

Community Climate Action Plan: Unincorporated Areas of Alameda County

**East County Community Meeting:
Martinelli Event Center, Livermore, CA
September 15, 2009
6:00 -8:00 p.m.**

**6:00-6:40 pm 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

Bruce Jensen of Alameda County Planning Department welcomed the community to the meeting. He described the County's commitment to developing the climate action plan. he 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

A recent study found that Unincorporated Areas emissions fell under the basic 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.

Questions and Answers:

What does the unincorporated areas of Alameda County refer to?

These communities include Ashland, Castro Valley, Cherryland, El Portal Ridge, Fairview, Hillcrest Knolls, Mt. Eden, San Lorenzo, Sunol, and Rural East County.

Will the plan reflect the diverse needs of East and West County residents?

Yes, the plan will need to reflect the geographical difference of East and West residents.

Question? How was public outreach conducted?

Outreach was conducted through a combination of resident and institutional mailing, newspaper advertising, and online list serves. Over 200 individuals participated so far in the survey. Residents are encouraged to "tell a neighbor, send emails, complete surveys to be sure that their voice is heard in this process.

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 Bicycling and Trail Use

- Trail development (equestrian, biking, pedestrian).
- Eliminate gaps in trail development
- Provide more PR about trails as carbon neutral activity.
- Develop bike share options at BART stops and other locations
- Invest in bike path development instead of just bike lanes.
- Allow more during commute hours on BART
- Develop more connectivity - Bike lanes inconsistent- may end by freeways.
- Ensure that traffic lights are triggered by bikes as well as cars.
- Encourage all including recreational cyclists to follow bike lanes/laws
- Currently - there are conflicts between cars and cyclist commuters

Encourage Public Transit

- Expand BART to 3 stations in Livermore
- Improve route efficiency Buses takes too long - they don't travel on freeways
- Run buses regularly from Park and Ride to BART
- Increase parking at BART. Can't count on finding space - so can't use it
- Buses not desirable- not seen as clean or efficient- light rail is a more attractive option
- Create more high speed buses that are attractive -appealing and fast.

Create More Efficient Park and Ride and Car Pool Systems

- Underutilized in some areas - no shuttle bus to BART from Park and Ride
- Other location choices poor - review police/towing reports to see bad locations
(e.g. not visible from highway - vandalism occurs in cul-de-sac locations)
- Local Car Pooling takes place, but not mass-scale.

Congestion Factors

- Transitory Congestion cause of GHG emissions
- Macro issues causing congestion - need to focus on jobs-home on macro level, not just unincorporated
- Country Road congestion in some areas
- Improve more back roads to get traffic off of 580.

Encourage Tele-Commuting

- Develop communication infra-structure (internet, cable) so residents can work from home.
- Create work-incentives to promote tele-commuting for employers

Disincentives for Driving

- Regional fees for driving may impact recreational use but not commuter, as for business will still need to drive due to availability and convenience
- Increase gas tax.

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Building Energy Use - - Break Out Discussion Notes

Economic Considerations

Green concierge services - help transform the marketplace. Example: get a group of individuals together - purchase/implement measures as a group -receive a group rate/discount to eventually help make measures affordable to all who want to employ this measure later on. The initial people who want to implement the measure, will receive a cost savings by going in as a group – rather than paying a higher premium for being one of the first users.

Businesses are so small – they can easily be damaged by a 'blanket' measure that is imposed. Be conscientious about this when establishing measures.

County can establish a 'pool' of funds for low-income and other individuals to tap into to implement energy reduction measures. Consideration needs to be made for 'middle income' people/households and not just those low income households.

Measures to reduce energy bills now- need a more immediate payout. Some payouts are not realized for a substantial period of time.

Net metering from PG&E: Make it permanent (currently comes up for review periodically) and provide good incentives to keep net metering in place

Programs/measures should take into account persons who are land rich / cash poor. If savings are not provided to them, then it is not economically feasible for them to make any changes.

Education and outreach

Need to have education/access to what information is out there for energy reduction measures.

Publish/provide information on companies licensed to install solar panels.

Analysis

Need to look at what the drivers are for using energy at peak times. Questions to ask are: What are the patterns of usage? And who is using/consuming energy at peak times – commercial vs. residential?

Resulting in incentivizing people to change behavioral times/exploring alternative energy sources.

Questions about New Construction

What is considered 'new construction? Should measures apply to all new construction? Will new restrictions be punitive/cost prohibitive to some? (concerned about that).

New/modular houses - how will they be affected by new construction codes/regulations?

"Paybacks" - easier to get/realize with new construction vs. retrofitting existing homes.

Incentivize owners to use land to augment energy conservation efforts

Idea: Composting toilets/e-toilets [waste].

Energy performance in new construction buildings is a no brainer – this must be done.

Strongly support new construction codes.

Renewables and Technology

Maximize use of renewable energy - municipal as well as private.

Reduce regulations and permit fees = barriers.

Make it as easy as possible for people to implement measures.

Streamline permit process.

Solar panels should be encouraged/ provide rebates, etc.

Use of windmills (or different structures of wind mills) – among county - develop a plan/framework.

Geothermal heat pumps.

Provide gas line to homes, currently using only electricity.

More power lines - explore putting underground.

Incentives for getting off the grid entirely for rural areas – make these areas more self-sufficient.

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Waste, Water and Green Infrastructure - Break Out Discussion Notes

Waste

County can give incentives to companies like Waste Management to go rural and increase recycling.
Need collectors of waste/recycle.
More convenient recycling (is it cost effective?). Maybe 1 or 2x per month.
Currently need to bring yourself to recycling center.
Don't allow burning (even with burn permit) for greens.
Lots of vineyards recycle almost all waste (hard for smaller operations).
Dumpster at Home Depot would work for smaller farmers and residential (bring recycling to town).
Recycling programs not free in rural area. Need to do it yourself. People bring garbage and recycling to dump.
Currently have \$50/month dumpster for food and tree trimmings.
What regulations restrict measures (i.e. vector control not allowing trimming piles with rats).
Concern with zero (100%) waste (not spending limited resources to do a difficult few % if it's hard to achieve).

Water

Grey water systems (legal within code)
Most remote folks don't have food waste (chickens, coyotes, barnyard for birds).
Is grey water system cost-effective for rural water systems (vs. pipes from Sierras)?
New law to allow more grey water systems (easier and cheaper)
Separate water system for toilets (make grey water easier).
Septic systems leeching into water system in ground (limiting what you put in it).
Composting toilets (vs. septic).
Water conservation – outlet/authority for regulating Zone 7 misuse of water by neighbors (i.e. taking water out in trucks).
Most have well water (some CAL water lines)
Water biggest issue: Wells mostly - South Bay Aqueduct (agricultural)
Drip systems and waste water ponds at vineyards (wineries harder – lots of water use).
Ranches vs. “foofie” big houses (water use difference).
Energy efficiency in motors.

Green Infrastructure

Restoring oak forests (property tax reduction for incentive).
Agricultural service to help with trees that grow here (and not too invasive).
Unused land between freeways, urban parts not being used (plant trees there?) – most is private vs. county land.
Monitoring/measure what's left.
Trees that will grow without water (pepper trees, oaks, etc.)
Incentives for owners to increase green land use (not regulations but incentives).
County needs tree protection laws for existing trees (people cut them down).
Incentives for reforestation? (Tri Valley conservancy).
Education, removing barriers.