

## Implementing ARRA

Design Snapshot

# Bay Area's Economic Recovery Workplan: Guiding State Stimulus Spending

July 2009

Requested by the [California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency](#) to develop a nine-county [Economic Recovery Workplan](#), the [Bay Area Council Economic Institute](#) accepted submissions of nearly 500 project ideas and selected among them to craft one coherent strategy that aligns state and regional priorities and aims to spark short-term job creation as well as long-term economic growth. The plan is intended to inform how the state deploys its stimulus allocations, applies for competitive ARRA awards, streamlines the flow of stimulus dollars down to communities, and implements longer term economic development strategies.

Bay Area Economic Recovery Workplan	
<b>Purpose:</b>	Strategically prioritize regional needs and opportunities to inform state-level stimulus allocations
<b>Lead entity:</b>	State economic development agency and regional nonprofit
<b>Partners:</b>	Counties, cities, local business associations, economic development organizations and others
<b>ARRA focus (selected):</b>	Transit Capital Assistance Program, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants, Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2, and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
<b>Scale:</b>	Nine-county region
<b>Strategies:</b>	Reflects a long-term regional vision; adopts multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral approaches; embraces integrated solutions
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The Bay Area Economic Recovery Workplan represents a productive state-region partnership that focuses on regions as California's economic engines and drivers of recovery and sustained growth. The state's Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BT&H) initiated the process by inviting (not mandating) all 12 California regions to submit regional plans to help the state identify the best prospects for expending ARRA resources efficiently and effectively. The Bay Area Council Economic Institute (BACEI) took full advantage of the opportunity to maximize stimulus investments in its region. By developing a plan guided by regional priorities and objectives, BACEI puts the Bay Area in good position to receive bonus points for certain state housing funds and bond applications. Additionally, their work will help the region qualify for state assistance for federal and state grants, targeted outreach on new business tax incentives, and new economic recovery and infrastructure financing tools.

In developing its plan, BACEI made it a priority to produce a multi-dimensional, actionable strategy that sets out a long-range vision, not just a running list of potential stimulus projects. The Bay Area Economic Recovery Workplan hews to established

regional priorities, including 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation infrastructure, water security and reliability improvements, renewable energy and energy efficiency, human capital and workforce development, advancing science and innovation, and housing market sustainability. Grounded in existing long-term plans, the plan helps to ensure that any new stimulus investments over the next two years supports core regional priorities.

Projects proposed by the plan were selected to capitalize on the Bay Area's competitive assets, best opportunities for economic expansion, and best chances of obtaining maximum leverage from all funding sources. The plan covers a wide range of proposals including, a new stem cell research facility, conversion to LED streetlights, and electrical vehicle infrastructure. While the immediate focus of the Workplan is the allocation of federal and state stimulus funds on relatively short timelines, it is also designed to add lasting economic value by informing the implementation of longer-term strategies to enhance state and regional economic competitiveness.

Truly regional in scale, the plan encompasses all of the 9 counties and 101 cities of the Bay Area region. BACEI engaged mayors, city administrators, county supervisors, legislative delegations in Sacramento and Washington, and business and economic development leaders all across the Bay Area to identify and advocate high priority projects that can maximize the regional benefit and impact of any stimulus dollars flowing into the area. This regional initiative does not preclude any of the region's counties and cities or other nonprofits, transit agencies, and partner institutions from submitting proposals for stimulus funds. Rather, it highlights those Bay Area projects and activities with the highest regional priority and places these within the context of broader regional concerns regarding long term economic recovery and global competitiveness.

To be as representative as possible of the entire Bay Area region, the planning process drew on extensive collaboration. Partnering with BACEI, 13 city and county officials, economic development groups, and regional business councils conducted outreach to their respective jurisdictions and member organizations to solicit as many stimulus project proposals as possible. Similarly, nine regional subject matter experts on specific stimulus-relevant topics (e.g., energy, transportation, housing, etc.) also reached out to their respective networks to urge proposal submissions. Over the course of a three-week submission period, BACEI accepted nearly 500 proposals through its website.

Bay Area's Economic Recovery Workplan emerged through a deliberately open and consultative process. Between the start of the process in March 2009 and the delivery of a final plan to BT&H in the first week of June, numerous exchanges of information flowed back and forth between the state, BACEI, team leaders, and would-be project implementers. After issuing general guidance on the purpose of the regional recovery plan, the state and BACEI continued to touch base so that Bay Area's plan could be crafted to best meet state objectives. BACEI also issued specific guidance, based on federal, state, and regional contexts, about the content of proposed projects and recruited its key regional partners and subject matter experts to disseminate the information widely, serve as resources to support proposal development, and relay stakeholder concerns. After BACEI management and subject matter experts provided initial evaluation of submitted proposals, team leaders sought further clarification from proposers and then put together a draft plan open for broad review and input before finalizing a consensus document for BT&H.

Currently, the Bay Area Economic Recovery Workplan is circulating within a state-level inter-agency working group overseeing stimulus issues and will presumably inform their decision-making. BACEI will continue with follow up work through the summer with BT&H and other state agencies regarding the plan's implementation, supplemented by a continuing flow of information to regional partners and project

proposers regarding implementation opportunities. The Institute has also offered to write letters of support for projects included in the plan, indicating that they have been reviewed by regional leaders and deemed to be a top priority or significant for the region.

### **The Implementing ARRA Series**

America's current economic crisis is not only a national crisis. It is also a metropolitan crisis. Therefore, it is critical to monitor the progress of creative metropolitan leaders who are leveraging the myriad resources provided by the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). To that end, the Metropolitan Policy Program's Implementing ARRA Series is tracking the implementation work of metropolitan leaders, assessing their progress and struggles, and extracting from the innovators' experiences ideas for short- and long-term federal policy reforms. Ultimately it is hoped the series will serve as a resource for best-practice exchange among regions and a source of ideas for designing the next generation of metro-friendly federal policies.

#### **For More Information**

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