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CERF RFI

Ms. Kimberlee Meyer
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Valley Vision is a civic leadership organization dedicated to improving the livability of the Sacramento region. Together with our Prosperity Partners — Greater Sacramento Economic Council, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce, and Sacramento Metro Chamber — we developed and continue to implement the Prosperity Strategy, our region’s federally-recognized Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the strategic framework that prioritizes our core economic initiatives and will result in a more prosperous, equitable and resilient region.

Valley Vision appreciates the Administration’s Request for Information seeking input on proposed metrics for Phase 1 and 2 of the program, considerations for approaching research in Phase 1, and considerations for approaching Phase 2. At this early stage of project development, it is challenging to envision a comprehensive set of metrics. Without the final planning phase guidelines, and without additional information on the implementation phase guidelines and how these two phases will intersect, our recommendations at this stage consist of general parameters that we foresee as being critical to the research and evaluation efforts of the CERF. We hope that leadership will continue considering feedback on proposed metrics as the process continues to unfold.

Our response below includes our recommendations, as well as information on approaches we are taking in our region, and some questions and concerns we have. These will be further detailed in our public comment to the draft planning phase guidelines, to be submitted next week.

We hope this information is helpful, and we look forward to continuing to engage with the state’s CERF leadership team on these efforts.

Thank you!

I. Metrics for Evaluation

- a. Recommendations:** The metrics used to evaluate the outcomes of projects and programs funded by the CERF should have the following characteristics: *First*, they should reflect the CERF’s program objectives — equity, job quality, and sustainability. *Second*, they should consist of data points that are publicly available or can be made available to the lead applicants and collaboratives of all regions. *Third*, they should consist of data points that reflect that CERF program’s equity priorities — race, ethnicity, gender, and geography — and can be disaggregated according to those priorities.
- b. Approaches in the Sacramento Region:** In the Sacramento region, the CEDS for the six counties (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba) identifies several indicators to measure the success of the strategy’s short- and long-term initiatives. These are the following:

Regional Inclusive Economic Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSA Performance on Growth, Prosperity and Inclusion (Data Source: Brookings Institution Metro Monitor) • Median Annual Household Income by Zip Code (Data Source: U.S. Business Census) • Cost of Living Index Compared to Other Mid-markets (Data Source: Council for Community and Economic Research) • Wage Gain Over Time by Sector, Skill-Level and Education (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Brookings Institution Metro Monitor) • Average Annual Wage by Sector (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics) • Relative Poverty Rate (Data Source: U.S. Business Census) • Households Struggling to Make Ends Meet (Data Source: California Budget and Policy Center and Brookings Institution Metro Monitor)
Innovation and Business Growth Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Employment Dynamics Index (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics) • Number of Business Openings by Area, both Solely and Multi-Employee (Data Source: U.S. Business Census) • Jobs at Young Firms (Data Source: Brookings Institution Metro Monitor) • Venture Capital Funding Investment in Businesses (Data Source: PWC MoneyTree) • Innovation Index 2.0 (Data Source: Stats America) • Entrepreneurial Business Growth (Date Source: Kauffman Foundation Growth Entrepreneurship Index)

Workforce Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor Market Equity by Census Tract, Gender and Race (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & U.S. Business Census) • Number of Degrees and Awards in Emerging Industries (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics) • Projected Skills Gap and Labor Shortages (Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & U.S. Business Census) • Levels of Education for People of Color Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & U.S. Business Census)
Transportation and Infrastructure Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transit Wait Times • Number of Transit Oriented Development Projects, Including Housing (Data Source: SACOG and Regional Transit) • Roadway Reliability – Trucks and Passenger Vehicles (Data Source: FHWA and SACOG) • Bike Share and Micro-Mobility Trips Per Capita (Data Source: SACOG and System Operators) • Annual Home Price (Data Source: California Association of Realtors) • Average Rent per Unit (Data Source: Apartment List) • Federal and State Funding Investment in Infrastructure Projects (Data Source: SACOG) • Households Served by Internet (Data Source: California Public Utilities Commission)

In addition to these, the Sacramento region also has data assets that relate to High Roads Training Partnerships, broadband coverage, food security, and degree and certificate completion.

- c. **Questions and Concerns:** As noted above, capturing the equity impact of CERF-funded projects and programs requires metrics that are up to date, available to all, and can be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and geography. Yet **many of the traditionally relied upon economic indicators do not fit these criteria, either because they are limited in their granularity (e.g., are only captured at the county or census-tract level) or do not have available cross tabs for race, ethnicity, gender, or other demographics.** Available data points that speak to multiple equity priorities (e.g., the employment rate among female Hispanics in a particular city) are even harder to come by. The Sacramento Region seeks guidance from the state CERF leadership team on specific data points that can be pointed to that fit these criteria, to supplement the indicators listed above, and provide a more robust picture of equity impacts.

II. Approaching Research in Phase 1

- a. **Recommendations:** Comprehensive research and analysis efforts are foundational to a region's ability to successfully carry out its planning phase and, together with robust community and stakeholder engagement, should inform which projects should be funded by the CERF. For regions that already have their CEDS in place, planning phase research efforts should include **updating the CEDS to reflect the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a strong equity lens**. Regions should also consider making use of **innovative research and database tools**, such as mapping and economic modeling tools, to support their research processes and ground their analyses.
- b. **Approaches in the Sacramento Region:** The Sacramento Region will be focusing much of its Phase 1 efforts on **updating and building on its existing CEDS**. Our CEDS was completed and released right at the onset of the pandemic. The data and analyses that inform the strategy need to be updated to reflect the ongoing effects of the pandemic. Research and engagement with a particular emphasis on economic recovery for underrepresented communities is required to ground-truth the strategy's priorities and strengthen its equity lens. Additionally, our CERF region includes Colusa and Nevada counties, which are not part of our existing CEDS, and we are committed to expanding on our existing CEDS to include the economic needs and priorities of Colusa and Nevada. The Sacramento Region is exploring the possibility of using innovative research and database tools, such as **Esri's ArcGIS (a mapping and spatial analytics software) and REMI's macroeconomic policy analysis models**.
- c. **Questions and Concerns:** The Sacramento region seeks guidance on the time horizon of data metrics and CERF goals - how will immediate term performance goals be balanced with long term performance goals that might be outside the time period of the CERF program? The Sacramento region will also look to the state CERF leadership for tools that support data collection and disaggregation.

III. Considerations for Approaching Phase 2

- a. **Recommendations:** In their approach to Phase 2, CERF regions should **leverage existing economic development processes**, while also being mindful of those stakeholders and communities who may have been left out of these processes, and meaningfully engaging with them to ensure that their priorities are elevated in implementation. Given the wide economic diversity within each of the CERF regions, regions should also consider a **subregional approach** in Phase 2, through which the varied priorities of the different communities and jurisdictions are elevated and coordinated through the Convener and regional Collaborative. Finally, regions should ensure that their CERF processes align with existing federally funded efforts, to maximize the CERF's transformative impact.
- b. **Approaches in the Sacramento Region:** The Sacramento Region will be leveraging its existing six-county CEDS, while being mindful of the need to update and build on it to reflect the



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ongoing effects of the pandemic and the need for a strong equity lens, as discussed above. We are also working closely with subregional partners (e.g., our economic development partners in Tahoe).

- c. **Questions and Concerns:** The Sacramento Region seeks technical assistance from the state CERF leadership team in establishing a regional governance structure that will guide the CERF process from planning through till implementation.

Sincerely,


Evan Schmidt
CEO