



# CivicSpark

The California Partnership for Accelerating Local Climate

## CivicSpark – A Governor’s Initiative of AmeriCorps

CivicSpark provides high-quality, technical support to local and regional governments, helping California communities pursue clean energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard against climate change impacts, and implement sustainable community strategies.

To do this, 48 CivicSpark AmeriCorps members will work with nine regional partners to provide capacity-building support to local governments through research, planning, and implementation activities, while simultaneously supporting volunteer engagement at a greatly reduced cost (a fixed hourly rate based on project duration).

Civic Spark is a program of the Local Government Commission, launched in partnership with the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. Learn more at: [civicspark.lgc.org](http://civicspark.lgc.org)

### CivicSpark in the Sacramento Region

**Regional Partners:** Sacramento Council of Governments and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

**Members:** 7 – 9 members will be located in the Sacramento Region

### Projects in the Sacramento Region

#### One Cool City Campaign

In early 2013, Cool Davis began working with the City and a task force of community experts and leaders to design the “One Cool City Campaign.” This campaign targets specific GHG reduction actions that households can achieve in the areas of home energy, transportation and consumption. Members will help launch the Campaign by participating in the design of GHG reduction programs at the neighborhood and community organization level; training and supporting community volunteers in their neighborhood and organizational ambassador roles; and planning and leading workshops and other community based activities designed for community engagement in GHG reductions in their action area.

#### Yolo County Climate Action Plan Mid-Point Assessment and Course Correction

This proposed project involves the review and evaluation of the Yolo County Climate Action Plan. The member will research and analyze data to evaluate the current status of the County’s goals and the effectiveness of the plan’s policies and action items. The member will also identify policies that may need to be modified in order to accomplish the County’s goals and make

*Climate change is a global challenge that requires strong, sustained local action.*

*This program gets young people into communities across California to help reduce emissions and boost energy efficiency.*

*- Governor Jerry Brown*



recommendations regarding those policies as well as evaluate the goals and make recommendations regarding the feasibility of their implementation.

### **Climate Impact Vulnerability Assessment and Policy Review for Adaptation**

Many cities and counties in the Sacramento region already have policies in place that address anticipated climate impacts, but they may not recognize these policies as adaptation strategies. These jurisdictions will find it encouraging to understand that they already have an array of adaptation responses in place, helping make the task of responding less daunting. This project will provide communities with a foundation upon which they can strengthen and improve their adaptation strategies. Members will conduct a broad level vulnerability assessment for the region and audit a select number of existing community plans and policies that can contribute to community preparedness. Members will help generate a standard set of policies that can be incorporated into local readiness efforts, and work with staff to scale these policies to fit within their communities.

### **Combatting the Urban Heat Island Effect in Disadvantaged Communities**

The urban heat island effect is projected to worsen as temperatures rise due to climate change. This will have the biggest impact on low-income residents. Urban forestry has been documented in multiple studies to have extensive public health, air quality, and quality of life benefits, including providing natural cooling. However, many low-income and disadvantaged communities are critically short of urban tree coverage. Members will work with communities and local tree foundations to increase the urban canopy in disadvantaged neighborhoods. This project will entail working with neighborhood residents and building community engagement and buy-in as well as providing public outreach and education on the health threats of climate change and air pollution, including resources and information to help residents respond to the urban heat island effect.

## **Looking for Support?**

We are currently looking for local governments who want to take action, but need support to advance their climate change response efforts. Generally, CivicSpark can support projects that can be completed remotely and are of a scale and type that can be implemented without deep technical expertise. A few project examples are listed below:

#### **Research:**

- Benchmarking local building energy use
- Inventorying current school route conditions
- Researching local climate change impacts

#### **Planning**

- Localizing a renewable energy action plan
- Supporting ZEV readiness planning
- Integrating health considerations into CAPs

#### **Implementation**

- Piloting a residential water conservation program
- Coordinating the implementation of a Safe Routes to School Improvement Plan
- Monitoring and evaluating progress on extreme heat responses.