



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



**Amy J. Bodek, AICP**  
Director of Regional Planning

**Dennis Slavin**  
Chief Deputy Director,  
Regional Planning

December 17, 2019

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT A GRANT AWARD FROM THE  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY'S CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND  
RESILIENCY GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND THE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY  
ASSESSMENT FOR THE GENERAL PLAN SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

Recommendation to authorize the Director of the Department of Regional Planning (Department) to accept and implement a grant award under the Southern California Gas Company's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Grant Program (Grant Program) to support the development of the Adaptive Capacity Assessment (Assessment) for the General Plan Safety Element Update.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:**

1. Find that the acceptance of the grant award is not a project pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
2. Adopt the attached Resolution to accept grant funding of \$50,000 from the Grant Program for the purpose of developing the Assessment.
3. Authorize the Department to execute all necessary documents to administer the grant.

320 West Temple Street • Los Angeles, CA 90012 • 213-974-6411 • TDD: 213-617-2292

   @LACDRP | [planning.lacounty.gov](http://planning.lacounty.gov)

## **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approval of the recommendation will enable the Department to accept the award from the Grant Program to fund the development of the Assessment for disadvantaged communities in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (County). This Assessment will support the update to the General Plan Safety Element that is required to be completed by January 1, 2022.

The purpose of the Safety Element is to reduce potential short and long-term risks of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change and other hazards. California Senate Bill 379 requires all Safety Element updates to include a climate change vulnerability assessment and address climate change and resiliency strategies. A vulnerability assessment includes potential climate impacts and community adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is the potential or ability of a system, region, or community to adapt to the effects or impacts of climate change. Adaptive capacity is often determined by access to resources and socio-economic characteristics.

The Department will be assessing the adaptive capacity of disadvantaged communities in the unincorporated County. Used in conjunction with the Chief Sustainability Office's forthcoming climate vulnerability assessment, this Assessment will offer the Department a fuller understanding of the perceptions and attitudes residents have toward climate change and provide a baseline from which to develop adaptation and resilience strategies for the Safety Element.

## **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

Participation in the Grant Program supports the following Strategic Plan goal and strategies:

- **Goal II. Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities**
  - Strategy II.2 - Support the Wellness of Our Communities
  - Strategy II.3 – Make Environmental Sustainability Our Daily Reality

Conducting an Assessment that is informed by residents or participants of disadvantaged communities will help the Department understand communities' baseline institutional, educational, and social capacities. Knowing where the communities currently are in their readiness to adapt will enable the Department to tailor effective climate adaptation and resilience strategies for the Safety Element that align with the County's Strategic Plan goal of Fostering Vibrant and Resilient Communities. This effort also aligns with the Board of Supervisors' interest in implementing the County's General Plan and Sustainability Plan in an equitable manner.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

Participation in the Grant Program will not result in any new significant costs to the County. The total cost for the development and preparation of the Assessment is estimated to be \$50,000. The funds will be used for production and mailing of outreach materials, training for internal capacity building, participation incentives and stipends, translation services, and food and refreshments for the planned workshops.

**FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

All documents required for the acceptance of the awarded grant will be subject to approval by County Counsel prior to execution by the Department.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

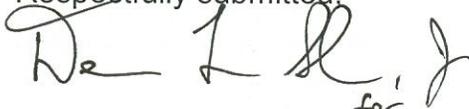
The acceptance of the grant is not a project for which review is required under CEQA. Section 15378(b)(4) of CEQA states that a "Project" does not include the "creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment." The acceptance of the grant will allow the County to fund the Assessment. The acceptance of the grant will not commit the County to the adoption of any plan, policy, or project. An appropriate environmental document will be prepared for the project as required for the adoption of the plan.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

Participation in the Grant Program will improve planning and services to the public through targeted community engagement that promotes climate adaptive and resilient communities.

Should you have any questions please contact Iris Chi, Regional Planner, Environmental Planning and Sustainability Section at [ichi@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:ichi@planning.lacounty.gov) or (213) 974-6461.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy J. Bodek, AICP  
Director of Regional Planning

AJB:BS:PH:IC:ems

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
December 17, 2019  
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Attachments:

Board of Supervisors Resolution  
Grant Program Award Letter  
Scope of Work

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel

S\_AP\_121719\_BL\_GAS\_CO\_GRANT

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
AUTHORIZING RECEIPT OF GRANT FUNDS UNDER THE  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY'S CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND  
RESILIENCY GRANT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the County of Los Angeles (County) is eligible to receive grant funding in the amount of \$50,000 for the Adaptive Capacity Assessment for the General Plan Safety Element Update from the Southern California Gas Company's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Grant Program (Grant Program); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Supervisors finds as follows:

1. The Department of Regional Planning submitted a proposal to obtain funding from the Grant Program to develop an Adaptive Capacity Assessment for the General Plan Safety Element Update.
2. The Los Angeles County General Plan identifies the purpose of the Safety Element is to reduce potential short and long-term risks of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, and other hazards.
3. California Senate Bill 379 requires all Safety Element updates to include a climate change vulnerability assessment and address climate change and resiliency strategies. A vulnerability assessment includes potential climate impacts and community adaptive capacity.
4. The Department of Regional Planning will be assessing the adaptive capacity of disadvantaged communities in unincorporated Los Angeles County through in-depth workshops to gain a fuller understanding of the perceptions and attitudes residents have towards climate change and provide a baseline from which to develop adaptation and resilience strategies for the Safety Element Update. This effort also aligns with the Board's interest in implementing the County's General Plan and Sustainability Plan in an equitable manner.
5. Funds totaling \$ 50,000 from the Grant Program will be allocated to the County.
6. The Board of Supervisors must authorize the Department of Regional Planning to enter into an agreement or contract with Southern California Gas Company to receive the Grant Program funds.
7. In accordance with Section 15378(b)(4) of the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, adoption of this resolution and acceptance of grant funds does not constitute a project and, therefore, is not subject to the requirements of CEQA.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. That the receipt of the Grant Program is not a project under CEQA.
2. That the acceptance of the grant is approved as it is consistent with the goals, policies, and programs of the Los Angeles County General Plan.
3. That the acceptance of the grant will help foster vibrant and resilient communities in unincorporated areas.
4. That the Director of Regional Planning or his designee is authorized to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to, applications, agreements, contracts, amendments, receipt of funds and payment requests, which may be necessary for the purposes of administering this grant.

The foregoing Resolution was on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019, adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles and ex officio the governing body of all other special assessment and taxing districts, agencies and authorities for which said Board so acts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Celia Zavala  
Executive Officer-Clerk of  
the Board of Supervisors of the County of  
Los Angeles

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

MARY WICKHAM  
County Counsel

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
ELAINE LEMKE  
Assistant County Counsel



A  Sempra Energy utility

Geoffrey Danker, AICP  
Franchise, Fees & Planning Manager  
555 W. 5th Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

213-244-3363  
[gdanker@socalgas.com](mailto:gdanker@socalgas.com)

November 4, 2019

Iris Chi  
Los Angeles County, Department of Regional Planning  
320 W. Temple Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: SoCalGas Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Grant**

Dear Iris,

Congratulations! On behalf of the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), I am pleased to present you with a 2019 Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Grant in the amount of \$50,000 in support of your Adaptive Capacity Assessment as part of Los Angeles County's Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Safety Element Update.

SoCalGas is committed to helping improve local resilience in the communities we serve by supporting initiatives that advance projects that support enhancement of local climate adaptation efforts.

To start the process, please contact Geoffrey Danker, AICP at [gdanker@socalgas.com](mailto:gdanker@socalgas.com) or 213-244-3363 to set up a meeting regarding next steps. Additionally, if you choose to accept the grant, as specified in the grant requirements, the County should include SoCalGas staff when planning both technical advisory and community meetings. In addition, SoCalGas staff will help to ensure that the approved Scope of Work, Project Timeline, and project funding will be maintained throughout the life of the contract. We further encourage you to engage with SoCalGas throughout the entire grant life, when applicable.

Once again, congratulations! We eagerly look forward to working with you to bolster resilience throughout Los Angeles County.

Cheers,

Geoffrey Danker, AICP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'GD', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Franchise, Fees & Planning Manager



## CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCY PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

NAME: Los Angeles County Dept of Regional Planning - Iris Chi, Regional Planner

ADDRESS: 320 W. Temple Street, 13th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012

EMAIL ADDRESS: ichi@planning.lacounty.gov

PHONE NUMBER: 213-974-6461

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

As used herein, "Responder" refers to (i) the individual who submits, and (ii) the entity on behalf of whom an authorized individual has submitted, a proposal ("Proposal") to a grant request for proposal ("RFP") issued by Southern California Gas Company ("SoCalGas") in connection with the SoCalGas Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Planning Grant Program.

By submitting a Proposal, Responder will be deemed to have agreed to, and be bound by, the following terms:

1. Responder grants SoCalGas<sup>®</sup> permission to use any or all of the information contained in its Proposal for marketing and other promotional purposes, as determined solely at the discretion of SoCalGas. SoCalGas agrees to use any information provided solely for marketing and promotional purposes. SoCalGas will not sell Responder's information to any third parties. Responder agrees that SoCalGas will have no obligation to keep Responder's information (including the Proposal) confidential.
2. This RFP is not and shall not be construed to be a contract, offer, or request for an offer. SoCalGas will not have any express or implied obligations or responsibilities to issue a grant to Responder or any other individual or entity. SoCalGas makes no commitment to issue any grant to Responder (or any other individual or entity that has submitted a Proposal) even if SoCalGas enters into discussions or negotiations with Responder (or any other party) regarding a Proposal.
3. SoCalGas in its sole and exclusive discretion, and with or without notice or reason, may (i) accept or reject any Proposal in whole or in part, (ii) reject all Proposals, or (iii) withdraw this RFP at any time before or after submission of Proposals. SoCalGas retains the discretion and right to change, without notice, the criteria for evaluating RFP responses even after an RFP has been released and/or Proposals have been received.
4. SoCalGas reserves the right in its sole and exclusive discretion to waive irregularities or defects in any Proposal.
5. SoCalGas reserves the right to request additional information from any or all Responders. Responder agrees to make itself available for follow-up as requested by SoCalGas.
6. SoCalGas will not be responsible for errors or omissions by any Responder submitting a Proposal, and SoCalGas shall be the sole judge of the responsiveness, appropriateness, and completeness of any and all Proposals.
7. SoCalGas reserves the sole and exclusive right in its discretion to modify the timeline for decision-making after an RFP has been released and even after Proposals have been received.
8. All costs incurred by a Responder in reviewing, responding to, providing follow-up, negotiating, and otherwise engaging in the RFP response process are the responsibility of Responder. SoCalGas is not responsible for and will not reimburse any of Responder's costs.
9. Responder certifies and represents to SoCalGas that neither Responder's Proposal nor SoCalGas' use of information contained in the Proposal (including the rights outlined in Section 1 above) will constitute an infringement or violation of the intellectual property rights (including trademarks, copyrights, patents, trade secrets, moral rights) or privacy rights of any individual or entity.
10. SoCalGas reserves the right to amend these Terms and Conditions at any time at its sole discretion, with or without notice to Responder, and Responder shall be bound to the Terms and Conditions as so amended.

# Adaptive Capacity Assessment of Disadvantaged Communities in Los Angeles County

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning) is currently updating the Safety Element of the County's General Plan for all unincorporated communities. The purpose of the Safety Element is to reduce potential short and long-term risks of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, and other hazards; this document will be approved by the Board of Supervisors. According to California State Bill 379, all Safety Element updates must now include a climate change vulnerability assessment, and address climate change adaptation and resiliency strategies.

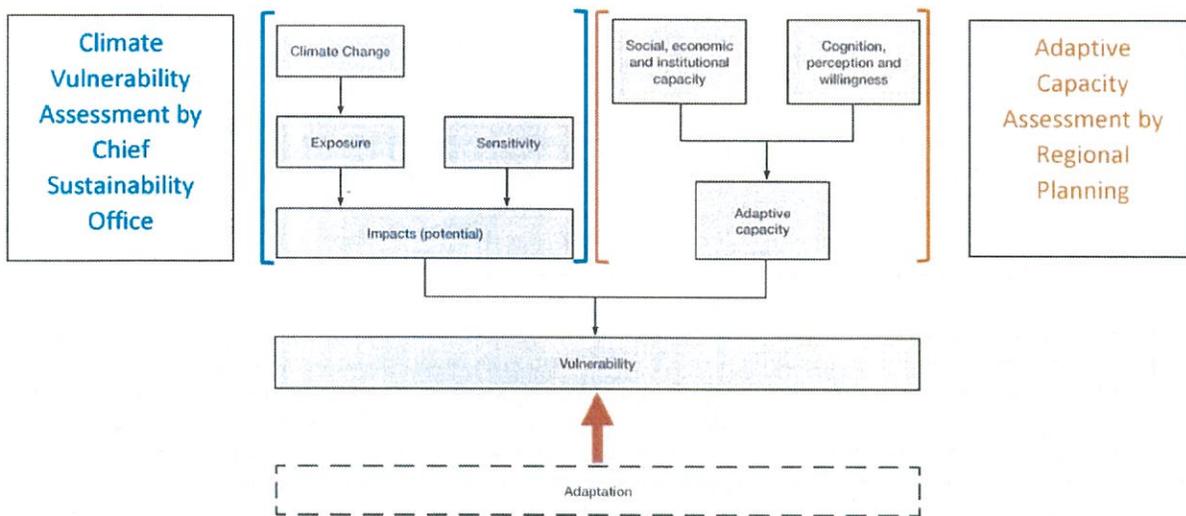


Figure 1: Vulnerability to climate change as a function of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity (BuroHappold Engineering, 2019; Schroter et al. 2005)

A vulnerability assessment includes two components: (1) potential climate impacts and (2) community adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is the potential or ability of a system, region, or community to adapt to the effects or impacts of climate change (Smit and Pilifosova 2001). Adaptive capacity is often determined by access to resources and socio-economic characteristics. For example, residents with access to cooling stations and who have the means to relocate to a hotel during a climate emergency have a higher adaptive capacity than residents who lack these resources.

Regional Planning would like to assess the adaptive capacity (Assessment) of disadvantaged communities in unincorporated Los Angeles County. Per SB 535, we define disadvantaged communities here as communities in the top 25% scoring areas from CalEnviroScreen (CalEPA 2017). Used in conjunction with the Chief Sustainability Office's forthcoming climate vulnerability assessment, this Assessment will offer Regional Planning a fuller understanding of the

perceptions and attitudes residents have towards climate change and provide a baseline from which to develop adaptation and resilience strategies for the Safety Element.

## **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

- **How do disadvantaged communities in unincorporated Los Angeles County perceive climate risks? What are the constraints to the adaptive capacity of disadvantaged communities?**
- **How can Los Angeles County enhance the adaptive capacity of communities to reduce vulnerabilities in disadvantaged communities?**
- **How can the County do a better job in communicating climate change risks to the communities, especially to disadvantaged communities?**

Los Angeles County (County) is unique compared to other counties in California because it is large, comprises diverse geographies, and is home to diverse populations. Spanning 4,083 square miles, the County stretches along 75 miles of the Pacific Coast and shares boundaries with four different counties. The physical environment of the County includes beaches and shorelines, the Mojave Desert, coastal plains and valleys, and a 10,000-foot tall mountain range. Each geographic type can present different climate impacts. Over a million people live in the 140 unincorporated areas of the County, spanning urban, suburban, and rural contexts. This population represents multiple different cultures, ethnicities, and English language attainment. With limited resources, Regional Planning must determine which communities are most vulnerable to climate impacts and how to engage them to improve their adaptive capacity.

Conducting an Assessment that is informed by in-depth interviews and workshops with disadvantaged communities with help Regional Planning understand communities' baseline institutional, educational and social capacities. Knowing where the communities currently are in their readiness to adapt will enable Regional Planning to tailor effective climate adaptation and resilience strategies for the Safety Element.

## **GRANT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE**

### **Stakeholder Committee**

**Collaboration** is a main theme for the Assessment. Regional Planning will be assembling a Stakeholder Committee to ensure multiple points of view. Qualitative studies can reveal local knowledge and unique perspectives that may not be captured by quantitative data alone.

### **Disadvantaged Communities**

What is innovative about this project is the how Regional Planning would like to work with SoCalGas to reach disadvantaged populations through rate payer mailings. Disadvantaged populations often consist of hard-to-reach populations and reaching these populations is often difficult for researchers. Disadvantaged populations may have fewer resources to adapt to climate change, but planners are unaware of their true needs. Regional Planning wants to listen to stories from residents to understand what adaptive capacities are available to them. Regional Planning envisions SoCalGas's regular mailings as a fitting method to reach these populations

because disadvantaged populations may still receive and pay their utility bills by mail if they do not have credit cards, bank accounts, or regular access to internet.

### **Co-benefits**

Co-benefits of the Assessment include increasing resident awareness of potential climate impacts, improving County emergency preparedness planning for climate change, increasing resident engagement in policy development, and piloting a novel form of participatory research that may serve as a model for future educational outreach campaigns. Participation in workshops may result in increased community cohesion.

## **ADAPTIVE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT SCOPE OF WORK**

Regional Planning will conduct 12 to 20 Adaptive Capacity workshops to facilitate in-depth discussions on the adaptive capacity of disadvantaged communities. Disadvantaged communities will be selected based on climate hazards, CalEnviroScreen, and input from the Stakeholder Committee. The communities will be a combination of geographic- and demographic-based groups.

<b>Geographic-based Communities</b>	<b>Demographic-based Groups</b>
Fire	Seniors
Flood	People with disabilities
Sea Level Rise	Transportation disadvantaged
	Limited English proficiency

### **Stakeholder Committee**

Regional Planning will form a Stakeholder Committee to help advise and inform the Assessment development. Regional Planning will consult with SoCalGas to determine whether other members should be included in the committee.

- o Tribal representative
- o Community based organizations
- o NGOs
- o Youth and Aging
- o Utilities
- o Local businesses
- o Faith-based organizations
- o Farm and domestic workers
- o People with disabilities
- o Social scientists
- o County departments

### **Public Engagement**

The public engagement campaign will consider creative methods in reaching members of the public to participate in the Adaptive Capacity workshops. This grant is a mutually beneficial opportunity for Regional Planning to collaborate with SoCalGas Outreach to reach disadvantaged populations through SoCalGas's billing inserts and paperless billing notifications regular mailings and special Assistance Programs to further garner interest in participation. Regional Planning will pay close attention to the feedback of this subgroup of ratepayers, as their capacity to adapt to climate impacts may be more limited.

Outreach materials will be translated into different languages to include communities with language barriers. Fifty-four percent of unincorporated area residents speak a language other

than English. Of these residents, the majority speak Spanish (41%), with an additional 10% speaking an Asian and/or Pacific Island language. With a high percentage of residents speaking another language other than English, it is important to ensure that public agencies provide local resources, outreach materials, and services to residents in the appropriate non-English languages.

Regional Planning will collaborate with other County Departments and Community-Based Organizations to reach members of the public who are eager to participate and provide meaningful input.

### **Adaptive Capacity Workshops**

Workshops will be conducted as an open house, focus group, or one-on-one interview based on the level of interest from disadvantaged communities and groups. The goal of the workshop is to (1) provide information to participants so that there is a basic level of understanding of climate change topics and risks, and (2) receive meaningful input from participants regarding personal perception, attitudes, and degree of readiness to adapt to climate impacts.

#### Education component

- Information on climate change and definition of adaptive capacity
- Types of the climate hazards and risks
- How a community can be resilient to hazards

#### Discussion component

- Perception towards risks and attitude towards different types of adaptation
- Measure of resources available and likelihood to use resources
- Shock and slow onset climate impacts – how participants perceive and prepare for potential risks
- Ideas on better preparation and adaptation

### **Presentation of Results**

The final Adaptive Capacity Assessment will be presented in three ways:

1. Appendix to Climate Vulnerability Assessment  
The Climate Vulnerability Assessment, along with the Adaptive Capacity Assessment will guide Regional Planning in customizing adaptation and resiliency strategies for the Safety Element update. The Safety Element will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors.
2. Multi-language Infographics and Climate website  
Regional Planning will translate the data into a visual handout using infographics and plain language. This handout will also be translated into Spanish, Chinese, and Korean and made publicly available on our Climate website. This website will thoughtfully engage viewers through blog posts, easily accessible documents, and connections to active social media platforms.
3. Shared with Planning community  
We think that a qualitative adaptive capacity component is important to include in a climate vulnerability assessment. Regional Planning will disseminate the results with the

academic and professional planning communities. We will also offer a best practices model for other jurisdictions to follow.

<b>PROJECT TIMELINE (12 months)</b>	
Month 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)</li> <li>• Draft Outreach Plan</li> <li>• Prepare community profiles and research existing social networks</li> </ul>
Months 1-3 (Duration: 3 mos.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemble and solicit input from Stakeholder Committee</li> <li>• Develop and produce outreach materials</li> <li>• Finalize workshop logistics</li> <li>• Partner with SoCalGas for public engagement campaign</li> <li>• Send outreach materials</li> </ul>
Months 4-9 (Duration: 6 mos.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Adaptive Capacity workshops</li> </ul>
Months 10-12 (Duration: 3 mos.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and finalize results</li> <li>• Disseminate final Assessment</li> </ul>

<b>PROJECT COSTS</b>		
<b>Project Components</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Production and mailing of outreach materials	\$10,000	SoCalGas Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Grant
Training for capacity building	\$38,000	
Participation incentives and stipends		
Translation services		
Food and refreshments for workshops	\$ 2,000	
Staffing – 2 project managers, Graphic designer	\$50,000	Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (In-kind services)

### References

California Environmental Protection Agency. 2017. "Designation of Disadvantaged Communities Pursuant to Senate Bill 535 (De Leon)," April, 32.

Schröter, Dagmar, Colin Polsky, and Anthony G. Patt. 2005. "Assessing Vulnerabilities to the Effects of Global Change: An Eight Step Approach." *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 10 (4): 573–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11027-005-6135-9>.

Sinclair, Martha, Joanne O'Toole, Manori Malawaraarachchi, and Karin Leder. 2012. "Comparison of Response Rates and Cost-Effectiveness for a Community-Based Survey: Postal, Internet and Telephone Modes with Generic or Personalised Recruitment Approaches." *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 12 (1): 132. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-12-132>.

Smit, Barry, and Pillifosova, Olga, 2001, "Adaptation to Climate Change in the Context of Sustainable Development and Equity", in *Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, Chapter 18, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.