

Mayor Sheng Thao Celebrates Earth Day and Highlights Oakland's Major Climate Wins and Investments

Oakland, California - April 22, 2024 - As the world commemorates Earth Day, Mayor Sheng Thao of Oakland, California, proudly celebrates the city's significant strides in building a more climate-resilient future while safeguarding communities from environmental threats. Since taking office, Mayor Thao has spearheaded transformative initiatives to combat climate change, prioritize environmental justice, and foster economic prosperity through green innovation and job creation.

Under Mayor Thao's leadership, Oakland has achieved several major climate wins and secured substantial investments aimed at mitigating climate-related risks and enhancing community resilience:

1. **[California Hydrogen Hub Funding](#)**: Oakland is set to receive federal funding as part of the California Hydrogen Hub initiative, a crucial step towards accelerating the adoption of clean hydrogen energy technology. This investment will decarbonize heavy-duty trucking and port operations, mitigating air pollution impacts and advancing local job creation in green industries.
2. **[Urban Tree Planting Initiative](#)**: The city has been awarded \$8 million in federal funding to support tree-planting projects across Oakland, addressing air quality concerns, combating urban heat island effects, and fostering community engagement. This initiative underscores Oakland's commitment to greening neighborhoods and enhancing quality of life for residents.
3. **[Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities Initiative](#)**: Mayor Thao proudly announced Oakland's selection as one of 25 U.S. cities to participate in the Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities initiative. This groundbreaking program will provide critical support for implementing transformative local solutions to confront climate change, promote racial equity, and drive economic prosperity. Oakland's innovative approach aims to incubate Black entrepreneurship within the tree work sector, creating opportunities for economic empowerment and community resilience.
4. **[Lincoln Community Resilience and Recreation Center Grant](#)**: Oakland has secured a \$9.25 million grant to construct a state-of-the-art Community Resilience and Recreation Center at the Lincoln site. This facility will serve as a vital resource during emergencies, providing cooling and warming centers, clean air facilities, and essential services for vulnerable communities. The project

aligns with Oakland's Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) and reflects the city's commitment to building resilient, self-determining communities.

5. **Environmental Justice Plan**: Mayor Thao proudly announced the passage of Oakland's first Environmental Justice Plan, identifying and uplifting Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities disproportionately impacted by pollution and adverse health impacts. These communities, eligible for special considerations and investments, are prioritized to achieve environmental justice and equitable resource allocation. The city received a \$500,000 federal grant for this project.
6. **Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Changes**: Oakland has implemented a general plan with zoning changes that encourage transit-oriented development, promoting compact, walkable communities with access to public transportation. This approach reduces reliance on cars, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and improves air quality and public health.
7. **Thermal Microgrid Project**: Oakland has embarked on an innovative project to deploy a Thermal Microgrid in West Oakland, funded in part by a \$500,000 federal grant. This project aims to create a scalable and replicable framework for integrating energy-producing assets within the community, fostering economic opportunities, lowering energy costs, and increasing resilience. By leveraging existing technologies and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, Oakland is paving the way for sustainable urban development and equitable economic growth.
8. **New clean, electric water heating systems** have been installed in more than 60 City facilities at no cost to the City.
9. **Secured additional support from CalTrans and CalFire** to support vegetation clearance in the Very High Wildfire Risk Zone. This clearance is along Highway 13 as well as Joaquin Miller Park.
10. **Oakland secured 20 Climate Fellows** as part of the California Climate Corps for this year, and 20 more for next year, which is the largest contingent in the state. The fellows have been leading on issues like illegal dumping, climate resilience, compost carbon capture, and more while developing skills that will help them in career and personal development.

Mayor Sheng Thao expressed her gratitude for these accomplishments, emphasizing Oakland's dedication to fostering sustainability, equity, and resilience in the face of climate change. She highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts among government agencies, community organizations, and residents in achieving these milestones and driving meaningful change.

"As Mayor of Oakland, I am honored to celebrate Earth Day alongside our community and reflect on the significant progress we've made in building a more climate-resilient city," said Mayor Sheng Thao. "From investing in clean energy technology to prioritizing urban greening and community resilience, Oakland continues to lead by example in addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change and environmental justice. Together, with the support of our partners and residents, we are creating a more sustainable and equitable future for all."

As Oakland continues to pave the way for innovative climate solutions and inclusive economic development, Mayor Sheng Thao reaffirmed the city's commitment to championing environmental stewardship and advancing social equity.