

# CALIFORNIA GREEN BUSINESS NETWORK

# IMPACT REPORT

## 2023



NO UNACHIEVABLE PLEDGES OR PLANS.  
JUST CLIMATE ACTION - ONE BUSINESS AT A TIME.

# An investment in the California Green Business Network is an investment in California.

Investing equitably in small businesses to assist them to operate efficiently and sustainably invests in our State's economic backbone, its people, and its environment.



**CAGBN INVESTS IN CALIFORNIA:**

**BUSINESSES**      **PEOPLE**      **ENVIRONMENT**

## CAGBN by the numbers.

Our program is helping small businesses emerge from the pandemic with renewed strength and is returning to its pre-pandemic popularity.

**196**

new Entry-level  
businesses  
in 2023

**782**

new Certified  
businesses  
in 2023

**40**

new Innovator  
businesses  
in 2023

**241**

businesses  
recertified  
in 2023

**4,705**

total Certified  
Green Businesses

**22,882**

total businesses that have  
received technical assistance

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# Green Businesses are key to addressing California's environmental challenges.

Small businesses are growing a sustainability movement in California through the California Green Business Network. These businesses grow to be big businesses, with big sustainability efforts. We're seeding this movement.

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## Transportation

"So far, we've eliminated the GHG equivalent of 6 power plants. For our employees, **we incentivize active transportation.**"

- Carbon Lighthouse

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## Solid Waste

"From the elimination of single-use products and the installation of LEDs, to a recycling and **composting program**, we do everything we can to ensure that our business is sustainable."

- Allbirds

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## Water

"We operate a clean, green studio by using only non-toxic cleaners, eliminating single-use plastic bottles and offering a pure, filtered water refill station, and using energy and **water-saving features.**"

- Pilatesology Studio

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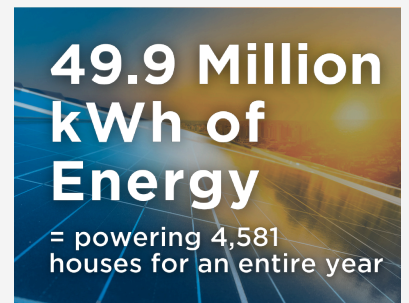
## Energy

"The Green Business Program helped us keep our energy use to a minimum with better tracking tools, equipment, and **energy-efficient lighting.**"

- Toole's Garage

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**In 2023 Green  
Businesses Reduced:**



# Green Businesses are the entry point for early adoption of California Initiatives that lead to widespread engagement and adoption.

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**CA Initiative/Legislation:** GHG Reductions AB32, SB253, SB261 Climate Neutrality by 2045

**We helped businesses:**



Green Businesses track their carbon emissions and reduce them every year.



Simplified Savings Program: Energy Efficiency for Small Businesses.



CDFR Healthy Refrigeration; eliminating food deserts while conserving energy and climate.



Intuit sponsored rebates to businesses for energy upgrades.

**INTUIT**

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**CA Initiative/Legislation:** Solid Waste Elimination and Reuse: SB 1383, SB 54, AB 1276, AB1080, AB619

**We helped businesses:**



Foodware reuse, limit foodware accessories and eliminate single-use plastic.



Early adoption of organics recycling and edible food recovery (a decade before SB1383).

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**CA Initiative/Legislation:** Safer Consumer Product, Greener Chemistries: AB-1879 and SB-509

**We helped businesses:**



Many industrial sectors switch to greener chemistries: nail salons, auto body, auto repair, garment cleaning, dental services, construction, painting, laboratories, etc.



All Green Businesses switch to safer janitorial products.

The Green Business Network is prioritizing equity in everything we do so that we can serve all small businesses in California. It's working.



Increased participation from businesses in disadvantaged communities by 40%.

Years	2012-14	2021	2022	2023
% DAC	5.5%	15.6%	33.23%	45.12%

Over 40% of funding for underserved regions and businesses.



Spanish speaking staff

Spanish language media focus



Community-based organizations



Source Reduction



Assisting home based child care businesses and restaurants to switch to safer janitorial products and eliminate disposables in favor of reusable/washable foodware items

Equitable solutions for microbusinesses and equity-based businesses.



Small farm assistance



Equitable Solutions for Small Businesses

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## Not just a Green Business Program but a Community-Based Workforce Development Program.

CAGBN continues to prioritize adding Sustainability Consultants that are a cultural fit for the businesses they are reaching out to, and are also members of the communities in which they serve. No one knows their community better than someone who is part of it, and no one can affect change more than a community member can.

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"I always thought working with Spanish-speaking businesses was important work, but it wasn't until I went into a small Mexican candy store to talk to the owner that I realized the impact we were having. When I was about to leave, she got teary eyed and started thanking me because she's never had someone from the government come and explain things to her. She told me that she was grateful because she felt seen.

This experience made me realize that incorporating equity into the work we do is so much more than just speaking Spanish. It's not just about being able to understand each other, it's about being there to support businesses that are often forgotten. Businesses want to do the right thing, but they need someone to be there and explain all aspects of what we are asking them to do, why it's important, and how the changes we are asking them to make will impact them. It's the personal connection that they need and should get, just like any other business. It's important to make them feel important, to make them feel like they matter, because they're the ones at the forefront. And they do matter."

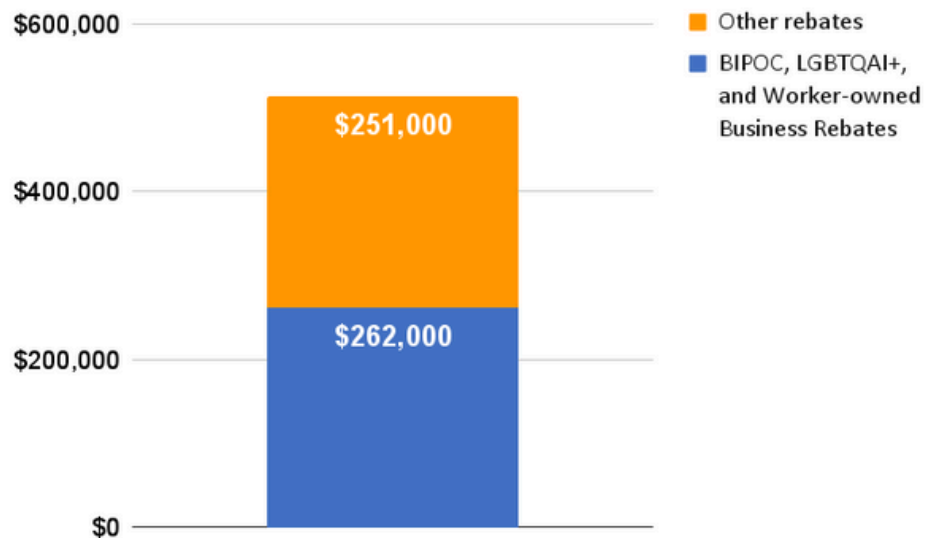


Jakki Castorena-Davila  
Bilingual Sustainability Consultant

### Rebates Distributed:

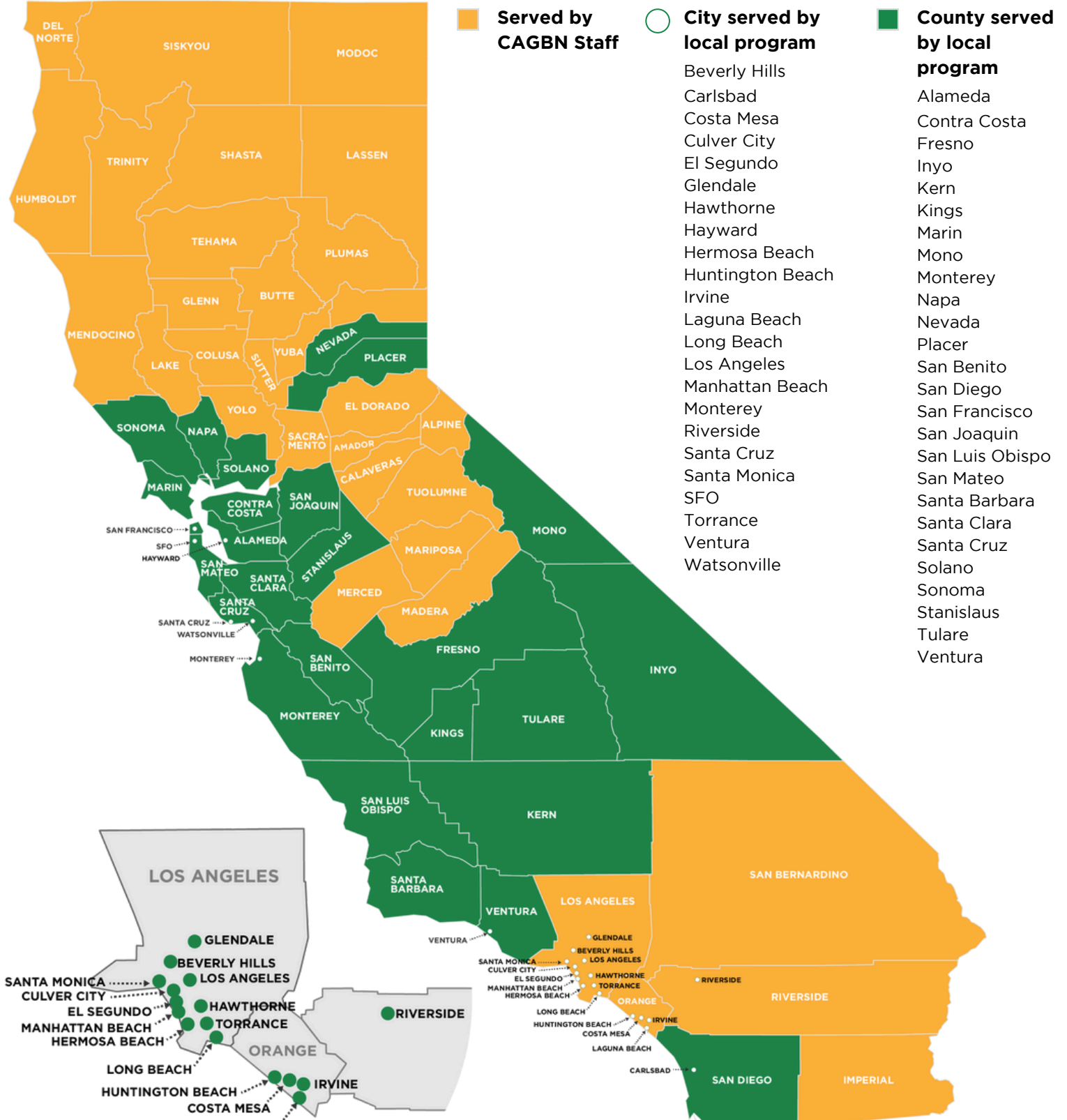
BIPOC, LGBTQAI+, and Worker-owned Business Rebates vs Other Rebates

Over 51% of all CAGBN rebates have been distributed to BIPOC, LGBTQAI+, and Worker-owned Businesses.



# CAGBN now serves businesses Statewide with state funding.

We are currently serving any business that applies to be a Certified Green Business. However, the locally run programs have the most traction and provide more resources to the businesses they assist. We strive to have a locally run program in every municipality in California. State funding is helping us nurture new programs every year.





"Thank you so much for coming to my business and offering help. In all my years here, I've never had someone come from the City to explain things to me. I want to do the right thing but I need to understand and know first."

Maria Martinez, My Candy House



"Working with someone who speaks Spanish was very helpful and above all, they used a very easy to understand vocabulary. Many times when people come to my business offering some help from the city or county, they never use words or phrases that I can understand."

Guillermo Lara, Las Chiquitas



"Understanding all the information in Spanish has made a big difference and is a big change for me. Normally the information I receive is the misinterpretation of people who do not speak Spanish as their first language, and it is not 100% understood."

Edith Chavez, Mexical Taqueria

## We help businesses take actionable measures that lead to quantifiable change.

The California Green Business Network leads the state in working with underserved businesses to create a vibrant, green economy.

Since 1996, the Network has offered technical assistance and economic incentives to help business owners make lasting changes that:

- improve their bottom line
- protect the environment
- expand the workforce
- provide a green marketplace for consumers


Led by a coalition of state and local governments, utilities, and NGOs, the program achieves a shared mission of recognizing and promoting businesses that meet high sustainability standards.

The Network was formalized as an official state program in 2011 (A.B. 913 Feuer) and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that leads and sources 50 locally run Green Business Programs.

## We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to make California a greener, more equitable economy.

### Contact

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