Technical Advisory Council

Item 6: Update on VCP Discussion Paper

Mar. 6, 2026

Introduction

The Vulnerable Communities Platform (VCP) is a new website and mapping tool developed by the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation and publicly launched in October 2025. The platform was created to identify climate vulnerabilities in communities across California and retrieve the data needed to plan for adaptation.

Use Cases

The VCP is designed to help users answer three core questions:

1. *Where will climate hazards will be most severe?*
2. *Which communities are most vulnerable?*
3. *What factors contribute to that vulnerability?*

By bringing together climate hazard and socioeconomic data in one place, the VCP helps translate complex information into actionable insights for a wide range of users.

For State Agencies

Program administrators can use the platform to identify the specific climate risks and social vulnerabilities facing the communities they serve, helping to guide where outreach, technical assistance, and funding can have the greatest impact. The VCP is also referenced in the 2024 Climate Bond Implementation Guide as a recommended tool for identifying and prioritizing vulnerable populations.

For Community-Based Organizations

The VCP provides accessible data, maps, and visuals that CBOs can use to articulate local climate risks and community needs. This can strengthen grant applications, support community engagement, and inform program design and priority-setting, enabling organizations to direct resources and efforts where resilience investments are most needed.

For Local Governments

The VCP serves as a starting point for climate adaptation planning. Local planners can use the platform to quickly access relevant hazard and vulnerability data, conduct preliminary analyses, and inform required planning efforts. This includes supporting compliance with state adaptation planning requirements such as SB 379 and SB 1035, which call for jurisdictions to assess climate hazards and develop resilience strategies.

VCP Rollout

To publicize the launch of the platform, the team held three statewide webinars focused on community organizations, local governments, and state agencies. TAC members Jacob Alvarez, Kim Clark, Jonathan Parfrey, Linda Helland, and Denise Kadara spoke on panels for the webinars. There was a major communication effort to share the platform to regional climate collaboratives, regional planning agencies, equity and climate related state agency workgroups, and tribal workgroups, and many more. In the past six months, the VCP website has received nearly 13,000 views. The website's visitors come from Southern California, the Bay Area, Sacramento, the Central Valley, and even some out of state.

Since the launch, the team has presented at over a dozen state or local venues, including at a Health in All Policies (HiAP) task force meeting, the CNRA Climate Leadership Coordination monthly meeting, and the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) state agency workgroup meeting. In January 2026, we held our first in-person training at UC Merced's Labor Center with their Valley SEED cohort.

Climate Ready Cohort

To ground-truth the VCP and create a training program to guide potential users in making use of the platform, the team created the Climate Ready Cohort (CRC). This pilot program runs a series of classes for a group of 15 community-based organizations and local governments from across the state to gain the skills and knowledge they need to use the VCP and other tools to create their own community climate vulnerability assessments. The cohort is under way and participants are expected to complete their final assessment case studies Summer 2026.

Background Materials

- [Vulnerable Communities Platform Website](#)
- [VCP Factsheet](#)
- [VCP Press Release](#)

Discussion Questions

- What challenges or barriers have you encountered when applying for grants (e.g., data, capacity, eligibility, match requirements)? Which of these could better data or mapping tools like the VCP help address?
- What types of guidance, resources, or features would make the VCP most useful when preparing a grant application (e.g., video walk-through, exportable maps, sample language, eligibility screening)?
- How do you see the VCP adding value in California's funding landscape? For example, in identifying need, prioritizing projects, demonstrating eligibility, or strengthening applications