

**Southern Arizona Coalition For Climate Adaptation and Resilience
Governance and Coalition Sustainability Proposal**

Lead Institution: City of Tucson

The Southern Arizona Coalition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience seeks to support Southern Arizona in becoming a national epicenter of climate adaptability by weaving together currently under-coordinated industries and organizations into an impactful, diverse Coalition addressing a growth cluster critical to our arid region--sustainable agriculture, water resources, and clean energy. For the Phase 1 application, the Coalition amassed support from 11 Coalition members, 9 municipalities, tribal governments, 22 industry partners and countless additional regional assets conclusively demonstrating with EDA support, this Coalition is positioned to leverage momentum, gather joint resources, and make a transformative “moonshot” to propel our regional economy, and environment, in a new direction.

If selected as a Phase 2 award recipient, our Coalition will have the need to maintain our collaboration efforts under a shared governance structure. Given that our unique value proposition is in our existing collection of assets, intentional equity-based framework, and the development of a reproducible model for communities to organize around climate challenges at an international scale, the key to the ongoing viability of the Coalition has is the continuance of our established structure that works to ensures credibility and transparency in the process and a mechanism for governance and conflict resolution both internal and external to the Coalition. As the lead institution for the overall Coalition, the City of Tucson will take on the responsibility of and is committed to leading and supporting the Governance of the Coalition for the duration of the Build Back Better Regional Challenge program.

Scope of Work

The City of Tucson, along with all Coalition members, propose the following scope of work to ensure the viability of continued governance and sustainability for the Coalition for the duration of the BBBRC awards and beyond. This overall structure will provide transparency and public accountability for the Coalition’s actions and facilitate the dissemination of information regarding our approach to addressing the challenges of growing our industry cluster focused on sustainable agriculture, clean energy and food entrepreneurial enterprises in our region.

City of Tucson Committed Staffing	As the Lead institution for the overall Coalition, the City of Tucson will commit dedicated staffing resources of the economic development team to support the component projects and leads as well as ensure there is a centralized location for governance, equity and conflict resolution
Coalition Member Committee	Since submission of Phase 1, all Coalition members have been meeting weekly to maintain open and clear communications and work together to submit the Phase 2 application. Led by the City of Tucson, these check-ins will continue monthly to ensure collaboration is maintained and new opportunities for collaboration are identified.
Equity Advisory Committee	As part of Phase 1, the Coalition formed an Equity Advisory Committee to help review all Phase 2 applications and ensure underserved populations were

	represented in the overall Coalition’s approach. This Committee will be maintained and expanded as the Coalition continues with the purpose to evaluate component and Coalition performance and help ensure the work of the Coalition serves all populations. The equity committee will meet at least bi-annually as part of the Conferences.
Project Component Sub-Committees	If selected for Phase 2, all component projects will adopt a relevant committee structure for their particular project. These standing committees should be designed to support and enhance the component’s work and work with their project’s structure. Committees can include coalition member representatives, regional asset organization representatives, industry leaders, and equity partners, and should have seats on each committee reserved for representatives from tribal, rural and underserved communities. Component leads should call committee meetings at least bi-annually if not more depending on their needs.
Annual Governance Conference	The Coalition will convene an annual Governance conference in Tucson, Arizona to create transparency between projects and for the public. Coalition Members and partner organizations will be included. Component Area Sub-Committees will update Coalition Members and regional stakeholders regarding the progress of projects and programs, and to ensure alignment of outcomes with the Coalition’s overall goals. Each committee will have the option to recommend action items to be taken up by Coalition Members at the Annual Meeting.
Annual Public Engagement Conference	The Coalition will also convene an annual Climate Adaptation and Resilience conference to rotate between Tucson and Yuma to ensure equitable distribution of resources and access to opportunity for the regional community. Coalition Members and partner organizations will create opportunities for public participation and education related to climate science, economic resilience, entrepreneurship and other topics related to the ongoing work of the Coalition.
Annual Public Report	The Annual Meeting shall result in the publication of the <i>Proceedings of the Southern Arizona Coalition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience</i> , in print and electronic format, which will serve as record of the process, reporting on successes and opportunities for the Coalition, as well as challenges and barriers.

Regional Industry Assets and Needs

The largest barrier faced for successful implementation of the Coalition’s vision has been lack of collaboration. In the past, a major barrier to implementation for this cluster concept has been the under-coordination and disparate activities of the various regional leaders, organizations and industry partners. A perceived scarcity of resources has often undermined true collaboration and therefore transformational innovation. Rural, tribal, and underserved communities have been relatively absent from regional conversations due to the effort required for relationship development and the persistent perspective that the projects in their communities do not create the same returns on investment and job creation as metropolitan areas. The Coalition must remain focused on the new opportunity to overcome some of these prior challenges by ensuring stronger urban-rural linkages, addressing economic distress, and ensuring equity.

Service Area: Southern Arizona is defined here as the counties of Pima, Yuma, Cochise, and Santa Cruz, Greenlee and Graham and the tribal nations of Tohono O’odham, Pascua Yaqui and Cocopah. Compared to national averages, this region is exceptionally diverse but also economically at-risk, with high poverty rates throughout and difficult recovery from COVID-19. Traditionally engaged in accommodation and food services, administration, health care, manufacturing, and retail industries, job losses have been particularly hard on women (more than triple the same period in 2019), and people of Hispanic/Latino/a/x ethnicity (more than double) during COVID-19. Yuma County perfectly encapsulates the duality of providing a nationally critical resource while economically teetering on a knife's edge. For example, Yuma County agricultural production is a \$3.28B industry that is in the top 1/10th of 1 percent of U.S. counties by many measures. Yet, Yuma faces unemployment rates nearing 20% and per-capita personal income 35% lower than the U.S. averages. Primary Service Area: Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area Population and Yuma Metropolitan Statistical Area (FIPS codes spreadsheet is attached).

CEDS Alignment: As mentioned in the primary narrative, the intentional processes and structure laid out here will complement the goals stated in all of our regional CEDS. In particular, the Coalition is aligned with the region’s following CEDS:

- **Tucson Economic Development Strategy:** Tucson’s strategy is focused on 5 goals: 1) Grow Tucson’s existing and small businesses to foster economic resiliency; 2) Attract investment to diversify Tucson’s economy, 3) Bolster Tucson’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, 4) Support economic mobility and wealth creation for all Tucsonans, 5) Enhance Tucson’s brand for investment, capital, and talent. Tucson values *an inclusive economy* that works for everyone, *a living laboratory* that embraces change that is people-first, climate-focused and future-defining, *robust entrepreneurship and innovation* by investing in entrepreneurs who solve tomorrow’s challenges, and *pride of place* as Tucson proudly celebrates its multicultural heritage, arts, and culture. Executing Phase 2 of Tucson’s Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to support climate resiliency, competitiveness and innovation directly supports Tucson’s ED Strategy.
- **Yuma County’s [CEDS](#)** has as a priority to invest in infrastructure to further enhance the economic opportunities in the region, by attracting new high growth industries and supporting the existing agriculture industries. This goal aligns with the Ubiquitous Yuma Broadband project, the South Arizona Coalition Equitable Revolving Loan Fund which will have an office located in Yuma, the Future Farming Hub out of the University of Arizona, and the Sustain SoAZ entrepreneurship programming.
- **Western Arizona Development District’s [CEDS](#)** states a mission to foster an innovative and resilient economy by addressing climate change impacts and responding to these imminent threats through creative problem solving to ensure regional economic resilience.
- **Pima County’s [Economic Development Plan](#)** states a focus on strategically increasing workforce development programs and increasing focus on innovation and the successes of start-up companies across multiple industries. These goals align with all 6 projects we are submitting under this grant proposal.

Proposed Solution

The Southern Arizona Coalition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience was intentionally formed by bringing in partners that represent a multitude of Southern Arizona stakeholders and new intersections within the cluster. To ensure this collaboration continues, a resourced and specific achievable governance and Coalition sustainability plan is needed. Given the background of the City of Tucson’s Economic Development Team, the City of Tucson is equipped to lead the Coalition in the creation and maintenance of this governance structure and will ensure its feasibility for the duration of the award. The following components represent key aspects of the Coalition’s Governance Plan.

City of Tucson Committed Staffing: The City of Tucson proposes the following staff structure to support the component projects and leads as well as ensure there is a centralized location for governance, equity and conflict resolution. The role and responsibility of each position is defined as follows:

<p>Economic Initiatives Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manage RECO ● Expand Coalition outreach and participation ● Ensure Equity commitments are met ● Inform City of Tucson Mayor & Council and Management of progress 	<p>Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure each component committee is meeting their deliverables and key milestones ● Coordinate all financial reporting to the EDA and ensure its completeness and accuracy ● Management of communications and day to day operations of Coalition ● Coordinate annual conferences ensuring diverse and widespread participation ● Publish Proceedings of the Southern Arizona Coalition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience as a record of the annual Governance Conference
<p>Economic Initiatives Deputy Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist Director with oversight of program ● Manage any contractors on the phase 2 implementation ● Expand Coalition outreach and participation ● Seek future partners 	
<p>Grants Manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all reporting to EDA is completed accurately and on-time ● Assist the RECO in managing the Coalition’s budget 	

Tested and Established Community Engagement Strategy, Committee Structure and Conflict Resolution Process: The key to the ongoing viability of the Coalition has been the establishment of a structure that ensures credibility and transparency in the process and a mechanism for conflict resolution both internal and external. This includes the Coalition Member Committee, Component Sub-Committee and Equity Committee and Public Meetings, Conference and Information Dissemination. The structure created by the Coalition for Phase 1 has been tested and will be used for Phase 2 as outlined in the Scope of Work. Below are highlights of how the model was used in Phase 1. Lessons learned from this process will be carried forward into our committee, governance and review process in Phase 2.

- Planning Conference: After Phase 1 submission but prior to learning of Phase 2 selection, the Coalition held its first public planning meeting in partnership with the University of Arizona. The Conference was well attended by over 50 individuals representing all

industries. The conference included breakout sessions for participants to share issues and areas ripe for investment within the cluster.

- Community Engagement Strategy and Public Meetings: After the Coalition was notified of the Phase 1 award, a notice was sent to the public, and our professional network, for requests for proposals to participate in phase 2. This process was created to allow for members of the community and underrepresented organizations to join in the process. A website page was built, and a webinar was hosted in which a step-by-step process for submitting a proposal was explained. This resulted in 92 participants and 48 projects being submitted for the Coalition.
- Coalition Committee Review: All projects that were submitted were vetted through multiple Coalition meetings over 2-weeks and proposals that fit within the vision of the Coalition and met EDA funding guidelines. This process resulted in down-selecting and formation of 8 total projects.
- Equity Advisory Committee: The Coalition convened its Equity Advisory Committee to review the 8 projects. The RECO, utilizing the skills acquired in TA presentations, the two-day EDA conference, and existing research, built an equity rubric. This rubric was then presented to the Equity Advisory Committee who reviewed the 8 proposals and scored them in the equity rubric. A final meeting was convened in which the Equity Advisory Committee had a deeply moving and impactful discussion on each proposal which led to a document of recommendations to the Coalition.
- Refined & Equitable Final Proposals: These recommendations helped refine the component projects offering valuable insight related to the identification of inclusion opportunities, unintended consequences and other ways to enhance projects to promote diverse and widespread participation and positive outcomes. This resulted in further outreach, adding several new partners from underrepresented communities, reconfiguring our initial project scopes, and bringing our total constellation of projects to 6. This experience drove home the point for our Coalition that with intentionality and support, we can build an equitable and resilient future.

Partners and Program Outreach

The lead entity for the Coalition, the City of Tucson (CoT), is well positioned to serve as the hub to host the Governance responsibilities for Phase 2 and beyond. The CoT currently hosts the RECO position and provided technical and resource support for the Coalition during Phase 1 and has shown capacity to continue this role.

All Coalition members have been nationally recognized for their focus on equity and inclusion. To ensure representation of all community voices in the governance of the Coalition, these 6 projects and our governance structure have been developed with the support of the Coalition's equity partners. Our equity partners are connected throughout the region and lead numerous existing efforts to reach historically excluded populations, minorities, and women. Coalition member the Community Food Bank of SoAZ has strong connections through rural and underserved communities in Southern Arizona and is well-positioned to facilitate and support outreach efforts throughout the region. In addition, the Coalition includes designated Equity partners who will offer valuable insights into the equitable allocation of project funding including the Santa Cruz Heritage Alliance, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, and the

Southern Arizona YWCA who have partners located throughout Southern Arizona and can offer valuable connections and advice around communicating with some of the historically excluded communities. Rural partners include Yuma and Cochise counties, the Town of Sahuarita, and the cities of San Luis and Yuma, and Tribal partners include the Pascua Yaqui and Cocopah Indian Tribes. With the support of our rural and equity partners, intentional outreach will be conducted to promote awareness, engagement and transparency and to minimize barriers and unintended consequences.

Measurable Goals and Impacts

METRICS:	GOALS:
Committee Meetings: Monthly Coalition Committee Meetings Equity Committee Meetings Component Sub-Committee Meetings	48 total 8 total 8 total
Conferences: Number of annual conferences held Number of attendees at annual conferences Geographic origin and ethnic diversity of attendees	8 total 150 each 40% from outside of Tucson, diversity reflects region
Public Engagement: Maintenance of Coalition Webpage Maintenance of Coalition Contact List Number of impressions and engagements on social media Bi-annual survey for community feedback Number of survey responses each time Annual Publication of the <i>Proceedings of the Southern Arizona Coalition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience</i>	Updated quarterly Updated quarterly 200 per month 8 occurrences 50 responses each 4 occurrences

Sustainability Plan

The Coalition has committed to continuing its collaborative work beyond the period of the funded award, with the intent of realizing transformational change in the areas of climate adaptation and economic resiliency. The major public institutions represented in the Coalition, specifically the City of Tucson, University of Arizona, Pima Community College, and Arizona Western College, have committed significant resources to this effort that will ensure the regional growth cluster is sustained after the period of the funded award.

To promote sustainability of the Coalition, the City of Tucson and Coalition members will work together to meet our stated goals and impacts. The Coalition and City of Tucson are confident that should the Coalition be selected for Phase 2 funding, support for the effective governance and transparency of the cluster will be top priority and provide multiple types of investment opportunities to support the continuance of this plan post-award.