

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

May 11, 2026

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

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

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – April 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 Hawthorne – The Police Department lighting project and Memorial Center HVAC project have completed construction, and final invoices were approved by council.
 - The projected final annual energy savings estimates for the Police Department interior lighting upgrades are **241,811kWh**, and **29,334 kWh** for lighting controls with annual electricity savings of **14.72%** and **\$51,532**. The total measure costs were **\$394,133**, with an estimated incentive of **\$35,682** and a payback period of 7 years.
 - The Memorial Center HVAC controls upgrade projected annual energy savings are **73,342 kWh** and **4,157 therms**, representing approximately **37%** annual electricity savings. Estimated annual utility cost savings are **\$24,548**.
- City of Inglewood – The City Hall lighting and pump project is under construction, to be completed by December 2026. There have been significant changes in project scope which SoCalREN is following including 370 lights retrofitted compared to the original 70.
- City of Rancho Palos Verdes – The city is enrolled in the new Energy Resilience Action Plan program cohort. The city has started collecting data to be shared with the SoCalREN.
- 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.

- Manhattan Beach Unified School District – The agency is working with Energy Systems Group to downsize a water heater at Mira Costa High School to help meet requirements for incentives.
- West Basin Municipal Water District – 9 pump overhauls are in the incentive application pipeline with SoCalREN and Statewide WISE. The agency is also enrolled in the SoCalREN Water District Strategic Energy Management Cohort.
- Palos Verdes Library District – Three library sites are in progress to be certified as green businesses and a FEI inventory was conducted. FEI workbooks are being prepared and will be shared with library staff once completed.

ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM)

SBCCOG staff has contacted all South Bay cities to confirm buildings that require Building Energy Benchmarking (AB802) reporting for buildings greater than 50,000 square feet. These reports are due to the California Energy Commission by June 1. **For the 5th year in a row!** SBCCOG staff have drafted energy use reports and coordinated city review and approval prior to submitting them to the California Energy Commission on behalf of the cities to reduce city staff time and resources while meeting compliance.

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 in identification of over **940,000** potential kWh savings from lighting retrofits and **123** HVAC units that are overdue for replacement. The SBCCOG is also looking to audit new facilities. Please reach out to shawn@southbaycities.org if your agency is interested in completing a facility audit.

Institute for Local Government Beacon Awards

SBCCOG is offering support to cities in applying 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. Participating cities can also earn points for the South Bay Energy and Climate Recognition program. Applications are due by June 30. If you are interested in the SBCCOG staff helping your city, reach out to Shawn at shawn@southbaycities.org before **May 15**.

Agency Enrollments – The SBCCOG is re-engaging and conducting outreach to new agencies to facilitate SoCalREN enrollments. To date, SBCCOG has enrolled 15/15 cities, 10/13 school districts, 0/3 higher education agencies, and 4/9 special districts. SBCCOG staff are requesting support from electeds and city staff for introductions to the following agencies:

- Inglewood Unified School District
- Lawndale Elementary School District
- Wiseburn Unified School District
- El Camino College
- LA Community College District
- LA Harbor Area Cemetery District
- Southern CA Regional Occupational Center
- South Bay Regional Public Communications Authority
- Miraleste Recreation and Park District, if applicable
- Westfield Park Recreation and Parkways District, if applicable

City Staff Accreditation Pilot: LEED GA and AP – The SBCCOG was approved for a pilot program funded by the SoCalREN to cover the cost of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental

Design) certification for **2 staff per member city**. This 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 recently presented this opportunity to Community Development Directors and will soon present it to the Energy Managers Working Group. An e-mail notification was sent to city staff including energy managers and community development directors. An announcement was also made at the last city managers' meeting. Interested city staff should contact Jake Romoff (jake@southbaycities.org) to learn more.

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.

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. Promotion to property owners has been conducted with help from chambers and the Niles Foundation as well as potential opportunities through the Equitable Building Decarbonization Residential Direct Install Program which has just kicked off. SBCCOG, in partnership with ICF, is developing an informational webinar to assist city staff in communicating energy efficiency incentives to residents.

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. Palos Verdes Unified School District has 9 classrooms in the Kits for Kids program enrolled this Spring semester. SBCCOG staff are working to celebrate and recognize the success of these classrooms. Recently, SBCCOG staff attended a Silver Spur Earth Week event, filming the school's waste-free lunch, green-team presentations, and kit implementation to highlight student sustainability initiatives and how Kits for Kids ties in.

School districts interested in enrolling in the program, whether or not they are in disadvantaged areas or receive Title 1 funding, should talk to the SBCCOG to get on the interest list. SBCCOG Staff will conduct outreach over the summer for Fall 2026 participation.

Equitable Building Decarbonization: Residential Direct Install

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

The SBCCOG is a Community Partner with Los Angeles County, joined by local Community Based Organizations (CBO) and non-profits, to implement the California Energy Commission's Equitable Building Decarbonization Residential Direct Install Program in **Carson, Hawthorne, Lawndale, and Wilmington**. The EBD program will accelerate large-scale residential building decarbonization efforts for single-family homes, multifamily properties, manufactured housing, and public housing. SBCCOG is responsible for conducting marketing, education, and outreach activities to inform and engage potential participants about the program.

The SBCCOG is meeting with sustainability, energy, permitting, and planning city staff at relevant cities. Once all stakeholders are on board and program collateral is received, program rollout and outreach will begin.

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.

- Restaurant Energy Efficiency Starter Kit: Kit includes energy- and water-saving tools such as a pre-rinse spray valve, faucet aerators, gas valve handles, a Turbo Pot aluminum frying pan for efficient cooking, and a pocket thermometer for food service businesses.
- Commercial Building Energy Solutions and Technologies (C-BEST) Program: Provides technical assistance and incentives for businesses to implement natural gas-saving measures in commercial buildings.

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 April 13 and April 27, to discuss the implementation of ongoing programs. New contract discussions have already started, and a draft scope of work is expected in May. SBCCOG staff also 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: 93 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Support for Workshops & Webinars Educational Classes

Contract goal: Up to 17 physical classes or virtual webinars

Status of goal: 11

Completed Workshops:

- *Wednesday, April 22, 2026 – 11:00 am – 12: 30 pm - West Basin-MWD Collaboration Class California Friendly & Native Plant Landscaping Training*

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 the WRD's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning (ARC). This tour is scheduled for June 4, 2026, and 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. The SBCCOG staff attended events and distributed marketing materials to city halls, libraries, senior centers, and other community locations. In addition, WRD Eco-Gardening classes and workshops were promoted.

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: 96 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Ongoing promotion of LACSD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters, social media channels, and website postings. Staff are also coordinating outreach for LACSD's upcoming May events and sending e-blasts to help boost attendance. SBCCOG staff attended events and distributed marketing materials to city halls, libraries, senior centers, and other community locations. Discussions on a new agreement 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 – May 21, 2026 – Scheduled

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, the technical consultant, EcoNomics, Inc., completed three educational videos and conducted two workshops for Rolling Hills residents. As part of this program, interested residents also received a compost bin and kitchen pail for organic waste. Staff are working with the city to coordinate another in-person training this summer and will continue promoting the free equipment giveaway to ensure residents take full advantage of this opportunity.

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.

California Green Business Network -

LA County is covering the cost of 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 April, SBCCOG staff certified three **Peninsula library buildings**, along with **City Halls in Rolling Hills and Rolling Hills Estates**. Building on the successful certification of an Inglewood business in March, staff are currently preparing two additional Inglewood businesses for certification. 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 Hawthorne, Lawndale, and Torrance.

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 April 2026.

SBWIB Expanding Flexible Apprenticeship in California (EFAC)

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

Under the Expanding Flexible Apprenticeship in California (EFAC) project, SBCCOG is conducting business engagement and outreach services to connect businesses to apprenticeship opportunities across the South Bay. Activities 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 have been conducting business walks and engaging employers regarding the program.

Climate Action

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories: SBCCOG, with support from volunteers and prior CivicSpark Fellows, has finalized the city specific 2019-2020 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory reports and sent them to each jurisdiction. SBCCOG staff are developing a sub-regional inventory by end of May.

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 March, the SBCCOG/SBESC distributed MEL materials at eight events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: 53 hours for April 2026

Volunteers supported several recurring projects, including office assistance, database research, and outreach events. An added benefit to volunteering - volunteers that are interested can also work on a Career Preparedness Project at no cost to them or any extra cost for the SBCCOG, where individuals can complete trainings to earn certifications that enhance their professional skills. Two training courses were completed this month with a focus on administration and data analysis. Lastly, 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.

The volunteer program continued to grow, with three new applicants interviewed and welcomed this month.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In April 2026:

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