

# Carbon Reduction Through Better Housing, Land-Use, and Low-Carbon Transportation

## **Problem**

Current federal funding programs are siloed and make it difficult to address regional challenges like housing, land use, transportation, and climate issues comprehensively.

SACOG has been focused on this issue, because of regional challenges with infill development. SACOG developed Green Means Go to tackle this problem.

## **Federal Funding Silos**

Despite large new federal grant programs and funding that in theory are there to achieve what SACOG and other regional entities want to accomplish, siloed funding is one of several issues making it more difficult for State, regional, and local agencies from being able address some of the issues head on.

Federal funding pots have different eligible uses, different eligible recipients, and different timelines.

Example, if a regional agency wanted to incentivize infill development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase housing and improve transit service – multiple pots of funding could be needed to address just one development site:

- **Improved Bus Service** – Several FTA/DOT pots that could be eligible – funding would need to ultimately go to a transit agency
- **Upgraded Drinking Water/Wastewater Capacity** – Several competitive programs as well as a revolving funds could be accessed, but the funding request would need to come from a water agency (and they may have other priorities)
- **Utilities** – Depending on the specific utilities, some DOE and NTIA funds are available to support electricity and broadband, but most of those grant programs require partnerships with the utility providers

This is just a small sample of where a community would have to work with 4 different agencies and pursue 3 or more different funding pots for the project to work. Not to mention, the timing and requirements of each pot of funding would all vary widely.

**Proposed Recommendations:**

Our goal is to allow regions to use innovative approaches to address regional challenges like infill development to better meet climate, housing, land use and transportation goals. This can be accomplished several ways:

- 1) Set-Aside within US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Act
- 2) Pilot program developed by dedicating a small portion of relevant IIJA and IRA grant programs
- 3) New pilot program funded through annual appropriations

**Action to Date:**

SACOG has preliminarily met with USDOT, HUD, EPA, and DOE to discuss how existing IIJA and IRA funding pots could be better utilized to support regional efforts to address housing, land use, transportation, and particularly infill development as a climate solution. We are currently working on proposals to develop grant funding to tackle regional pilots with broad funding and eligibility to creatively address these challenges.

A small coalition of regional councils has met a few times to discuss ideas and strategize.

**Our Ask of You:**

SACOG has been working with several MPOs/COGs as many regions around the country are facing similar challenges but tackling the problem through different avenues. Let us know if you're interested in helping to push any of these initiatives with Congress and the Administration. We'd love to include as many interested regions as possible.

**Will your agency engage? If so, please contact Christina Lokke, Director of Government & Public Affairs, at [clokke@sacog.org](mailto:clokke@sacog.org) or 916-340-6230.**

**Next Steps:**

Later this summer, we will host a call to gauge where things stand, go over in detail the different recommendations, and plot a path forward.