

From the Ground Up: Practicing Community-Led Climate Planning

CCEC, Hiro, 6/24 @ 3:00 pm - 5:00pm

Moderator:

- Hannah Kornfeld, Ascent, Climate Practice Leader

Speakers:

- Catherine Baltazar, Climate Resolve, Associate Director, Advocacy & Organizing
 - TA, grant writing support, community-based sustainable development, policy advocacy
- Taylor Carnevale, California Forward, Project Manager
 - Sustainable, resilient, inclusive CA economy, talking about Resilience District Incubator
- Jenny Nitzky, ICLEI USA, Sustainability Senior Program Officer
 - TA to local governments, talking about ClearPath2.0 & how you can use it to make a business case to implement different strategies

Notes

- At the opening plenary, ICLEI talking about ClearPath2.0 to support economic analysis, CA Forward → CRDs - theme at these conferences = not enough money to go around, don't have all the answers, peer to peer tasks to learn from each other
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Scenario-based activity:

How do we design a policy based intervention that will be used - how to pay for it and sustain it

Empowering, beautifying, transforming iur community - Cat

- How collect community feedback that impacts what you build? CLimate Resolve designs community-engagement strategy
- Boyle Heights - predominantly Latino community in LA, many residents live near industrial areas, near transit corridors. Housing pressures, gentrification, limited access to open space, high rates of climate vulnerability - present day lived experiences e.g. fire burning for 7+ days, located in project area - residents report problems, despite officials saying it's not dangerous
- Climate change intensifies existing inequity - higher temps from UHI, lack sufficient shade and cooling infrastructure - when sheltering in place, many don't have A/C at home - heat isn't happening in isolation, air pollution, aging housing, transportation, limited housing options. Discrimination and racism - long term disinvestment/discriminatory planning concentrate industrial areas in this community - legacy of who has/has not been included in planning projects.
- Need to start with lived experiences based on the neighborhood's history. Residents ID priority - decrease pollution, increase green space, walkability,r

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respond to daily conditions. Not a final infrastructure design, but a direction to go in e.g. address pollution, heat, disinvestment. Our project takes broader community vision, translate planning priorities into infrastructure. Partner with Promesa Boyle Heights and their EJ promotoras, invest in capacity building with promotoras training on climate change, participatory science, etc - equip community leaders with skills to be in this project. This step matters the most, need local partners to bridge technical planning with communities

- Start with participatory science walk to observe and discuss existing conditions e.g. AQ, noise pollution, to see how truck corridors impact. They could make their own conclusions without having to be told. Here's what this problem looks like and why it matters
- Without shade, temps reach 160°F, high noise level, bad air quality where the build environment fails to provide protection. Residents connect these conditions to daily life e.g. bus stops, traffic, lack of cool spots. Build shared language around climate change, ground conversations in actual neighborhood conditions
- What kind of responses feel like they address these issues → infrastructure menu like trees, shade, water station, bike share, etc = concrete infrastructure options
- Community information sessions - used infrastructure poster to prioritize, use bilingual voting cards to respond to neighborhood needs, what was missing. Brought expert to the questions, LA Metro addresses gentrification concerns of using bike share, etc - community members hear directly from them. Residents who wanted to learn more about infrastructure had useful, meaningful, engaged ways to share their opinions
- Large take away - need to give people concrete choices to weigh in on, not a blank page
- Then, used participatory mapping to show where different infrastructure interventions were most useful e.g. corridors populated by people. There are lots of street vendors, people want shade where they gather. Bridged gap between CE and design readiness with residents' lived knowledge - knew exactly where lights, shade, trash, etc were needed
- Build trust/local capacity → participatory science → visual menu → participatory mapping - allowed for actionable community input, structured process to prioritize decision making
- Pursuing TCC implementation grant to fund these options

Resilient District Incubator - Taylor

- Directed vs general tax - need 50% or $\frac{2}{3}$ vote
- How's Sonoma doing
- CRD - SB 852 - special government entity composed of local government entities to raise and direct funding towards climate adaptation and risk reduction

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- A legal home, financing mechanism, coordinated entity
 - Financing mechanisms: Tax increment financing, benefits assessment, sales tax, utility fees - allows for many types of use, from planning and community to pre-development to O&M for asses/programs
- Today - retroactive/reactive recovery - one time basis funding, after disasters vs Resilience district - how keep the momentum moving towards the goals we want
- Why are so few CRDs being implemented?
 - Innovation risk/cost - this is a new model, lots of uncertainty
 - Siloeing - similar to proven economic development tools - separation between sustainability, budget, econ development, etc - people are already constrained, hard to track down all the right people
- Created Resilient District Incubator - learning pathway + discovery course, think through feasibility and district building exercise. Critical prioritization work, examining the statue, etc
 - Build out boundaries, financing tools, what would it seek to do, etc
 - Working with set of communities in CA, working with RCC who is doing projects in NY, Connecticut → National Learning Network to think through potential amendments or way to advocate for changes with the state, what can we improve
 - Expert Advisory Group - how to advocate for ongoing funding, benefits around risk reduction, access to finance and insurability
- CRDs are not right for everyone - there are similar structures below
 - SF Green Benefits District - neighborhood scale based on homeowners opting in
 - Inglewood Transit Connector with LA Metro - stood up CRD but doesn't have funding mechanism
 - Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority - parcel tax, annual reporting with revenue, exists as a JPA
- Sonoma - existed for over 10 years, lacking financing
- Pilot communities - NCRP, COunty of Marin/City of San Rafael, County/City of Sacramento
- Key considerations:
 - Development resources - need to fund work of forming district before district can fund projects
 - Appetite for a new tool
 - Geographic boundaries - need to have a clear boundary on fiscal basis e.g. revenue generation, political buy-in, projects you want to fund
 - Revenue mechanism fit - e.g. tax increment financing - consider types of investments you want to do and if the tool is right for those investments

ClearPath 2.0

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