

**Assembly Bill 617 – Community Air Protection Program  
Consultation Group Meeting  
February 26, 2020**

**FLIP CHART NOTES: Consultation Group and Public Discussion**

**Summary of UC Davis AB 617 Community Reflection and Learning Convening**

Reference: [Presentation on AB 617 Evaluation Study: Preliminary Findings](#)

- Title VI and California Government Code Section 11135 are important regarding civil rights and discrimination
- The guidance on co-leadership versus district-led processes is confusing
- Facilitation needs to be utilized for CSC processes
- CSC members need to engage in after-meeting conversations to learn from each other
- A Resource/model: Comité Civico del Valle guidebook for developing an air monitoring network
- Presentation Slide #43: The first quote is important. Regarding the second quote, in San Joaquin Valley, industry started to get it
- Community/industry communication needs air district support. Now we need to set the bar higher
- Presentation Slide #29: How can you do a CERP without monitoring data?
  - Regional data is insufficient. We need local data
  - The tension is, do we wait for the data, or demand action now?
  - Make immediate reductions and use CAMP to verify results
  - In Los Angeles, hexavalent chromium came up – we otherwise wouldn't have known about it
- For the final UC Davis report, break survey results into geography, sector, etc.
- How to evaluate air quality increases, and whether we are achieving them with inclusivity?
  - Build in the analysis – it takes time
- We need clarity on goals regarding admissions reductions, time, populations. How are metrics weighted?
- There is differing capacity among the air districts on communication and engagement – how can capacity be built?
  - It includes financial capacity, plus capacity regarding people, culture, disadvantaged communities, race, and issues
- The report needs to incorporate languages and youth
- It will be important to clarify CARB's authority
- How has the Brown Act been an issue for some communities? It is not in the Blueprint.
  - For Sacramento Metro, district counsel recommended it
  - In Coachella, the CSC wanted to use the Brown Act. There may be lots of problems with it, but the community decides
- There needs to be education on community engagement – how it works, for air districts and business. It's very important to build residents/business relations and trust over time
- Document how to do it
- Maybe we need to give business incentives to engage? All are not ready
- In the fall, there was a presentation on the West Oakland AB 617 at the national American Public Health Association. Two presidential candidates have asked about it

- We need to get along in order to have success
- How to move on changing relations? Is it about empowerment through co-leading? I would recommend that as a model
- CARB needs to be a timely arbitrator of CSC legal/scope questions. Example: an air district said that mobile emissions were not included in 617
- Some CARB divisions are not with the program. Example: the Monitoring and Laboratory Division. That needs to change. They need to look at how CARB can be involved
- Support for the Consultation Group serving in a formal advisory capacity
- The survey shows high numbers of “meh” and unsatisfactory responses – that points to frustration with the lack of movement, and is not a strong endorsement
- CAPCOA has no oversight, but can facilitate communication, lessons learned, and advocate for 617 funding
- SJVAPCD is interested in the co-lead model – we have and continue to gain capacity in community engagement
- AB 617 showed up conflicts that also involve cities, land-use issues – how to add depth to those discussions?
- San Joaquin Valley is replicating approaches to other communities
- Funding and time constraints are challenges
- At SCAQMD, disadvantaged community issues were long known – there was a desire for speed
- Each community has unique dynamics
- We could expect that Year 1 would be more challenging
- The world is watching AB 617
- How is CARB going to use the UC Davis work?
- The co-leadership model works
- The report misses air district technical 617 implementation, the foundation of BAQMD’s engagement approach
- We disagree regarding CARB’s role in facilitating with CSC’s
- The report needs to drill down on needs, and where there is success, so that new communities can leapfrog beyond Year 1 issues
- How to reflect the broader voice rather than a piecemeal voice?
  - We need more resources
  - Jesse has South Coast examples
- Strong governance is key for disadvantaged communities
- Follow up on technology best practices
- Include the business community in asking for AB 617 funding

### Public Comment

- At San Bernardino CSC, there’s been the issue of academic privilege and learning styles – some people absorb information through hearing it, rather than reading it
- “Engagement” versus community ownership – there needs to be the sharing of power
- There is a problem with tokenism – taking “feedback,” etc.
- Consider who is not at the table. The community is the table. The goal of AB 617 is to lift the voice of those most impacted
- We need both emissions reductions and monitoring – it is a matter of urgency
- The Brown Act can be used to subvert, to inhibit public participation. We need the full participation paradigm

- CARB and AQMD should host a skills share for new communities
- CSC's are not equal regarding researcher and technological support
- How is CARB handling violations of the Blueprint now? It took a long time to get a response
- Important: there was an incident where a CSC member was removed – what is the authority around that?
- Systemic racism is the reason for AB 617
- There has been a lack of youth understanding and inclusion. The content is very hard to understand
  - Where are young people invited, represented?
- How can faith communities have greater representation?
- Slide #31: Land-use is an important implementation tool for increasing air quality. Involve the California chapter of the American Planning Association. There needs to be an AB 617-specific local plan.
- CARB needs to increase air district capacity to promote environmental justice. I hope we can make progress.

### **Sharing of Best Practices and Eliminating Disparities; Updating the Blueprint**

Reference: [Best Practices List](#)

- There needs to be a Blueprint update this year
- It needs to be a community process like the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, with meetings around the state
- Clarify CARB authority
- Consider the BAAQMD's CSC governance model
  - The plan, implementation, and structure
- Include compensation for community participation
- Incorporate guidance regarding outreach and advocacy
- A SIP (State Implementation Plan)-like design doesn't work. The plan needs to be understood by the community
- Incorporate tools such as the Freight Handbook
- 2020 OPR environmental justice best practices
- Adapt to different environments (deserts, etc.)
- Original idea was that it was to be community done. But there is often not the community capacity to do that
- Timelines issue needs to be addressed
- In Imperial, the community owns the monitoring. Have we lost that vision?
- What are the requirements for education?
- In Richmond, BAAQMD conducted four-month technical education for the CSC, including an Air District summit on 617, air quality, health factors/impacts
- Funds allocation – there is no CSC role
- Suggest the CSC decides on experts to come in
- There needs to be a minimum of 1-2 weeks to review documents before meetings, and the districts need to think creatively about finding ways for CSC review time
- How can the CSCs save resources? We could hold a joint Zoom call to share best practices
- Translation needs to be understandable

- A model: BAAQMD's information on source apportion (percentage contributions to air pollution)
- Resources for all:
  - SCAQMD AQ-SPEC (<http://www.aqmd.gov/aq-spec>) - it is the world model on monitoring
  - AQVIEW (<https://aqview.arb.ca.gov/>) – it's incredible
  - Bay Area Community Resource Center
  - Kevin Hamilton's business/community relations development model
- Turn the Best Practices list into complete sentences so it is understandable
- Staff resources need to be built in. There needs to be equity among the different CSCs to do work. Some need more support and should be able to get it
- Don't burden communities by requiring them to develop deep technical knowledge. The air districts need to develop bridge communication. Questions to ask in developing materials:
  - So what does it mean?
  - Why should we care?
- We need to know what CAPCOA's authority is
- Consider how to engage engineers
- Youth engagement is needed
- Brown Act: it needs to be a community decision
- Make toolkits available
- How to engage local business/industry?
  - How associations are involved in CSCs if there is no local business connection
- Information share: impact zones – a tool for all CSCs
- CSCs select experts to support them
- Imperial: there was clear decision-making, stipends; the ICAPD/Comité switch chairing meetings, serve as ex officio members
- Business: the CSC needs to only involve those within the 617 corridor
- Funding needs to be dealt with at the CSC
- The binder needs to be constantly updated
- We need to be clear on the limits of sensors, that expensive regulatory equipment is needed
- Plans need to follow the 14 elements/protocols
- Los Angeles: how to do real democracy? Importance of lay science (experts on tap, not on top)
- Transparency around funding for environmental justice – it needs to be program, not PR
- Hold a special event on how to present information, how people learn
- Toxins were missed: dioxins, furans were not monitored, and have impacts
- Ensure there is food variety
- San Joaquin Valley: translation was good, and videotaping meetings worked well
- Under the "ladder of social engagement," the air districts need to ensure that community participation is above the level of tokenism [Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation]  
Stipends for residents
- Tours are crucial
- Acknowledging affiliations is crucial
- Hold a Blueprint training and ensure understanding so communities know their power
- An emissions inventory should be focused on the impact area, not the jurisdiction
- Co-creation of agendas is extremely important
- For each community, what does success look like? There needs to be a clear view
- Look at West Oakland goals as a best practice

- Success requires the involvement of the city, port, county transportation, county health officers – the latter two were very important
- To generate trust, act your talk
- How will the process address future emissions?
- There is no going back, once that community experiences 617 engagement – the air district has to shift its engagement, and adopt the 617 approach in all areas as a best practice
- Blueprint – apply lessons learned more broadly
- Define an objective enough to identify if there is success, and ensure it reflects the community. Shafter example: included specifics on homes and vehicles
- Blueprint: highlight best practice models, but allow flexibility
- SJVAPCD supports stipends for CSC community participants
- Strengthen noticing and other logistical pieces
- Translation of documents is a challenge. There is an opportunity to centralize using the best translation services
- Pesticides can also be an issue, even in urban areas. In Los Angeles, the Port used methyl bromide, and it was found in the air - there were violations
- Container storage sites, abandoned oil wells and tanks leak VOCs
- Subject matter experts include the community. Cross-train experts from the community and technical areas – help them translate for each other
- Incorporate a stipend for community organizations as well that have stepped up to coordinate
- Clarify roles in CERP implementation
- Suggest that a CSC choose food options at the beginning of a process
- Monitoring: regarding last night's Marathon oil refinery fire, it took six hours before I received an alert, but I received a notice about a chemical release 20 minutes before the fire from a newly installed monitoring system
- We experienced a false report of a benzene release that ended up being an equipment validation issue
- In partner processes, the co-lead organizations get a share of the funding

#### **Public Comment**

- Is there an emissions inventory tool designed for AB 617 to serve all communities? That has truly shared, co-produced data?
- Is there a screen for more impacted areas?
- How can AB 617 cover more communities?
- Incorporate groundtruthing and community studies
- What facilities and technology can speed achievement of zero emissions of highly toxic substances close to people? We miss toxins in monitoring
- There needs to be a structured process for the legacy toxics piece
- It's important to share best practices to unselected communities, and offer cross-learning opportunities – the 617 program excludes communities
- Residents on CSCs do not have enough time to review materials – this is a critical issue
- The process needs to identify/track/incorporate community priorities
- Richmond offers childcare for CSC members
- Richmond's approach to food has been a best practice
- Make sure that the community is part of developing the charter, rulemaking, and process

- Using video to record meetings allows people to hear everything, and helps to support different learning styles
- Community Summits need to result in a digestible report-out to the community. Share it with the press and document events. Hold it every six months so we can tell our own stories
- Rushed public comment is not equity
- As we reduce emissions, development is going to occur that will increase emissions. We need a moratorium - basta

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