

CLIMATE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT (CVA)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Vulnerable communities are those most exposed to climate hazards and with the least amount of and access to resources to offset the impacts from that exposure.

What is the Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA)?

The CVA is a study that examines physical and social vulnerability to the anticipated climate changes of extreme heat, extreme precipitation and flooding, wildfires, sea level rise, drought, and public health, but also considers climate hazard mitigations and strategies needed to address these identified vulnerabilities.

The CVA is an important step to ensure that the City can adapt and be resilient to the impacts of climate change with a strong focus on climate equity. The City assessed climate change impacts, identified at-risk communities and developed adaptation strategies, in partnership with City stakeholders including vulnerable communities and populations, community based organizations, tribal nations and groups, City departments and other agencies.

What is the purpose of the CVA and how does it align with Environmental Justice efforts?

The CVA will help to ensure that the City can adapt and be resilient to the impacts of climate change with a strong focus on climate equity. The CVA assesses climate change impacts, identifies at-risk communities and develops adaptation strategies, in partnership with City stakeholders and our Community Partners. The CVA also analyzes the social and physical vulnerability of the City's populations and communities and their sensitivity and adaptability to climate impacts and provides recommendations for mitigation and resilience strategies.

The CVA provides recommendations for mitigation strategies and resources that were obtained through meaningful engagement with the city's most climate hazard-exposed communities that are also most under-resourced against climate hazard exposure. These recommendations inform the **environmental justice policy** work being undertaken by City Planning's Environmental Justice Policy Unit, as well as other city work programs that are also addressing environmental justice throughout the City. The CVA's findings will help in the development of policies and programs that address climate resilience and equity in the City's General Plan.

What is the difference between the CVA and a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan?

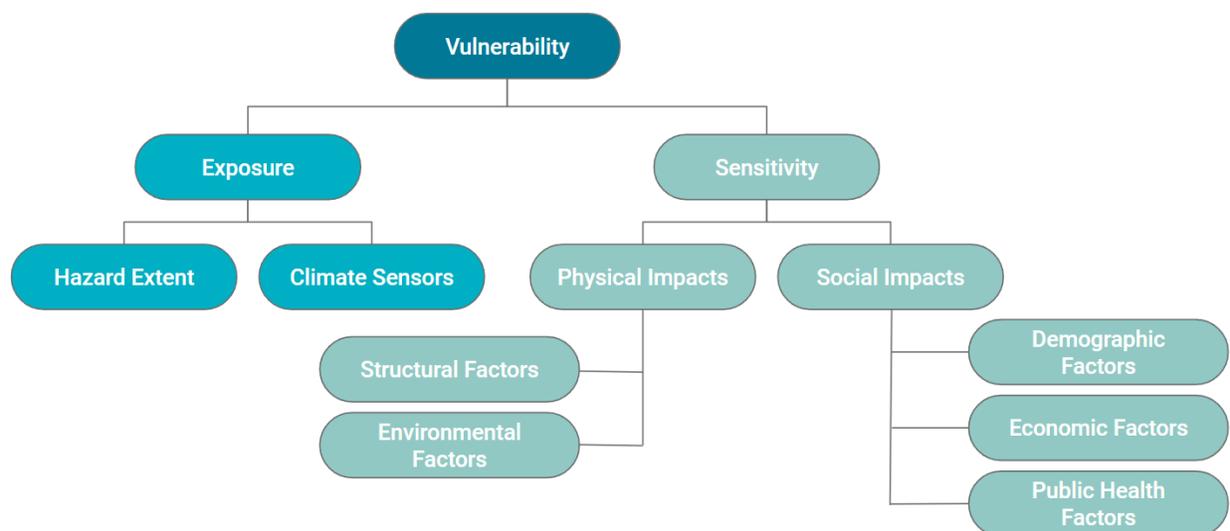
While the CVA and a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) both seek to help identify the effects of climate change on communities, they represent different stages in the policy process.

The CVA can be thought of as an inventory of existing climate hazards and the degree of their severity in the City of Los Angeles through data analysis, identifying which communities are most exposed and under-resourced to mitigate those exposures. A CAAP seeks to direct specific actions, work programs and resources at specific issues/hazards and their mitigations. The City of Los Angeles' CVA goes beyond the traditional approach of evaluating vulnerability by also recommending mitigations and strategies that have been community driven, and are contextualized by the City's baseline data. Furthermore, the City's CVA also identifies work programs and the city departments that have either initiated some of the recommended mitigation strategies and or may have the potential ability to address them in the future. Currently the City does not have a CAAP, however, there are ongoing discussions to initiate this work. The CVA provides a solid foundation for the future preparation of an equitable CAAP.

What are current City climate efforts and how does this work align with those efforts?

The Emergency Management Department (EMD) recently updated the City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) which includes mapping projected climate hazards and analyzing impacts related to extreme heat, sea level rise, extreme precipitation and inundation, wildfires and drought. Separately, the City's Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO) is leading the development of the City's Heat Action and Relief Plan (HARP) to coordinate how the City adapts to increasing heatwaves and droughts, as these are the primary climate hazards for Los Angeles. The CVA developed adaptation recommendations to be incorporated into existing climate efforts like the LHMP's next update cycle and the HARP as well as other future climate planning efforts that ensure climate equity is prioritized. Furthermore, other city departments have also undertaken various climate planning efforts around infrastructure and operations that are being reviewed to identify how these efforts can collaborate as the City's overall comprehensive approach.

How was vulnerability defined in the CVA?



The CVA has three components: a social vulnerability analysis, physical vulnerability analysis, and climate data understanding and analysis. Social vulnerability is defined as the potential negative effects on communities caused by external stresses on human health, such as natural or human-caused disasters or disease outbreaks. Physical vulnerability refers to the likelihood that a person, place, or thing will be negatively impacted by hazards, determined by factors like exposure and sensitivity. Exposure involves the physical contact with hazards, while sensitivity reflects the extent of potential harm to assets.

Although many communities throughout Los Angeles are exposed to the seven climate hazards, the most **vulnerable communities** identified and targeted in this study are those communities that are **most exposed to climate hazards with the least amount of and access to resources** to offset the impacts from that exposure. By prioritizing our most vulnerable communities, the City can improve the most dire areas and thereby reduce the overall City's vulnerability to climate hazard exposure.

What was the community engagement process for the CVA?

The community engagement process ensured communities most impacted by climate hazards and compounding health, economic and social disparities, participated in the CVA process to inform and guide community driven solutions. In collaboration with City Planning, CEMO and EMD, a co-designed community engagement process was conducted that partnered with six Community Based Organizations (CBOs), which we referred to as the CVA Community Partners, to meaningfully engage vulnerable and sensitive communities, including Angelenos who traditionally do not engage in government processes, Angelenos of color, and monolingual non-English speakers. The CVA Community Partners are: the **Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians**, **Pacoima Beautiful**, **Promesa Boyle Heights**, **Rising Communities**, **Strategic Concepts and Organizing for Policy Education in Los Angeles (SCOPE LA)**, and **Strength Based Community Change (SBCC)**. Other strategic partners focused on other specific vulnerable populations including the unhoused and outdoor workers. Additional strategic partnerships led to focused engagement with representatives from the **Gabrielino-Shoshone Nation of Southern California**, the **Anawakalmekak Indigenous School** and **NorthEast Trees**. Outreach efforts focused on populations residing in South Los Angeles, Northeast Los Angeles, the Harbor, and the Central and North San Fernando Valley, which include areas of the City experiencing the greatest hardships.

How were Community Based Organizations (CBOs) selected for the CVA Community Partners Program?

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) were invited to participate in the CVA Community Partners Program based on the organization's demonstrated expertise in the identified vulnerable communities by way of their proven meaningful engagement and experience in working on climate hazard issues in those communities. As such, geography, community reach, staffing capacity, interest, immediate availability, technical experience and/or knowledge and understanding of climate hazards and/or environmental justice in the most impacted communities were primary considerations. Acknowledgement and consideration was also given to address engagement fatigue as part of this effort, as some CBOs are already actively involved in other City efforts.

Was there additional outreach and coordination conducted?

Additional outreach, presentations, and coordination with various departments, PlanCheckNC, the Sustainability Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, the City Planning Department's Environmental Justice Policy Unit's Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee, and Council Offices was carried out throughout the development of the CVA. Additionally, the CVA incorporated survey results from EMD's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) as well as the City Planning's Environmental Justice Policy Unit's Survey. This process helped to identify existing work programs aligned with the CVA's strategies, share community input, ensure consistency with other plans, and gather feedback. In addition to CEMO and EMD, other departments involved in this process included the [Department of Recreation and Parks \(RAP\)](#), [Department of Transportation \(LADOT\)](#), [Department of Water and Power \(LADWP\)](#), [Department of Building and Safety \(LADBS\)](#), [Bureau of Street Services \(BSS\)](#), [Sanitation and Environment \(LASAN\)](#), [Bureau of Engineering \(BOE\)](#), [Urban Forestry Division](#), [Office of Forest Management](#), and the [Port of Los Angeles \(POLA\)](#). There was also internal coordination within the Department of City Planning's Urban Design Studio as well as the Venice Community Plan and Local Coastal Program update teams.

How is the CVA addressing cascading impacts from other hazards?

While the CVA focuses on the impacts of the seven climate hazards in identified at-risk communities, the report recognizes that climate hazards can create cascading impacts across the City. Communities adjacent to those engaged by the Community Partners may experience spillover effects of hazard impacts. Additionally, the impacts can create new problems and increase the risk of additional hazards not assessed in the CVA. Some of these cascading impacts originate from impacts to air quality from industrial sources, such as oil wells and refineries, airports and port operations, particularly when located adjacent to and abutting residential uses and schools. These cascading impacts are recognized as being present in many of the vulnerable communities identified in the CVA. The CVA provides mitigation recommendations to the degree that they can be addressed in the *Cross-Cutting Issues* section of the CVA or in any of the other hazard specific mitigation recommendations. Additionally, the issues and concerns raised concerning the cascading impacts are being shared to the other teams within the City Planning Department as well as other City Departments that are currently working on those policy and implementation efforts. The intent is to draw the lines between these cascading impacts and close the gap on addressing these issues that have not yet been captured to ensure they are addressed accordingly. Other emergency or hazard events not directly related to climate change such as tsunamis are addressed in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).

How is the CVA implemented?

While the CVA is an assessment and does not include mandatory action items, the CVA is intended to address several purposes and goals. For stakeholders, the recommendations in the report and mitigation table are meant to raise awareness of climate hazard risk and create transparency about the existing climate work already being done throughout the City. Through

the CVA, stakeholders also communicated their priorities for resiliency and the gaps in the work programs the City is currently conducting. For the City, the CVA serves as guidance for next steps as departments prepare for future budget requests to ensure that future work programs prioritize our most vulnerable communities and provide more resources for climate exposure resiliency. The CVA can also help inform how to prepare for large scale events such as the Olympics. It lays the foundation for a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, the Heat and Resilience Plan, the Environmental Justice Element, the Open Space Element targeted update, as well as other citywide climate related work programs. The CVA can also be a resource for the development of a citywide climate dashboard by cataloging the existing work programs in the mitigation table to the degree possible. For CBOs and non-profit organizations, it offers an opportunity to use the CVA to partner with the City and apply for grants where they can implement those mitigations that are a priority at the local level without having to wait for City funding to be available.

How were responsible Departments identified in the CVA's Mitigation Strategies Table?

City Departments, Offices and Agencies were identified as leading or supporting the various mitigation strategy recommendations and current climate related work programs throughout the City. These work programs were collected from various sources including: lead staff from City Departments, Offices and Agencies; Department websites and City work programs; and the City's Council Files for adopted Council actions directing responsible parties. The Departments, Offices and Agencies listed either have existing work programs implementing the recommended work programs to some extent and have the opportunity to expand those work programs, have the authority and jurisdiction for implementing the scope of the recommended strategies under the City Charter's Administration Code, and/or are identified as the lead Department, Office or Agency in the Council Actions.

Who can I contact for additional information?

For questions — and to be added to City Planning's email notification list, contact: Gabriela Juárez | planning.climate@lacity.org | (213) 978-1199.