

**IV. BACKGROUND**

This grant program implements the vision of the Governor and Legislature to foster the development of sustainable communities throughout California. It is designed to help local governments meet the challenges of adopting land use plans and integrating strategies in order to transform communities and create long-term prosperity. Sustainable communities are intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment and promote healthy, safe communities. The primary goal of this grant program is to develop and implement plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the following objectives:

- Improve air and water quality.
- Promote public health.
- Promote equity.
- Increase housing affordability.
- Increase infill and compact development.
- Revitalize urban and community centers.
- Protect natural resources and agricultural lands.
- Reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption.
- Improve infrastructure systems.
- Promote water conservation.
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation.
- Strengthen the economy.

Following areas have been identified as priorities in awarding grants that are consistent with the goals of the program. In evaluating proposals, the state may also consider factors including, but not limited to geographic distribution of bond funds, environmental justice, and partial funding.

- Proposal demonstrates ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, public and private stakeholders and community involvement.
- Proposal addresses climate change impacts.
- Proposal demonstrates strategies or outcomes that can serve as best practices for communities across the state.
- Proposal is leveraged with additional resources (in-kind or funds).

**Analysis**

Through the adoption of AB 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and SB 375 which directs the Air Resources Board to set regional targets for the reduction of green house gases, the state is holding local governments accountable towards more sustainable developments and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The first step in this process is to prepare a Climate Action Plan. On August 31, 2010, the application for grant funds was transmitted to the Strategic Growth Council. The