

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

April 13, 2026

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

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

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – March 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 Hawthorne – The Police Department lighting project and Memorial Center HVAC project have completed construction. Final reporting is almost done, with the SoCalREN awaiting final city signatures. Once project paperwork is completed, savings numbers will be available.
- City of Inglewood – The City Hall lighting and pump project is under construction, to be completed by December 2026.
- City of Rancho Palos Verdes – Water heaters eligible for incentives for upgrades to Heat Pump Water Heaters have been identified: The Interpretive Center unit is approved for 50% cost coverage, with \$3,180 of cost covered and the same amount out-of-pocket from the city with an estimated \$1,667 in annual energy savings. The Ryan Park unit is approved for 17% cost coverage which is \$1,490 of the cost covered and \$7,107 being the cost to the city with an estimated \$2,800 in annual energy savings. City staff have chosen not to move forward with either project currently due to cost.
- Lennox Elementary School District – Lighting upgrades and Heat Pump Water Heater replacements are in the data collection period 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.

- West Basin Municipal Water District – 33 pumps are being vetted for overhauls with significant savings. The projects are moving forward with collaboration between the agency and SoCalREN. The agency is also enrolled in the Water District Strategic Energy Management Cohort.
- Palos Verdes Library District – SBCCOG staff enrolled the district in the SoCalREN in March. Staff are identifying project potential through an upcoming FEI site visit. The District is also interested in becoming a certified green business.

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, **60** facility audits across 15 South Bay cities, 2 school districts, and 1 special district 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.

City Staff Accreditation Pilot: LEED GA and AP – The SBCCOG was approved for a pilot program with SoCalREN funds 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. The preparation for the credential will build agency expertise in sustainable building design related to energy efficiency and internal environmental quality at the agency level. LEED accredited staff can assist in city, commercial, and residential building development and design and provide expert information to the community that will lead to lower utility bills. As LEED v4 is being released in April, SBCCOG staff will promote this program to city staff next month.

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 for opportunities for energy- and cost-saving. Contacts are being identified

through Chambers of Commerce and city business lists. 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.

SoCalREN Kits for Kids – Schools in disadvantaged areas or those that receive Title 1 funding are eligible to participate in the LA County Kits for Kids program, which 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.

Apparently, if someone such as a teacher in a district that is not disadvantaged expresses interest in participating in the program, they can consider enrolling them. This happened with the Palos Verdes Unified School District which is now enrolling 9 classrooms in the Kits for Kids program this Spring semester. SBCCOG Staff is working to celebrate and recognize the success of these classrooms.

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 in under resourced communities. SBCCOG is responsible for conducting marketing, education, and outreach activities to inform and engage potential participants about the program.

The kick-off meeting for the program took place in March. A meeting to coordinate outreach strategies for all overlapping local Community Partners, facilitated by the SBCCOG, will take place in early April. Attendees include H.E.L.P., GRID Alternatives, The Niles Foundation, Clean Power Alliance, California Housing Partnership, and Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles. SBCCOG staff plans to begin outreach by May.

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 March 2 and March 16, to discuss the implementation of ongoing programs. New contract discussions have already been 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: 80 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: 10

March Completed Workshops & Classes:

- *Thursday, March 12, 2026 - 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm – West Basin Firescaping Workshop*
- *Wednesday, March 18, 2026 – 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm – West Basin Chat Educational Class*

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

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

Ongoing promotion of LACSD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters and social media channels as well as website postings and coordinating LACSD upcoming 2026 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. New agreement discussions have already started, 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

- 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 – Postponed to May
- 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 in the summer.

Organic Waste City Staff Meeting

March 16, 2026

The SBCCOG recently hosted an Organic Waste meeting for partner agency city staff to learn more about SB 1383, what cities are doing to comply, and how SBCCOG can assist. The meeting featured a guest speaker from SGVCOG, Mackenzie Bolger, who provided an overview of their FRESH program – a regional food recovery program administered by the SGVCOG. The program has been successful in helping cities comply with organic waste regulations. During the meeting, the work conducted by the SBCCOG and the City of Rolling Hills was also presented. The meeting was well-received, with attendees representing El Segundo, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, and Torrance.

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 California Green Business Network program – the tool used to conduct the certifications. This work is in addition to the GBAP information program. In March, SBCCOG staff made calls to businesses in the cities of Hawthorne and Carson providing information on \$550 mini-grants available to businesses in those cities. In addition, SBCCOG staff are scheduled to certify three Peninsula library buildings in the month of April. Following the successful certification of an Inglewood business in March, SBCCOG staff are currently preparing two additional businesses for April certifications. To ensure all requirements are met, SBCCOG staff are conducting bi-weekly audits and providing direct support to the owners throughout the process.

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 March 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, interested in utilizing apprenticeships as a workforce development strategy. The first kickoff meeting was held on Monday, March 23.

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 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 four events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: 91.25 hours for March 2026

In March, volunteer hours doubled compared to February. Volunteers supported several recurring projects, including office assistance, database research, and outreach events, as well as helped prepare for and attend the General Assembly. The volunteer program continued to grow, with 5 new applicants interviewed and welcomed into the program.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In March 2026:

- 4 - Networking Event
- 2 - In Person Community Event
- 1 – Presentation
- 1 - Business Event
- 1 – Workshops Events