

Community Climate Action Plan: Unincorporated Areas of Alameda County

**West County Community Meeting:
Eden United Church of Christ, Hayward, CA
September 16, 2009
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

6:00 - 6:40 p.m. Introductory Presentation and General Questions
6:40 - 7:50 p.m. Rotational Breakout Sessions
7:50 - 8:00 p.m. Closing Remarks

I. 6:00 - 6:40 p.m. Introductory Presentation

Albert Lopez, Alameda County Planning Director welcomed the community to the meeting. He described the County's commitment to developing the climate action plan and introduced the consultants supporting the county in this effort (AECOM in drafting the plan and Gibson & Associates for conducting public outreach).

Claire Bonham-Carter of AECOM, presented slides regarding the Climate Action Plan (CAP) timeline, climate change, legislation and process:

Timeline for the Development of the Climate Action Plan:

CAP Preparation Begins – June 2009
Public Outreach and Survey –August 2009•
Public Workshops –September & December 2009•
Analysis and Selection of Draft CAP Measures –Sept-Nov 2009•
Release of Draft CAP est. Dec 2009
Public Review Period – est. Dec 2009
Draft CAP Public Hearings –early 2010
Adoption of CAP by County Supervisors –March 2010•
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Climate Change

Due to man-made activities, there are increases in the release of carbon dioxide and other gasses that create a warming effect . Among the effects of the predicted impact in California due to global warming, is a significant decrease in the snow pack providing water to Northern California, and up to a 36 inch rise in sea levels.

Legislative Context for Climate Change Activities:

Senate Bill AB32, California Global Warming Solution Act (<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/docs/ab32text.pdf>) to achieve 1990 level emissions by 2020.

Executive Order S-3-05 (EO -S-3-5): Requires regions to reduce emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Senate Bill 375 (passed 2008); Requires regional land use, transportation and housing plans to comply with regional GHG reduction targets.

Alameda County Resolution - 2007-366: County commitment to reduce emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

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Alameda County Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Alameda County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Unincorporated Area Community Emissions Inventory released in 2008 (and using 2003 as the baseline year) found emissions use fell into these categories:

- 51% Transportation
- 31% Residential Energy Use
- 19% Commercial-Industrial Use
- 4% Waste (Note - Excludes emissions from Water)

Process for Developing Climate Action Plan

Receive ideas from the community and develop Strategies, Objectives & Measures.

Potential CAP measures to be analyzed by effectiveness at reducing GHG, economic cost, and the local context and for their technical, economic and political feasibility.

II. 6:40 - 7:50 p.m. Rotational Breakout Sessions

Meeting participants split into three groups, rotating among the stations of:

1. ***Transportation and Land Use***
2. ***Building Energy Use***
3. ***Waste, Water and Green Infrastructure***

In each of these groups, members heard a short (3 minutes) presentation on the issues at hand, and offered their ideas about what types of improvements they would like to see in the community. Member switched stations after about 20 minutes.

III. 7:50pm-8:00pm Closing remarks

Opportunities for Conversation: alamedacountyclimateaction@yahoo.com

Web Site Address: http://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/climate_action_plan.htm

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Transportation and Land Use - Break Out Discussion Notes

Encourage Pedestrian Routes

- Safety: pedestrian routes
- Police/Sheriff should give more tickets to cars blocking/ not stopping for pedestrians
- Cherryland needs sidewalks
- New policies: new developments and sold homes should have sidewalks placed in front
- More trees and shade are more conducive to walking
- Need more street trees for shade - enjoyable walking experiences
- Better curbside sidewalks for disabled and for parents – strollers
- Tree-scaping – Important that roots don't upset the sidewalk
- Creating community commercial areas (Ex. Use Mission Blvd to build dense environments)
- Encourage small-local grocery store development - selling fruits and vegetables at local store
- Provide local stores with fresh food - reflect culture of the population
- Educate population on small grocers and competitive pricing for many items.
- Families leave early: unsafe to walk or bike to school when it's still dark
- "Walking carpool" – to school should be encouraged
- Safe Routes to Schools active to promote walking and biking to school

Increase Cycling

- Encourage cycling-rather than driving in office parks
- Include bikes for local county office activities
- Improve bike lane connectivity
- Every street should have a bicycle path
- Need more bike lanes with clear identification
- Publicize safe bike routes
- Utilize street designs that have bike, pedestrian and car – separate lanes
- Improve bike lock security
- Increase safety: left hand turn lane and signals
- Promoting culture of bicycling to the grocery store - more baskets, images of cycling
- Bike education classes at schools
- Need to establish transit arteries within Cherryland

Land Use

- All planning should be sustainable: Reviewing projects for greenhouse gas emissions
- All new construction must be on transit line
- Align and stick-with stated land-use strategies
- Educate local businesses and support business development
- People leave neighborhood for work - goods - need encourage goods and jobs near residence
- Promote better balance of local jobs and affordable housing
- New buildings/homes policy should reflect sustainability

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Public Transportation and Car Pools

- Involve AC Transit in plan development
- Increase bus links to BART
- BART parking is too limited, can't count on parking there for commute.
- AC transit service is too limited in hours, times and routes don't reflect needs
- AC Transit not provided on streets without sidewalks
- Bus stops not always shaded
- Need smaller buses going shorter distances
- Trolley cars to BART, school, stores (Ex. Redwood Rd, Lake Chabot, Castro Valley Blvd.)
- Make public transit user friendly – need shuttles to bus stop
- Create mini public transit with shuttle in town (Ex - Berkeley Campus shuttles, N. Carolina)
- Funding needs to increase for transit needed on multiple levels
- Examine local policies within statewide context
- Encourage development of park n rides
- Analyze MTCs role in financing transportation.

Limit Single Passenger Vehicle Use

- Urban/Suburban golf carts – fleet of shared vehicles for the public
- Fleets must have minimal fuel efficiency (county vehicles)
- Discomfort level needs to increase to limit driving
- Disincentive more important than incentive for behavior change
- Make it take longer to drive than to car pool
- Gridlock and super congestion causes behavior change
- Parking fees will discourage single use driving
- Carpools – Companies communicate with BART, bus
- People's commute hours vary - challenge to commute
- Encourage: lifestyle change to carpool (can't do groceries, etc)
- Fighting independence and privacy of single use vehicles
- Make shared ride enjoyable
- Educate more about global warming

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Building Energy Use: Break Out Discussion Notes

Incentives:

- Institute a 'Cash for clunkers' type program for old inefficient appliances – i.e. have a program to remove all inefficient refrigerators or washers/dryers etc. and give homeowners a rebate.
- Provide a tax credit or break to owners of apartment buildings to enable them to make improvements.
- Owners of single family homes need to be provided incentives as well (shouldn't necessarily be income related).
- Question: How do you motivate people to take action and raise awareness? Incentives/Funding
- Need to talk about things we can actually do. There are people losing their homes and storefronts that are abandoned/empty. → Some of these measures are pie in the sky
- New buildings/retrofitted older buildings/homes the technology simply isn't there yet to be affordable to people These measures are the last thing people think about in this economy.
- Most commercial property is leased and renters pay energy bill.
- Leaseholder improvements don't affect owner. Even for residential, return on investments takes too long
- Energy audits with RATINGS (home buying, etc)
- State has rebates system that could be utilized

Selling and Buying Homes and construction

- When selling home – it may be a good idea to make the sellers have to go through an energy efficiency audit – all homes on the market would have to have an audit and buyers could use that information to determine which home is most desirable. This would encourage more homeowners to make changes.
- Elevate energy efficiency → make sure it is included in building/home inspection
- Unincorporated passed a green buildings initiative - We already have green building codes
- Grants and money for dealing with dilapidated buildings
- Building codes, i.e. Title 24
- Rebates, etc and other incentives for buildings

Existing Codes and Policies

- Need to make sure that existing codes are enforced. There are already some good codes on the books. However, we do also need additional energy conservation methods/programs as well.
- Prioritize energy conservation efforts, i.e. older homes over newer construction – determine where most work needs to be done, and focus on that sector initially.
- Clothes-lines are outlawed in Cherryland: no front exposure of clothes lines is allowed (related to discussion around the use of clothes dryers during the daytime)
- Schools need help improving energy efficiency

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Technology

- Commercial buildings → need to be aware of heating and cooling measures (there is no need for the AC to be blasting in these commercial buildings in the summer).
- Solar thermal: needs more emphasis
- Small scale – solar panels county wide
- Cool roofs for residential homes
- Install light colored pavements to reduce heat island effect.
- Think about how to design things like parking lots – need more trees, not just pavement.
- Lighting system: need to change street lighting both in terms of lamps and direction (see also Transportation)
- Technology has not caught up with conservation efforts, i.e. flat screen TVs are more expensive to power than earlier generations of TVs. (Education has not caught up with technology)
- Buildings and Factories: Use top of flat roofs to install solar panels.
- Windmill expansion is not likely due to bird death issue

Education, Outreach and Partnerships

- Supervisor Miley's office generated a booklet around conservation.
- Maybe it is better to focus on 1 cost effective measure – market and publicize that particular measure for a stated period of time in order to increase awareness/motivation/education. Narrow the focus to encourage adoption of the measure
- Condo Associations: Reach out to condo groups – consideration will need to be given to condo associations and that the association would all have to agree to adopt measures as a whole building. Individual owners can't operate without consideration and consent of the whole association. There are many condos in Castro Valley.
- Conservation works with static populations, not growing ones
- This category (buildings and energy) area has the most potential – this is the area in which most change can be leveraged
- Greatest efficiency is when it's done at a County level
- Provide specific – targeted education for those who need it around specific issues
- Provide general education for those needing that kind of education/information.
- Special energy efficient roofing (demonstration project/education with sign on lawn)
- Somehow make sure ALL residents receive info.
- Outreach plan to communities, i.e. churches
- Consider using the local media for education/outreach
- Questions - How best to conduct *outreach* to all in the unincorporated areas - around changes they could/have to make around energy usage and conservation methods. What is the best way to reach all of the households?
- Question - How best to provide *access* to info. What is the best way to make information accessible to all around existing or proposed programs that people can tap into or changes they can implement to conserve energy?
- These are lifestyle changes. We need to find solutions that don't ask people to compromise quality of life
- Explore working with the East Bay Energy Watch Partnership
- Many of these issues are beyond the scope of the unincorporated areas

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PG&E

- Continue with PG&E support to customers with regard to rebates and other 'breaks' to customers
- Work with programs such as the PGE Savings By Design Program - encourages energy-efficient building and process design and construction
- Work with PG&E to assess/remediate where energy efficiencies lie – develop a strategic plan.
- PG&E can internally do analysis of energy use, aggregate and share info with the City.
- Can figure out who the individual households/commercial businesses are and gather data.
- Since this information cannot be shared – PG&E would share only general data with the county and suggest where they could target efforts to specific households/types of businesses.
- For instance, a PG&E analysis may indicate that specific types of businesses within the unincorporated areas are utilizing a lot of energy. Rather than share any specific information with the county – they would tell the county that they think there is a need within this specific business sector – as an aggregate-needs support in implementing conservation measures. This can be done with both residential and commercial businesses
- Participating in PG&E programs: Involves too much paperwork Unworkable system
- Streamline PG&E process to make participation easier

Waste, Water and Green Infrastructure- - Break Out Discussion Notes

Waste

- Solutions need to be something people can live with (ex: green bin in kitchen is smelly, might be used more when service is done FOR folks) – other participants indicated that the issue is behavior change, and the bin provided is adequate for collecting foodwaste so long as it is deposited in the larger bin somewhat frequently
- “food scrap man” like milk man can come every day
- Bring small green bucket out to bigger green bin (keep smell down)
- Keep food scraps in refrigerator/freezer for the week, or wrap in paper and take to outside bin
- Waste management does a good job in AC with recycling
- Visit landfills to educate re: plastic bags and stop stores from using them
- Trash pickups LESS OFTEN as incentive for more recycling

Water

- The low hanging fruit is to start a metering program to measure water consumption and identify areas for conservation and increased water efficiency
- Rain water collection in buckets
- Systems for rain water collection
- Fixtures and appliances are more efficient now and with change in ownership could require codes (may affect house sales and costs \$50-60,000 is cost prohibitive)
- Easy stuff has been done, hard/expensive stuff left (in economic climate, not realistic)
- Sewer backups due to low flow toilets, etc
- Program for condo owners to reduce water use? (incentives/rebates for new appliances) could expand to fixtures and other energy saving methods (especially with multiple homes, like a condo building)
- Oils are put down the gutter. Enforce the fine on this!

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Water (cont.)

- Improve efficiency of pumps at water and waste water facilities
- Grey water systems, recent changes to regulations makes it easier to require this on new buildings
- Santa Clara County water treatment facility has pipeline for recycled water → cooling towers (possible to share with multiple counties?) contact SJ/SCC Pollution and Control Plant
- Find water on sidewalks and gutters from lawn watering (or outside businesses) – key area for behavior change through enforced rules and regulations
- White paper (Air Resources Board) re: snow cap reduction, groundwater, other options AB32 scoping plan
- Metered water (make sure everyone has one for charging rates)

Green Infrastructure

- Temporary food/community gardens- more veggies eaten (and grown locally) Getting kids involved for rehabilitation
- County could offer to remove concrete if you plant trees
- Urban infill/growth (not as much room for trees, more H2O use and waste)
- Smart urban planning and knowing tree species (large canopy, fast growing, low water use, no damage to sidewalks)
- Street tree preservation (have lost most urban trees) and planting (Public works in county didn't follow through with this in the past)
- More dedication from public works toward urban forestry
- Energy saving lawns/landscaping
- City of Rockland did 50% match for fake lawns (1st 1,000 to sign up, which was met in a matter of hours after the program was launched)
- Limit amount of concrete that building code allows on home sites – reduces impervious services and urban heat island effect
- Educate newcomers on the local codes for living here
- Put signs near trees re: Keeping the air cleaner (some folks think trees are a waste of money) – education of environmental and economic benefits can be a powerful inducer of behavior change
- Barriers to planting: money, and kids can destroy young trees
- Planning green space within the distance that has been studied re: usage by people walking, etc.
- Get people walking more – plan for pedestrian-oriented communities
- Mobile gardens in pots on concrete paths not being used (trees and veggies) – demonstration plots are another key educational opportunity for the community