

Annalisa Siregar-Wurm

We want to give some concrete examples of examples consideration for HRTC projects.

The best guide to CERF projects that the state can give us right now were Economic Development Pilot SFP. There were eight awards given and one of them is right here in Orange County. We're going to hear today from two of those folks to give us a little bit more background on the Walnut Daisy Farm Project and we hope this will be helpful to you all as we start thinking about strategies, help make the purpose of the work here a little more concrete and really understanding not just this project, but what could be transferred and applied as we consider other projects foundation for those projects.

Luis Sarmiento

I am the program director for our first Community Land Trust here in the city of Santa Ana, Thrive Santa Ana. And we're going to be talking about our project, the Walnut and Daisy Urban Farm.

Nate Greensides

The walnut and Daisy Urban Farm will include space for one, urban farming, two, cooperative development and incubation, as well as space for farmers markets and community events. All this will be developed via a community land Trust model which centers local ownership and governance.

In the Walnut and Daisy neighborhood, one in four residents have experience in farming, whether here in the US or in their places of origin. Walnut Daisy is going to have urban farming, and that's a strategy for healthier, more sustainably locally owned and produced food systems. Drawing on deep knowledge in our communities.

Cooperative development has emerged as one strategy in and around Santa Ana to combat the displacement of small businesses. For example, when the carousel in downtown, which was a staple cultural attraction for many Latinos who grew up in Sant Ana when it got shut down and a lot of longtime Mexican owned businesses were pushed out, being displaced by arbitrary rent increases and renovations, a study of downtown performed at that time in 2014 of downtown businesses was considered for the City council. The City council passed a resolution known as the Wellness District Resolution, which named Mercadito and microfarm projects as potential economic development strategies in the city.

Community ownership is the second aspect that's going to be incorporated into the project with incubation space for worker owned businesses, also known as cooperatives, as an economic development strategy.

Luis Sarmiento

We're really we're standing on and building on the work of residents for probably over a decade of community organizing that's been happening here in the city of Santa Ana. Within CERF, we know that we're talking about centering disinvested communities, and what that means is recognizing from the perspective of our communities that development historically has been a process rooted in racism and rooted in the displacement of communities of color.

There's this idea of developed countries versus undeveloped countries or underdeveloped countries, which comes out of a time where imperial powers were saying that these poor countries need to be more like these wealthy countries without recognizing the history of colonialism and exploitation that model was built on. In the United States, we've seen those types of perspectives perpetuated. Things like redlining, were the models around which our cities were developed. Some of those practices are perpetuated today the way that for communities of color, it is systemically more difficult to access financing, more difficult to develop ownership.

What we're doing is actively dismantling those systems by creating something which we call community led development. The main aspect is centering the participation, the needs, and the talents of local residents. Our guiding values are that we want to be able to address these root causes of inequality, while at the same time addressing the immediate needs that we see in our neighborhoods, and the ongoing and direct participation of local residents. We use models of popular education, meaning we are trying to move away from this very top down approach to education, in which we have experts that have all of the information and a public which is assumed to be completely disinformed. In popular education, we understand that everyone has a lot of information to share, and it's a horizontal learning process in which we learn from each other.

A lot of the work that we do with Thrive is capacity building for residents to learn the language and the

technical aspects of development in order to be part of the conversations around development, but also building capacity among institutional partners who oftentimes don't really know how to work with community. There's also a lot of learning that has to happen and has happened with institutional partners. The way we implement these guiding values in our approach to development is through a lot of different tools, a lot of different ways that community can get involved in a project, starting from door to door knocking, surveys, inviting folks to participate via surveys.

We also host a lot of different sizes and types of community meetings. We've implemented community art projects, and we understand that you have to get creative. Different folks will participate in different ways. And we've had to implement a lot of different methodologies in order to get folks in some of our neighborhoods to take ownership of the development process. Some of the elements that we think distinguished our project for selection was our approach to community engagement, putting workers first, environmental sustainability, which is also an aspect of our project. Our project had already completed our city approvals, our permit processes.

Thrive Santa Ana is a community land trust, which is a model, that permanently acquires land and administers that land as an asset for the community. CLTs very often build or manage affordable housing, but can also be used for things like open space, agriculture, commercial spaces, or community commercial spaces, and the preservation of land. We have a really great example of a Native American land trust here in Orange County that is doing some preservation work on behalf of native communities in the Bolsa area and in other parts of the United States and here in California. The first CLT here in the US came out of the civil rights movement. The first CLT is in the 1960s in Albany, Georgia. It was a group of African American farmers who saw the CLT model as a way to protect their ownership of land. Today, we have over 277 CLTs in the United States, 36 here in California, and one in Santa Ana and here in the city of Irvine.

Community groups started proposing the CLT model as a way to administer our publicly owned land in partnership with the community. This piece of land is the site of what is now under construction as the Walnut and Daisy Micro Farm. It was a piece of land which used to be the Orange County Rescue Mission many years ago and was vacant for many years. We convinced the City of Santa Ana to allow us to do a community driven development project on this site and invited residents to take ownership and provide guidance for this development project.

We're now in construction again, navigating the approval process, and were able to break ground and are now in construction. We're projected to open our space early next year.

Nate Greensides

Cooperation Santa Ana is a co-op developer, and what that means is we work with folks to provide training and resources and eventually incubation to create their own cooperative business models. Cooperation Santa Ana envisions a strong, locally owned, shared community where products and services are created with dignity and respect for the people who work them and the planet that sustains us. What is a cooperative? A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. In other words, the economy and business projects are people powered. Some popular retail stores that are co-ops include REI and ACE hardware. Worker co-ops are owned and governed by the employees of the business. They operate in all sectors of the economy and provide workers with both employment and ownership opportunities.

Co-ops put workers first because the work tends to be longer term, offers skill training and better wages as compared to similar jobs in conventional companies. One of the biggest aspects is that it improves low wage work and it helps build wealth in communities most directly affected by inequality, which helps vulnerable workers build skills and earning potential, as well as household income and assets.

In traditional business models, the business owner or business owners, the small select group of individuals who own the business make all the decisions, and the employees are subject to the will of those who are making the decisions. In the co-op, workers are the business owners. Everybody has shared governance and a stake in how things are run inside the business. With the project, a portion of the space is going to be dedicated to co-op and small business incubation. There's going to be, part of it is going to be a co-op farm known as Sauce San Crece, and La Milpa Cafe is going to finally have a physical location. Arte and Lana El Mercado Carousel is going to be able to utilize the space for the Mercadito and there's going to be space for community events and office rental to bring in some revenue. We've got more than 50 families who are supported by Crece Urban farm agriculture. 500 plus pounds of organic waste are diverted from landfills every month. This partnership is that

Crece supports new and emerging BIPOC urban Farmers and food stewards to create a just transition to a community owned food system. Crece is committed to building a local food system through democratic stewardship of land.

Luis Sarmiento

We were implementation ready, all of our different community organizations Thrive, Cooperacion Santa Ana Crece were named in the general plan that the city recently updated as community resources. We completed a lot of our pre-development. Our project is a prevailing wages project. Our disposition and development agreement with the city includes a 99-year lease, so we had site control.

This is land that is in community hands, and we're able to develop it freely as leaseholders. The development budget is a little bit over a million. The full grant amount is \$3.8 million, and that includes not construction, but a purchase offer on the land so that land can become part of the community Land trust under a direct ownership, and operating support for the micro farm moving forward.

Linda DiMario

Is there a point at which you see this project becoming self-sustaining?

Luis Sarmiento

The answer is yes. We have a pro forma that goes out about five years, and within that time is more or less what we're projecting for the community owned businesses to be able to sustain the site itself. Operating costs include maintenance, utility payments, and a construction loan.

We're planning to continue supporting through grant funds some of the operating costs of the site over the next five years or so. The businesses themselves really only have to worry about the maintenance and operating costs of the site, which is, we feel is definitely feasible for some of these small micro businesses to get to that point. And we're able to kind of cost it out little by little how those costs would be transitioned from the land trust to the businesses themselves.

Annette Kelly-Whittle

I just was curious as far as the numbers of jobs that you guys projected for this project as part of the grant application.

Luis Sarmiento

Good question. I wish I knew those numbers off the top of my head. I could definitely look a little bit more into what data we have on jobs that we're creating, because there's also definitely jobs associated with our project. I just don't have that numbers with me.

Annette Kelly-Whittle

And I think overall economic impact, would probably be an interesting or important piece of information.

Andrew Gonzalez

I'm wondering how many people are planning to be fed out of this community garden or community farm? What are the wages going to be for the workers there? I'm just trying to grasp sort of what the economic impact for workers and wages and true equitable economic development out of this project.

Nate Greensides

The 0.4 acres, as was stated earlier, supports 50 plus families on a monthly basis. That site's got a lot of compost being processed, so that's becoming a source of revenue as well. And then in terms of wages, because they're a worker co-op all their wages are meant to be living wage.

And when there's a shortfall from the revenue of the farming efforts there's grants that provide support where.

Annalisa Siregar-Wurm

Our second presentation today we have Garry with Coastkeepers and Melanie with the Banning Ranch Conservancy, two HRTC members leading a presentation on environmental and economic justice. They want to talk about what's happening and what's been successful in the county so far.

Garry Brown

Thank you so much. We want to thank Jesse for the opportunity to present today. And this is going to be a co presentation by both myself and Melanie Schlotterbeck.

We must challenge the narrative by meaningfully incorporating environmental sustainability, resilience, safety, health, and equity into each project to ensure that they meet the state standards for CERF so that we present competitive projects that receive funding. Our presentation today is meant to inspire us to think creatively and spark conversations that intersect each of our priorities, as well as an invitation to reach out to us so that we can help each other find opportunities of collaboration. A resilient economy and an environment go hand in hand, just as a strong and healthy workforce and a safe and healthy community go hand in hand.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

Our objective today with this presentation is to introduce you to our work through the eyes of the environmentalists and environmental justice advocates, the ones who work on these topics every day. The natural world struggles to keep up with the demands we make of it, but its systems continue to operate.

There are a lot of opportunities for collaboration, and we hope to shed some light on these and acknowledge the inclusive nature of the environmental category. The work of nonprofits and the environment can be incorporated meaningfully into each and every one of these industries.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

Environmental resilience is a core CERF priority, and it should be its own industry. Every project that gets funded through CERF should have an environmental alignment because of its tie to the carbon neutral goal. The nonprofit Friends of Harbor's beaches and parks created the Green Vision map in the late 1990s. It's a living document that shows lands that are protected and those that are in need of protection. This Orange county focused map has over 275 potential properties totaling over 30,000 acres available for conservation. What's the tie to CERF? Governor Newsom recently signed SB 337 into law, which mandates protecting 30% of California's lands and waters by 2030. Buying land reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves the air quality and water quality, increases carbon storage and improves our quality of life, among many other things.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

Implementing the Green vision map could include conserving land from willing sellers or restoring degraded habitats. It could also be expanding marine protected areas off of our coast. Other conservation mechanisms include conservation easements where the landowner still owns the land but permanently restricts its use, and wildlife corridor projects?

Melanie Schlotterbeck

Two examples of shovel ready projects that implement the Green Vision map include completion of the West Coyote Hills acquisition by the City of Fullerton and Friends of Coyote Hills and the collaborative public private effort led by Laguna Greenbelt to create a wildlife corridor between the 22,000 acres protected in Laguna coast to the Santa Ana Mountains at the five freeway. Under Governor Newsom, more emphasis is being placed on tribal governments, land return and tribal rights. These concepts include employing traditional ecological knowledge like cultural burning and nature-based solutions to improve habitat lands. It could also come in the form of better planning with tribal input, the incorporation of cultural access easements across Indigenous homelands or co-management of the land.

Sacred site protection of known burial grounds and other significant sites is important too. Two examples of shovel ready projects that could help with Indigenous collaboration include the protection of the Goddell Property, which is twelve acres near Bolsa Chica wetlands. This site has significant cultural value to the local tribal nations. Another project is the creation of a museum focused on indigenous history in Irvine.

Garry Brown

Best management practices in the workplace are critical to keep people in the environment safe. Low impact development in construction activities has proven to reduce pollutants and urban runoff, along with providing benefits like waterwise landscaping and habitats for wildlife. County stormwater permits manage how much pollution can be discharged into our waterways, harbors, and coastal waters. A couple of projects ready for funding is the DROPS program. This program enhanced the school landscapes with rain, gardens and diversions that reduce pollution, recharge drinking water supply, and engage students in hands on science education.

The Fairview park provides habitat for endangered species, diverts runoff to ponds that filter pollutants, and recharge groundwater, and this is a site for a student led conservation research projects. Community engagement is critical in understanding and addressing inequities and injustices that have detrimentally affected people's health and the ability to safely be a part of the workforce. Our transition to a carbon neutral economy must be a just transition for all, including our labor communities, children and youth, and all marginalized people. Accessible pathways with paid opportunities, childcare, nutrition, transportation, safe working environments, and housing are all needed to ensure an equitable and adjust transition to a carbon neutral economy.

Some examples of projects is Orange County Environmental Justice's Soil led Biomediation project that is a partnership between youth cultivating changes and UCI public Health. Community members took soil samples and determined hotspots for lead in their community. They then developed remediation programs using California native plants. They produced two educational videos that have won awards from the EPA. Water is what elevates our county to give us the quality of life we enjoy here in Orange County. They provide economic value in the form of recreation, tourism and resources. Ocean dependent tourism and recreation generates more than \$2 billion to Orange County

Today in California, 94% of our waterways are polluted with at least one pollutant and most waterways contain multiple pollutants. Some projects is the Pacific Marine Mammal center in Laguna beach, which rescues, rehabilitates and releases marine mammals, along with conducting research, is currently undergoing renovations that include on site water recycling and treatment. We must ensure that we are implementing conservation projects wherever possible. Our purple pipe recycled water program started at IRWD and is well established in many areas of the country.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

There are a lot of planning projects that will help improve management and stewardship goals. This helps build climate resilience, create new jobs and mentorship opportunities in science and other technical fields, and improve access for communities needing park space and nature. Two examples include the recently protected Randall Preserve, which is undergoing numerous planning efforts, including a resource management plan and coastal resilience plan. This land is immediately adjacent to two disinvested communities. Cities are also working towards reducing carbon outputs with the creation of climate action plans like the one Santa Ana is creating. These can include things like energy audits, solar investments and better policy. Urban greening is yet another opportunity to invest.

Catalyst funds incorporates improved design in previously disinvested locations. It can come in many forms, like planting trees to adding water fountains at parks, and transit stops to help mitigate the effects of high heat days. Newer to the mix is the concept of community gardens that promotes the farm to table concept, reducing the reliance on big farms and transportation to get produce to the area. Two sample projects include the City of Santa Ana's Urban Greening Project, which incorporates community amenities, streetlights, playgrounds and trees. Second is the potential to adopt a countywide native tree preservation policy by the Board of Supervisors. This policy sets standards on how native trees are removed and replaced. It recognizes the intrinsic biological and ecological benefits of trees.

My last example includes infrastructure projects. This can include installing electric vehicle charging stations to help meet the state's goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. Other examples are adding cool roofs or cool streets to combat local heat islands, mixed use zoning so that people are near services and making surfaces pervious to help groundwater recharge and reduce urban runoff. The first example is the city of Brea's Lane reduction of Birch street near the Brea Mall, which creates a safer, pedestrian oriented corridor to get people to the Brea downtown, which is where they spend money, so it boosts the economy. Finally, one of Orange County's largest park assets includes the Tri County Chino Hills State Park. About a decade ago, rains and poor drainage permanently closed one of the favored east west trails enjoyed by visitors. Funding could be allocated to make the final repairs and reopen this trail.

Garry Brown

Our recent outreach and engagement surveys findings show that education, training and skills development as a top solution to ensure there are accessible, high quality jobs for most economically disadvantaged individuals and families. Studies have shown that hands-on learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, the environment, arts and math, paired with stewardship and the solution based approach, creates bridges for community members to access these job sectors. There is a large demand in our communities for these opportunities projects.

Garry Brown

Examples include Coast Keepers in the Institute for Conservation Research and Education student led research projects where students visit various sensitive habitats throughout the county regularly during a school year to conduct research that could inform future habitat restoration decision making. There's also a need for additional community monitoring of the health and status of our environment, such as Sea and Sage Autobonds, Christmas Bird Count. This is our opportunity to come together and work to ensure that everyone has access to the amazing quality of life we can enjoy and secure in Orange County and for future generations.

Jesse Ben-Ron

There's \$9 million for predevelopment projects. The state knows that we don't know what these projects are. Then we have the sector investment coordinators. The state recognizes there is no way that we will have selected the coordinators.

What we do know, as regional conveners, how OCBC thinks it's best to spend the \$2 million to sustain this per the requirements, and then the fiscal agent gets \$1.5 million in order to make sure there's adequate staffing to do the compliance.

For the \$2 million that are designated to the regional convener, OCBC will hire a full time manager. We will still have Dr. Walrod be in support of all this work, we have our communications on staff, a second support person to do the calendar, invites, the notes and all the staffing, as well as rent and other operating expenses. For two years OCBC will designate 1.25 million.

The rest of the \$2 million we think it's important to spend on compensating the collaborative. We are supposed to sustain research. We think \$100,000 is fair. \$180,000 for outreach and engagement. The main purpose here is to ensure that we are hearing from community when we start surfacing catalysts and implementation projects

For the sector investment coordinators, we will have five organizations or individuals doing this work for a total of \$1.5 million for them to do. The following ways to think about this is there are people who might know specific industries. Those people could be valuable partners or potential sector investment coordinators, or you could look for people who are real experts in some of these specific skill sets.

We will have an RFQ process with this, and we'll develop that in preparation of May.

Toni Symonds

One of the pieces that I felt that we would advantage ourselves and get closer to our alignment with disadvantaged communities is to make sure that we're including intentionally and specifically language about skill sets and activities that are helping community members where they are today to go forward. I was thinking we would want to say things like workforce training, connections, ensuring that we're assisting the highest environmental standards, just transition.

Jesse Ben-Ron

In the proposal narrative and in the budget summary. I welcome people's feedback and input on how they want to answer these questions. I will note that these answers are not supposed to be more than 500 words.

Iosefa Alofaituli

As we think about many of the organizations that are rooted in these disinvested communities, oftentimes the data infrastructure is not strong. And I assume that with catalyst programming that data collection, data management, data reporting is going to be critical. Do we know what type of Reporting is required for the catalyst program?

Jesse Ben-Ron

The question from a compliance standpoint. That's why I'd have to defer to the fiscal agent. But as far as what's required for the actual activities themselves, that has not been made explicitly clear by the state. Although I'm sure, we can always have our own criteria, so long as it doesn't contradict the state. So that is something we could definitely develop before we start selecting projects.

Katharyn Muniz

Could you go over the five sector investment coordinators, and what those are?

Jesse Ben-Ron

They're supposed to be our technical eyes and ears on projects within those specific sectors and the feasibility of the things being requested, and they need to constantly be looking at funding.

Linda DiMario

And the \$1.5 million, would be evenly divided among the five industry sector coordinators?

Jesse Ben-Ron

We have time to decide, but that does not need to be the case.

Katharyn Muniz

Jesse and those five sectors, could you just repeat them?

Jesse Ben-Ron

Healthcare and social assistance, education services, manufacturing, accommodation and food services, and construction.

Annalisa Siregar-Wurm

There's three documents in the appendix of your agenda packet, so you'll see an executive summary there of all of the pilot projects that were awarded in May. You will also see the state criteria on how this collaborative should start thinking about the differences between a ready to go project that we've been talking about, ready for implementation, and other sources of funding beyond the jobs for CERF versus what a last mile project is in an exploratory project.

Linda DiMario

One of the questions I have in seeing the five industries that were selected, I'm curious, how are we going to make certain that the emphasis on those five industries are integrated with the 21st century and 22nd century industries that are the current cornerstone of Orange County's economy now?

Jesse Ben-Ron

I don't know if we can't guarantee that's going to be done with all industries. I think that you can continue to elevate that as something for your colleagues to consider, but there's no way that we can.

Toni Symonds

I also think you're going to find in both the stakeholder map, which I haven't looked at that closely, and the SWOT analysis, that there may be other strategies or groups that either have these industries or have identified other industries, because it's not necessarily that this task is the highest and best industries for the region. It's the five industries that the group feels when you talk about centering on disinvested communities that you want to begin to address.

Adine Forman

The state does have things like high road training partnerships and high road construction careers in the labor agency. And those are good ways to look at projects that have climate resiliency and career pathways.

Sarah Riggs

Is there a certain amount of last mile ready to go and exploratory projects? Is that divided in any way?

Jesse Ben-Ron

The answer is no, but the state did say they want to see exploratory projects.

Sarah Riggs

In regard to disinvested communities, my concern would be that anything that is passed just wouldn't be only for one community, that it would kind of be inclusive of anyone under that bracket.

Jesse Ben-Ron

From an ethnicity or heritage, indigenous or Native American descent is the only one explicitly mentioned. Everything else is based on income, so it should be colorblind when it comes to disinvested communities.