

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

August 11, 2025

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee
FROM: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director
RE: SBCCOG Agency Partnership Policy

BACKGROUND

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) has collaborated with agencies for over 20 years to deliver sub-regional environmental and sustainability programs through the SBCCOG South Bay Environmental Services Center. These relationships have been formed on a program-by-program basis without a framework or formal criteria.

The SBCCOG current partners are:

- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro)
- Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN)
- SoCalGas
- Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD)
- West Basin Municipal Water District
- Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

At the June Steering Committee, and in light of the interest of the Clean Power Alliance in possibly becoming a partner, staff were directed to develop a policy to establish a consistent standard for what qualifies as a formal partnership. Attached is a draft policy that defines what constitutes a partner, outlines roles and responsibilities, and sets expectations for resource commitments that are supported by a tiered funding structure.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Board approve the SBCCOG Agency Partnership Policy, which outlines expectations for engagement, program coordination, and financial commitments with agency partners such as utility companies, water districts and other special districts such as transportation agencies.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG)

Agency Partnership Policy – August 28, 2025

Purpose

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) engages in strategic partnerships with other t agencies to promote and implement regional sustainability initiatives and collectively support our mutual goals. This policy outlines expectations, and requirements for agency partners, including utility companies, transportation authorities, water agencies, sanitation districts, air quality districts, special districts, alliances, and others yet to be identified.

I. Partnership Objectives

SBCCOG partnerships are designed to:

- Advance mutual goals in climate action, energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, sustainable transportation, resilient communities, and improved air quality
- Extend the reach and impact of agency programs to South Bay audiences, including government agencies, businesses, residents, and school districts
- Foster collaborative implementation that leverages local networks, technical resources, and shared expertise

II. Criteria for Partnership

1. Strategic Alignment

- Partner's mission and programs must align with SBCCOG's sustainability and environmental goals
- Partnership activities should have clear relevance to the South Bay region and demonstrate potential for sub-regional impact

2. Financial Commitment

- Partner agencies must commit to a minimum of five years of funding, unless otherwise negotiated.
- Funding can support:
 - Program implementation and coordination
 - Outreach, engagement, and education
 - Research and analysis
- Contributions are financial and must be detailed in a formal agreement

3. True Collaboration

- The partnership must be structured as a two-way collaboration, not a sponsorship or grant-only relationship
- Expectations of agency partners include:
 - Assignment of a liaison for coordination

- Participation in planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs
- Sharing of technical knowledge and program materials
- Mutual promotion of agency mission, achievements, and activities
- Agency recognition of SBCCOG's role in their programs and materials when applicable
- SBCCOG will:
 - Promote programs to relevant South Bay stakeholders
 - Provide regular communication and performance updates
- Provide input on design and help to manage programs that are aligned with agency goals

4. Outreach

- SBCCOG will promote agency programs using its regional communication platforms:
 - E-newsletters, social media, website, flyers, and e-blasts
 - Public events, workshops, and city presentations
- Agencies will be recognized in public materials as SBCCOG Program Partners.
- Joint branding opportunities will be based on program scope

5. Implementation Support

- SBCCOG will use its staff and extended network including volunteers, city liaisons, relationships with other public agencies, and community-based organizations, to support program implementation
- Partner agencies must support local implementation efforts for their organizations as needed (e.g., providing training, program data, resources)

6. Evaluation & Reporting

- Each partnership must include mutually agreed-upon metrics for success
- SBCCOG will provide annual reports summarizing outreach efforts, participation, outcomes, and lessons learned
- Regular coordination meetings will be held to refine strategies and share progress

7. Coordination

- Each partner agency will designate a representative responsible for ongoing communication with SBCCOG staff
- Partners are expected to attend monthly partner meetings to coordinate outreach efforts and maximize the effectiveness of the work.
- Where appropriate, partners may be invited to participate in SBCCOG working groups or serve in advisory roles.

III. Becoming a Partner

To initiate a partnership, interested agencies must:

Submit a letter of interest identifying mutual priorities, proposed programs, and level of support

- Meet with SBCCOG staff to develop a scope of work and timeline

- Enter into a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or funding agreement that outlines commitments, deliverables, and performance expectations

IV. Financial Commitment

To become a partner, the agency must agree to a minimum financial contribution to support program implementation, outreach, and coordination efforts.

1. The base partnership financial commitment starts at \$25,000 per year and increases based on scope of services, level of engagement, and regional impact.
2. Funding levels may be negotiated for agencies with unique program needs, specialized initiatives, or limited-service areas
3. Multi-year commitments (minimum 5 years) are expected to ensure continuity and regional impact