

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

June 8, 2026

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director
Kim Fuentes, Deputy Executive Director

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report –May 2026

I. PROGRAMS - TECHNOLOGY, PLANNING, & RESEARCH

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) AGENCY SUPPORT

Contract period is January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026

Contract goal: Work Plan (including goals) underway for 2026

Energy Efficiency Project Status: SBCCOG and SoCalREN project managers are working with the following agencies to advance energy efficiency projects:

- City of Carson – An upgrade opportunity for a Heat Pump Water Heater at the Community Center was presented to staff. SoCalREN staff are waiting on City staff to sign the participation agreement for installation to proceed.
- City of El Segundo – As identified through site walks with SoCalREN and Water Heater Warehouse, there are three Heat Pump Water Heater projects identified. SoCalREN is waiting on city staff to approve the projects to move forward.
 - Joslyn Center: \$3,218 incentive, \$5,980 out of pocket
 - Police Station: \$6,437 incentive, \$15,560 out of pocket
 - Library: \$1,495 incentive, \$5,204 out of pocket
- City of Hawthorne – A site assessment was completed at South Bay Universal Development Center for a water heater replacement. The project and incentive are under review by SoCalREN. Also, the SoCalREN communications team is working on a case study on the success of the Police Department lighting project (\$35,682 in incentives) and Memorial Center HVAC project. City staff, SBCCOG staff, and SoCalREN project manager filled out information on the projects for the case study.
- City of Inglewood – The City Hall lighting and pump project is under construction, to be completed by December 2026.
- City of Rancho Palos Verdes – The city is enrolled in the new Energy Resilience Action Plan program cohort. City staff shared data with the SoCalREN for the development of first reporting. The comprehensive Resilience Hub Opportunity Assessment was finalized by the SoCalREN and is being presented to the city in early June.

- Lennox Elementary School District – Lighting upgrades and Heat Pump Water Heater replacements are in the data collection stage under the Metered Savings Program. The agency is also enrolled in the Schools Strategic Energy Management Cohort which provides additional support for projects. SBCCOG Staff conducted a FEI site visit to identify potential lighting projects.
- West Basin Municipal Water District – 9 pump overhauls are in the incentive application pipeline with SoCalREN and Statewide WISE. SoCalREN is also vetting the district’s in-progress Modernized Operational Security & Automation Integrated Control project. The agency is enrolled in the SoCalREN Water District Strategic Energy Management Cohort.
- Palos Verdes Library District – Their three library sites have been certified as green businesses. SBCCOG Staff are looking into pipe insulation project incentives for the district.

ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM) – **For the 5th year in a row!** On behalf of the cities, SBCCOG staff have completed, all AB802 reports that are required for Building Energy Benchmarking (buildings greater than 50,000 square feet). These reports were due to the California Energy Commission by June 1.

Facility Equipment Inventory Program (FEI) – SBCCOG staff continue to work with agencies to update FEI workbooks, capturing completed and new projects and needs. To date, **63** facility audits across 15 South Bay cities, 2 school districts, and 2 special districts have been completed and resulted have identified of over **940,000** potential kWh savings from lighting retrofits and **123** HVAC units that are overdue for replacement. The SBCCOG is also planning to audit new facilities. Please reach out to shawn@southbaycities.org if your agency is interested in completing a facility audit.

FEI is part of ongoing work with SoCalREN and SoCalGas. As requested by the SoCalGas public partnerships team, SBCCOG staff recently presented the process and outcomes of FEI to other SoCalGas regional partners, Western Riverside COG and Association of California Cities - Orange County. Attendees were impressed with the body of work and are considering implementing similar programs or processes in their regions. SBCCOG staff also presented to the San Gabriel Valley COG on the FEI process to support implementation of their own FEI program.

Institute for Local Government Beacon Awards – SBCCOG is working with the cities of Gardena, Manhattan Beach, Rolling Hills, and Torrance on their applications for the Institute for Local Government’s annual Beacon Awards. This program honors voluntary efforts by local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save energy, and adopt policies that promote sustainability. Applications will be completed and packaged for the cities to submit by the deadline of June 30.

City Staff Accreditation Pilot: LEED GA and AP – Through SoCalREN pilot program funding, the SBCCOG is operating a program to cover the cost of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for **2 staff per member city**. The program will support training, studying, and cover test registration fees for agency staff to earn a LEED Green Associate and/or Accredited Professional credential. SBCCOG staff have notified the following regarding the opportunity -- Community Development Directors, City Managers, the Energy Managers Working Group, and Climate Action and Adaptation Working Group. The class is almost full, interested city staff should contact Jake Romoff (jake@southbaycities.org) as soon as possible. The SBCCOG will also be developing a waiting list and seeking additional funding in the 2027 program year.

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) Residential
Contract period is January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026

Contract goals: Contact, track progress, and outreach to local community organizations; track number of virtual events held and attendees; distribute program collateral to local community organizations.

SoCalREN Kits for Kids – The LA County Kits for Kids program provides free energy efficiency kits (LEDs, faucet aerators, and games) to third- and fourth-grade students to implement at home and \$1,000 to teachers who implement it in their classrooms. Classrooms interested in enrolling in the program should talk to the SBCCOG to get on the interest list. SBCCOG Staff will conduct outreach over the summer for Fall 2026 participation.

For this spring, Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District has 9 classrooms enrolled in the Kits for Kids program, with \$8,500 in grants being administered (one classroom received \$500 because they have less than 10 students). SBCCOG staff are celebrating the district with a video including interviews with Silver Spur Elementary teachers, students, and parents, and city elected officials. SBCCOG Staff also presented a big check to Rancho Vista Elementary and dropped off certificates to the 5 other schools.

Multifamily and Hard-to-Reach-Direct-Install Energy Efficiency – The SBCCOG continues to identify multifamily property owner customers for the SoCalREN Multifamily program which enrolls eligible properties in opportunities for energy- and cost-saving upgrades. Contacts are being identified through Chambers of Commerce, city business lists, senior living centers and housing focused community-based organizations. SBCCOG continues to share co-branded materials at community outreach events and coordinate with other agencies to help identify opportunities

Equitable Building Decarbonization: Residential Direct Install (EBD)

Contract period is May 1, 2025 - December 31, 2029

The SBCCOG is one of the Community Partners, conducting outreach and enrolling residents from **Carson, Hawthorne, Lawndale, and Wilmington**, in the California Energy Commission's EBD Program implemented by LA County. The EBD program provides no-cost gas-to-electric fuel-switching upgrades (including water heaters, HVAC, and induction cooktops) to single-family, multifamily, and manufactured homes.

The SBCCOG has met with energy and permitting staff at all relevant cities except for Lawndale. Through these meetings, Staff learned valuable lessons about program rollout and project permitting processes which have informed SBCCOG outreach and have been reported to the County to improve the program. Engagement tactics look different for each city including potential presentations at City Council or Neighborhood Council meetings, community events, and door-to-door outreach. Other community partners are conducting outreach through their own channels and the SBCCOG is working to align all outreach (SBCCOG staff have met individually with two other partners). Outreach to residents has not yet started, pending County and CEC approvals of materials. For questions about the program or to enroll a resident, contact Eleanor Murphy at eleanor@southbaycities.org.

Southern California Gas Company Energy Pathways

Contract period is May 19, 2024 – December 31, 2027

The SBCCOG continues to work with SoCalGas to promote gas energy efficiency assistance program opportunities and financing support to cities, school districts, and residents. Program offerings were shared with businesses and residents at community events. Current day-to-day activities continue with

the support from SoCalGas staff. Program offerings and related marketing materials have been shared with agencies to support outreach to residents and businesses.

Water Conservation

West Basin Municipal Water District Programs (West Basin)

The contract period is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026

SBCCOG and West Basin met on May 11 and May 28 to discuss the implementation of ongoing programs, and new contract discussions are already underway. A draft scope of work has been received and revisions have been made. West Basin staff will present the SBCCOG accomplishments for FY 2025-2026 to their Board on June 18, followed by the West Basin Board meeting on June 22, where our contract for FY 2026-2027 will be considered for approval. In addition, SBCCOG staff continue to respond to phone inquiries on the dedicated West Basin line.

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

Contract goal: 100 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Status of goal: 108 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc. - GOAL EXCEEDED

Support for Workshops & Webinars Educational Classes

Contract goal: Up to 17 physical classes or virtual webinars

Status of goal: 13

Completed Workshops:

- *Wednesday, May 20, 2026, Transforming Lawns: A Sustainable Approach, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm, 3901 W El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250*
- *Saturday, May 30, 2026, Eco Gardener Workshop: Container and Planter Gardening, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, 3201 Plaza del Amo, Torrance, CA 90503*

Rain Barrel Giveaway

Contract goal: 6 Rain barrel distribution events.

Status of goal: 6 Rain barrel program distributions: All events have been completed

Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD)

The contract period is January 1-December 31, 2026

Contract goal: promote WRD programs and support in-person events

Status of goal: ongoing

SBCCOG staff have scheduled a tour of WRD's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning (ARC) on June 4, 2026. Attendees will include SBCCOG staff and volunteers. Ongoing promotion of WRD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters and social media channels. SBCCOG also posts WRD events on its website and sends e-blasts to help boost attendance. Additionally, SBCCOG staff attended events and distributed marketing materials at city halls, libraries, senior centers, and other community locations. WRD Eco-Gardening classes and workshops have also been promoted, and SBCCOG staff will attend the WRD Eco-Gardening class in the City of Torrance on May 30.

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD)

The contract period is January 1-December 31, 2026

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

Contract goal: 100 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Status of goal: 111 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc. - GOAL EXCEEDED

Ongoing promotion of LACSD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters, social media channels, and website postings. SBCCOG staff are actively coordinating outreach for LACSD's upcoming May events and sending e-blasts to help boost attendance. Staff are also promoting the Clean & Green event and distributing sanitation-related marketing materials to city halls, libraries, community centers, senior centers, and other community locations. Discussions on a new agreement with LACSD have already begun, and a draft scope of work is expected in June.

Task - Speakers Bureau

Contract goal: identify and coordinate up to 3 speaking opportunities.

Status of goal: 4/3 Identified and Scheduled - GOAL EXCEEDED

- Carson Gardena Dominguez Rotary Club – January 14, 2026 – Completed
- City of Gardena's Planning and Environmental Quality Commission – February 17, 2026 – Completed
- City of Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission – March 5, 2026 – Completed
- City of Gardena's Beautification Committee – POSTPONED– Date TBD

Waste Reduction

Rolling Hills Organic Waste

Contract period is April 8, 2024 – November 1, 2026

The SBCCOG continues to work with the City of Rolling Hills to educate residents on organic waste recycling and food waste prevention funded by a CalRecycle SB 1383 grant. As part of this program, interested residents also received a compost bin and kitchen pail for organic waste. SBCCOG staff worked with Rolling Hills city staff to coordinate a final compost workshop on June 30, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM. The class will be taught by SBCCOG staff and will cover composting basics, in conjunction with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, which will highlight their native plant programs and restoration efforts. Residents will also have the opportunity to sign up for free equipment at this event.

Green Business

South Bay Green Business Assist Program (GBAP): Ongoing

The SBCCOG continues to provide information to local businesses on opportunities to implement sustainability actions and West Basin programs. In addition, businesses also receive updates on resources from SBCCOG's utility partners. The Green Business Assist newsletter, distributed by email to more than 400 businesses, was sent at the end of May. SBCCOG staff also updated the Green Business GIS map and shared it with West Basin. West Basin staff will present the map to their Board on June 18.

California Green Business Network -

LA County is funding membership for all South Bay cities in the California Green Business Network program, the platform used to conduct business certifications. This support is in addition to the ongoing Green Business Assistance Program.

In May, SBCCOG staff successfully certified a Lomita business and Lomita City Hall while continuing to build on the program's momentum by exploring additional certification opportunities. Staff are currently working to enroll in businesses in Inglewood, Gardena, El Segundo, Hawthorne and Lawndale. As well as pursuing certification for all Peninsula city halls. To ensure all requirements are met, SBCCOG staff are conducting bi-weekly audits and providing hands-on support to business owners throughout the process.

Additionally, staff conducted outreach walks in the cities of Gardena and El Segundo.

GBAP by city: Carson (18), El Segundo (55), Gardena (55), Hermosa Beach (12), Hawthorne (83), Inglewood (20), Lawndale (30), Lennox (10), Lomita (9), Manhattan Beach (10), Palos Verdes Estates (9), Rancho Palos Verdes (11), Redondo Beach (6), Rolling Hills Estates (6) Torrance (92), Los Angeles County – Community of Westmont (1) and District 15 (8) for a total of 435 businesses participating as of May 2026.

SBWIB Expanding Flexible Apprenticeship in California (EFAC)

Contract period is February 4, 2026 – June 19, 2026

SBCCOG staff have reached out to 172 businesses as part of the EFAC project. During outreach walks and at events, staff met with business representatives in person and provided information about the SBWIB Apprenticeship Program. Under EFAC, SBCCOG is conducting business engagement and outreach services to connect employers with apprenticeship opportunities across the South Bay. Activities have included consulting with SBWIB staff on the project framework, goals, and timelines; conducting outreach to employers, school districts, educational providers, and other entities interested in apprenticeship programs; and establishing connections with at least 15 employers, including public sector organizations. SBCCOG staff continue to conduct business walks and engage employers regarding the program.

Climate Action

Biodiversity: The San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) has awarded the SBCCOG a \$1.6 million Prop 68 grant with a project period projected to occur between July 2026 and May 2029. Building on the SBCCOG subregional adaptation plan, this funding will support development of a biodiversity plan and demonstration projects within the South Bay. SBCCOG staff are waiting for a contract from RMC. Demonstration projects include the following:

- **Street Tree Planting, Carson:** Street tree plantings (200 trees) to increase shade and reduce urban heat island effect, improve air quality, contribute to native habitat, and sustain carbon sequestration

- **Hillcrest Boulevard Median, Inglewood:** Landscape conversion of medians and triangle along Hillcrest Boulevard between S Grevillea Avenue and Grace Avenue (0.56 acres total) from nonfunctional turf to native plants supporting habitat and water management
- **Palos Verdes Drive Landscape Conversion, Lomita:** Landscape conversion of turf and shrubs along a bicycle path on Palos Verdes Drive North (1.1 acres) improving water conservation and native habitat, as well as residents' and neighboring communities' access to green space

Climate Action & Adaptation Planning Working Group Meeting: SBCCOG staff convened a working group meeting on May 28, 2026, which was well attended by 10 cities (Carson, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, and Torrance). Speakers from the LA County Chief Sustainability Office, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and the California Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) presented on the LA County Heat Action Plan, the CalHeatScore tool, and the Vulnerable Communities Platform, respectively. SBCCOG staff provided updates on biodiversity plan and project funding, and cities shared updates.

Transportation

Metro Express Lanes (MEL) (Contract period January 23, 2026 – January 22, 2026)

The SBCCOG continues to prepare, update, and share the outreach calendar events to provide opportunities for Metro to share their Express Lane program. In May, the SBCCOG/SBESC distributed MEL materials at nine events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: 38 for May 2026

Volunteers supported several recurring projects, including office assistance, database research, and outreach events. SBCCOG helped a volunteer achieve two professional certificates in data analysis and administrative work. Additionally, a volunteer has been actively scanning all Board of Supervisors' agendas and providing highlighted items to the SBCCOG team, and another volunteer reviewed all 400 of our Green Businesses to ensure contact information and addresses are up to date. Finally, staff scheduled a field trip for volunteers and staff to WRD's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning (ARC), set to occur on June 4, 2026.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In May 2026:

- 3 - Networking Event
- 9 - In Person Community Event
- 0 - Presentation
- 1 - Business Event
- 2 - Workshops Events