



Office of the City Manager

August 17, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager *DR*  
Re: Berkeley awarded grant for equitable climate outreach during COVID-19

The City of Berkeley was recently awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network to partner with the Ecology Center (the fiscal agent and grant recipient) and Green the Church, a sustainability initiative led by the local, Black-run Church by the Side of the Road. The six-month project will engage communities most at risk from the impacts of climate change with ongoing efforts to improve the health, safety, resilience, and equitable electrification of buildings. Using an innovative approach that meets the challenges of COVID-19, the project will pivot from traditional in-person outreach to a community-friendly virtual engagement method. The Ecology Center will connect with people using a train-the-trainer model where church facilitators lead in-depth virtual discussions with peers, placing Black voices at the center of the dialogue.

This Ecology Center and Green the Church project builds upon earlier community engagement efforts contributing to the Berkeley Existing Building Electrification Strategy. Informed by community members at the front lines of climate change, this strategy will provide inclusive and equitable policy options that address all buildings in Berkeley to prioritize multiple benefit solutions that improve health, comfort and affordability.

This community partnership also supports the response to Council's July 2020 referral to seek external funding to advance community engagement around equitable climate change solutions. Community engagement requires ongoing resources and long-term authentic relationship and capacity building. This project is one component of a larger commitment towards community-led, participatory policy creation.

For more information please contact Jordan Klein, Interim Director of Planning and Development, at (510) 981-7534 or [jklein@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:jklein@cityofberkeley.info).

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager  
David White, Deputy City Manager  
Jenny Wong, City Auditor  
Mark Numainville, City Clerk  
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager  
Jordan Klein, Interim Director, Planning and Development Department  
Liam Garland, Director, Public Works Department