

# Alameda County Government Services & Operations Climate Action Plan

Nov. 18, 2022 Public Workshop Summary

## Workshop Overview

This document summarizes participation, discussion, questions, and feedback from the Alameda County Government Services & Operations Climate Action Plan (GOCAP) public workshop, held on Zoom on November 18, 2021, 5:30 - 7:00 pm Pacific time.

- 96 people registered. 44 people attended (in addition to County and consultant staff).
- Workshop agenda:

Time	Item
10 min	Introduction
15 min	GOCAP overview presentation and brief Q&A
25 min	Breakout 1: Priorities, Interests, & Concerns
30 min	Breakout 2: Action Brainstorm & Discussion
10 min	Conclusion & Next Steps

## Workshop Objectives

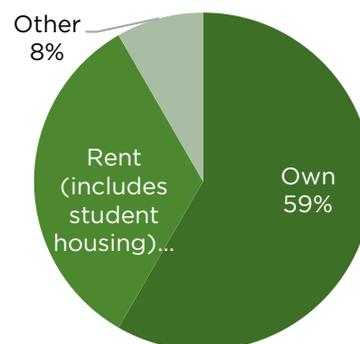
- Gather information about community priorities, interests, and concerns related to overall plan goals.
- Introduce GOCAP goals, scope, and desired outcomes to participants so that they can participate more fully.
- Understand participants' priorities for and concerns related to high-level GOCAP action ideas and gather ideas to build on, with participation from participants who are both new to climate and experts in climate-related issues.

## Demographic Summary

Twenty-four (24) participants completed the demographic survey at the end of the workshop. The results are summarized below.

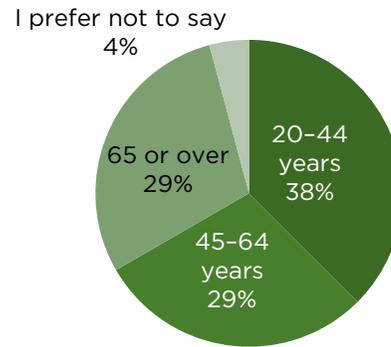
1. Do you, or the people you live with, own or rent your home?

	#	%
Own	14	59%
Rent (includes student housing)	8	33%
Other	2	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>



2. What is your age?

	#	%
20-44 years	9	38%
45-64 years	7	29%
65 or over	7	29%
I prefer not to say	1	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>



At the beginning of the workshop, participants were invited to share their names and affiliations in the Zoom chat. Below are the affiliations participants entered in the chat:

- Alameda Policy Group of the Climate Reality Project
- Alameda County Water District
- Bay Area Climate Reality Project: Climate Action Group
- Brown and Caldwell
- Castro Valley Library
- Cherryland Community Association
- Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Friends of San Lorenzo Creek
- Iron Workers Union Local 378
- 100K Trees for Humanity
- San Leandro Community Advisory Budget Task Force
- StopWaste
- UC Cooperative Extension Urban Ag & Food Systems

## Overarching Feedback and Takeaways

Key takeaways and themes from the entire workshop are summarized below.

- Overall, most participants **support bold County climate action**. Participants have experienced negative climate impacts in Alameda County, and they want the County to be a climate leader in the coming decade.
- Participants' **vision for Alameda County** in 2030 involves a community that is safe, welcoming, economically vibrant, on track with climate goals, improving public transportation, and centering environmental justice.
- Participants expressed support for the County's engagement with the community around the climate action planning process, creation of a vision for climate action and leadership, steps to reduce GHG emissions and meeting previous targets, and improving infrastructure (e.g., highways, green spaces).
- Some of the **biggest opportunities** that participants noted for the County to address climate change through its services and operations included electrification of buildings and transportation, employee transit (telecommuting options and support), and coordination across jurisdictions and agencies.
- Most participants supported the **GOCAP sample draft actions** across the six sectors. Participants specifically encouraged tree planting, edible food recovery, and the emphasis on vulnerable communities. Breakout group members discussed topics such as telecommuting, data transparency, and producer responsibility. Breakout members suggested potential partners that could help the County carry out GOCAP actions.

## Poll Results & Visioning Activity

During the workshop, participants were asked to complete poll questions and answer questions in the Zoom chat.

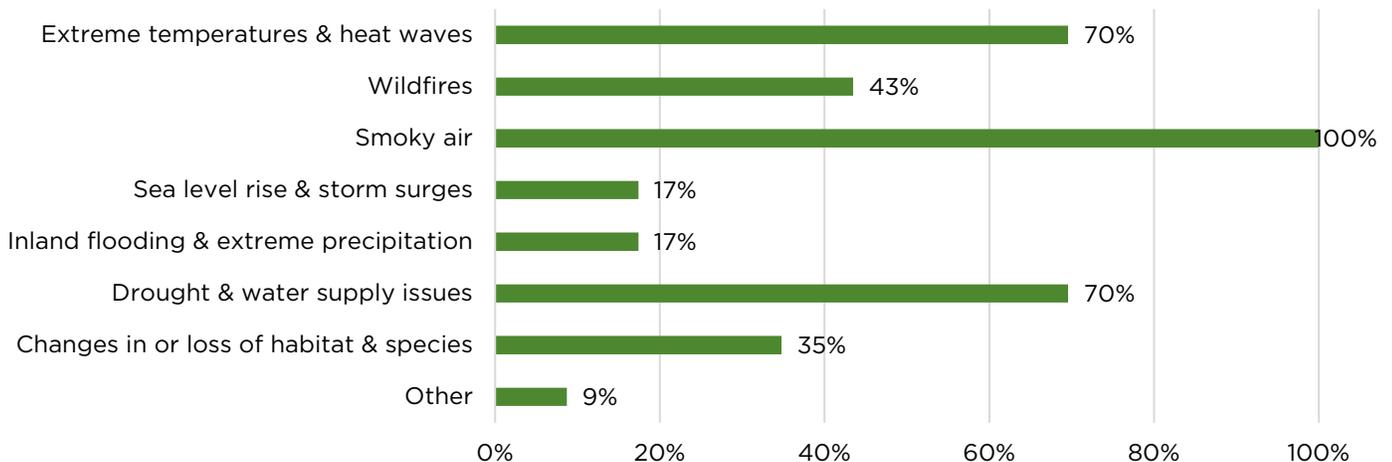
### 1. Did you take the SurveyMonkey survey in September?

Most respondents (55%) did not take the SurveyMonkey survey.

	#	%
<b>Yes</b>	2	10%
<b>No</b>	11	55%
<b>Not sure</b>	7	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2. What climate impacts have you experienced in Alameda County? [Select all that apply] Please share in chat how you've been affected.

All twenty-three (23) respondents (100%) had experienced smoky air in Alameda County. Over half (70%) had experienced extreme temperatures & heat waves and drought & water supply issues. Shared impacts from those experiences include respiratory health, discomfort, and mental health.



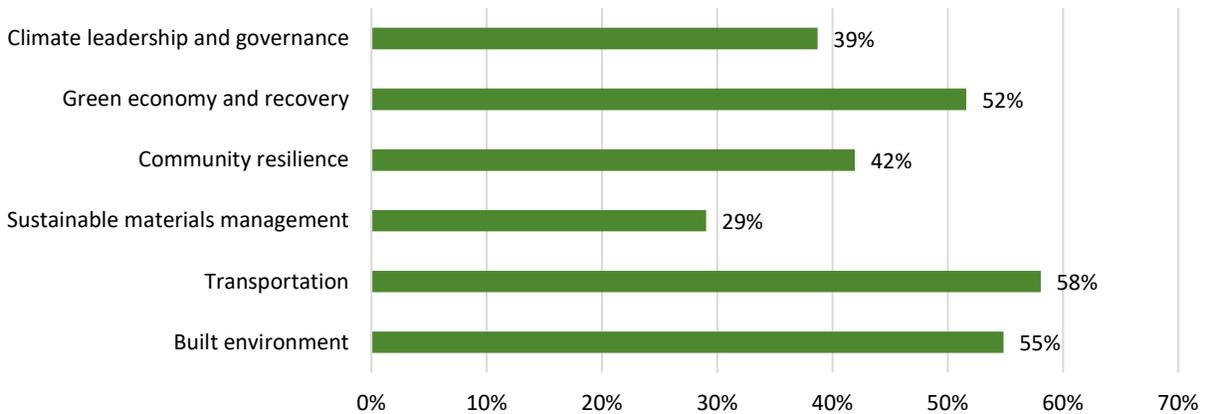
- Wildfires incited smoke and more coughing
- Poor air quality from fires and general pollution impacts breathing capacity and overall lung health
- Last year working from home in a very hot house but with smoke so bad I couldn't open windows
- Many East Bay houses don't have AC when there are heat waves
- Respiratory impacts of wildfire smoke
- Also lacked central AC amidst heat wave last year
- Drought conditions have affected local stream levels and raise the question as to how many wells can be drilled outside the urban growth boundary before creeks have no water
- Difficulty breathing; fear; motivated to change; extreme temperature discomfort without AC last year
- Stay inside to avoid smoke, reduce water usage
- Mental health impacts on children
- Excessive heat in our city and at home
- Fear waiting for the next climate emergency
- I live in an upstairs apartment without air conditioning, on extremely hot days I worry about the health and safety of my 6-year old daughter, we have to escape our home to find respite outdoors in the middle of a pandemic
- Last year during heat + smoke we were rotating through closing a room off from the rest of the house, opening the window for an hour or two at night to cool it down, then closing the window and running the air purifier in



- I want Alameda County to be looking in the rearview at the implementation all of these things.
- To train teachers on environmental issues
- In 10 years, I want Alameda County to have more improvement on environmental justice, which routed deeply due to historical redlining issue

**4. Which of the following climate action areas are most important to you? Select as many as you'd like. (31 respondents)**

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents indicated that transportation is one of the most important climate action areas. The built environment and green economy and recovery were the next two areas indicated as most important (55% and 52% of participants, respectively).



## Zoom Chat Q&A

Throughout the workshop, attendees were encouraged to submit their questions into the chat area on the Zoom platform. County staff provided verbal answers to some questions during designated Q&A sessions and are providing written responses to the remaining question. See the Appendix for the list of questions and answers.

# Breakout Room Discussions

Participants divided into six breakout rooms based on sector to discuss their priorities, interests, concerns, ideas, and questions related to the GOCAP. **Key themes** and **raw notes** from the breakout room Miro board (online whiteboard) responses are shown below for each set of questions.

## Breakout 1: Priorities, Interests, & Concerns

The first breakout session intended to capture participants' general priorities, interests, and concerns related to the GOCAP. Themes from this breakout session are listed below, followed by compiled notes for each question.

- Participants expressed support for the County's engagement of the community around the climate action planning process, creation of a vision for climate action and leadership, steps to reduce GHG emissions and meeting previous targets, and improving infrastructure (e.g., highways, green spaces).
- Some of the **biggest opportunities** participants noted for the County to address climate change through its services and operations included electrification of buildings and transportation, employee transit (telecommuting options and support), and coordination across jurisdictions and agencies.
- When thinking about how the County can better **support vulnerable communities**, participants discussed themes such as homelessness, education, resilience hubs, elimination of natural gas, recycling, land use planning and new construction, and online permitting.

Questions that arose during breakout rooms are included along with the Zoom chat questions at the end of this document.

### *What is the County already doing well?*

- Met goals from previous plan
- Paying attention—asking to save water & go solar
- Holding itself accountable & being transparent
- Attention to building materials & lifetime uses & operations
- Move toward electrification
- Community energy is greener than it used to be. Now 100% renewable energy option
- Fremont green challenge to educate young people. They have good resources.
- Going well—initial GHG reduction targets
- The County has a good vision—creating a vision statement is important
- We do have an indication that emissions are decreasing
- Thinking progressively about sustainability
- This did require deliberate action
- Providing info sessions for community to connect, learn, and provide input
- The concepts of inventories, sources, and metrics are more widespread
- Having metrics and communicating what these metrics are is an important design process to continue with
- Existing GHG inventory is great starting point
- There are some hybrids in the fleet
- Engaging the community
- Having a planning process
- Public awareness of the crisis is starting—but more is better
- Staying lean in terms of staff, vehicles; potential to impact carbon
- Improvements to parks, playgrounds, green spaces; more compact
- Express lane on highway; upgrades
- Traffic light at highway entrance; work well to reduce traffic
- GHG inventory is good to have done; needs refinement; moving away from just mitigation and towards adaptation; VA and risks well documented
- Has some sustainable programs for county ops (e.g., green building codes, sustainable purchasing programs) and now need to grapple with the more difficult things
- Community perspective—hard to tell what's the county vs state vs city
- Library system, handled the pandemic really well—were able to get everything we needed during the pandemic
- Sustainable to share books rather than everyone owning their own :)

## *What are the biggest opportunities for the County to address climate change through services and operations?*

- Go 100% electric
- Massive investments in natural solutions—specifically tree planting
- Supporting public safety, public health, & wellness
- Transportation is the biggest opportunity
- Modernization for buildings and facilities
- Places for people that don't have clear air at home
- Need to start young and should be included middle school and on
- Opportunities to include BIPOC community to discover additional data points and approaches to resolving issues
- We need data to understand the biggest bang for our buck
- The County needs to measure progress
- Requiring low carbon cement in all buildings
- More transparency around the coordination role of the County; understand roles of different water districts, cities, the County, etc.
- Muni bonds for environmental/ social justice reporting—be transparent
- Employee commutes—virtual commutes
- Incentives for public transit, carpooling, and biking (rebates, incentives, etc.); make parking lots smaller
- Public works currently doesn't talk about climate change
- Fleet operations—switching to EVs
- County fair exhibition all about reducing carbon footprint at home
- Consider sea level rise when there are new constructions near coastline
- Transportation improvements—more accessible
- EV charging stations
- Public transportation that's going to work (can 'incentivize' takin the bus, but limited if system is not accessible)
- Secure bike parking
- Installing HVAC / heat pump for buildings/facilities
- Assessment and pre-planning as things near end of life
- Continue to strengthen connection to utilities; be able to anticipate climate impacts and reduce impacts
- Important to implement regulations and incentives to stop carbon emissions; address consequences but also slowing/stopping
- County needs to take the lead; SLR is county issue; many of these issues are countywide; need to coordinate amongst cities and regional entities
- Water management—other areas increased rate to encourage conservation
- More coordination across cities and various agencies around urban agriculture and tree stewardship; community engagement is a core component; need funding for staff to run programs
- Heat wave/smoke cooling centers—more awareness about where those are/access
- Land use planning; renovation in industrial sites along BART tracks
- Employee transit emissions: more working from home, allow more flexibility
- Working from home also has challenges, so allow flexibility + make employees homes safer and more efficient for working from home
- Would be great if people could afford to live near where they work; affordable housing in urban areas is a climate issue
- Governments can also lead by example for other cities
- This plan seems narrow, one opportunity is to expand this planning effort to be more comprehensive

## *How can the County better support you in the face of climate change? How can it better support vulnerable communities?*

- Homelessness—providing sustainable housing for houseless people
- Education: focused on EJ communities (e.g., worse air quality, less resource access); incentives & rebates are available, but many are unaware
- Resilience hubs, cooling centers
- Clarifying paths for working together and communicating potential opportunities for vulnerable communities to engage from where they stand
- Tree coverage—scant in many communities vulnerable to heat impacts
- EV access and access to charging for communities. How will low-income communities afford it?

- Redirect its budget to decarbonize all county department service through its Climate Action Plan first
- Impacts of small engines on landscape workers → education effort & support for those who use equipment to replace with electric (County has piloted electric landscape equipment)
- Focus more of its budget on climate solution strategies linked to public health indicators
- Elimination of natural gas in County buildings (everything within County's power to do)
- Smart growth that it directly controls. Maximum transit accessibility reduces GHG to workforce
- Setting high level standards, living wage and other things for infrastructure. It's beneficial for workforce development and reducing commute probabilities. Workforce locally cultivated. Enhances local tax revenue if high wages
- Better at reusing and recycling facilities. We can reverse engineer plastic
- We need to figure out outreach to vulnerable populations—use nontraditional communication, like for COVID vaccinations
- Build more public cooling centers to prepare for heatwave (and also smoky days from wildfires)
- Land use planning: renovation in industrial sites along BART tracks
- Consider sea level rise when there are new constructions near coastline
- Resilience hubs/cooling centers for homeless residents + people who are especially vulnerable during climate crises (making sure people have resilient and safe spaces)
- Better integrate climate into all services—e.g., all home visiting programs should identify heat and smoke sensitive people and connect them with LIWP, low-cost air filters etc. (low-income weatherization program)
- Incentivize landlords to make sure air quality within their buildings is good, etc.
- Educate homeowners on what they can do
- Improving online systems for permitting to save a trip (anything that can be done online and not in person)
- Improve access to county employees through phone, email, etc.

## Breakout 2: Action Brainstorm & Discussion

The second breakout session intended to capture participants' priorities, interests, concerns, and ideas related to specific sectors and potential GOCAP measures. Below are the **key themes** and **raw notes** from the six breakout rooms (green, efficient County facilities and landscapes, green economy and workforce, zero waste County operations, low-emissions County fleet and commutes, local leadership and resilient County services, and resilient, healthy community).

### *Green, efficient County facilities and landscapes*

**Context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Overall, participants **supported actions that involve planting trees and increasing green spaces**, and it was noted that tree planting is a great way to involve community members. Participants also **supported building decarbonization and retrofitting**.
- Participants noted that the **County should consider** funding opportunities, integration of grey water systems, and partnerships with the labor industry, water and flood control districts, and community colleges.
- The County could **leverage its facilities** to serve as models for education.

What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- Planting trees and micro forests, green roofs, rooftop gardens, increase resilience by decentralizing services to become community based; increase community education with county modeling of its own facilities and properties; partner with labor to hold demonstrations on solar installations, heat pump conversions, etc.
- Planting trees benefits everyone—aesthetically & spiritually uplifting
- When renovating home is best time to transition to clean electricity—solar panels, heat pumps, save money
- Roof space to reduce heat impacts
- Retrofitting needs to happen quickly

What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- Compendium of options for building to show/compare options—if place could come and see
- County is looking at low-carbon standard for building materials

- County roads—clean concrete
- Using County land for solar power generation
- Partnering with labor industry to show how County is doing it and offer rebates
- Micro forests—County can do on own property
- Leveraging County facilities to serve as model & educate
- County could serve as models (e.g., at facilities, signs, education)

What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Grey water reuse system should be integrated into new construction and solar panels as essential element
- All needs to happen quickly
- Need to get the County's story out (PR)
- Funding—pursue grants & provide grants to community
- Reframing the funding or policy debate through the GOCAP for public health & safety—look at other activities/departments through lens of climate (depoliticizes the activity, decarbonize departments as part of programming)

Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- Labor industry
- Flood control district
- Young people, community colleges (e.g., tree planting)
- NorCal Resilience Network
- NRCD
- Water district

Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan?

- Could mix with education
- Tree planting is great way to get community involved
- Time urgency is paramount

## *Green economy and workforce*

**Context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Overall, participants **supported the sample draft actions**, but noted that they seem **voluntary**.
- Participants noted that the **County should consider** packaging, recycling, and other sustainability standards, responsibility of companies and producers, and measurements of progress.
- **Suggested partners** included environmental and labor movements, libraries, and companies like TerraCycle.

What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- Really like first action. More available to borrow equipment
- People don't know they can repair things. Local community learn about this
- I like all of them. How can we get people on board and realize how important it is? If everyone pays attention, then we would be moving steadily
- I like that action B addresses increased partnership with green job training opportunities. Including a partnership with local schools or re-entry programs to address vulnerable populations. High schools, trade schools.

What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- They seem to be voluntary without requiring something. Training opportunities but also there are standards that the County should have
- Better recycling and County should have standards on packaging

### What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Having good measurement of the progress so we can adjust. Accountability. Based on these actions especially necessary
- Make the company selling the product responsible for that packaging. Less packaging
- Better recycling in all facilities.
- Policy sequence, supply chain, interconnected policies. Have facilities and infrastructure as locally as possible. Electrify something – working to expand the renewable energy capacity to supply electricity – want to make sure all sequences are local so not unintentionally raising GHGs or waste
- Keep in mind the partners and how their emissions will impact or not.
- Neighboring counties like Contra Costa have broad concept that investment with low carbon focus in underserved communities. That means expansion into underserved regions and sub regions within the County. Approximate housing and transportation
- Bring recycling facilities locally. Be careful about what is recycling and where citing it.
- Recycling must be last resort – need to ingrain this in young people
- Libraries aren't distributed equitably

### Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- People need other organizations and validators. Primary 2: environmental and labor movements; wide spectrum of people older and newer.
- Labor: Alameda Central Labor Council and Building Trades Council. Has focus on infrastructure workforce
- Libraries are not equitably distributed around the County so keep that in mind for the first sample action
- Lean on companies like TerraCycle
- Partner with neighboring counties (under ABAG/MTC Plan Bay Area context)

### Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan?

- Burden can't be on end consumer, so it has to be a circular economy eventually. But business and corporation should be responsible.

## *Zero waste County operations*

**Context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Participants **supported actions** around edible food recovery and repair/exchange activities and noted that **food safety** is a consideration.
- Participants **suggested** donating **recovered food** to people who need it and making **waste characterization data transparent**.
- Participants emphasized the need for **transparency** from the County so that residents can understand progress on climate goals throughout implementation, rather than at the end of a CAP period.

### What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- Like the actions about edible food recovery—make sure it's safe
- Sustainable packaging—keep packaging out of the trash
- Fix-it resources to repair items. Items in the bulky bin seem like they can be fixed
- ++ to item exchange, and actually the county could TAKE IN assets and hold/repair, which helps the used furniture economy

### What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- Address manufacturing and construction/demolition waste
- Make waste characterization data transparent
- Would be nice to know if when there is a surplus of items from big generators (ex. furniture)
- Recovering food: instead of composting or throwing out food, donate to people who can benefit from it

### What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Data-driven decisions and data collection
- End-of-life management of bulky items—reuse options may be limited for some old or damaged items (there's a group in Fremont that deals with that—repurposes old components into new computer)
- Make sure that waste reduction is low effort for residents, so they are feasible and supported
- Education about waste sorting varies. Educate especially about reuse
- Challenge: attachment to a specific surplus stream and then vested interest in the creation of that surplus
- Learn from other states and other countries. Ex. Sweden waste-to-energy
- Data collection about clothing waste—training for makers/designers about waste
- Education at consumer level—information about how recyclable items are. Encourage manufacturers and producers to stop making nonrecyclable items
- Cotton and natural fibers—more sustainable at end of life
- Impacts are complicated. Cotton is water-intensive and not sustainable in certain areas

### Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- Jay Nath: head of innovation in SF
- A challenge is misaligned approaches. County can make sure residents hear a consistent message. Pick 3 big ideas
- Fremont group that works with electronics at end of life

### Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan? (Questions answered at end of this document)

- Transparency. How can residents in the County know that we're on track not only at the end of the CAP period, but throughout?
- Use the right metrics to accurately capture progress. It is easy to pat ourselves on the back for "progress"
- The state of Maine is holding producers responsible—could the County support producer responsibility?
- Is food safety a concern?
- Scope 3 GHGs from food? The County won't track these emissions
- Who is evaluating what each solution should be? Is it better to have plastic container or paper? Make sure data guides decisions
- Australia has a set time each year to exchange items curbside. Could the County or hauler facilitate this?
- How does the County know what quantities and amounts of items need to be recycled? How will the County monitor that?

## *Low-emissions County fleet and commutes*

**Key context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Participants discussed **challenges** with low-emissions employee commutes and how the County could support employees with telecommuting and other incentives and disincentives.
- Participants encouraged **adding actions** related to cycling and improved bike infrastructure.
- Participants believe there is a **need for more education** about the urgency of climate change at the County level and in the general public.

### What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- Lower GHG emissions, which impact everyone
- County can be a leader/encourage other people (biking, public transit, etc.)

### What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- Flexible use vehicle management/availability for staff
- Cycling should be added
- Should have a fleet of bicycles like Google
- Need more bicycling infrastructure

- Currently no target date for 100% electric
- Flexible work from home policy/telecommuting
- Provide equipment/reimbursements for WFH set up
- Rooftop solar on all County infrastructure/buildings to charge vehicles in sustainable way
- Parking should be addressed in separate actions from public transit (book recommendation: the high cost of free parking)
- Provide more information, charging stations at schools, need to educate population in general

#### What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Problem with carpooling/transit: people worry about kids/getting home for emergencies—County should have cars available for employees so if they commute by bus/bike, they have access to get home; reimburse for Uber/Lyft in emergencies
- Behavior change—providing incentives & disincentives (social incentives too—Gamify etc.)
- There will be resistance to taking vehicles out of service to replace with electric
- Extensive virtual working could close some facilities
- New hires could have expectation/assumption of WFH
- People don't feel safe biking

#### Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- All the cities
- Media to help pick up the pace with conversation around climate
- PG&E and BAAQMD
- EV producers
- Universities and researchers (low carbon concrete) and businesses (Coolclimate.org is one such example out of UC Berkeley)
- Businesses—get sponsorship/support because all will benefit
- Sacramento—money needs to come from Sac (for more charging stations, etc.); also federal government
- Building Trades Unions—get them involved with transitioning to electric
- More separate bikeways to help people feel safe biking
- Educate! parents, high school kids, younger kids. Some can be done in school (EV charging at schools, etc.)
- We can support these actions by understanding who decision makers are and opening communication channels/decision making processes

#### Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan? (Questions answered at end of this document)

- Has anyone done a survey for what work needs to be done on site (vs. WFH)?
- Sense of urgency—County needs to educate themselves on this—seems like County doesn't feel the urgency
- More education within County—especially high-level people
- Educating population in general—to get buy-in and support
- Why are there still plastic water bottles at County events?
- We need to overcome the immense discounting of the future

### *Local leadership and resilient County services*

**Key context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Participants **suggested** supporting and leveraging efforts of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, doing more extensive canopy cover studies and projects to increase carbon sequestration, and providing incentives for emissions reductions at home.
- Participants expressed a desire to learn more about how the County is **establishing partnerships** for key services for **vulnerable communities**.

What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- Ability to direct employees to resources and knowledge, especially in vulnerable communities; need vulnerability and resource mapping

What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- Lack of leadership; climate impacts are not addressed; need a coordinated effort (e.g., SLR, wildfire)
- Stormwater detention tanks under parking lots, and stormwater detaining street tree pits, coupled with business and resident-oriented training for local street and grounds tree stewardship
- Should be a groundwater plan for the county to deal with increased flooding and need for water storage
- Missing: objectives to lower emission for county. need to look at this holistically. need to educate county residents.
- Need incentives to promote emissions reductions at home (electrification, etc.)
- I ask that consideration be made on socioeconomics and low-income populations being most affected in many cases, foremost. In relation to climate change
- More extensive canopy cover studies and action projects to increase carbon sequestration

What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Need more clarification on what is meant by "clients" in the third draft action. Need more resources to educate people on how to deal with climate impacts

Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- Groundwater Sustainability Plan—support and leverage efforts. They are also very aware of, conduct studies on, and are working on solutions for anticipated impacts of sea level rise on our groundwater resources
- However, Alameda Co water district doesn't serve the whole county; services ACWD serves Fremont, Newark, and Union City

Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan? (Questions answered at end of this document)

- How is the county establishing partnerships for key services for vulnerable communities?
- Need to think about resilience at a neighborhood level; at the block level; and back into resilience steps from there
- Incorporate actions from county hazard mitigation plan?
- Need leadership training; resilience communities
- Scenario: built environment burns, floods falls in earthquakes. how do we manage on yard/farm/garden food safety, how do we manage against vertebrate pest infestation? (When water rises, so do soil dwelling gophers, ground squirrels, built environment rats/mice, etc.?)
- General concern from group: community action not addressed; are they addressed elsewhere?
- There are currently efforts at county board to legislate allowance to install solar on East County Ag Lands. Is that a good idea?
- Encourage local produced green energy—may need to sacrifice open ag land

## *Resilient, healthy community*

**Key context** and **sample draft actions** can be viewed [at this link](#). Key themes from the discussion are listed below:

- Overall, participants liked the emphasis of the sample draft actions on **vulnerable communities**.
- **Considerations** brought forward by the group included the social and environmental impacts of police patrolling, mitigation and adaptation in homes and other buildings, and addressing climate change drivers like consumption.
- Participants noted that climate is one issue, but many people have **other, more immediate concerns** for their health and wellbeing.
- **The group suggested partnering with community-based organizations.**

What do you like most about these actions? How would they benefit you? How might they benefit more vulnerable populations in the county?

- The last three sample draft actions seem more specific and overall like the emphasis on vulnerable communities

What do you like least about these actions? What are other ways to accomplish their aim?

- The first and third actions are less clear; what's the outcome/action taken?
- None of these seem to challenge or change any of the things that are driving climate change; can we think about the broader drivers of climate change (consumption, cultural shifts)?
- Put more resources into businesses trying to cut emissions
- Resources/rebates for homeowners for energy efficiency (educational programs)
- Police patrolling is emissions intensive and deteriorates the resilience and health of community
- For action "D" that could go for anything, not just for SLR—think about mitigation + resilient adaptation in people's homes and other buildings
- Investing in more green spaces, helps with lots of these issues and helps with healthier communities
- 580 cuts through neighborhoods and separates people. So rethinking the ways we redirect traffic (Pedestrian and biking, connecting communities)
- Not being afraid to start with the vision of "healthy resilient community" and then identifying pathways that intersect with those

What potential challenges or considerations should we take into account?

- Challenge, e.g., climate deniers. But we also have cultural shifts (consumerism and consumption) that are already an important thing to do
- Climate focus tries to convince people it's the major concern, but for other people they have more immediate concerns to their health and well-being. Climate is ONE issue, there are many issues

Is there anyone we should partner with to carry out these actions? How could you support these actions?

- Need to partner with community members, community-based organizations that work with most vulnerable (for these specific resilience actions especially)
- Keep working with StopWaste

Other notes, questions, or concerns? Is there anything else you'd like to ask or tell the County unrelated to this climate action plan?

- Need to be able to hold corporations accountable
- There are lots of things related to a resilient healthy community that aren't always centered on climate
- Investments that are made, purchasing decisions that are made, financial resources need to go to companies who are making efforts to reduce contributions
- Co-benefits to climate change planning, but meet people where they are at and talk about what issues matter to the community
- Could add criteria for county purchasing for green businesses

## Zoom Chat Q&A

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Throughout the workshop, attendees were encouraged to submit their questions into the Q&A box on the Zoom platform. County staff provided verbal answers to some questions during designated Q&A sessions. Some questions asked in the chat have been edited for clarity and grammar.

- **Could you remind us what the survey was about?**  
*The community survey for the county's Climate Action Plan for Government Services & Operations was conducted in September 2021. It provided an opportunity for people who live and/or work in Alameda County to share about their own priorities, how climate change is affecting them today, their perspectives on reducing the carbon footprint of county government operations and services, and how county services, such as social and health services, can best support residents in the face of our changing climate. A report summarizing the survey results is available at <https://www.acsustain.org/what/climate/22plan.htm>.*
- **Did the County actually manage and monitor its previous climate action Ops plan goals and progress, or did it look at its "success" mostly at the end of plan period? Note: the County seems to have not actively resourced management of its goals and progress on the previous Community Climate Action Plan... Instead, the County mostly looked at progress at the end of the climate plan.**  
*Yes, for the 2010 Climate Action Plan for Government Services and Operations, we conducted regular greenhouse gas emissions inventories to determine the overall impact of climate action on the county's operations. We also regularly tracked progress and completion of the climate action measures listed in the plan to assess how implementation was proceeding. It may be useful to note that the Government Services and Operations Plan we're discussing now is different from the Community Climate Action Plan for the unincorporated county. For information on that plan, please visit <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/sustainability/index.htm>.*
- **Why is the target only 80% by 2050? The numbers I've been hearing that we need to hit, overall in the US, are 50% by 2030 and net zero by 2050. How does the county goal square with that? Are we expecting deeper cuts from other jurisdictions to make up for the gap?**  
*The 80% emissions reduction goal was adopted by the Board of Supervisors for the 2010-2020 Plan. The County is reviewing this goal and we appreciate your feedback. We are considering a more ambitious goal in line with the State of California's emission reduction goals.*
- **Is there a plan for setting up monitoring stations for air quality in north Bay areas?**  
*Air quality monitoring in the Bay Area is a function performed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Air quality data and forecasts for the region can be viewed here: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/about-air-quality/current-air-quality>.*
- **What are you doing to electrify public transportation?**  
*The County does not manage public transportation, which is under the purview of the local transit agencies. To assist electrification of personal vehicles, all of our [charging stations](#) are open to the public, except those that are exclusive to our carpool participants.*
- **When will the County insist on all electric new buildings?**  
*We understand the importance of decarbonizing our buildings to meet our climate goals. While the County does not have a firm date for requiring all-electric new buildings, we do encourage electrification for our upcoming projects.*
- **What is the County's current/emergent standards for creation of green jobs (or greened/adapted existent jobs/professions) that are equitable and enduring middle-class pathways?**  
*The County recognizes the importance of equitable, family-supporting jobs in the green economy. For example, the Alameda County Workforce Development Board is a partner in a High-Road Training Partnership project convened by Rising Sun Center for Opportunity to establish and incentivize industry labor practices and develop clear, accessible training pathways to building decarbonization jobs, particularly for entry-level and disadvantaged workers. We are exploring additional opportunities to encourage equitable, sustainable and family-supporting jobs through the GOCAP and welcome your input.*

- **It seems like the categories in last poll were over simplified. At what point will County integrate environmental sustainability efforts completely with workforce development and better engagement around open space/water/canopy cover & built env management?**  
*We agree that these efforts are linked and complementary. The GOCAP will reflect coordination of sustainability and workforce efforts through its Green Economy & Recovery section. The County's Community Climate Action Plan for the unincorporated county will reflect sustainability aims for open space, canopy cover, and land use.*
  
- **What is the county doing to educate the public as to the causes, consequences of the Climate Crisis and actions needed to address it?**  
*This workshop was one small component of a broader effort to educate the public about climate change and climate action. We encourage you to continue to participate in the community engagement efforts around this Plan, and you can find more information about those here: <https://www.acsustain.org/what/climate/22plan.htm>. The County also issues protective action guidance and alert messages regarding the impacts of climate change when they occur, such as heatwaves, wildfire risk, wildfire smoke, and power shutoffs. To receive these communications, sign up for AC Alert, the County's alert system, at [www.acalert.org](http://www.acalert.org). We welcome your suggestions for other ways that the County can help increase awareness of climate impacts and the need for climate action. It is worth noting that much of the work with community members around climate change – including education and guidance for actions – happens at the city level, or within the unincorporated community. If you live in the unincorporated county, you can find out more about the Community Climate Action Plan here: <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/sustainability/index.htm>.*
  
- **Where is the focus on dealing with climate change, such as dealing with sea level rise? That is a county/regional issue to deal with, not on a city basis.**  
*The County's flood control function leads assessment and project implementation for sea level rise adaptation in our county. Because sea level rise, as you point out, cannot be addressed by any jurisdiction alone, the County also participates in The Bay Area Climate Adaptation Network ([BayCAN](#)), the [BayAdapt](#) Regional Strategy for a Rising Bay, Bay Area Flood Protection Agencies Association ([BAFPAA](#)) – and initiated the San Francisco Bay Regional Coastal Hazards Adaptation Resiliency Group ([CHARG](#)) to coordinate efforts.*
  
- **Why are there so few folks on this call? What was outreach strategies, and how much outreach was done through others, county board newsletters, city councils, etc.?**  
*We also wish more of the nearly 100 people who signed up had been able to join, and will look for ways to send additional reminders for the next workshop. Broadly speaking, for the GOCAP, we are structuring multiple opportunities for the community to engage – including a survey, focus groups, this workshop, a measure review platform, and a second future workshop– to reach a broad audience. We promoted these efforts through existing County channels, social media, and community partners and networks, and will continue to do so. We welcome your suggestions at <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/climate/22plan.htm> for specific ways to expand our outreach.*
  
- **What kind of encouragement will be given to installing solar and replacing gas appliances? And what about Highway 80 and the railroad tracks? Where I live, they run right next to the bay.**  
*Home and commercial energy upgrades are beyond the scope of the GOCAP and normally under the jurisdiction of individual cities within the County. We will share this strategy with the relevant staff at the city level. For our own facilities, Alameda County has recognized by the EPA several times as a green power producer and currently generates about 16% of our electricity from onsite renewable sources, as well as using carbon free electricity from East Bay Community Energy for the remainder of our electricity. We will continue to develop new solar and storage projects for our own facilities as well as all-electric new buildings, when feasible.*
  
- **Are there some specific ways that the county is looking to work with climate organization chapters on the plan sections/measures?**  
*We would like to work with climate organization chapters throughout our process. Additional opportunities to engage with the GOCAP include a measure review platform in the spring and a second workshop. We hope you will sign up about these opportunities as described at <https://www.acsustain.org/what/climate/22plan.htm> and share information about them with your members. In addition, your members can contact us as described on <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/climate/22plan.htm> to provide their input.*

- **Can the County work with AC Transit to provide more frequent and reliable local bus service? And could the county promote use of buses - getting people OUT OF THEIR CARS?**  
*We assist and support AC Transit, but they are an independent transit agency that is charged with making operations and scheduling decisions about their services. Alameda County operates several shuttles to County facilities which are open to the public: <https://gsa.acgov.org/local-services/take-a-free-shuttle/>.*
- **What issues does the county think will be the greatest problems over the next 10 years?**  
*The County's Vision 2026 was crafted in 2016 to answer exactly this question, and to identify how the County will work to address our community's greatest challenges. We encourage you to check out Vision 2026 at <https://vision2026.acgov.org/>.*

## Breakout Groups Q&A

Workshop attendees shared questions during their breakout group discussions. County staff provided verbal answers to some questions and are providing written answers to all questions.

- **Are our goals rigorous enough given the trends & challenges we see/project?**  
*See question above about 2050 target.*
- **Has the County set science-based targets?**  
*We are reviewing the targets set in the previous plan to develop a more ambitious target in line with climate scientists' recommendations to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.*
- **Is purchasing/supply chain included in the GHG emissions inventory/pie chart?**  
*We have conducted a supply chain sustainability analysis that identifies GHG emissions sources by product category to help prioritize our efforts: <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/purchasing/report.htm>. This analysis determined that GHG emissions in our supply chain are four times larger than emissions from our government operations, and over 75% of those emissions come from two sectors, professional services and construction. We are addressing these emissions sources, as well as other findings from the report, in the development of the GOCAP.*
- **Are there bikes in the fleet?**  
*The County does have bikes that employees can check out for business travel.*
- **Is the County doing anything with buses?**  
*See question above about public transportation.*
- **What ARE the impacts on vulnerable communities?**  
*Climate vulnerable communities are any communities or groups that face disproportionate impacts of climate change due to their exposure to hazardous climate events, including heatwaves, flooding, wildfires, smoky air, power shutoff and increased storms. In addition, underlying social, economic, and physical factors may limit the ability of individuals, households or communities to successfully respond, adapt, and recover from these events. A recent EPA report reviews some of the specific impacts: <https://www.epa.gov/cira/social-vulnerability-report>. See also [http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20180313-Building\\_a\\_Resilient\\_CA.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20180313-Building_a_Resilient_CA.pdf) for discussion of how state agencies are planning for a resilient California and considering climate vulnerable populations.*
- **Densification plans—how does this impact transit? Is there adjacent work to address issues (noise, congestion, traffic accidents)?**  
*Land use decisions and transit operations are important GHG emission reduction and climate resilience strategies, yet beyond the purview of the GOCAP, which focuses on government services and operations. We are considering ways to reduce carbon emissions associated with employee commutes and increase equitable access to county services, including proximity of county facilities to transit. If you would like more information about transportation and land use in the county's unincorporated communities, please see: <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/>.*

- **Could the County use the election cycle to talk about services that aren't transparent—like water management? How to weigh in as community members?**  
*Many County processes present a great opportunity to share what the County does and get input from the public. The GOCAP is one such opportunity, and we appreciate your weighing in at the workshop. If you have questions about specific county services, or additional input, we encourage you to contact us as described at <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/climate/22plan.htm>.*
  
- **How is the County managing climate goals and targets for facilities that it owns and manages such as Flood Control facilities, roadways, bridges? Is this covered by this planning or the Community Action Plan to be updated?**  
*As part of the process to develop the GOCAP, we are setting goals and targets for facilities and infrastructure owned and operated by County departments with input from the appropriate department and agency. We welcome your input and ideas for setting climate goals and targets. For more information on the Community Climate Action Plan for the unincorporated county, please see <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/sustainability/index.htm>.*
  
- **I'd like to know if and how the health department is engaged, especially in helping build climate resilience to reduce health impacts in vulnerable communities. And is the county hospital working to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions?**  
*The county's Health Care Services Agency prioritizes equity and health access in all of its work, including work on climate resilience. The Health Care Services Agency plays a key role in climate and health projects and is a key partner in GOCAP development. Projects have included development of protective actions guidance and materials for smoke and heat; heat resilience education; development of a smoke communications protocol; and coordination of local partners to support residents medically dependent on powered equipment during power shutoffs. Highland Hospital was recognized by the US Green Building Council in 2016 for eco-friendly building renovations: <http://www.alamedahealthsystem.org/668m-highland-hospital-renovation-earns-eco-friendly-certification/>.*
  
- **Transparency. How can residents in the County know that we're on track not only at the end of the CAP period, but throughout?**  
*We agree that tracking our progress throughout implementation and sharing our progress with the public is important. We are still determining what our internal tracking process will look like and are bringing the question of how to share our progress with the public to our internal stakeholders for discussion.*
  
- **The state of Maine is holding producers responsible—could the County support producer responsibility?**  
*Producer responsibility is something we are exploring as we continue to refine measures. We have a strong sustainable purchasing program that focuses on product efficiency, recycled content, low-toxicity items and use of eco labels. The County's 2021-22 Legislative Platform includes support for transition to a circular economy. We look to build upon this work. Thank you for your suggestion to look into Maine's program.*
  
- **Is food safety a concern?**  
*As part of California State Law SB 1383, businesses with leftover food (such as restaurants) will be required to recover edible food for human consumption instead of sending it to the landfill. Food recovery organizations will be key in this process and will collect the food from businesses using established food safety processes for transportation, storage, and serving.*
  
- **Scope 3 GHGs from food?**  
*We measure these emissions in our supply chain inventory at the category level (food service). Check out our website (<https://www.acgov.org/sustain>) to find out more about the supply chain inventory.*
  
- **Australia has a set time each year to exchange items curbside. Could the County or hauler facilitate this?**  
*Curbside activities are beyond the scope of the GOCAP and normally under the jurisdiction of individual cities within the County and their respective waste haulers. We will share this strategy with the relevant staff at the city level.*

- **How does the County know what quantities and amounts of items need to be recycled? How will the County monitor that?**  
*County facilities have had recycling and composting programs in place for a number of years. We do audits to evaluate how the recycling and composting services are used and then make changes to the services as needed. We regularly conduct outreach to County employees to ensure the programs are used correctly.*
- **Has anyone done a survey for what work needs to be done on site (vs. WFH)?**  
*County employees regularly give input on their commutes and telework, and their input is being considered to inform the GOCAP.*
- **Why are there still plastic water bottles at County events?**  
*As community members, your support will help remind event planners to reduce waste. When you attend a County-sponsored event, you are welcome to ask the organizer what waste reduction efforts are in place and encourage them to implement additional waste reduction efforts in future meetings. We have an award-winning internal green events program which recommends alternatives, and County event organizers can refer to <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/greenworkplace/wellness.htm> for more information.*
- **How is the county establishing partnerships for key services for vulnerable communities?**  
*We agree that partnerships are very important for climate resilience, and GOCAP projects related to community resilience will establish relevant partnerships at the project level. As for internal partnerships, through the GOCAP process, agencies from diverse roles have joined to co-develop and implement changes informed by the GOCAP working principle of prioritizing the health, well-being, and voices of communities affected most by climate impacts.*
- **Incorporate actions from county hazard mitigation plan?**  
*Yes, we are considering how to best integrate the Recommended Mitigation Actions outlined in the [2021 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) into the GOCAP.*
- **Scenario: built environment burns, floods falls in earthquakes. how do we manage on yard/farm/garden food safety, how do we manage against vertebrate pest infestation? (When water rises, so do soil dwelling gophers, ground squirrels, built environment rats/mice, etc.?)**  
*Thank you for highlighting these potential impacts of climate-related events. We will share your concern with our facilities and landscape staff and our colleagues at the Community Development Agency who develop and implement the Community Climate Action Plan (<https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/sustainability/index.htm>).*
- **General concern from group: community action not addressed; are they addressed elsewhere?**  
*Yes, actions by community members are very important to achieve sustainability and climate resilience. These are often covered in Climate Action Plans at the city level. If you live in the unincorporated county, these actions will be addressed in the Community Climate Action Plan, which will be updated soon. You can find more information on that plan here: <https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/sustainability/index.htm>.*
- **There are currently efforts at county board to legislate allowance to install solar on East County Ag Lands. Is that a good idea?**  
*This effort is beyond the scope of the GOCAP. We will let our colleagues in the Alameda County Community Development Agency know that this question was raised in the workshop.*
- **What is the County doing about impacts of small engines on landscape workers? Have you done education and outreach, and provided support for those who use equipment to replace with electric. Has County done this? Have piloted electric landscape equipment?**  
*The County is currently using electric-powered leaf blowers and string trimmers in its own landscape maintenance program. Promoting or requiring use of electric/battery- powered small engine landscape equipment by private entities is beyond the scope of the GOCAP, and would be under the jurisdiction of the appropriate city (or the Community Climate Action Plan for unincorporated communities) where that activity is taking place.*