

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



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Los Angeles Team Wins \$1 Million to Fight Climate in Cool City Challenge *Edges Out 37 Other California Cities in Moonshot Quest for Carbon Neutral 2030*

LOS ANGELES, October 25, 2021 – Empowerment Institute awarded the Los Angeles Cool City Challenge team \$1 million to mobilize the entire city, neighborhood by neighborhood, toward a moonshot goal of carbon neutrality without offsets by 2030. The effort includes hyper-local climate mitigation through a program of energy efficiency, water conservation, emergency preparedness, and community empowerment. Piloted by LA in 2016-2017 across more than 20 neighborhoods, Cool Blocks also reduces utility bills. Joining LA in the winner’s spotlight were Irvine and Petaluma. The awards are a result of a rigorous, months-long application process involving over 40 California cities.

California Governor, Gavin Newsom, described the Cool City Challenge as “an exemplary how-to guide for local communities to make a significant impact on climate change.” He added, “It demonstrates the untapped potential of citizens to engage in an effective and achievable way.”

The bar for the climate moonshot award was set extremely high to ensure the winning cities have the right stuff to take on such an ambitious challenge. All applicants were required to recruit a cross-sector leadership team and at least 25 community partner organizations and 200 Cool Block leaders plus create a climate moonshot strategy. Applicants were also encouraged to ask their city councils to pass legislation committing to carbon neutrality by 2030. All three winning cities have passed these game-changing resolutions – the most aggressive in the United States.

Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz, author of the City's carbon neutral 2030 legislation said: “If we are to meet the greatest challenge ever faced by humankind — in time — we must look climate change square in the face, and do not what’s possible, but what’s necessary to keep our planet habitable and thriving.” He continued, “The Cool City Challenge thankfully provides the framework, the path, and the people power.”

“Los Angeles is already leading the way with LA100, our landmark effort that will bring the City to 100% renewable energy,” said **Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, chair of the Council’s Environment, Climate Change, Environmental Justice and River Committee**. “The Cool City Challenge asks us to tap into the boundless creative forces found across Los Angeles, and will engage 200 neighborhoods as we work toward substantial emissions reductions and a stable, sustainable climate.”

Each plan developed by the winning cities had a bottom-up moonshot climate solution—Empowerment Institute’s proven [Cool Block](#) program which has achieved a 29% average carbon footprint reduction per household—and top-down moonshot climate solutions in policy, technology, and market development. CCC integrates these top-down and bottom-up solutions for a synergistic effect capable of accelerating the speed of change.

Potential LA volunteers can sign up for Cool Block information sessions at: https://www.ncsa.la/cool_blocks_la.

“These cities deeply inspired me with their dedication to such a rigorous application process, their out-of-the-box moonshot thinking, and the high-caliber leaders spanning the public, private and civic sectors they attracted to their moonshot teams,” said **David Gershon of Empowerment Institute and creator of the Cool City Challenge**. <more>

Councilmember Paul Koretz
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(KORETZ 21-10-25 Press Release Cont.)

LA's CCC Moonshot team is: co-founders: **Lisa Hart**, Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance Board member and **Andy Shrader**, Director of Environmental Affairs for Councilmember Paul Koretz; team: **David Giron**, Senior Advisor to Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell; **Marta Segura**, Director of the City's Climate Emergency Mobilization Office; **Cassie Rauser**, Executive Director of UCLA's Sustainable LA Grand Challenge; **Jennifer Bravo**, Project Director, Accelerate Resilience LA; **Mark Spears**, founder & Chief Strategist, common+value and retired Disney Sustainability Executive.

"On behalf of the LA Moonshot Team, our amazing supporting organizations, and our courageous Cool Block leader signatories, we are humbled, delighted and excited to pull this off," said **Andy Shrader, Director of Environmental Affairs for Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz and co-founder of Los Angeles' moonshot team.** "The climate has already changed. True victory now lies in minimizing the damage, preparing for its impacts, and turning around climate breakdown on behalf of our children and all living creatures on our singular, beautiful, fragile Earth."

"At this point in the climate crisis, all of us at every level—from individual households to the international level—need to make big changes quickly, so we're excited to leverage the power of neighborhood councils and neighborhoods to help the entire city of Los Angeles reach carbon neutrality by 2030," said **Lisa Hart, Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance board member and co-founder of Los Angeles' moonshot team.** "Now the LA Moonshot Team challenges all Angelenos to join in the effort, sign up as a Cool Block leader or help us design the way to a climate-safe 2030."

"I'm honored the City of LA was one of only three California cities to receive this tremendous opportunity and grant from the Empowerment Institute. Such perfect timing, the week before COP26 in Glasgow," said **Marta Segura, Director of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office.** "LA now has a game-changing bottom-up strategy to address climate emergencies at scale to mobilize Angelenos while building bridges in partnership with the most affected and burdened communities."

The Glasgow International Climate Summit, COP26, begins Sun, October 31st and runs through Fri, November 12th.

"The UCLA Sustainable LA Grand Challenge is excited to work with the City and this great group of climate leaders to empower our communities and support the ambitious achievement of carbon neutrality by 2030 through research, education and engagement. If we can do it in LA, we can do it anywhere," said **Cassie Rauser, Ph.D.**

Executive Director, UCLA Sustainable LA Grand Challenge.

The Cool City Challenge builds on decades of innovative behavior and social change work by David Gershon, CEO of Empowerment Institute, author of "Social Change 2.0: A Blueprint for Reinventing Our World," and creator of the CCC.

The LA Cool City Challenge official partner organizations include: LA Compost; Heal the Bay; Temple Isaiah Green Team; YEA! (Young Entertainment Activists); 5 Gyres; Brand Awakening; LA Forward Action; SoCal 350 Climate Action; Interfaith Solidarity Network; Studio – MLA; Do Good Bus; Resilient Palisades; Brentwood Residents Coalition; Sierra Club; The Climate Center; 350 San Fernando / Conejo Valley; Surfrider LA; Friends of the LA River; WeTap; Pando Populus; Mono Lake Committee; Southern California Watershed Alliance; Breathe Southern California; Electrum (previously Pick My Solar); and Environment California. **With many, many other orgs supporting with outreach.**

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