

# HOW TO IMPACT CLIMATE POLICY IN THE BAY AREA



As wildfires intensify, temperatures rise, and flood risk increases, Bay Area residents are experiencing the overlapping impacts of a changing climate. It's true that climate change is a complex, global problem that requires bold action from government leaders. However, the Bay Area is a beacon for innovation and future-facing solutions, and local residents have the power to impact important climate decisions at the local level—affecting everything from building community resilience to greenhouse gas reduction and environmental justice.

## WHY ADVOCATE

Every community member has the opportunity to influence climate action where they live through land-use planning by getting involved in city and county general plan updates, climate action plans, and master planning for development. These critical policy documents set the direction for how jurisdictions commit to addressing climate change. And though they might sound complicated, your participation in the planning process is the perfect way to impact climate change in your community.

## ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

During this workshop you will hear from Bay Area advocacy and community engagement experts on how to influence policy and how to ensure cities and counties adopt equitable and environmentally-progressive plans—guiding the future we want to see for our communities. Here's what you can expect:

- ▶ Interactive 45 minute session led by an environmental policy expert
- ▶ Content based on employee education goals and interests
- ▶ An advocacy toolkit with best practices, talking points, and sample statements ([see example here](#))



Every city in the Bay Area must update their housing element (a core piece of a General Plan) by 2022 to accommodate close to half a million new homes over the next 8 years.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will gain the following knowledge to be better equipped to make an impact on climate change:

- ▶ What a general plan is and how it affects communities
- ▶ A firm understanding of how to influence decisions at the local level
- ▶ How to advocate around climate change
- ▶ How to advocate around environmental justice
- ▶ Advocacy best practices for: letter writing, petitions, and making public comment

## EXAMPLE WORKSHOP

Our [Contra Costa County Climate Advocacy Workshop](#) brought together over 100 people for an open forum where elected officials, nonprofit leaders, and organizers illuminated the general plan process and shared best practices and training on planning initiatives at the city and county levels.