

# San Joaquin Valley Health Fund 2021 IHHEEL Policy Platform

DIGITAL DIVIDE • IMMIGRATION • HEALTH  
HOUSING • EDUCATION • ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE  
LAND USE AND PLANNING



SAN JOAQUIN  
VALLEY  
HEALTH FUND



THE CENTER  
at Sierra Health Foundation

In 2014, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation launched the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund (SJVHF), an ambitious community-first funder collaborative, in response to the deep inequities in health, social and economic outcomes throughout California's San Joaquin Valley. Prior to its launch, listening sessions and community meetings confirmed a need for sustained grantmaking, organizational capacity building, investment in community leadership, and respect for the needs, ideas and hopes of those living in the region. The Center has since grown the fund into a dynamic partnership of more than 40 national and California funders and more than 160 community partner organizations dedicated to advancing health and racial equity in one of the state's most under-invested regions.

With an explicit emphasis on community organizing and systems change to address health and racial disparities, the SJVHF's groundbreaking community-driven model leverages community, philanthropic and legislative leadership partnerships to advance progressive shifts in policy and practice. The collaborative's grantmaking, networking, capacity building and regional power-building activities focus on growing inclusive communities, increasing opportunity and promoting civic participation.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the existing inequities that the San Joaquin Valley region has long experienced. These inequities only increased as the pandemic spread, and while the strain could have deterred our community partners, it instead affirmed their resolve, commitment and innovation. Dozens of community partner organizations received timely response grants from the SJVHF to meet immediate relief needs of their constituents.

Community leaders who inform advocacy and grantmaking strategies are truly essential to the success of the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund and The Center at Sierra Health Foundation. The SJVHF Policy Committee, comprised of community-based partners, is built on this ideal to transform grantmaking in collaboration, centering equity and community voice to promote civic engagement and achieve systems change.

Working through subcommittees, the Policy Committee adopted the following policy framework: Immigration, Health, Housing, Education, Environmental Justice, and Land Use and Planning (IHHEEL). Each priority area in their Policy Platform includes a vision, the data behind the need to pursue the vision, and pathways toward clearly articulated outcomes. This year, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on our communities, the Policy Platform includes the Digital Divide as a priority. The inclusion of this specific priority area represents the commitment of the Policy Committee to collectively address a critical, intersectional issue that touches all of the IHHEEL areas. As in the past, access to economic opportunities, or the lack thereof, significantly impacts economically vulnerable families. The ongoing efforts to increase economic mobility and opportunity and reduce poverty in the region is a theme that cuts across all the areas.

The 2021 Policy Platform is both opportunistic and aspirational, a reflection of the promise of the San Joaquin Valley and the commitment of its grassroots and organizational leaders to advancing health and racial equity. The platform is more than a document; it serves as a year-round organizing tool that fuels partners' local, regional and statewide advocacy and ongoing partnerships with impacted communities, elected representatives and policymakers.

Underpinning these policy recommendations is an acknowledgement of the intersectionality of the priorities for underserved San Joaquin Valley communities, the critical importance of community organizing and power-building, and the key roles economic development and access to opportunity play in obtaining and sustaining the health and equity advances the Policy Platform represents.

With deep gratitude to the SJVHF Policy Committee, subcommittees, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation team, and the dedicated funder and community partner organizations and their constituencies who make the work of the SJVHF possible, we proudly present the 2021 San Joaquin Valley Health Fund Policy Platform. ***The Valley is Rising!***



Chet P. Hewitt, President and CEO  
Sierra Health Foundation  
The Center at Sierra Health Foundation



Eileen Espejo, Children Now  
SJVHF Governance Committee Co-Chair



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# DIGITAL DIVIDE POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To create a healthy environment and a robust economy, marginalized communities in the San Joaquin Valley must acquire broadband internet service that is affordable and delivers high-quality service that fosters civic engagement, supports student success, stimulates economic development and opportunity, and promotes access to essential services such as telehealth.

## CHALLENGES

Far too many residents in the San Joaquin Valley communities experience extreme poverty and are among those most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially low-income families and people of color. They are unable to obtain high-speed broadband service, further limiting their options to basic services and information. For decades, these communities have lacked the necessary infrastructure to create alternative and innovative economic opportunities for themselves. The absence of these investments is further perpetuated by many local, state and federal government institutions due to systemic racism, resulting in the imposition of economic apartheid.

Not having broadband access coupled with existing language barriers further limits opportunities among low-income residents for civic engagement with elected and appointed representatives as decisions are made. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how ill-prepared society is in responding to the basic needs of area residents. Monopolies among internet service providers perpetuate their lack of access to quality and affordable high-speed broadband services.

## PATHWAY

There is a collective consciousness of this great need to extend broadband internet services into San Joaquin Valley communities, evidenced by the leadership of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), accompanied by the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Legislature,

educational institutions, California Forward, and the Governor's executive order requiring state agencies to coordinate efforts. Consensus principles endorsed by these and many other groups have formulated a viable path forward—access to high-speed, high-quality broadband internet services must be a top priority for our valley's impoverished communities to thrive.

It is imperative that individuals impacted by the lack of broadband services be engaged in shaping sustainable solutions. Critical to success, efforts must be joined with the multiple nonprofit community-based organizations—the trusted messengers—to inform area residents. Many trusted messengers are current or past community partners in the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund and/or CETF. Several opportunities exist including the designation as a public utility, municipal and/or educational provision of broadband, and continued infrastructure development by internet service providers with the expansion of affordable coverage.

- We seek to educate policymakers regarding the need for policy solutions at the federal, state, county, municipal and school board levels to promote greater infrastructure and options for residents.
- We seek widespread partnerships and engagement with local community-based organizations to advocate and organize residents so their needs, concerns and desired outcomes are realized.
- We seek to prioritize increased funding and investments in infrastructure from public, private and philanthropic sectors.
- Our guiding principles specify broadband access must be equitable, universal, affordable and viewed as a fundamental right for all residents.
- To ensure progress is forthcoming, litigation as a necessary tool must be contemplated.

# IMMIGRATION POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To ensure inclusive communities where all immigrants and refugees, regardless of income or place of residence, enjoy access to support services, economic opportunity, high quality legal representation and meaningful civic participation. A just, equitable and prosperous San Joaquin Valley requires an inclusive democracy and due process for all.

## CHALLENGE

Immigrants and refugees are critical to California and are at the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. In 2018, the estimated immigrant population for the eight counties in the region was nearly 900,000. Foreign-born persons comprise 22% of the population in the San Joaquin Valley and 34% of the workforce. The region has a long history of refugee resettlement from many parts of the world, including Southeast Asia, Central America and the Middle East, which continues today. In the San Joaquin Valley, 319,000 undocumented persons call the region home, and 349,000 U.S. citizens and 86,000 lawful permanent residents reside with an undocumented family member. Approximately 13% of California's DACA-eligible residents live in the

San Joaquin Valley. Limited English proficiency, lower educational attainment and poverty rates are at higher levels in the San Joaquin Valley than in most other regions of the state.

Changes to federal policies have created fear among immigrant and refugee communities and community organizations have responded to these attacks in the absence of a systematic response by local governments in the region. A change to the public charge rule instilled fear in low-income immigrants around access to critical social services. This has been especially devastating during the pandemic, when communities of color, including immigrants and essential workers, including farmworkers, have been disproportionately impacted by the virus and the resulting economic hardships. Immigrant families are often left out of economic relief and recovery programs or are fearful of receiving assistance due to immigration status.

Immigration enforcement leaves low-income immigrants in the region vulnerable to detention and without the ability to pay bond, resulting in family separations and financial hardship. In 2018, there were 2,279 ICE-related arrests in the San Joaquin Valley, with Kern County having the highest number of arrests (1,235). The dearth of low-cost quality legal service providers in



# IMMIGRATION POLICY PLATFORM (continued)

the region, particularly in rural areas, means many immigrants ordered to appear in immigration court cannot secure legal representation, which greatly reduces their chance of being granted relief.

## PATHWAY

To address the challenges and attacks on our immigrant and refugee communities, we stand united in our call to:

- Secure robust public and private investments to facilitate COVID-19 economic relief and recovery for all families and small business owners regardless of immigration status.
- Ensure that every government and public institution provides equitable language access and treats residents with utmost respect and dignity.
- Ensure the needs and voices of our communities are represented in the redistricting process.
- Secure partnerships with local governments and educational institutions to encourage pro-immigrant policies and increased opportunities for education, inclusion and access to support services.
- Abolish the racial profiling and mass incarceration of immigrants in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Advocate for full implementation of SB54 to ensure local law enforcement agencies respect the rights of immigrants in alignment with California law and that local governments enact even more protective policies.
- Support the establishment of an immigration bond fund and a removal defense fund, without restrictions based on criminal history, in every county or major city in the San Joaquin Valley to support individuals in detention and removal proceedings.
- Promote public and private funding initiatives that:
  - 1) foster the growth and sustainability of nonprofit immigration legal service providers serving rural and remote urban areas, and 2) are reflective of, and responsive to, the legal needs of San Joaquin Valley residents.

- Advocate for accessible and inclusive pathways to legal protections and citizenship for immigrants and policies that keep families together.
- Strengthen consumer protections against immigration fraud by predatory *notarios*, immigration consultants and attorneys.



# HEALTH POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To strengthen California's commitment to and momentum toward increased access to high quality, affordable, culturally and linguistically appropriate physical and behavioral health services regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or other social, economic and demographic factors so that every Californian has the opportunity to thrive.

## CHALLENGE

The San Joaquin Valley is disparately impacted by environmental, economic, social and access-to-care obstacles and adverse conditions that negatively affect the health of residents. San Joaquin Valley residents face many barriers including fear of immigration-related risks, lack of access to technology and insufficient or unreliable broadband, language barriers, discrimination and difficulty accessing health services. These include services related to behavioral health, mental health and dental care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the inequities in access to health care and health outcomes experienced by San Joaquin Valley residents. For example, a recent study found that the leading cause of death for residents in San Joaquin County in 2020 was COVID-19. Access to testing, vaccinations and relief resources has lagged in the Valley, while residents have been at a disproportionate risk of becoming ill and dying of COVID-19. The federal COVID-19 responses have excluded many immigrant families and have denied support for many of those who need it most.

Four of the nine counties that comprise the region—Fresno, Kern, Madera and Tulare—rank among the bottom 10 counties for health outcomes—52nd, 53rd, 49th and 50th, respectively. Two out of every five (44% or 1.8 million) of the 4.2 million people who live in the San Joaquin Valley are enrolled in Medi-Cal. As of 2019, the average life expectancy in the San Joaquin Valley ranged from 77.6 to 79.9 years, significantly lower than the statewide average life expectancy of 81.5 years. In addition, there are significant disparities in life expectancy

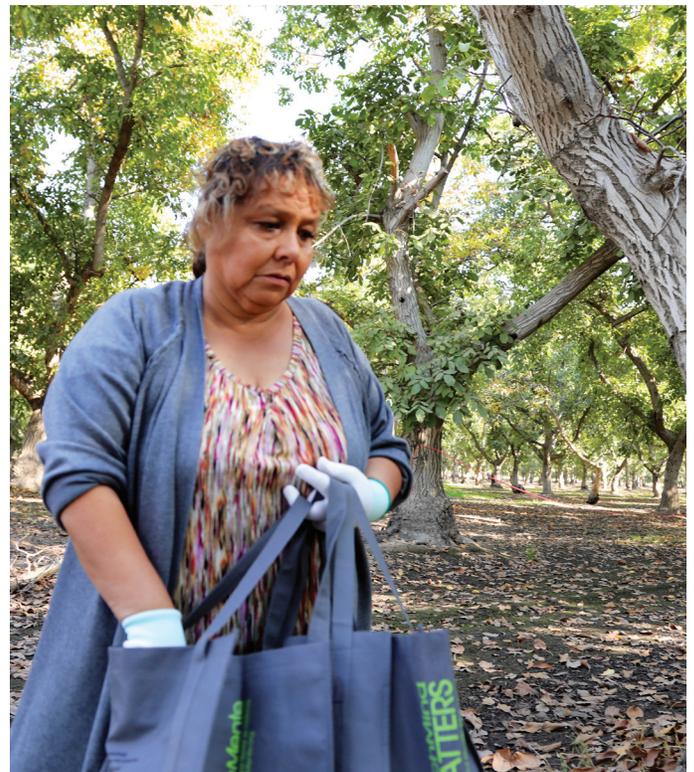
across demographic groups and neighborhoods, reflecting a cumulative impact of social, economic and environmental factors. The San Joaquin Valley also suffers from a severe shortage of providers. For example, a 2019 report found that the ratio of primary care physicians in the San Joaquin Valley, 39 per 100,000, was 20% below the state average of 50 primary care physicians per 100,000.

## PATHWAYS

- Ensure equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines and other relief resources to the communities and populations hardest hit by COVID-19, regardless of immigration status.
- Ensure that youth and adults are able to access behavioral health supports necessary as a result of the public health emergency.
- Support policies that will address food security issues experienced by families and individuals as a result of the public health emergency.
- Expand broadband access for residents to reach health care services.
- To address health disparities at the local, regional, state and federal levels, we stand united in our call to:
  - Support federal efforts in comprehensive immigration reform with pathways to citizenship and eligibility for federal benefits. Educate immigrant community on current status of the public charge regulations and encourage participation in health and nutrition programs.
  - Expand investments and eligibility in the Medi-Cal program to close the health care gap for all uninsured residents and seniors over 65.
  - Increase and expand investments in culturally and linguistically appropriate primary care for LGBTQ+ and transition-related health care for transgender Californians.
  - Advance the collection of SOGIE (sexual orientation/ gender identity and expression) data.

# HEALTH POLICY PLATFORM (continued)

- Call for systems change to facilitate compliance of health care providers with existing policies that ensure access to care for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Increase and extend affordability assistance in Covered California for all residents beyond the short-term federal relief in the American Relief Act.
- Streamline the portability of Medi-Cal coverage across county lines to ensure the continuation of coverage for already-vulnerable populations.
- Improve the county indigent care system for all vulnerable residents.
- Support sustained funding for local oral health programs and the implementation of county-level oral health strategic plans that aim to increase public awareness of the importance of oral health and improve access to and utilization of dental services across the lifespan.
- Increase and expand the use of county agencies' funds from the Mental Health Services Act county dollars and state Innovation Funds to promote locally and culturally informed efforts to address mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse.
- Increase funding and long-term support for domestic violence and sexual violence prevention education to interrupt the cycle of violence.
- Support a health insurance system that is inclusive of reproductive health and abortion services.
- Raise the standards for hospital community benefit agreements so that more investments are made in improving neighborhood conditions for the communities they serve, such as investment in local workforce development, creation of affordable housing, community greening efforts, and interventions focused on access to healthy food and food security.
- Support efforts to secure funding and enact institutional and agency policies that help address the shortage of diverse and culturally competent medical, dental and behavioral health providers and specialists in the region through recruitment, retention, incentives and training.
- Strengthen accountability and investments that support the local implementation of comprehensive gender and reproductive justice policies.
- Increase funding for health workforce pipeline programs that train and prepare students from underrepresented backgrounds for careers in the health profession to improve access to high quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate care for California's diverse communities and provide youth with a pathway to meaningful and sustainable careers.
- Increase funding and support for community health providers, non-clinical community-based organizations, and other local initiatives that primarily serve low-income and vulnerable communities through responsive and locally tailored supports.
- Ensure communities of color remain intact during the redistricting process to secure, protect and sustain funding for critical health programs in California.



# HOUSING POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To ensure that residents in the San Joaquin Valley, especially the most vulnerable populations, have access to safe and affordable housing by promoting mixed-use developments, preserving existing affordable housing and protecting residents through improved housing affordability, housing quality, and home ownership and community ownership opportunities.

## CHALLENGE

The San Joaquin Valley contains agricultural land that provides livelihoods for many residents, contributes tens of billions of dollars a year to the region's economy and provides food for the nation. Yet, in this land of abundance, more than 70% of low-income residents—those earning less than 30% of the median income—pay 50% or more of their income on rent or mortgages. Historically concentrated wealth and housing ownership, as well as persistent exclusionary zoning and housing practices, have exacerbated racial and economic segregation and perpetuated racially concentrated areas of poverty.

## PATHWAY

To address these housing disparities, we stand united in our call to:

- Actively address segregation by securing true housing choice through incentivizing development in growth areas to facilitate and incorporate housing opportunities for all income levels.
- Support policies and investments that produce new affordable housing, preserve existing affordable housing, and protect residents for improved housing affordability, housing quality and home ownership opportunities. Preserve existing housing stock—especially mobile home parks—and provide means for low-income homeowners to repair or replace their homes.
- Support models of housing development and land management that promote long-term affordability and community control by creating community land trusts, housing cooperatives and other opportunities for resident ownership and management of housing, particularly for housing whose construction or preservation is subsidized with public or philanthropic resources. Prioritize these models for housing development on public land as well as recovering and reinvesting land value increases that result from public investment and other government actions.
- Enforce proactive rental housing inspection rules, promote a baseline inspection of all rental properties and create a standard registry list of all rental units.
- Protect tenants by strengthening and enforcing local and statewide rent stabilization, just-cause eviction and source of income discrimination laws. Strengthen and enforce local and statewide policies that provide housing stability during the pandemic and beyond, including eviction moratoria and rental assistance.
- Advocate for enforcement of a strong Community Reinvestment Act that promotes equitable lending to low-income communities of color and rural markets.
- Advocate for policies and regulations, and enforcement of standards that ensure state and federal funds are adequately allocated for housing projects in rural and farmworker communities by creating set-asides within programs like Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities and redefining density so it works for these communities.
- Recognize that the answer to homelessness is a home by prioritizing the development of permanent housing in line with services, removing barriers to housing for those re-entering the community after incarceration, and ending policies that criminalize homelessness.
- Support the collection of eviction data and the provision of legal aid to prevent undue evictions, displacement and homelessness.
- Support and promote the adoption of dedicated sources of funding that leverage public investments into local and/or regional housing trust funds.
- Advocate for investment in water, wastewater, electric and other infrastructure systems necessary to support the development and preservation of safe, healthy, affordable housing choices.

# EDUCATION POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To ensure equity, inclusion, safety, autonomy and justice as cornerstones of a holistic education system, in the face of systemic racism, inequality and redlining.

Our vision is expansive, where opportunities equip students with real-world knowledge and skills, outcomes are reflective of our aspirations, the value of diversity is centered, leadership and content reflect the hopes of the communities served, students and families are empowered to advocate for their own needs and the needs of their communities, students and families are viewed as co-creators of the campus community, trauma-informed and restorative practices are centered, where state and local governments related to education are transparent, accountable and democratic, and all Californians are instilled with a shared sense of empowerment and responsibility toward our most vulnerable.

## CHALLENGE

The San Joaquin Valley is home to more than 10% of California's public-school students. Within this large population of 800,000+, among the youngest students, almost 75% of eligible 3-year-olds and 20% of eligible 4-year-olds are not enrolled in government-sponsored preschool programs, meaning these children are missing a strong start to their educational journey. Once in the K-12 system, disparities increase in math and language arts proficiency, with lowest rates among Southeast Asian, African American/Black students, Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native students. LGBTQ+ often face a hostile school climate where officials attempt to stymie their expression and being, and where students have little support.

Disengagement among students can in part be attributed to curricula that do not include them and a teaching cohort that does not reflect their experiences, highlighting the need for stronger and wider hiring recruitment into teaching, and inclusive ethnic studies K-12 curricula. In addition, parents do not feel connected and involved with their kids' schools. The average rate of expulsion of 2.25 per every 1,000 students is double the statewide average of one per every 1,000 students.

With a juvenile felony arrest rate higher in the Valley than in the state, and with disparities existing among Hispanic/Latino, African American and Southeast Asian groups, this contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline for disadvantaged students. Among the class of 2015, one in 10 (10.8%) San Joaquin Valley students failed to graduate with their high school classmates.

COVID-19 has exacerbated existing inequities. It will require additional resources and concentrated efforts that include outdoor spaces, increased green areas, social-emotional learning and other efforts to confront the challenges of systemic inequities and racism.

The San Joaquin Valley celebrates its role as a land of refugees and opportunities. From those who came before to new arrivals from Southeast Asia, Central America and indigenous communities of Mexico, our challenge is to build a broad education vision that centers communities, learning and opportunities.

## PATHWAY

- Support increased investments in locally informed and culturally competent academic strategies that help place students on a path to achieving and maintaining proficiency by the third grade, including leveraging dual-immersion opportunities.
- Decriminalize school campuses and implement restorative justice practices and trauma-informed care to create welcoming schools that foster strong community engagement.
- Support investments in partnerships and programs that provide students with access to high-quality opportunities that enhance their academic programs through after-school programs, arts, music, sports, access to healthy food and safe drinking water.
- Increase recruitment of people of color into education professions while ensuring there is alignment between teacher preparation programs and on-the-job training to equip teachers with the tools to implement restorative, cultural and trauma-informed disciplinary practices. In addition, school staff should be trained in the delivery of LGBTQ+ and culturally competent and sensitive curriculum

# EDUCATION POLICY PLATFORM (continued)

and instructional practices, including a comprehensive, unbiased sexual health curriculum as required by the Healthy Youth Act, as well as healthy living practices as required by the Local School Wellness Policy.

- Increase investments and availability in quality early childhood programs, facilities and staff that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and designed to meet the needs of vulnerable and underserved communities.
- Improve participation of community, parents and students while providing fiscal transparency to ensure students receive benefits of Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).
- Encourage investments in adult education and training to build a sustainable workforce that includes supports for community-based re-entry programs.
- Provide access to community college vocational training for all immigrants regardless of immigration status.
- Support school-based SEL curriculum and incentivize outdoor activities, including environmental and experiential education, to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors associated with negative mental health outcomes for all youth.
- Build an inclusive and empathetic system for students, families and communities to report and have hate-incidents and microaggressions by other students, faculty and staff investigated thoroughly in a process that centers the experiences of students.
- Include African American Vernacular-speaking students as English Learners to increase supports via Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) funding.
- Ensure curriculum on healthy relationships and dating abuse is included in health education programs or other appropriate courses at middle and high schools as required by the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA).
- Increase funding and support long-term investments in dating and sexual violence prevention education to improve student safety and interrupt the cycle of violence.



# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To ensure clean air, clean food and clean drinking water for all; improved regional health and quality of life; and just, ecological, climate-resilient industries and farming practices.

## CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic and rampant wildfires have exposed the health inequities faced by low-income communities of color in California. Both crises disproportionately injured and impacted food service, food growers and food packers who all Californians depend on. These same communities face additional daily and ongoing health threats that are largely ignored and unaddressed by policymakers. Nearly four million residents living in the San Joaquin Valley, predominantly low-income people of color, continue to be disproportionately exposed to multiple hazardous contaminants, including unsafe drinking water, pesticide exposure and air pollution. All proposed funding and response strategies must therefore be equally skewed toward these vulnerable communities, with affected communities driving the vision for solutions.

## PATHWAY

To address these environmental disparities, we stand united in our call to:

- Ensure that all California residents—regardless of Internet access, ability, language, health status or region—have a direct role in the decision-making process to design and implement the environmental and social policies that impact them.
- Compel government agencies to use information about cumulative health impacts (including CalEnviroScreen 3.0/4.0), in all regulatory and permitting decisions. Assessments of anticipated long-term public health costs should be included in all regulatory decision making and be available for public review.
- Hold agencies accountable for their work through ongoing legislative and administrative oversight. Regularly monitor agency enforcement and implementation and ensure agencies are following federal and California laws and their own regulations.
- Support the successful implementation of the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, by ensuring that all San Joaquin Valley communities with contaminated and/or unaffordable drinking water, including those reliant on private wells, secure interim solutions and progress on the path to long-term solutions by 2025.
- Protect the Valley's groundwater for future generations by: 1) implementing the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in a manner that preserves access to safe water for communities, 2) holding agriculture and oil companies accountable to pay for drinking water solutions through implementation of the Central Valley Basin Plan Amendment, and 3) promoting more proactive drought planning through new legislation that will protect Valley communities for the next drought.
- Support agency enhancement of water management data collection systems to improve monitoring and management of safe drinking water, sanitation, surface water, wastewater, small water systems and private wells.
- Create a low-income rate assistance program (LIRA) for water and prevent mass water shutoffs once the water shutoff moratorium expires by addressing the water debt crisis and providing emergency relief to struggling small water systems.
- Focus on reducing air pollution from the largest sources, including oil and gas facilities, agricultural burning, dairies, biomass plants, pesticide-treated agricultural fields, vehicle transportation, and magnet sources such as ports and distribution centers. Promote direct emission reductions, including through land use changes, and reduce reliance on voluntary programs, taxpayer-funded incentives and credit-based systems.
- Improve enforcement and strengthen regulations regarding toxic air emissions, including agricultural emissions, and establish zero-emission health and safety zones around homes, schools, hospitals and other sensitive sites.

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY PLATFORM (continued)

- Advocate for timely, culturally appropriate notification systems that alert the public to unsafe levels of air pollution and water contamination. Provide information and direct resources for people to protect themselves, such as air filters and protective equipment.
- Support the creation and implementation of plans for a just transition from fossil fuels and petrochemicals to clean, renewable energy and sustainable, equitable storage.
- Ensure that California's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases are equitably implemented and enforced and do not exacerbate air pollution problems or other adverse effects of climate change in the Valley. Ensure investments meaningfully improve conditions and infrastructure, and expand reforestation and urban greenery. Include synthetic pesticide and fertilizer emissions in all climate-related plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, toxic air contaminants, volatile organic compounds and co-pollutants, like short-lived climate pollutants that impact respiratory health and are an attainable strategy to impact climate change in the near term.
- Support the mental and physical health and resilience of all communities by ensuring equitable access to outdoor spaces, especially for low-income and rural communities, communities of color, disabled or special-needs communities at-risk youth, minorities and underserved populations, thus reducing the park-to-population ratio in the San Joaquin Valley. Provide funding for green space development near schools to promote environmental literacy in underserved communities, ensure healthy alternatives to out-of-school time, and provide opportunities for vocational and hands-on learning for youth to fill the anticipated need for a "greener" workforce in the future.
- Dedicate funds to provide technical assistance and support for small- and mid-scale farmers, particularly historically underserved farmers and farmers from environmental justice communities, to promote the widespread adoption of ecological farming practices that stimulate soil health, protect air and water quality, and support the resilience of San Joaquin Valley farms in the face of climate change.
- Incentivize schools to purchase California-grown organic and fresh produce for their school food programs, especially from historically underserved farmers and farmers from environmental justice communities.
- Expand eligibility for funding under the State's Healthy Soils Program to the following farming practices: 1) adopting an organic transition package, and 2) reducing the use of soil fumigants.
- Immediately ban the carcinogenic fumigant pesticide 1,3-dichloropropene. Quickly phase out the most hazardous, drift-prone and outdated agricultural pesticides in use in California, including organophosphates and fumigant pesticides. Secure bans on glyphosate and other synthetic pesticides on public land in schools, cities and counties. Uphold the public's right to know, in advance, about upcoming pesticide applications by having the Department of Pesticide Regulation or County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs) post all Notices of Intent to use Restricted Material pesticides on their web site/s, along with CAC approvals and denials.
- End the discriminatory permitting of waste disposal facilities in low-income communities of color, including the three Latino, Spanish-speaking farmworker communities that are unwilling hosts to the state's three hazardous waste landfills.
- Ensure the Division of Occupational Safety and Health maintains, at all times, an adequate stockpile of personal protective equipment to distribute to farmworkers during emergencies, such as wildfires or disease outbreaks.

# LAND USE AND PLANNING POLICY PLATFORM

## VISION

To ensure that land use planning and policy decisions are centered in residents' priorities, that decision-making power remains in communities, and that communities of need in the San Joaquin Valley are given equitable priority in the allocation and distribution of local and state funds.

## CHALLENGE

By 2050, the San Joaquin Valley is projected to be home to one-tenth of California's population. However, historically poor land use and disinvestment in existing communities have resulted in widespread urbanization of farmland, habitat and other green space, disproportionate exposure to and health impacts from pollution-causing land uses in disadvantaged communities, a lack of safe places for physical activity, and a dearth of decent and affordable housing. Land use decisions are one of the primary reasons that the strongest predictor of a person's lifespan and quality of life is their zip code.

## PATHWAY

To address these disparities in land use and planning, we stand united in our call to:

- Raise community awareness and advocate with agencies to promote prioritization of holistic, sustainable and mixed-use communities with access to public transportation infrastructure and amenities and complete streets, and to promote requirements that industry not be intermixed with residential through defined land use and/or economic development incentives.
- Promote private and public investment without displacement by requiring strong anti-displacement policies, community benefit agreements, meaningful and robust public engagement practices, and inclusionary housing policies to create mixed-income neighborhoods.
- Educate local decision makers and community residents to ensure that city- and county-level general plans commit to directing new development and resources into existing communities (including disadvantaged communities) instead of new towns and greenfield development at the

periphery, and that regional transportation investments in each county's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy are selected accordingly.

- Educate local decision makers and community residents to ensure that zoning promotes infill development and allows for alternative forms of housing, including accessory dwelling units and smaller housing units.
- Conserve agricultural land and natural habitat to promote access to green space and help mitigate the environmental impacts of development.
- Require mitigation of environmental impacts of projects that consume habitat, agricultural land or other open space through permanent conservation easements, with mitigation ratios of at least 1:1 for farmland and higher ratios as appropriate for habitat.
- Secure the adoption of school district policies that support the use of public school playgrounds for neighborhood use.
- Educate agencies to adopt policies and raise public awareness to ensure that vacant municipal lots will be conveyed through long-term ground leases that secure community control of these scarce resources rather than being sold.
- Require jurisdictions to support, enforce, fund and implement public engagement processes that prioritize underserved communities for proposed residential and industrial development.
- Promote the need for adoption of Good Neighbor guidelines that address potential impacts to neighborhoods from on-road trucks associated with warehouses and distribution centers related to the impacts of diesel particulate matter.

# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you to all of the partners who contributed their time and expertise to developing the 2021 Policy Platform.

A Hopeful Encounter  
ACCE Institute  
ACT for Women and Girls  
ACTION Council of Monterey County, Inc.  
African-American Historical and Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley  
Alliance for Community Transformations  
Alliant Educational Foundation  
American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Northern California  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus  
Asian Business Institute & Resource Center (ABIRC)  
Asian Pacific Self-Development and Residential Association (APSARA)  
Be Smooth Inc.  
Binational of Central California  
Building Healthy Communities Fresno  
California Coalition for Rural Housing  
California Human Development Corporation  
California Immigrant Youth Alliance  
California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc.  
California Institute for Rural Studies  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation  
California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.  
California School of Professional Psychology, Alliant International University Fresno  
California State University Fresno Foundation  
Californians for Pesticide Reform  
Cambridge Academies  
Catholic Charities of Stockton  
Catholic Council for the Spanish Speaking of the Diocese of Stockton  
Center for Human Services  
Center for Multicultural Cooperation  
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment  
Central California Asian Pacific Women  
Central California Asthma Collaborative  
Central California Environmental Justice Network  
Central California Legal Services, Inc.  
Central Coast Innerfaith Sponsors Inc.  
Central Valley Air Quality Coalition  
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