utility rates, lining the pockets of the gas industry and investor-owned utilities. With nearly 25% of SDG&E's residential ratepayers missing payment deadlines and 17% of SCE ratepayers owing nearly \$1,000 on overdue electric bills, it is time to bring energy choice to more cities. Our need for affordable, clean energy means we must invest in local, renewable energy that puts ratepayers at the center of decision-making.

ACTION

Community Choice Energy (CCE) programs are proven alternatives to monopoly utilities. San Diego Community Power and the Orange County Power Authority, two local CCE programs, have been recognized as two of the top ten green energy providers in the U.S. With four Orange County cities now participating in a CCE program, we're on a mission to expand community choice energy to more OC cities. CAC will continue to organize and advocate for expanding OC Community Choice programs and ensure they equitably and effectively achieve our clean energy future.



Our work would not be possible without you!

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous individual, corporate, and foundation partners! Your support fuels our mission, amplifying our impact in driving local climate action towards a zero-carbon future.

Legacy

BQuest Foundation
County of San Diego
Satterberg Foundation
Left Coast Fund
Christopher H. Kohlhardt Charitable Fund
California Public Utilities Commission

Visionary

Blue Shield of California
Bright Power
Calpine Energy Solutions
IBEW Local 569
San Diego Communiy Power
San Diego Foundation

Champion

AES
Orange County CERF
Futures Unbound
Orange County Power Authority
Pedal Ahead
Anonymous Donor
Richard and Elizabeth Steele Endowment
Fund

Patron

David and Peg Engel
The Hervey Family Fund
WSP USA Buildings Inc.
Orange County Community Foundation
Jewish Community Foundation
UC Davis

Partner

AFT 1931
Bank of Southern California
Clean Energy Alliance
Edward and Shanbrom Family Fund
HNTB Corporation
Dennis Morgigno and Jennifer Stone
Aviva Paley
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
Mary Yang

Defender

Evari GIS Consulting
Mary Margaret McKenzie Charitable Fund
Jacob Chacko
John Hemmer
Bill Kuni
Better APC
Oatman Architects Inc
River City Bank