

Purpose

A Greater L.A. is an ambitious and integrative product that will guide local government efforts. The *Framework* will leverage research and regional capacity to create a consensus-based, actionable plan for combating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Greater Los Angeles.

The regional *Framework* will:

- ◆ Provide strategies for **mitigation** of the emission of climate change-causing greenhouse gases
- ◆ Assess the impacts of climate change and outline **adaptation** measures to cope
- ◆ Outline a path towards **sustainable economic growth** for communities throughout Greater L.A.

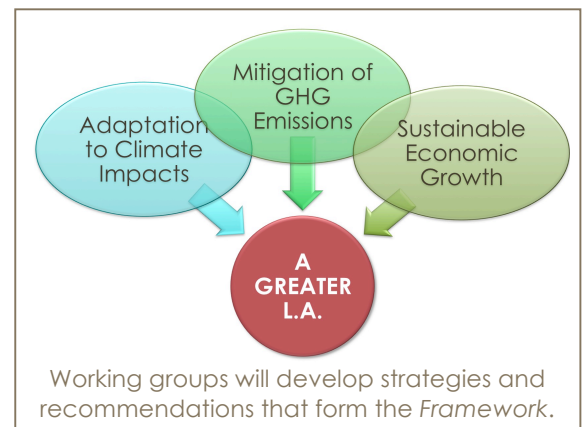
Process

The *Framework* is a living document. It is a scaffold for sustainability and climate action strategies, where each strategy can be integrated with others, recognizing the need for regional impact and efficient strategies.

Research and **Working Groups** form the basis of the process. LARC is overseeing research in climate change impacts, GHG mitigation, and sustainable communities to build the knowledge base for the *Framework*.

LARC will convene groups of stakeholders and experts in each of the three goal areas to provide:

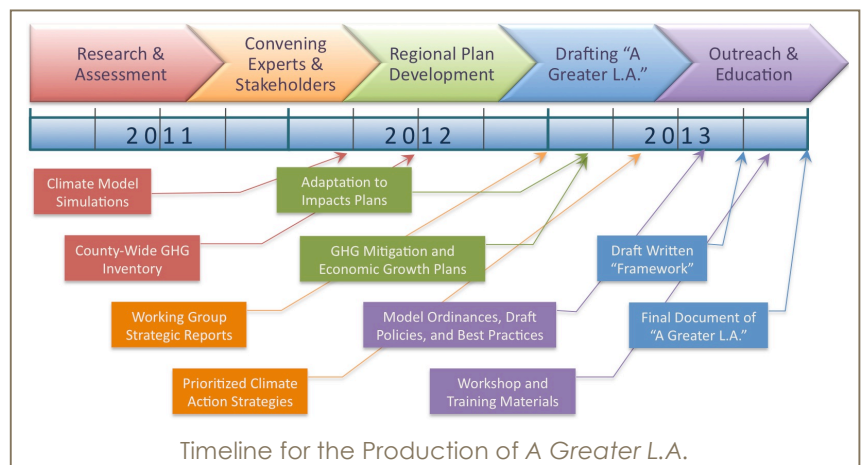
- ◆ **Assessment** of regional issues and concerns
- ◆ **Strategies and best practices** that can work in L.A.
- ◆ **Prioritized recommendations** for the *Framework*



Products

The *Framework* will combine the elements of climate action plans and consensus-building activities to identify regional strategies and mechanisms for successful climate action. By developing a process for expert input and stakeholder engagement, further details will be continuously added to the *Framework*.

- ◆ A completed *Framework* will be produced for dissemination and utilization throughout the region (2013)
- ◆ A web-based suite of resources, strategies, draft policies and ordinances produced by the process
- ◆ A physical report, produced biannually, outlining the integrated, regional strategy



A GREATER L.A. – THE FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Project Description and Work Plan

Overview of the Framework

The Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability (LARC), which represents the leading local governments, universities, and non-profit organizations in Greater L.A., recognizes the need to transform and reduce energy use in communities if climate change goals are to be met and they are to become sustainable. As such, the primary program of LARC is the production of *A Greater L.A.: The Framework for Regional Climate Action and Sustainability*.

A Greater L.A. is an ambitious and integrative product that will guide local government efforts. The *Framework* will leverage research and regional capacity to create a consensus-based, actionable plan for combating climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and outlining a pathway to ensure sustainability in Greater Los Angeles.

To accomplish these goals, the regional *Framework* will outline strategies for, and coordinate actions among, local governments in three key aspects (see Figure 1). It will:

- ◆ Provide strategies for **mitigation** of the emission of climate change-causing greenhouse gases and co-pollutants
- ◆ Assess the impacts of climate change and outline **adaptation** measures to cope
- ◆ Outline a path towards a **sustainable economy** for communities throughout Greater L.A.

The *Framework* will combine the elements of climate action plans and consensus-building activities to identify regional strategies and mechanisms for successful climate action. This process will proceed in five steps, which establish an ongoing process for continuous elaboration of the *Framework*.

1. Research and Assessment
2. Convening Experts and Stakeholders
3. Regional Framework Development
4. Drafting *A Greater L.A.*
5. Outreach and Education

The process of incorporating these elements serves as one of the primary products of *A Greater L.A.*, namely a consensus-based process for identifying regionally-appropriate strategies for sustainability that have substantive and actionable policies, tools, and best practices for implementation by local governments. It will identify best management practices

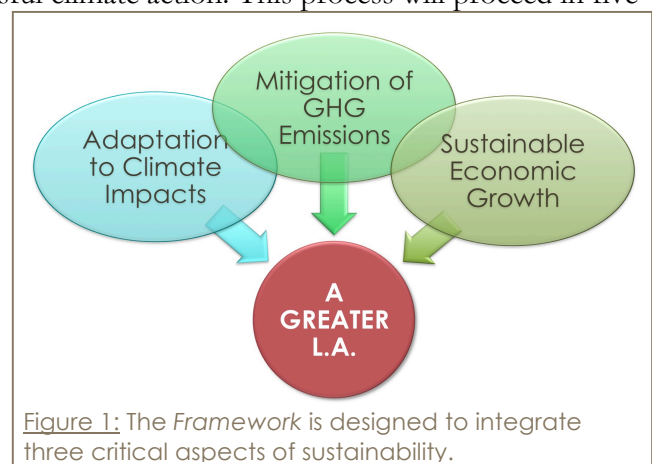


Figure 1: The Framework is designed to integrate three critical aspects of sustainability.

already being implemented in the region that can be replicated, as well as best management practices from across the US and elsewhere that might be implemented in the region. A written *Framework* that synthesizes the regional strategy will be finished by end of 2013.

In addition to a biannual written report, the *Framework* will appear as a living web-based suite of resources that provide guidance, planning support, resources, tools, data, model policies and ordinances, and a strategic atlas of regional climate action and sustainability policies. This allows for continuous updating and enriching of the regional strategy. What will result is a guidebook and strategy that stands as a model for true climate *action* that can be copied and utilized by communities throughout the country.

LARC has been tasked by cities, the County of LA, and agencies with coordinating regional climate action and sustainability strategies for Los Angeles County. These local governments have all endorsed the LARC Charter that establishes this Collaborative as the mechanism for achieving regional sustainability. As a result, the production of the *Framework* will serve as the guiding strategy for sustainability for Los Angeles County.

LARC MEMBERS

County of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, City of Santa Monica, L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, South Bay Cities Council of Governments, Westside Cities Council of Governments, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, USC SeaGrant, Electricore Inc., Council for Watershed Health, Climate Resolve, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the Aquarium of the Pacific, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability

The Need

Los Angeles County is a megacity of international economic importance with more than 10 million people, 88 cities, and over 1,200 special districts. Many important sustainability issues do not respect political boundaries, such as water supply, transportation and housing, land use impacts, waste and more, as well as reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs). To move the region toward sustainability in an integrated manner, requires a cross-jurisdictional approach to ensure community-wide reductions. Like many communities vehicular emissions take place in numerous cities in the region over the course of a single commute. In southern California, other shared issues exist as well, such as increased fire risk, long-term water availability, and air quality. *A Greater L.A.* is designed to transcend jurisdictional boundaries and engender a regional approach to a regional challenge.

The LARC was created to overcome historic fragmentation among political authorities and the realities of water resource management, and other issues that find themselves brought together with concerns over climate change. The LARC has been tasked with coordinating regional climate action and sustainability strategies for Los Angeles County. It brings together leadership from government, the business community, academia, labor, environmental and community groups to share information, foster partnerships, and develop system-wide strategies.

Funding

Production of the *Framework* is estimated to cost approximately \$2.8 million. Because it is made up of a number of interacting elements, LARC is pursuing a diverse set of funding sources that will add up to the necessary resources for completion of *A Greater L.A.* The LARC leverages many resources and coordinates work with members to maximize available funding and ensure elements of the Framework are well integrated. Funding is particularly needed, though, for the synthetic and management activities that ensure these funds are leveraged in a meaningful way.

LARC has already secured \$1,960,000 for elements of the *Framework*, namely the technical studies that will serve as the scientific basis for strategy planning. Work being completed under current funding includes a greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the entire County, a downscaled simulation of climate change impacts on Southern California, and research that identifies the energy flows into Los Angeles County and waste impacts that are also related to energy use (such as air pollution, solid waste, and sewage).

Additional funding is being pursued for the remaining steps through LARC. This is in addition to further research or activities funded by LARC's members, for instance USC Sea Grant has submitted two proposals to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to help the City of L.A. begin its climate adaptation planning initiative, AdaptLA. The City's planning efforts will necessarily include members of the greater LA region as many of the issues faced by the City are shared with its neighbors. Additionally, the planning process developed for the City will provide a best practice for climate adaptation planning for the region. Similarly, LARC is applying for funding from the CA Strategic Growth Council to XX. These efforts thus leverage funding from federal, state, private, corporate, and other sources with the funding requested herein. Research and working groups form the basis for LARC's Framework production process, thus additional funding is being identified for the remaining research tasks and for further convening activities. See the section on the process and work plan below for further details.

Toward Greater Sustainability – Resource Use Reduction, GHG Mitigation and Adaptation

The *Framework* aims to identify policies, programs and practices that can reduce energy inputs into the region, achieving multiple aims – reducing pollution and greenhouse gases, and creating greater resource use efficiency, all of which are essential for long term adaptation. This requires an approach based on sustainability principles and extensive outreach and stakeholder engagement to ensure that the strategies developed represent realistic and implementable actions.

Strategies for change are an important element of this effort. They will be developed collaboratively since each part of the region will have different abilities to address the needs to reduce resource inputs and waste outputs and create more efficient communities.

Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

California passed AB 32 (the Global Warming Solutions Act) in 2006, which legislates a cap on GHG emissions and an increased use of clean energy; SB 375 further requires the reduction of GHG emissions from land use. The task of implementing these policies falls to local and regional governments, who have limited capacity or expertise. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires three steps: (1) knowing how much is being emitted, (2) identifying a goal for reduced emissions, and (3) establishing mechanisms for moving from current emissions to the goal. Through a federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) to the County of Los Angeles, and the Public Interest Energy Research Program of the state Energy Commission, LARC will be provided with an emissions inventory for the region as well as establishing an economic model for energy consumption and GHG emissions.

Steps 2 and 3 will be accomplished through the development of the *Framework*. To be considered an established mechanism for reducing GHG emissions, the *Framework* will ensure that step 3 consists of strategies for reduction that are based on locally specific and plausible actions, coupled with ongoing evaluation of their success. The ~~RCAP~~ *Framework* will provide specific reduction goals, by sector, and a monitoring program that can track the regional reduction of GHG emissions consistent with AB 32 goals. LARC will guide coordinated efforts by developing model ordinances for all members to adopt that will lead to greater uniformity across the region, as well as provide best practices guidelines and examples.

Adaptation to the Impacts of Climate Change

Preparing for the impacts of climate change is central to the *Framework*. Through a federal EECBG grant to the City of Los Angeles, LARC has already embarked on downscaled climate modeling, by funding IPCC lead author at UCLA, Professor Alex Hall, to assist in identifying climate change impacts around the region. This will include addressing issues such as sea level rise, urban heat islands, increased fire frequency, and human health impacts. The research is also informative about the potential for development of local renewable energy resources that would also lead to GHG reductions.

Following the climate change simulation modeling, LARC will prepare a vulnerability assessment that will identify the regions exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity to climate change impacts, a risk assessment that identifies that social, economic and environmental costs of these impacts on the region, and a regional adaptation plan for addressing these impacts. These are all central elements of the *Framework*. By identifying, collating and developing when needed, model ordinances and best practices for each of these potential areas of impact, LARC will be providing the regional stakeholders tools to address impacts of climate change. This effort will develop data and approaches that can help mitigate regional inequalities both in terms of governmental capacity and social inequalities. This effort is at a finer scale, and using far more advanced science, than has ever been previously created.

Sustainability: Building Community and Economic Health

In order to effectively meet core climate action goals, such as mitigating GHG emissions and adapting to impacts, systematic and comprehensive outreach to many communities must be done so that people are engaged in planning the future. The physical form of communities, their relationship to other parts of the state, and their efficient and sustainable use of energy are the central determiners of how much energy is used, how it results in environmental impacts and emissions, and how each community can respond to a changing climate.

A goal of climate action planning must be to ensure access to a high quality of life. It is imperative that for communities to be sustainable, economic, cultural, health, and environmental aspects for all current and future community members are conserved. Therefore, the *Framework* will also directly address the following 12 objectives, for which quantifiable indicators have been developed:

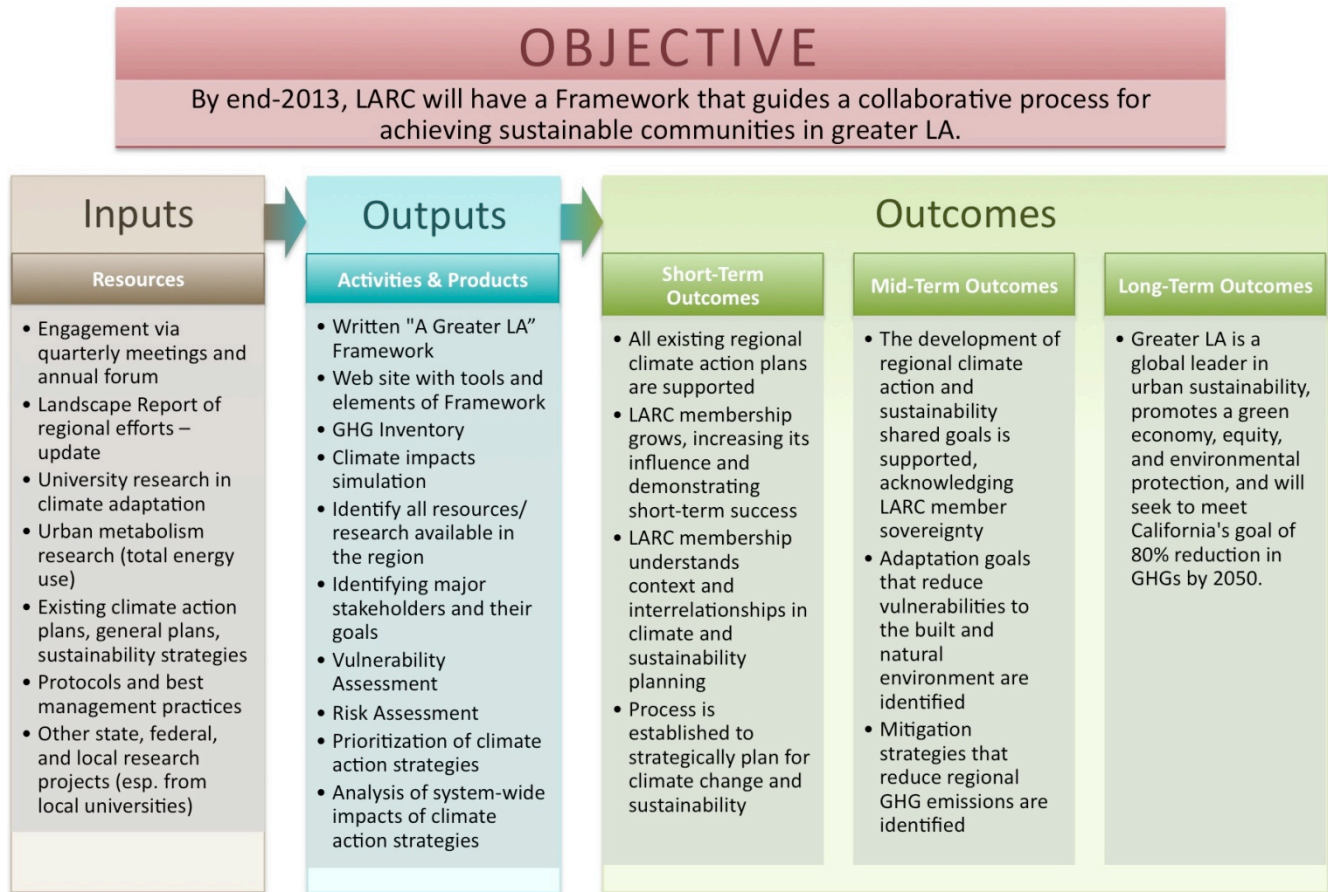
1. Improve Air and Water Quality
2. Promote Public Health
3. Promote Equity
4. Increase Housing Affordability
5. Promote Infill and Compact Development
6. Revitalize Urban and Community Centers
7. Protect Natural Resources
8. Reduce Automobile Usage and Fuel Consumption
9. Improve Infrastructure Systems
10. Promote Water Conservation
11. Promote Energy Efficiency and Conservation
12. Strengthen the Economy

Specific Attention to Disadvantaged Communities

Within Los Angeles County, there are numerous disadvantaged communities that do not have the resources or capacity to create and implement climate action plans—dozens of communities that have incomes and poverty rates up to 80% less than the statewide average. Thus, it is imperative that local governments pool their resources to more effectively tackle the planning and preparation needed to ensure that regional sustainability goals are met. As described below, active engagement of these communities is a pillar of developing the *Framework*.

Completing the Framework

Logic Model



Five-Step Process

A Greater L.A. will be developed according to a five-step process. Notably, this process is meant to establish an ongoing process that continues to enrich the *Framework*, providing greater detail and timely strategies for issues of concern that will continue to arise in our communities. Briefly, these five steps are:

Research & Assessment	Convening Stakeholders	Regional Plan Development	Drafting the Plan	Outreach & Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Modeling • Vulnerability Assessment • Risk Assessment • Urban Metabolism • GHG Inventory • Economic modeling of energy and GHGs • Strategy analysis and GHG savings quantification • Research of sustainability plans, statutes, policies, etc. • Analysis of existing best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Groups • Assaying the landscape of regional stakeholders in sustainability • Identification of critical regional plans/strategies (e.g. SCAG's CDEP) • Workshops to develop strategies • Assessment of effectiveness and practicability of possible strategies • Strategy Prioritization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation planning for impacts • Mitigation planning • Economic growth planning • Community health planning • This step is the critical glue that brings together all of the research, assessment, and priority-setting that occurs in the development of the <i>Framework</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline, strategic planning • Existing strategy/plan integration • Strategy prioritization • Plan writing and printing • Public review and comment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder & public meetings • Web-portal and online resources • Statewide outreach • Technical Assistance for local governments • Workshops and trainings • Dissemination of policies, model ordinances, BMPs, and strategies • Public Campaign

Research & Assessment

Research and assessment form the basis for the *Framework*. These activities are being carried out via LARC's members and collaborators (particularly the universities, City and County), under the auspices and direction of LARC. There is a need for further research and assessment, for which UCLA, USC, the City, and others have identified research teams and funding sources to complete.

In addition to the climate modeling and GHG inventory, and energy modeling that is underway, further technical research is needed, including vulnerability assessment of the region to climate change, risk assessment, energy system analysis, identification and evaluation of existing policies impacting regional climate action, and socio-economic impacts of both climate change and mitigation strategies.

Convening Experts & Stakeholders

Working groups serve as the primary engagement, intelligence gathering, and priority setting mechanism for the development of the regional *Framework*. These working groups are charged with (a) the identification of issues of concern and relevant stakeholders; (b) identification and evaluation of potential policies, strategies, ordinances, and best practices; (c) evaluation of unintended consequences and system-wide impacts of identified strategies; and (d) prioritization of mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Working groups are formed in a deliberate and stepwise fashion in order to ensure timeliness and relevance as well as a managed but open process. There are already working groups focusing on GHG inventories, sea level rise, electric vehicles, and solar development. Additional working groups that will form shortly include public health, water resources, built environment/buildings, transportation systems, utilities, and others as identified by Regional Climate Action Planning (RCAP) committee.

Regional Framework Development

The development of the Framework is the glue that holds all of the research, convening, and drafting activities together. It will be carried out by LARC staff in service of the RCAP committee and reporting to the LARC Steering Committee. At this critical stage, all of the research and products of the working groups will be integrated, synthesized, and prepared for region-wide dissemination. The following aspects will be synthesized in this stage:

- ◆ Research to provide fundamental data surrounding all elements of regional sustainability
- ◆ Assessment of regional issues and concerns
- ◆ Identified strategies and best practices that can work in L.A.
- ◆ Evaluation of system-wide consequences (especially socio-economic) of individual strategies
- ◆ Prioritized recommendations for implementation by local governments
- ◆ Consensus-building among stakeholders and community members

Specific outcomes of this stage include the tools and policies that can be used by local governments. Model ordinances, best practices, and policies are likely to include energy efficiency standards for buildings, landscaping standards, water reuse ordinances, green infrastructure strategies, public health strategies, stormwater runoff mitigation, and others.

Drafting the Framework

The complete *Framework*, including the regional model of climate impacts, greenhouse gas inventories, and adaptation modeling, along with best practices, expert knowledge, and a database of resources will be posted publicly on the *Framework* online platform. At the end of 2013 a written document will be produced that synthesizes the regional vision and strategy for meeting California's GHG emissions targets as well as adapting to the impacts of climate change as a unified region.

LARC will continue to engage directly with regional stakeholders, similar regional efforts throughout California, and with experts throughout the state through its quarterly meetings and other *Framework*-specific workgroup and outreach meetings. This engagement and ongoing process will result in continually updated online tools and strategies. And every two years a regional landscape report that synthesizes and updates the *Framework* will be drafted.

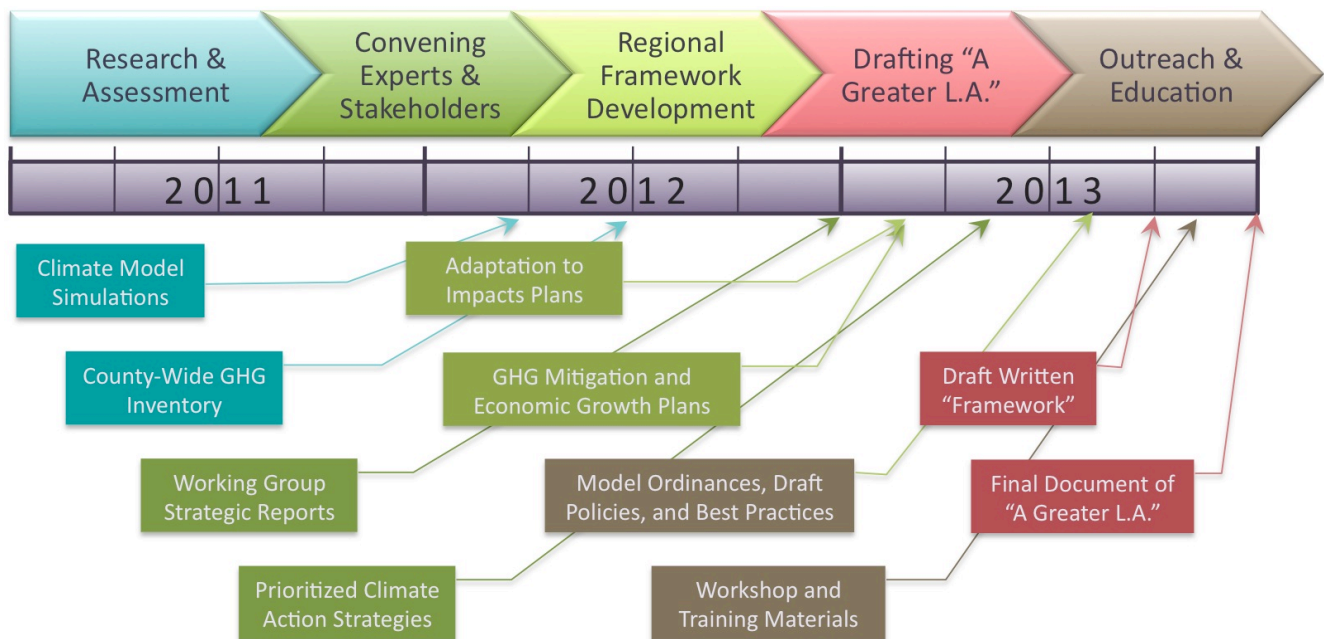
Outreach & Education

The products of the Framework will be turned into educational and training tools, workshops, and trainings for local governments. A fully accessible online platform for knowledge sharing, data storage, and community engagement will be developed to track and build the elements of the RCAP. Public outreach meetings will be held with targeted entities, communities, and stakeholders. LARC recognizes that it is necessary to be active in reaching out to affected, and especially underserved, communities in order to ensure inclusiveness and buy-in. The online platform will also include best practices and data from other locations and research studies. This database will thus allow for continued enrichment and analysis to provide local and regional planners with open, online access to current best-practices, shared expertise, and a way to access and contribute data that will increase knowledge and expertise region-wide.

LARC is built to engage its member stakeholders as well as the broader public. Due to its structure and ongoing outreach, LARC is able to communicate among its members, who then in turn will engage their stakeholders in the planning process. This will result in efficiencies of scale, the leveraging of existing capacity, and the engagement of stakeholders that include public-sector officials, businesses, non-profits, environmental groups, underrepresented communities, researchers, students, and the general public.

LARC is committed to providing economically disadvantaged communities throughout the region with climate action planning, sustainability, and GHG reduction strategies. By pooling regional resources, LARC is able to serve a wide range of communities, allowing them to meet their regulatory obligations and individual sustainability goals. In addition to the open forums on RCAP development that disadvantaged community representatives can attend, LARC recognizes the need for direct outreach and engagement of these communities. LARC staff will directly engage disadvantaged communities to ensure their input, inclusion, and benefit.

Work Plan



About LARC

LARC is an organization dedicated to fostering collaboration between cities, the County, councils of government (COGs), non-profit organizations, academic institutions, public agencies, and businesses. Membership in LARC continues to grow (see table above for current members). Observers, participants, and provisional members include SCAG, AQMD, Culver City, Gateway Cities COG, the City of Pasadena, the LA Department of Water and Power, the City of Long Beach, Northrop Grumman, and many others.

LARC provides a forum that allows agencies to collaborate on a regional level without being aggregated into a larger body or broken into smaller pieces. It is focused and targeted on climate action and sustainability. The UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, which hosts LARC, contributes tremendous management expertise and serves as a mediator and facilitator for cooperation. Collaboration is built into the Charter of LARC, ensuring that collaborative decision making drives regional climate action planning. This model has resulted in unanimous support for the collaborative purpose of LARC by members' governing boards and has ensured that the advancement of regional goals are truly shared and based on inclusion and engagement.

LARC operations are funded through the dues of its members and sponsorship by corporations and donors. Programs of LARC, including the production of the Framework, are funded primarily through government and foundation grants. LARC's operational funding strategy sees its budget continuing to grow through increased membership and sponsorship, which will ensure continuity in the operation of these programs into the indefinite future.