

The Honorable Anna Caballero
1021 O Street, Suite 7620
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Address Planada Flood Relief Gap (\$20.3M for FY23-24)

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of a coalition of community-based organizations that work and live in Planada, we write to respectfully request your support in addressing a gap in flood relief funding for Planada residents. **Specifically, we request \$20,260,314.80 from the California State Budget for Planada Flood Recovery.** This level of funding is necessary to address the various financial impacts that residents have experienced, and costs associated with making Planada whole again.

As your office is aware, on January 10, 2023, the unincorporated community of Planada, California, experienced a severe atmospheric event and major flood. The entire community of Planada--roughly 1,000 households--was evacuated, and dozens of families remain displaced.

On Saturday, April 15, together with the leadership of your office and several other state and local elected officials, a convening was held in Planada with community leaders that identified the wide-ranging and devastating impact of the floods. At the convening, you requested a better-informed understanding of the impacts of the floods on the residents, and you committed to submitting a budget request to the Governor for Planada flood recovery needs.

In response to your request, the UC Merced Community & Labor Center designed a scientific, random sample community needs assessment survey following the Planada flood. On Saturday, April 22 and Sunday, April 23, dozens of staff and non-profit volunteers knocked on the doors of nearly every one of the 1,000 households in Planada to administer the needs assessment survey.

The Planada Community Needs Assessment has generalizability to the entire community of Planada, and is within the margin of error of official census data for key measures (such as percentage of homeowners and household size).

The survey provides data on a range of community needs, such as loss of work, rent increases and threat of eviction, property damage inside and outside of homes, lack of access to disaster aid, and the need for rental assistance and remediation.

The survey indicates the following community needs resulting from the flood disaster:

Budget

Home Inspection (172 homes x \$500)	\$86,000
Home Remediation (340 homes x \$34,518)	\$11,736,120
Vehicles (211 vehicles x \$5,500)	\$1,160,500
Funding assistance for renters (301 households x \$1,448)	\$435,848
Infrastructure	<u>\$5,000,000</u>
Subtotal	<u>\$18,418,468</u>
	+
10% for Public Administration and Community Outreach	<u>\$1,841,846.80</u>
Total:	\$20,260,314.80

Our survey indicates that 52% of all Planada households experienced flooding (461 of 891 properties).

Following the collection of the survey data, the undersigned community partners hosted a community meeting with approximately sixty residents in attendance to review the survey data, discuss the findings with impacted Planada residents, and identify funding priorities through community voting.

In order of priority as identified through community voting, this funding request for flood-affected households includes:

- **Funding Assistance for Renters.** We estimate that 301 households fell behind on rent, mortgage or utilities, an average of \$1,448 per household. 29% of tenants also experienced either rental increases, threats of eviction, or both following the flooding disaster, and impacted residents raised the need for assistance finding temporary or permanent alternative housing as a result.
- **Home Remediation.** Of flood-affected households, 74% (340) lost property inside their homes. Among estimated 164 households that had received cost estimates for remediation of home damage, the mean cost estimate of remediation was \$34,518 per home. We apply this average to all 340 homes that lost property.
- **Infrastructure.** Residents and experts have voiced concern that neglected infrastructure needs contributed to the Planada flood disaster, and that investments in local infrastructure will have to be made to ensure resilience in light of escalating climate crises. We recommend at least five million dollars in repairs for roads, community facilities, and related infrastructure.
- **Vehicles.** Almost half (46% or 211) of flood-affected households lost at least one vehicle that was used to drive to work. (Previous research on the impact of floods on the insurance industry indicates an average cost of \$4,000-7,000 per vehicle lost to flood damage).
- **Public Administration / Community Outreach.** Community-based organizations that have been working with Planada flood victims estimate that the total cost of implementation for the budget line items referenced above will be 10% of the fund, or \$1,841,846.80 for both public administration of the fund and for community-based organizations to conduct outreach.
- **Home Inspection.** Of flood-affected households, more than one in three (37%), 172 households, did not receive a home inspection. (Home inspections for all flooded homes are warranted, given

that, among the 340 households that lost property inside their home, 89%, or 302 households, did not use a large, industrial dehumidifier to dry their house.)

As verified by the data collected by the UC Merced Community & Labor Center, we request \$20,260,314.80 from the California State Budget for the purpose of Planada Flood Recovery. The UC Merced Community & Labor Center is willing to administer and dispense these funds to affected households. Any follow-up correspondence regarding this budget request may be directed to Ana Padilla at anapadilla@ucmerced.edu.

Like other disadvantaged unincorporated communities in California, Planada lacks basic investments in social and economic infrastructure, and these features exposed it to disaster that could have been avoided during the January 10th rains. Planada is also a predominantly low-income community, ranking in the 88th percentile for poverty on CalEnviroScreen 4.0. Against the backdrop of escalating climate disaster, now is the time to commit to our most vulnerable and immediately affected communities.

Respectfully,

Ana Padilla
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UC Merced Community & Labor Center

Sol Rivas
Executive Director
Valley Onward

Alicia Rodriguez
Merced County Community Advocate

Madeline Harris
Regional Policy Manager
Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability