

California Climate Investments Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations



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Preface

Government agencies play an important role in shaping policies and programs that impact communities across California. This responsibility includes striving to avoid harm and working to reverse the lasting effects of historical injustices such as racism, sexism, classism, discrimination, and disinvestment that were often caused by past government policies (*Executive Order N-16-22*). These historic government policies such as funding decisions and the siting of public infrastructure contributed to the systemic inequities we see today, including unequal access to resources and opportunities.

As government agencies carry out their legal obligations and policy objectives, they have an opportunity to strengthen community well-being and advance important government goals. This includes protecting equal rights, expanding fair opportunities, reducing climate risks, and ensuring modern policies do not perpetuate or worsen past and current inequities (Cal. Civil Code, sections 51, 51.7, and 52.1; Gov. Code, sections 12955 and 12926.1) Disadvantaged communities and low-income communities often face disproportionate climate risks, environmental and health burdens, and limited capacity to adapt to climate change. Addressing these challenges is essential to building a more resilient and inclusive future for all Californians.

Effectively addressing these historical and ongoing challenges calls for a thoughtful and multifaceted approach. Assembly Bill (AB) 1532 (Pérez, Chapter 807, Statutes of 2012) requires California Climate Investments to maximize benefits while reducing the impacts and effects of climate change on the State's communities, economy, and environment. In addition, *California Air Resources Board (CARB) Resolution 18-27* approved the establishment of a "guiding principle that requires agencies, in designing programs and selecting projects, to avoid potential substantial burdens to disadvantaged and low-income communities."

California Climate Investments aim to create broad benefits for communities across the state. While these investments generally aim to improve public health, the environment, and economic opportunities, they may also have varied impact - both positive and negative. Administering agencies are required to consider these potential impacts when designing programs and selecting projects, with particular attention to communities that could experience disproportionate burdens.

Introduction

The *Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments* states that administering agencies “must consider and avoid potential substantial burdens or harms to priority populations.” *Priority populations* include disadvantaged communities and low-income communities and households as defined in Senate Bill (SB) 535 (De León, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2012) and AB 1550 (Gomez, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016). Administering agencies must consider whether a given program or project has the potential to result in substantial public health, environmental, economic, or community access burdens, and design programs and select projects in such a way as to avoid those burdens.

This supplemental guidance provides a three-phase approach with required and recommended steps specific for California Climate Investment programs to identify and avoid burdens with recommended strategies for implementation (Figure 1). The phases are:

- Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens
- Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens
- Phase 3: Evaluate Outcomes and Identify Improvements

These phases emphasize community engagement to identify program and project burdens, strategies to avoid the identified burdens, and evaluation techniques to assess outcomes of the implemented strategies. The *Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool* follows the three-phase approach of the supplemental guidance and is for administering agencies to track how they are implementing the avoiding burdens requirement. Administering agencies who are creating new or updating expenditure records or program guidelines, or posting active solicitations must complete the required portions of the tool before these materials are published, as feasible. The required responses of the tool must be reflected in the program’s *expenditure record*. The strategies identified in the tool to avoid burdens should be incorporated into program materials such as guidelines and solicitations, as applicable. It is administering agencies’ responsibility to implement this guidance and design programs to ensure that third-party program administrators or funding recipients avoid potential burdens. For more examples and resources to support avoiding burdens, see the *California Climate Investments Avoiding Burdens and Harms Webpage*.

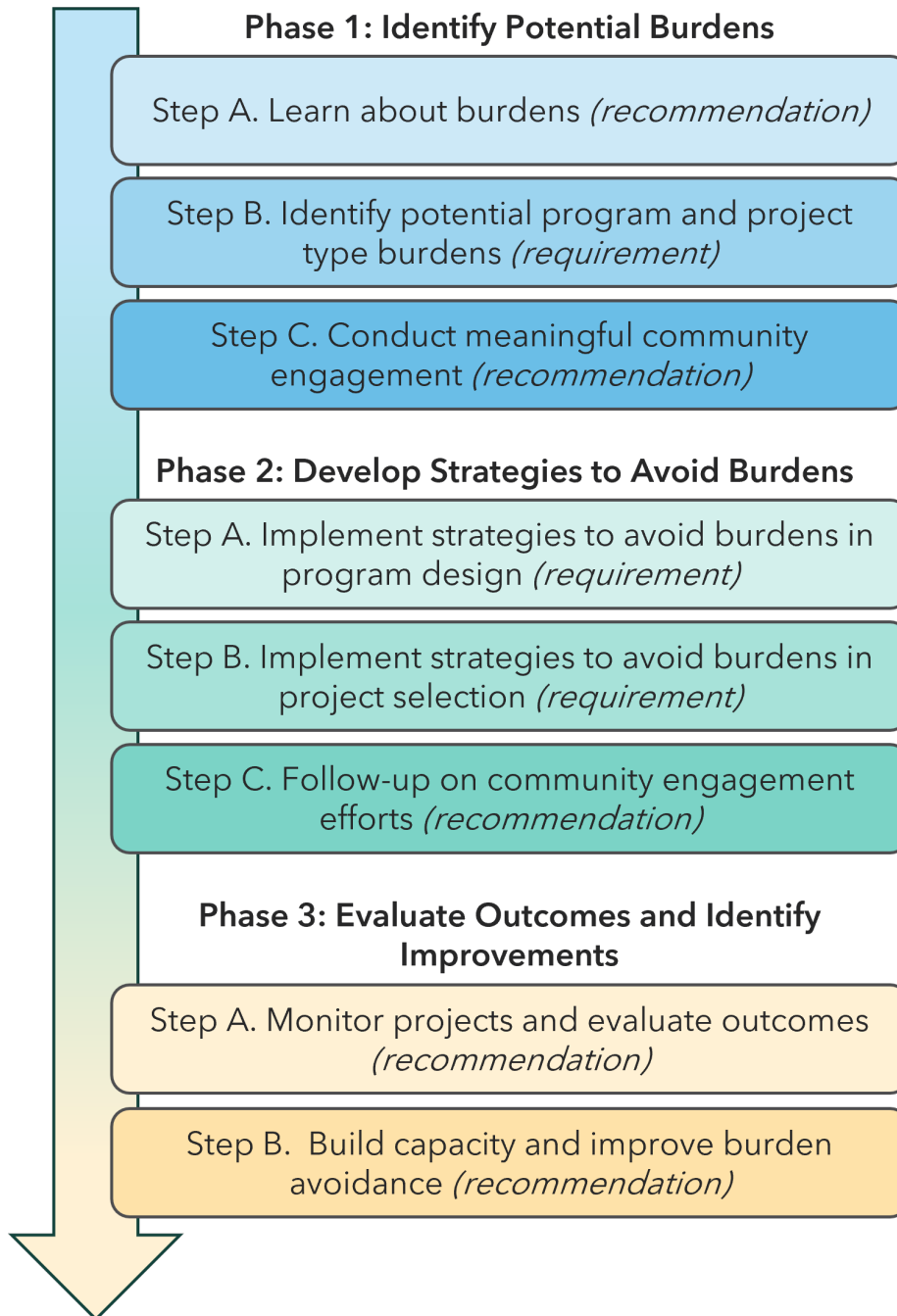


Figure 1: California Climate Investments process to avoid substantial burdens

Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens

Administering agencies must identify potential burdens that may result from the program and project types. Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens includes the following steps:

- A. Learn about burdens (*recommendation*)
- B. Identify potential program and project type burdens (*requirement*)
- C. Conduct meaningful community engagement (*recommendation*)

Administering agencies are strongly advised to implement these steps to identify and avoid burdens, as applicable and to the extent feasible. The strategies listed in each step are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. The strategies may not be applicable to every program. Administering agencies may need to consider other steps, strategies, and burdens based on their program, project types, and identified community needs.

A. Learn about burdens (*recommendation*)

Administering agencies are encouraged to gain a comprehensive understanding of a wide range of potential burdens. This baseline understanding allows for more awareness of the diversity of burdens that priority populations could be currently experiencing or could occur across California Climate Investments project types.

The definitions of “substantial,” “burden,” and “harm” vary depending on field of work and experiential context. To ensure consistency and clarity for agencies administering California Climate Investments, these terms are defined below.

Substantial: The level of an adverse impact that would disproportionately or predominantly affect the environment, community members, or Native American Tribes that already carry historical and present burdens.

The term “substantial” is subjective, based on the impacted community’s history and current challenges. Administering agencies should engage underserved community members to determine which burdens are considered most “substantial.”

Burden or harm: The collection of adverse impacts to a region, community, household, culture, or environment resulting from the implementation of a climate program. Adverse impacts may be newly introduced or may continue or worsen existing inequities or patterns of injustice, including public health, social, cultural, economic, or environmental injustice. A burden or harm can be direct or indirect, and exists across time, beginning at the planning of a proposed project or the application process, and extending past direct implementation, towards long-term impacts.

The terms “burden” and “harm” are used interchangeably within the context of California Climate Investments. For simplicity, the word “burden” will be used throughout this guidance.

Avoid: The act of preventing, mitigating, or reducing burdens.

To support administering agencies in learning about the wide range of potential burdens, types of burdens are described and organized into the following categories:

- Public health burdens
- Environmental burdens
- Economic burdens
- Community access burdens

Under each category, example burdens administering agencies may encounter in program design and selection of eligible project types are provided below. The list of example burdens was developed by researching available literature and through engagement with administering agencies and community-based organizations. Many of the example burdens are complex and stem from not just one source but from many historic and long-standing issues. However, administering agencies can implement strategies to not worsen existing burdens.

The example burdens are meant to support administering agencies in learning about potential burdens. The example burdens are not necessarily the burdens that will result from the program. Administering agencies are to identify the burdens specific to the program and impacted communities in Phase 1 Step B. Conducting community engagement is an important strategy to identify the burdens most substantial and relevant to the program as described in Phase 1 Step C.

Administering agencies may identify additional burdens not listed that are specific to the program and project types. An individual burden may qualify as more than one burden type or may exacerbate other existing burdens. Burdens may also overlap or occur concurrently, be short-term/long-term, local/remote, before/after implementation of a project, and within/outside the administering agency's scope. Administering agencies should consider the intersectionality of potential program and project type impacts.

Public Health Burdens

Public health burdens impact physical health and public safety.

Physical health burdens include exposures to hazards and pollution from projects, which can cause negative health outcomes that may include headaches, fatigue, inflammation, physiological stress responses, respiratory illness, birth defects, cancer, and other short-term or chronic diseases or physical ailments. These burdens are exacerbated in communities with existing health inequities, including those with high pollution levels and multiple pollutant sources.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Air pollution from emissions of criteria air pollutants (e.g., ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide) and toxic air contaminants (e.g., diesel particulate matter, benzene, formaldehyde) released from transportation, equipment, land management, agricultural, or industrial projects.
- Water and soil pollution from chemicals, heavy metals, plastics, untreated sewage, and other toxic materials or organisms released from equipment, industrial, land management, or agricultural projects.
- Odor, sound, and light pollution from transportation, equipment, land management, agricultural, or industrial projects.

Public safety burdens include reduced access to urgent or emergency health services due to projects that cause temporary impacts like traffic or transit disruptions or long-term impacts like displacement. Public safety burdens may also occur when a project increases risk of car collisions, increases surveillance and policing, or causes conflict. Public safety burdens may exacerbate physical and mental health impacts. These impacts can be influenced by program and project design decisions and can disproportionately affect communities experiencing systemic racism, prejudice, and disinvestment.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Lack of sufficient lighting or pedestrian-safe infrastructure from development projects that result in crime or safety risks.
- Reduced access to hospitals and emergency routes or increased number of car collisions from development projects or projects that cause traffic or transit disruptions.
- Safety risks from projects that cause conflicts over land use or jurisdiction, or cause heightened presence of non-tribal members around land under the control of Native American Tribes.

Environmental Burdens

Environmental burdens impact the physical environment and the ecosystem.

Physical environmental burdens include degradation to the physical environment, such as water and soil, and can cause negative impacts for both natural and built environments.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Increased runoff and flooding from building impervious surfaces, such as roads and buildings, from development projects.
- Groundwater depletion and altered water or sewer flow from development, agricultural, or industrial projects.
- Soil erosion and degradation from development, land management, or agricultural projects.
- Increased wildfire vulnerability from development, land management, or agricultural projects.

Ecosystem burdens include degradation to natural habitats, negatively impacting wildlife and disrupting ecosystem services.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Habitat destruction and fragmentation from development projects.
- Reduced biodiversity or introduction of invasive species from development, land management, or agricultural projects.
- Reduced health and abundance of culturally and ecologically significant wildlife and plant populations from development or agricultural projects.

Economic Burdens

Economic burdens impact the costs, resources, and workforce in a community. Programs that do not consider resource-burdened communities in program or project design can perpetuate hardships they face and result in reduced participation of these communities.

Cost burdens increase costs of living and reduce quality of life.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Increased housing costs for buyers and renters in areas where investments reduce climate risks or increase desirable amenities like transit access without pairing efforts to preserve and/or increase affordable housing.
- Increased utility costs from electrification projects.
- Increased energy demand and power outage risk in areas with strained grid reliability due to electrification, industrial, and decarbonization projects.
- Increased transportation costs from community displacement further from job centers.
- Increased vehicle recharging costs for low-income residents without access to cheaper at-home charging options.
- Reduced service of existing transit lines or increased transit fares.

Resource burdens strain resource-limited communities and exacerbate hardships without providing resources or support.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Reduced capacity from long application processes and/or excessive reporting.
- Decreased program access from a lack of advanced payment.
- Financial uncertainty for funding recipients due to unclear rebate, reimbursement, voucher, and award announcement timelines.
- Insufficient time for Tribal Council review or other processes required to submit applications or feedback due to short solicitation and public comment periods.
- Limited resources for long-term, sustainable solutions due to resources going to short-term projects that do not address root causes or create lasting change.

Workforce burdens reduce employment opportunities and perpetuate harmful practices.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Reduced local resident access to project jobs, workforce development, or projects that hire outside of the project region.
- Exacerbated workforce injustice or wage disparities from reinforced harmful workplace cultures, low-quality job practices, and exclusionary hiring.
- Disruption in access to local businesses due to development.

Community Access Burdens

Community access burdens include public processes that are not fair, transparent, or accessible. Community access burdens can also include displacement from long-established communities, networks, families, and ancestral lands that can result from development projects.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Development projects that isolate and displace community members from networks, families, or ancestral lands.
- Culturally insensitive project planning and development that removes access to cultural resources or practices.
- Culturally incompatible public processes, such as time limits that restrict a tribal leader's ability to share a story.
- Inaccessible public processes that do not provide translation or use plain language.
- Decreased access to essential services, decision-making opportunities, or public processes.
- Public documents or actions that are culturally insensitive or insensitive to historical injustices resulting in reduced social trust and connection.
- Ineffective outreach and engagement methods that do not succeed in reaching historically underserved community members.
- Excessive or exclusionary community engagement activities that require nearby residents to miss work or pay for childcare in order to participate.
- Development projects that gentrify long-established communities.

B. Identify Potential Program and Project Type Burdens (requirement)

Administering agencies must identify the potential burdens that may result from the program and project types. The following recommended strategies emphasize the use of existing information, data, and tools for identifying potential burdens. For more information and resources, see the [California Climate Investments Avoiding Burdens and Harms Webpage](#). Administering agencies should complete this step prior to engaging the community or finalizing program design and project selection. Conducting research to identify potential burdens prior to engaging communities reduces the burden to community members and demonstrates dedication to avoiding burdens at all levels of program design where possible. For more information on preparing for community engagement and for more strategies and examples to help identify potential burdens, see the [Preparing for Public Participation](#) resource.

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Identify past and ongoing burdens experienced by those who will be impacted by program and project implementation. Administering agencies should set goals to recognize and alleviate past and ongoing burdens.
- Review outreach documentation pertaining to the development of the program. Identify community concerns and potential impacts. Consider whether concerns and potential impacts have been addressed.
- Identify eligible funding recipients and potential barriers to program access.
- Review published literature, reports, or data that document and identify burdens in similar programs or fields of work, especially in underserved communities.
- Consider qualitative data such as documented community concerns and quantitative data from academic or scientific publications.
- Use Equity Lens tools to assess inequities in program design and project selection.
- Conduct a Health Impact Assessment, a systematic process for assessing potential health impacts of projects or program and policy decisions.
- Conduct a root cause analysis, see [Examples of Root Causes of Burdens and Potential Solutions](#) for examples and information on how to conduct a root cause analysis.
- Use guiding ethical frameworks, see [Guiding Ethical Frameworks for Avoiding Burdens](#) to help determine if a program or project action may avoid or cause burden.
- Investigate existing data mapping tools, such as the ones listed in [California Climate Investments Benefit Assessment Data Tools](#).
- Evaluate how relevant government regulations and industry standards address or identify potential burdens. Relevant statutory framework may include [California Environmental Quality Act \(CEQA\)](#) and the [California Toxic Release Inventory Program \(CalTRIP\)](#).

C. Conduct Meaningful Community Engagement (recommendation)

Engagement with community members, community-based organizations, and Native American Tribes reveals burdens that may not be articulated in available literature. The following recommended strategies should be implemented by administering agencies to identify potential burdens during existing or planned community or tribal engagement opportunities. Administering agencies should assess whether additional engagement would be needed to further identify and understand potential burdens. For additional community engagement resources and best practices, see the [California Climate Investments Outreach and Engagement webpage](#) and the [California Climate Investments Roadmap](#).

What can this look like? A few examples:

- Share the potential burdens identified by the administering agency and verify accuracy with community or tribal members.
- Ask community or tribal members to identify additional potential burdens they are experiencing or may experience as a result of the program and project types.
- Ask community or tribal members to recommend avoidance strategies for the identified burdens to inform Phase 2.

Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens

Administering agencies must consider and avoid potential burdens throughout program design and project selection. Administering agencies should develop strategies to avoid the burdens identified from Phase 1 Steps B and C. A single strategy may avoid multiple burdens. Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens includes the following steps:

- A. Implement Strategies to Avoid Burdens in Program Design (*requirement*)
- B. Implement Strategies to Avoid Burdens in Project Selection (*requirement*)
- C. Follow-up on community engagement efforts, as necessary (*recommendation*)

Administering agencies are strongly advised to implement these steps to identify and implement strategies that avoid burdens, as applicable and to the extent feasible, during the development or update of program guidelines and project selection criteria. The strategies listed in each step are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and can be used to avoid public health, environmental, economic, and community access burdens (see Figure 2). The strategies may not be applicable to every program. Administering agencies may need to consider other steps and strategies based on their program, project types, and identified community needs. For additional examples of burden avoidance strategies, see [Examples of Burdens and Avoidance Strategies](#).

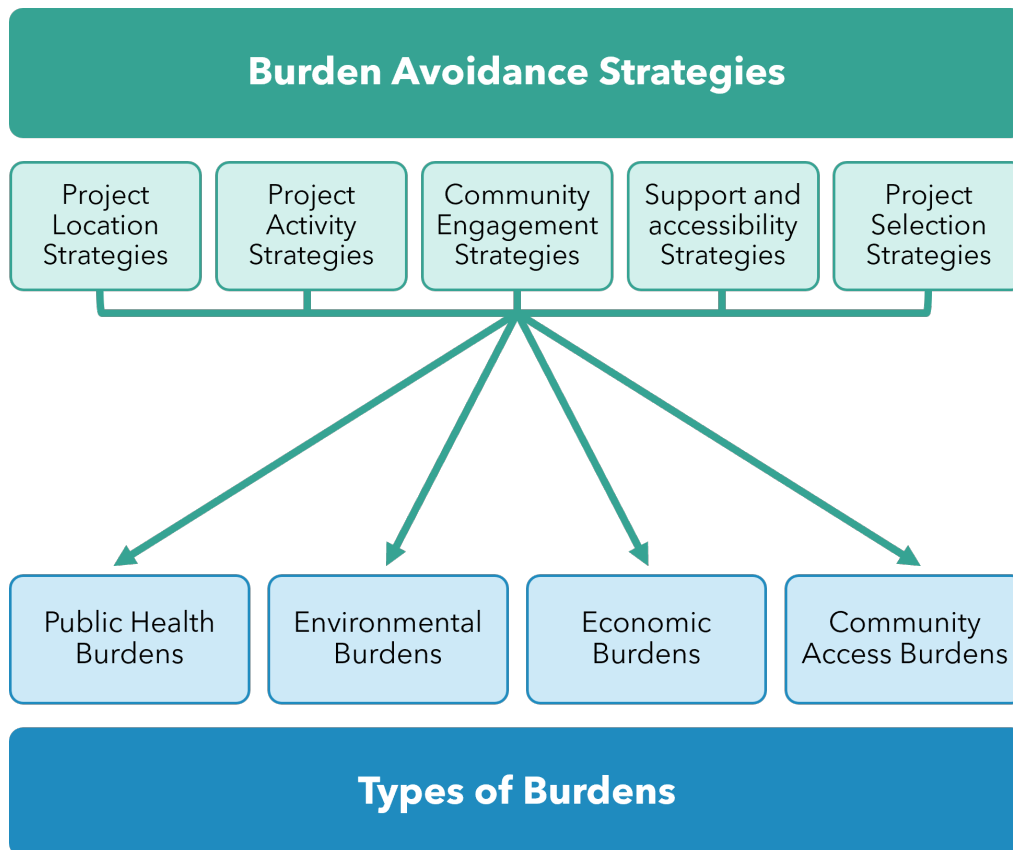


Figure 2: Strategies to avoid different types of burdens diagram

A. Implement Strategies to Avoid Burdens in Program Design (requirement)

Administering agencies must identify and implement strategies to avoid identified burdens in all elements of program design, as applicable and to the extent feasible. Program design strategies are organized into the following categories:

- Project activities
- Project locations
- Community engagement
- Support and accessibility

These strategy categories can be used for all types of burdens. Administering agencies may consider additional program design strategies, as necessary, to avoid burdens. Administering agencies should develop strategies in a manner that will best avoid burdens in communities that may be impacted by program design.

Project Activities

Project activities include program requirements that specify expenditures that are eligible for program funding.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Include community engagement as an eligible project cost. Eligible activities may include engagement plans, conducting the engagement, and implementing mechanisms for continuous community feedback.
- Include activities that avoid burdens as eligible project costs.
- Require applicants to include a plan to address community member concerns that may arise during project implementation.
- Require zero-emission equipment, when possible.
- Require projects to avoid or reduce near-roadway exposures such as vehicle emissions.

Project Locations

Project locations include program requirements that specify where a project can or cannot be located.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Require early and often outreach to tribal communities based on project location and placement, especially for areas where there are designated cultural sites.
- Establish thresholds that limit projects that may exacerbate burdens, such as projects that increase particulate matter (PM) in communities with a high PM indicator score in *CalEnviroScreen*.
- Disincentivize project types that may exacerbate pollutants in pollution-burdened communities.
- Require that projects will not exacerbate identified existing burdens in communities or create new burdens.

Community Engagement

Community engagement activities include program requirements that specify how projects should involve community-based organizations, community members, or Native American Tribes.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Require partnerships with Tribes or community-based organizations with letters of commitment from partner organizations that detail project roles and responsibilities to demonstrate meaningful engagement.
- Require a feedback process to allow the public to report project burdens and desired resolutions. Feedback processes may include public listening sessions, interviews, and surveys with a mechanism to respond to reported concerns.
- Require community or tribal advisory committees that co-develop project plans and have an active role in implementation decisions to ensure the project addresses community and tribal concerns.
- Require regular reporting and a communication plan to track progress and provide public transparency throughout project implementation. Reporting and communication may include progress reports, public meetings, and webpages.
- Require compensation of community members who engage in planning activities and project implementation, to the extent allowed by law.

Support and Accessibility

Support and accessibility activities include mitigating barriers for applicants with limited capacity to access funding.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Develop communities of practice to for project operators and third-party administrators to share knowledge and collaborate, especially as it relates to identifying burdens and avoidance strategies.
- Provide technical assistance throughout the application, implementation, and reporting phases to support applicants.
- Streamline and simplify application processes and requirements where possible. Provide simple, easy-to-use templates for required materials.
- Fund capacity building activities to support knowledge, skills, and partnerships needed for applicants to be competitive for funding.
- Host public listening sessions in accessible locations and close to public transit to increase participation and uplift and respond to concerns of community members.
- Navigate Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity thoughtfully to build trust and encourage tribal participation. Tribes are sovereign nations not subject to State civil laws. Waivers limit indemnification of the State and allow the State to enforce agreements as tribes provide explicit written agreement to be subject to State jurisdiction for limited purposes related to funding. Waivers discourage tribal participation, so programs should require only when absolutely necessary. For more information see the [*Funding Workbook for All California Tribes*](#).

B. Implement Strategies to Avoid Burdens in Project Selection (requirement)

Administering agencies must identify and implement strategies to avoid identified burdens in all elements of project selection, as applicable and to the extent feasible. Project selection strategies should complement program design strategies.

Administering agencies may consider additional project selection strategies, as necessary, to avoid burdens. Administering agencies should develop strategies in a manner that will best avoid burdens in communities that may be impacted by project selection.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Include selection criteria and scoring rubrics that demonstrate preference for projects with burden avoidance strategies.
- Incentivize project narratives that contain specific strategies to avoid identified burdens.
- Incentivize community and tribal engagement to identify potential burdens in project design.
- Incentivize community oversight or collaborative structures, such as community advisory committees, to increase participation.
- Incentivize burden avoidance plans that quantify the impact of potential burdens and level of mitigation estimated from burden avoidance strategies. Administering agencies should develop an avoidance plan template as part of their program materials.
- Incentivize community support letters or community benefits agreements. A community benefits agreement is a tool that supports avoiding identified burdens. A community benefits agreement itself does not avoid an identified burden.

C. Follow-up on community engagement efforts, as necessary (recommendation)

Administering agencies should follow-up with previously engaged community and tribal members and organizations throughout the program design and project selection development or update process where possible and to the extent feasible to obtain more information, respond to feedback, and report project selection results. Administering agencies should determine the level and frequency of follow-up engagement based on program and identified community and tribal needs.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Post draft program materials and host or participate in public meetings to collect public comments and notify previously engaged community and tribal members and organizations.
- Summarize updates to program materials informed by feedback and provide to previously engaged community and tribal members and organizations.

Phase 3: Evaluate Outcomes and Identify Improvements

Administering agencies should evaluate the impact of the implemented burden avoidance strategies and identify opportunities to improve burden avoidance at the program and project levels. Phase 3: Evaluate Outcomes and Identify Improvements includes the following steps:

- A. Monitor Projects and Evaluate Outcomes (*recommendation*)
- B. Build Capacity and Improve Burden Avoidance (*recommendation*)

Administering agencies are strongly advised to implement these steps to evaluate outcomes of implemented burden avoidance strategies and identify improvements in the program design and project selection. The strategies listed in each step are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Administering agencies are responsible for determining the need for program and project evaluations. For more information on program and project evaluations, see the [California Climate Investments Roadmap](#).

A. Monitor Projects and Evaluate Outcomes (*recommendation*)

Administering agencies should consider program and project monitoring and evaluation strategies throughout implementation up to and after projects are completed.

What can this look like? Strategy examples:

- Describe monitoring and evaluation requirements in program materials to set clear project expectations. Provide templates and tools where possible to reduce burden and so collected data is consistent and comparable across projects. Incentivize ongoing engagement with project partners to monitor project implementation and identify any additional burdens.
- Conduct site visits to assess whether projects are achieving burden avoidance goals.
- Conduct interviews with community members benefiting from and potentially burdened by the project to identify positive and negative project impacts. Prioritize seeking feedback from underserved communities.
- Conduct impact analyses to assess how project benefits or burdens impact different communities, including disadvantaged communities.

B. Build Capacity and Improve Burden Avoidance (recommendation)

Administering agencies should build capacity for improving strategies to avoid burdens. Cross-agency collaboration, external partnerships, and root cause analysis may provide valuable insights and solutions, especially for burdens that are difficult to avoid. Capacity building can include activities like performing a root cause analysis, organizing or participating in interagency collaboration, or seeking external support through contracts.

Interagency Collaboration

Interagency collaboration includes convenings that share challenges, successes, and best practices.

What can this look like? Example collaboratives:

- California Climate Investments interagency meetings facilitate information sharing and collaboration. Administering agencies should consistently participate in these meetings.
- The *Transportation and Housing Coordination workgroup* drafted *Policy Recommendations to Promote Anti-Displacement Activities Within State Transportation Programs*.

Contracts

Contracts fund external experts to address recurring burdens.

What can this look like? Example contracts:

- CARB contracted with University of California to develop a *White Paper on Anti-Displacement Strategy Effectiveness*.
- CARB worked with a contractor and community-based organizations to develop outreach strategies to reach communities experiencing program access barriers.

Root Cause Analysis

Root cause analysis is a process to uncover the root cause of an issue to then identify specific solutions for recurring burdens.

What can this look like? Example resources:

- *Root Cause Analysis Explained: Definition, Examples, and Methods* provides an explanation of benefits and goals of a root cause analysis with techniques and methods for how to conduct an effective root cause analysis.
- *Examples of Root Causes of Burdens and Potential Solutions* summarizes examples of root causes that can result in burdens and potential solutions.
- *Root Causes of Housing and Land Injustice* highlights nine root causes behind the inequities of housing and land ownership to inform solutions.



California Climate Investments Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool

Burden Identification and Strategy Tool

Purpose: The Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool is for agencies administering California Climate Investments programs to track how they are avoiding potential substantial burdens to priority populations in program design and project selection. The tool follows the three-phase approach in the *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations*. Administering agencies must complete the required portions of the Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool when creating new or updating expenditure records or program guidelines or posting solicitations, as feasible. The required responses of the BIST must be reflected in the program's expenditure record. The strategies identified in the BIST to avoid burdens should be incorporated into program materials such as guidelines and solicitations, as applicable.

Who uses it: Agencies that administer California Climate Investments.

Background: The *Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments* requires that administering agencies "must consider and avoid potential substantial burdens or harms to priority populations." The *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations* provides a three-phase approach to identify burdens and implement recommended strategies to avoid the identified burdens. For more examples and resources, see the *California Climate Investments Avoiding Burdens and Harms Webpage* and the *California Climate Investments Roadmap*. The terms "burden" and "harm" are used interchangeably within the context of California Climate Investments. For simplicity, the word "burden" will be used throughout this tool.

Phases to Identify and Avoid Potential Burdens

The three-phase approach outlined in the *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations* is as follows.

Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens. Administering agencies must identify potential burdens that may result from the program and project types.

Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens. Administering agencies must consider and avoid potential burdens throughout program design and project selection.

Phase 3: Evaluate Outcomes and Identify Improvements. Administering agencies should evaluate the impact of the implemented burden avoidance strategies and identify opportunities to improve burden avoidance at the program and project levels.



California Climate Investments Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool

Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens

Instructions: Describe the identified burdens that could potentially result from the program and project types by providing responses to the questions below.

For more information on how to complete the questions in this phase, review “Phase 1: Identify Potential Burdens” of the *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations*. Refer to the [Preparing for Public Participation](#), [Guiding Ethical Frameworks for Avoiding Burdens](#), [Examples of Root Causes of Burdens and Potential Solutions](#), and [California Climate Investments Outreach and Engagement Webpage](#) for additional support for completing Phase 1 B & C.

A. Learn about burdens (recommendation)

What are the potential types of burdens that may be applicable to your program? *Examples include public health, environmental, economic, and community access burdens and burdens that are short-term/long-term, local/remote, upstream/downstream, and within/outside the administering agency’s scope.*

B. Identify potential program and project type burdens (requirement)

What were the strategies used to identify potential burdens that may result from the program and project types and what are the potential program and project type burdens that were identified? *Example strategies include community input, local or regional reports, comment letters, advocate needs and motivations, scientific literature, mapping tools, datasets, and best available guidance. Example burdens include potential air, water, and soil pollution, and displacement impacts.*

C. Conduct meaningful community engagement (recommendation)

What feedback did community members provide regarding the identified burdens from Step B? What additional concerns and potential burdens were identified? *Examples include verifying the accuracy of the identified burdens, identifying additional burdens that they are experiencing or expect to experience, and recommending burden avoidance strategies.*



Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens

Instructions: Describe the strategies the program developed to avoid the burdens identified in Phase 1 in program design and project selection by providing responses to the questions below.

For more information on how to complete the questions of this phase, review “Phase 2: Develop Strategies to Avoid Burdens” of the *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations*. Refer to [Examples of Burdens and Avoidance Strategies](#) for additional potential avoidance strategies for completing Phase 2 A & B.

A. Implement strategies to avoid burdens in program design (requirement)

What strategies did the program develop to address the identified potential burdens in program design? *Examples of types of strategies include eligible project activities and locations, community engagement, and support and accessibility.*

B. Implement strategies to avoid burdens in project selection (requirement)

What strategies did the program develop to address the identified potential burdens in project selection? *Examples include incentivizing burden avoidance strategies or plans, community engagement, community oversight, and community support or benefit agreements.*

C. Follow-up on community engagement efforts, as necessary (recommendation)

How did the program follow-up with previously engaged community members and organizations throughout the program design and project selection? *Examples include summarizing how the program incorporated community member’s feedback and notifying them of posting draft materials for public comments.*



California Climate Investments Burdens Identification and Strategy Tool

Phase 3: Evaluate Outcomes and Identify Improvements

Instructions: Describe how the program evaluates or plans to evaluate the outcomes of the strategies developed to avoid burdens and identify opportunities to improve burden avoidance at the program and project levels by providing responses to the questions below.

For more information on how to complete the questions of this step, review "Phase 3: Evaluate Strategies and Identify Improvements" of the *Supplemental Guidance to Avoid Substantial Burdens or Harms to Priority Populations*. Refer to [Examples of Root Causes of Burdens and Potential Solutions](#) for additional support for completing Phase 3 B.

A. Monitor projects and evaluate outcomes (recommendation)

What strategies does the program use to evaluate the outcomes of the strategies developed to avoid burdens? *Examples include public listening sessions, routine site visits and audits, interviews, and analyses.*

B. Build capacity and improve burden avoidance (recommendation)

What challenges has the program experienced with identifying or avoiding burdens? What strategies does the program use to address difficult or persistent issues in avoiding burdens? *Examples include root cause analysis, interagency collaboration, and contracts.*