

Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF) Program

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the CERF funding is to:

- Build an equitable and sustainable economy and foster long-term economic resilience in the overall transition to a carbon-neutral economy.
- Use a High Road approach to economic development to support the creation of good-paying jobs and equal access to those jobs; businesses that invest in their workforces, pay living wages, and engage in environmentally sustainable business practices.
- Center community and worker inclusive economic planning, including voices that have been traditionally left out of economic planning.

Phase I: Planning Phase

- Provides \$5 million dollar planning grants to support a High Road Transition Collaborative (HRTC); HRTCs will be composed of balanced representation from labor, business, community, government, economic development, philanthropy, education, workforce partners, California Native American Tribes, and other stakeholder groups.
- HRTCs will encourage engagement, create inclusive and equitable economic plans, build capacity, and break down silos.
- Plans developed during the Planning Phase will inform projects eligible for funding during the Implementation Phase of the program.

Phase II: Implementation Phase

- The state will fund implementation projects on a rolling basis identified in the Planning Phase based on criteria such as demonstrated community support, alignment with state climate goals, and demonstration of labor standards and job quality.
- Applicants for Phase II implementation grants must participate during the planning phase or receive a letter of support from the HRTC to be eligible for funding.

CERF Tribal Funding Opportunity

- Out of the \$600 million, \$20 million is allocated for California Native American Tribes.
- Tribes interested in applying for the CERF Tribal Funding Opportunity may still also apply for CERF funding through the Planning and Implementation Phases described in this solicitation. Tribes are highly encouraged to participate in the CERF Planning Phase HRTCs and to apply for funding during the Implementation Phase. Tribes are not required to participate in their region's Planning Phase processes to be eligible for Implementation Phase funding.

Target Regions and Populations

CERF emphasizes inclusive planning to ensure equitable outcomes for each region's disinvested communities

Investments that benefit disinvested communities will be a priority for proposed projects in the Implementation Phase. CERF defines 'disinvested communities' as any of the following:

- Census tracts identified as 'disadvantaged' by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
- Census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80% of the statewide median income or with the median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the Department of Housing and Community Development's list of state income limits.

- ‘High poverty area’ and ‘High unemployment area’ as designated by the California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development California Competes Tax Credit Program.
- California Native American Tribes as defined by the Native American Heritage Commission Tribal Consultation Policy.

Post-Award Program Requirements and Deliverables

Planning Phase (Phase I) Requirements Overview

The Planning Phase requirements involve building inclusive planning tables, which will result in developing:

1. High Road Transition Collaboratives, and
2. Regional Plans.

High Road Transition Collaboratives

Inclusive Table-Building: Ensures accountability, addresses the needs of disinvested communities, represents the diversity of the region, and transparently oversees the facilitation of the planning process.

Strength and Diversity of Collaborative Partnerships: Account for diversity across sectors, subject matter expertise, lived experience, and inter-generational perspectives.

Ongoing Regional Processes: Ensure the alignment between these processes and CERF; includes Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, climate plans, High Road Training Partnerships, General Plans, Regional Transportation Plans, and other community-led initiatives.

Regional Plans

The plan will be co-developed with diverse stakeholders. The plans must also build on existing regional and/or subregional economic development plans and strategies as appropriate.

The Regional Plan includes two parts. Part 1 presents a snapshot of socio-economic conditions in the region: Part 2 establishes a forward- looking economic development and transition roadmap using the information obtained in Part 1.

Each of the following analyses and the roadmap must address the CERF Objectives:

- **Equity:** Needs and the interest of diverse communities, especially disinvested communities
- **Sustainability:** Self-sustaining and aims at a carbon-neutral, climate-resilient economy
- **Job quality and access:** Family-sustaining wage, health benefits, a pension, worker advancement opportunities, a safety net, and collective worker input
- **Economic competitiveness and resilience:** Strategies to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shocks

Regional Plan Part 1

Presents a baseline of the region. It considers the region’s stakeholders, assesses the factors affecting the region’s economic, environmental, and health conditions, and conducts detailed economic and workforce analyses.

1. Stakeholder Mapping

- Provide the list of organizations and entities
- Overview of the state of disinvested communities in the region
- Create and show a network of existing partners and their existing regional and subregional plans, strategies, and related reports
- Clarify opportunities for collaborations and partnerships

2. Regional Summary

The regional summary must include the following analysis and discussion:

- Economy and Economic Development
- Climate and Environmental Impact
- Public Health Analysis

3. Labor Market Analysis

- A snapshot of labor and workforce dynamics in the region; the analysis must also identify the following:
- Industry-specific labor standards that meet High Road priorities
- Barriers that limit access to good-paying jobs
- Relevant training programs, apprenticeships, or High Road training partnerships in the region

4. Industry Cluster Analysis

A snapshot of current major industries as well as industry trends and projections.

5. SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis will draw from data and components resulting from the above analyses.

Regional Plan Part 2

Develop a holistic economic development and transition roadmap with strategies that prioritize the creation of good-paying jobs, equitable access to jobs and resources, and emphasizes developing sustainable and resilient economies and industries. The roadmap and strategies must refer to the findings of the analyses in Part 1. The roadmap must include the following:

- 1. Vision and Goals**
- 2. Strategies for the growth of targeted industries**
- 3. Strategies for increasing economic diversification**
- 4. Strategies for responding effectively to economic shocks**
- 5. Strategies for increasing economic equity**
- 6. Strategies for increasing health and environmental equity**
- 7. Strategies for aligning with State strategies**

Strategic Investments and Projects

The HRTC will also identify 2-5 strategic investments or projects to be funded in Phase II (Implementation) that meet the following criteria:

- 1. Demonstrate Proposed Impacts to Communities/Industries**
- 2. Demonstrate Project Feasibility, Commitments, and Community Support**
- 3. Promote State Climate Goals**
- 4. Support Labor Standards and Job Quality**
- 5. Demonstrate Clear Role in Regional Strategy**