
News Release

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Ontario celebrates awarding of \$35 million Transformative Communities grant for Downtown revitalization

ONTARIO, Calif. – The city, community stakeholders and regional leaders are celebrating today’s formal approval of a \$35 million grant from the California Strategic Growth Council, which provides a major boost to Ontario’s plans for a modern urban village in and around its historic downtown core.

The Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) grant follows six years of planning and community engagement, led by the city as part of a broad effort to uplift the downtown area, create new economic opportunities and improve the health and well-being of all residents. Ontario was among three cities approved for TCC funding following the recommendation of Growth Council staff.

“We’re honored to have the support of the Strategic Growth Council in building a healthier community that provides long-term opportunities for residents and businesses. This has been our City Council’s vision for years, and to see it come to life is very rewarding,” said Mayor Paul S. Leon, who attended today’s meeting in Sacramento along with members of the City Council, city staff and community partners.

Said Randall Winston, Executive Director of the Strategic Growth Council, “Through their Transformative Climate Communities award, the City of Ontario will be able to leverage years of community engagement and planning to revitalize their city’s downtown core in a way that has a profound impact on environmental, economic and health outcomes for local residents. We are proud to support this truly transformative endeavor.”

The TCC program, in its first year, is designed to encourage transformative, neighborhood-level projects that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and create healthier, more resilient communities.

Ontario's plan features high-quality multimodal transportation, affordable housing, "urban greening," solar energy, a small business incubator and workforce training. Some projects will break ground early this year, with others being rolled out in phases over the next three years.

"Having a range of projects designed to improve the quality of life for our residents is the kind of comprehensive approach we need to take to maximize our chances for success," said Mayor pro Tem Alan D. Wapner.

Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), said approval of the \$35 million grant is a major step forward for the region as a whole.

"What Ontario is doing should serve as a model for other cities to follow. City leaders had a vision, engaged community partners and found the resources to make it happen," Ikhata said. "It's also important to remember that improving air quality – an important part of this plan – is not specific to any one community. What Ontario is doing helps all of us."

Transportation is a major element of the plan. Omnitrans will increase the frequency of its bus routes along Euclid Avenue, and a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including construction of a Class IV Buffered Bike Lane on Mission Boulevard, will promote safe active transportation. Other improvements include development of a downtown mobility hub, five premium bus shelters and transit training and incentives for area residents.

Additional projects included in the downtown plan:

- A 101-unit affordable housing development located on Holt Avenue, just west of Grove Avenue – in partnership with National Community Renaissance.
- The community-run Ontario Carbon Farm, which will take green waste from local restaurants and convert it to compost for use in the community.
- The planting of 365 trees in the project area.
- A small business incubator program.

- The installation of rooftop solar on 100 single- and multifamily homes. In addition to the energy and environmental benefits, the weatherization program will provide training and job benefits for residents.

“It is our responsibility to do what we can to promote these climate-smart programs to have a sustainable downtown.” said Council Member Jim W. Bowman. “The future of our downtown will be much brighter, and a bit cooler, if we always keep in mind that health also includes our environmental impact.”

Funding from the TCC grant is being paired with existing San Bernardino County Workforce Development programs to enhance workforce training and job placement opportunities.

“Pairing existing programs that support small business with the new opportunities available through this grant funding is a great way to enhance the efforts already being made to improve workforce training and placement.” said Council Member Debra Dorst-Porada.

The additional housing addresses a critical need in the downtown area, said Council Member Ruben Valencia.

“Bringing housing units to this project area is setting residents up with not only the opportunity to have affordable housing, but access to all of the other amenities this grant is funding,” Valencia said. “Housing combined with the major improvements in transportation and connectivity to the rest of the region will make this a premiere place to live.”

A budget breakdown of the Ontario program follows.

For more information on the TCC program, visit :www.sgc.ca.gov/programs/tcc/vision/ or Twitter and Facebook at @CalSGC and @CAClimateInvest.

	Total Cost	Requested Grant Funds	Total Leverage
Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities	\$35,423,048.00	\$18,825,393.00	\$16,597,655.00
Low Carbon Transit Operations	\$1,901,750.00	\$1,901,750.00	-
Urban Community Forestry	\$541,284.16	\$529,821.16	\$11,463.00
Low-Income Weatherization Program			
Multi-family	\$1,089,360.00	\$1,089,360.00	-
Low Income	\$2,456,000.00	\$1,656,000.00	\$800,000.00
Organics	\$1,306,500.00	\$1,060,000.00	\$246,500.00
Active Transportation Program			
Ontario Connector	\$2,035,401.47	\$1,848,187.44	\$187,214.03
Mission Blvd	\$6,927,544.09	\$6,635,490.00	\$292,054.09
Pedestrian Pathway	\$244,614.39	\$182,138.00	\$62,476.39
High Quality Job Creation & Workforce Development	\$965,489.40	-	\$965,489.40
Health and Well-being	\$308,594.93	-	\$308,594.93
Total	\$63,960,854.65	\$35,000,000.00	\$28,960,854.65

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