

Sarah Diefendorf  
Director  
The Capacity Collaborative  
(a project of Earth Island Institute)  
2150 Allston Way, Suite 460  
Berkeley, CA 94704

March 30, 2024

RE: Letter of Commitment for EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Capacity Collaborative (the CC) is pleased to express its commitment to participate in The Town of Parrish Alabama's application for the Climate Pollution Grants Program: Implementation Grants General Competition (CPRG) - the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project (PSAP).

The Capacity Collaborative (formerly EFCWest) has been building capacity with vulnerable communities and Tribes for over 20 years. Through training, workshops, and mentorship, the Capacity Collaborative protects environments and builds capacity for Tribes and communities to catalyze the skills, resources, and funding necessary to realize their goals. Our Senior Associate in the South, Kathleen Kirkpatrick, is a leader in Alabama's environmental movement and dedicated to helping rural environmental justice communities such as Parrish achieve their resilience goals. We have existing relationships with the Town of Parrish and the Alabama Center for Rural Organizing and Systemic Solutions (ACROSS) through our technical assistance efforts for small water and wastewater systems (via the Environmental Finance Center West).

We see this CPRG opportunity for the Town of Parrish as a critical investment in an energy community's transformation from one severely impacted by extraction and exploitation of human and natural resources to one where local government provides a solid foundation for resiliency in a town where local workers and their families can thrive thanks to improved economies, health, and environment.

The Capacity Collaborative is a proud project of Earth Island Institute, a 501(c)(3) organization.

The Capacity Collaborative intends to contribute expertise and resources to the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project (PSAP) in the following ways:

**Community Engagement:**

- Leading a robust community outreach and engagement program by utilizing the framework provided by the Just Communities Protocol, prioritizing racial and class equity and climate Justice throughout.
- Doing the groundwork with local leaders to ensure relevant stakeholders are meaningfully engaged from the outset of the project.
- Provide culturally relevant education about environmental issues, climate vulnerability, and a Just transition for workers and local government.
- Facilitating at least one workshop or community meeting each calendar year quarter, to foster collaboration among government, local leaders, workers, and organizations.
- Leveraging our extensive relationships with environmental, climate, and Labor organizations in the region to recruit participation in developing a Community Benefits Plan.

**Technical Expertise:**

- Facilitate development of a Community Benefits Plan with employers including the Town of Parrish, contractors for the executing the PSAP, community members, and potential commercial and industrial employers recruited.
- Advise the Town of Parrish and ACROSS in developing RFPs for work to carry out the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project in the areas of sustainable development, green building, integrative design, and climate resilience.
- Facilitate periodic meetings among contractors with a focus on integrative design to optimize energy and water efficiency and health outcomes in building renovation and construction.

The Capacity Collaborative looks forward to assisting the Town of Parrish and ACROSS in this thoughtful approach to building a sustainable future. It is our hope that the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project will serve as an example for other rural communities as they transition away from dependence on fossil fuels and build regenerative economies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Diefendorf', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sarah Diefendorf  
Director, The Capacity Collaborative

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