

ClimatePlan

Addressing the land use decisions that shape our climate and our lives

ClimatePlan Background and History

updated May 2011

ClimatePlan was founded in early 2007 by eleven non-profit organizations in response to the need for coordinated action on AB 32. The goal was to promote land use and transportation strategies to help achieve AB 32's greenhouse gas reduction targets. In the early days ClimatePlan was an ad-hoc group and loosely organized. A coalition director, Autumn Bernstein, was brought on in January 2008. Over the course of the AB 32 Scoping Plan process our coalition grew rapidly and sustainable communities became one of the most high-profile components of the AB 32 Scoping Plan process. In September 2008, at the height of our campaign surrounding the AB 32 Scoping Plan, Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 375. Successful implementation of this new law quickly became ClimatePlan's primary focus.

In early 2009 the coalition held its first strategic planning retreat. Over the course of two days we developed a set of shared priorities focused around SB 375 implementation and, just as importantly, created a governance and decision-making structure for ClimatePlan. Out of that retreat we published our first Strategic Plan ([link to: StrategicPlan_web.pdf](#)), appointed our first Steering Committee, and developed a plan to increase ClimatePlan's capacity, staffing and reach.

A major focus was ensuring that the first step in SB 375 implementation – the regional target-setting process – lived up to its potential. To achieve this we organized the “targetsetters” working group that met for 20 months to coordinate on policy, analysis, messaging and strategy. We also brought in technical experts to help inform ourselves and our analyses. In September 2010, after nearly two years of deliberation, the California Air Resources Board adopted targets of 13-16% GHG reductions in the face of withering opposition from conservative building interests and some local governments. In some cases this represented a four-fold increase over draft targets released in May 2010.

Our second major priority was to build NGO capacity at the regional level to help ensure that SB 375 would be effectively implemented in California's major regions. Southern California (SCAG region) and the San Joaquin Valley were called out as the two regions that could particularly use additional capacity to take on the new challenge of SB 375. As a result, ClimatePlan secured resources to hire contract organizers to inform, convene and organize non-profit allies around SB 375 in these two regions. Our efforts in Southern California are led by MoveLA (Beth Steckler, Gloria Ohland and Denny Zane) and in the San Joaquin Valley by consultant Virginia Madueño.

Our final priority has been to coordinate action on other state and federal policy related to SB 375. In this vein we've organized to influence the Strategic Growth Council and California Transportation Commission (RTP guidelines update), and provided a forum for our partners to share info about legislation, budget issues and federal policy.

ClimatePlan now has two full-time staff (Autumn Bernstein and Carey Knecht) and two part-time staff (Chanell Fletcher and Catherine Cecchi), along with our regional teams mentioned above. We are governed by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from partner organizations. The coalition has grown to include over 40 active partner organizations and a broader informal network of allies. TransForm, which co-convened the original meetings for ClimatePlan, continues to provide fiscal sponsorship as well as support on administration, personnel and management.