

# LADOT Celebrates Launch of \$60 Million South LA EcoLab Program

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A coalition of community-based organizations, including Community Partners, SLATE-Z, CicLAvia, Climate Resolve, Coalition for Responsible Community Development, GRID Alternatives, LACI, LA Neighborhood Land Trust, SAJE, SCOPE, TreePeople, and TRUST South LA partnered with the City of Los Angeles, LA Metro, and Los Angeles Trade-Technical College to secure a \$35 million Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) grant from the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to improve environmental conditions and reduce pollution in South LA. This funding combines with \$24.6 million in funding from LA Metro, the City of Los Angeles, and other sources to support the South LA Eco-Lab: a community-driven project to facilitate economic development through Climate Action within the project area to achieve the community's vision for a socially inclusive, sustainable, green community resilient to climate change, in the heart of South Los Angeles.

“South Los Angeles is the heart of LA, and this investment will set our sights on what tomorrow should look like in a community with big dreams for the future,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “This grant is a big step toward building the South LA that residents have envisioned for years – with improved quality of life, public health, and access to economic opportunity.”

"The Strategic Growth Council's Transformative Climate Communities Program supports under-invested communities who have built a network of organizations, residents, and businesses that have created a shared vision for the future. TCC provides resources to help catalyze this vision— whether that be affordable housing, community gardens, safe transit options, community resource centers, and more," said CA Strategic Growth Council Executive Director Lynn von Koch-Liebert. "We are honored to work in meaningful partnership with the South LA Eco-Lab, a group that has been an important leader in South LA, working for years to advance equitable and lasting community development."

The California EPA has identified South LA as one of the most polluted areas in the state. The South LA Eco-Lab project area includes 3.9 square miles bordered by Vernon Avenue, 60th Street, Western Ave, and Central at its northern, southern, western, and eastern limits respectively. 60% of the population in this area lives below the poverty level, 1-in-3 are unemployed, nearly half experience severe housing cost burdens, and approximately 1-in-5 individuals rely on active modes of transportation (walking, wheeling, or taking transit).

"The South LA Eco Lab project is an example of what can happen when we let communities lead and identify the projects that best meet their needs," said Connie Llanos Interim General Manager of LADOT. "This grant helps us expand on our commitment to deliver Universal Basic Mobility for South LA and ensure much-needed improvements for local residents including safer streets, cleaner air, and more options to get where they need to go reliably and affordably."

"Our community has been working to address poverty in South Los Angeles by revitalizing the economy in environmentally sustainable ways," said Zahirah Mann, President, and CEO of SLATE-Z. The South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z) is proud to serve as the strategic advisor for the South LA Eco-Lab, and form part of the lead applicant team with Community Partners and the City of Los Angeles; we have the privilege of working with incredible, mission-driven governmental, nonprofit, and resident leaders who developed holistic and transformative projects and plans. The South LA Eco-Lab will result in deep transformative change for South Los Angeles, launching our community as a leader in climate mitigation and preparing our businesses, residents, and students for the climate resilient economy."

With a final project budget of nearly \$60 million, the South LA Eco-Lab will invest in infrastructure projects such as LADOT Stress Free connections and EV Car Share, StreetsLA Cool Pavement projects, home solar installation through GRID Alternatives, street trees, and school greening providing open space and stormwater capture benefits. The South LA Eco-Lab will do this while also focusing on robust community engagement, workforce development, and anti-displacement measures.

Funding for the project will begin in 2023, with a project completion date of 2028 when Los Angeles will host the 2028 Olympic Summer games just a few blocks from the outer boundaries of the project area. The South LA Eco-Lab will also leverage or connect to other climate-related investments and programs within South Los Angeles and throughout the SLATE-Z area, including LADOT's Universal Basic Mobility Program, Rail-to-Rail, LA Metro's Rail-to-Rail, and expansion of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy.