

**State of California  
Air Resources Board**

**Executive Order # E-24-002**

**Assembly Bill 617 Community Air Protection Program -  
Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo Community Emissions  
Reduction Program (Path to Clean Air) Approval**

Whereas, California's statewide and regional air quality programs have led to significant emissions reductions and public health improvements;

Whereas, communities affected by multiple stationary, area, and mobile sources of air pollution continue to experience disproportionate environmental and health impact inequities from air pollution;

Whereas, historic local land use decisions have created disproportionate air pollution exposure impacts and the proximity of emissions sources to nearby sensitive receptors like schools, homes, and daycare centers exacerbate the cumulative exposure burden in many impacted communities;

Whereas, the high cumulative exposure burdens in these communities are a public health concern, contributing to health conditions such as cardiorespiratory disease, increased cancer risk, and an increased risk of premature death;

Whereas, in recognition that expedited emission reduction of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants in cumulative exposure burdened communities is critical, CARB implements the Community Air Protection Program (Program) to address air quality disparities at the neighborhood level in these communities pursuant to statutes first enacted by Assembly Bill (AB) 617 (C. Garcia, Statutes of 2017, Chapter 136);

Whereas, consistent with Health & Saf. Code § 44391.2, following engagement with stakeholders through robust public processes, CARB in October 2018 adopted its first statewide strategy,<sup>1</sup> and in October 2023 adopted its first five-year update to the statewide strategy to set guidance for overall Program requirements, this update is known as the *Community Air Protection Blueprint 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0)*, which describes criteria for the development of community emissions reduction programs and community air monitoring plans by air districts, informational and incentive resources for communities, and new pathways to support more communities;

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<sup>1</sup> [Community Air Protection Blueprint: For Selecting Communities, Preparing Community Emissions Reduction Programs, Identifying Statewide Strategies, and Conducting Community Air Monitoring \(Blueprint\)](#).

Whereas, consistent with Health & Saf. Code § 44391.2, CARB has annually considered, if appropriate, selection of communities with high cumulative exposure burdens for the deployment of community air monitoring systems and/or the development of community emissions reduction programs, which must be consistent with statute and the statewide strategy;

Whereas, Health and Saf. Code § 44391.2 requires air districts with selected communities to develop community emissions reduction programs to adopt, that are then reviewed by CARB for approval, rejection, or initiation of a public process to achieve an approvable program;

Whereas, in October 2023, CARB adopted Resolution 23-22 approving *Blueprint 2.0* and delegating authority to the Executive Officer to review community emissions reduction programs consistent with statute and *Blueprint 2.0*;

Whereas, CARB selected the Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo Community to develop a community air monitoring plan in 2018 and a community emissions reduction program in 2020 and;

Whereas, the Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo Community are impacted by multiple air pollution sources including fuel refining, storage, and distribution; commercial and industrial sources near communities; vehicles, trucks, and traffic patterns; and marine vessels and locomotives and;

Whereas, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD or District) convened a community steering committee (CSC) comprised of residents, community-based organizations, businesses, and local government representatives, and developed a community emissions reduction program (CERP) to improve air quality in the Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo Community, titled *The Path to Clean Air Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo Community Emissions Reduction Plan (PTCA Plan)*;

Whereas, the District and the CSC conducted a public process to develop the CERP via public CSC meetings held from April 2021 through March 2024. With support from CARB's executive officer<sup>2</sup>, CERP development continued past the two-year statutory requirement through an extension request by BAAQMD's executive officer and the PTCA CSC co-leads<sup>3</sup> to ensure a meaningful and impactful Plan to implement consistent with statute;

Whereas, the Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo CSC approved by majority vote the CERP on March 25, 2024;

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<sup>2</sup> [RICH\\_PTCA Timeline Acknowledgement](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Path to Clean Air Delay Notification Letter for the Community Emissions Reduction Plan](#)

Whereas, the District Governing Board adopted the CERP on May 1, 2024, and District staff thereafter submitted the CERP to CARB for review;

Whereas, CARB staff reviewed the CERP and determined it meets the criteria established in *Blueprint 2.0* and considered the perspectives of the CSC members in developing recommendations to the District Governing Board;

Whereas, CARB staff provided recommendations to strengthen the implementation process as the District and the CSC continue to refine the air pollution emissions and exposure reduction strategies, and identified key strengths of the CERP including that:

- The CERP reflects a diverse set of strategies, including those that support local, regional, and state actions;

Whereas, aspects of the CERP may change over implementation, including implementation timeframes, technical information, and strategy prioritization;

Whereas, CARB staff's evaluation is included in Attachment A, *Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo Community Emissions Reduction Program (Path to Clean Air) Staff Report* (Staff Report), released to the public on September 18, 2024, with the public comment docket opened from September 18, 2024, to October 9, 2024;

Whereas, CARB staff's evaluation proposes that CARB's Executive Officer approve the Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo Community CERP and direct the District and the CSC to take additional actions to strengthen implementation as outlined in Attachment A;

Whereas, the District anticipates it will continue to convene quarterly meetings with the CSC as they continue to implement the CERP strategies, consistent with *Blueprint 2.0* which requires ongoing meetings at least quarterly during implementation;

Whereas, CARB's certified regulatory program that involves the adoption, approval, amendment, or repeal of standards, rules, regulations, or plans has been certified by the Secretary for Natural Resources under Public Resources Code section 21080.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15251 (d)), and CARB conducts its CEQA review according to this certified regulatory program (Title 17, California Code of Regulations, sections 60000- 60008);

Whereas, the District is the lead agency implementing the CERP, and in the resolution adopting the CERP on May 1, 2024, the District Governing Board found the CERP exempt from CEQA under Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15308 ("Class 8" exemption: Actions Taken by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment);

Whereas, staff has determined that approving the CERP (Proposed Project) is exempt from CEQA under the following exemptions: (1) Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15061 ("Common Sense Exemption") as it can be seen with certainty and supported by the record evidence that there is no possibility that the Proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment; (2) Title 14 California Code of Regulations, section 15308 ("Class 8" exemption: Actions Taken by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment) because the record evidence shows that the Proposed Project will enhance the environment by better protecting the public from health impacts associated with exposure to air pollution within the project area, the Proposed Project includes procedures for protection of the environment, and the Proposed Project does not relax any applicable standards; (3) Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15306 ("Class 6" exemption: Information Collection) because the record evidence shows that many of the Proposed Project's implementing measures involve outreach and data collection from various parties to better hone particular efforts from implementing agencies in reducing localized pollution levels, which may lead to actions by those agencies; and (4) Title 14 California Code of Regulations, section 15321 ("Class 21" exemption: Enforcement Actions by Regulatory Agencies) because the record evidence shows that the Proposed Project incorporates actions by implementing agencies to enforce permits from the districts or other entitlements for use issued, adopted or prescribed by applicable regulatory agencies or enforcement of laws, general rules, standards, objectives administered or adopted by regulatory agencies identified as implementing agencies in the Proposed Project;

Whereas, in consideration of the applicable statutory and *Blueprint 2.0* requirements, and comments from the District, the Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo CSC, stakeholders, and the public, CARB's Executive Officer finds that:

- The Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo Community CERP is a community emissions reduction program under Health and Saf. Code, § 44391.2;
- The CERP was developed with the CSC in an open public process, in consultation with affected parties, through numerous public workshops, individual meetings, and other outreach efforts, and these efforts are expected to continue;
- The CERP addresses key elements required in the statute and the *Blueprint 2.0* and will benefit from additional actions to support successful implementation in the areas of continuing to refine strategies and ensuring continued collaboration during the implementation of the CERP and, if necessary, beyond; and
- The CERP is exempt from CEQA under Title 14, California Code of Regulations, sections 15061, 15306, 15308, and 15321 for the reasons stated herein.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, the CARB Executive Officer hereby approves the CERP with additional direction to CARB staff, the District, and Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo CSC as set out in this Executive Order:

- The District should continue to build and maintain effective agency partnerships and collaboration to clarify roles and to bring these agencies to the table to meet the overall goals and commitments established in the CERP.
- The District should continue to engage the Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo CSC in refining CERP measures and strategies to maximize emissions and exposure reductions and their associated health benefits for the community.
- The District should continue to develop and implement participatory budgeting processes to promote transparency and strengthen relationships.
- CARB will continue to pursue opportunities to partner with community, the District, and other regional, state, and federal agencies by focusing on ways to address community-identified priorities.

Be It Further Resolved, the CARB Executive Officer directs the District to submit annual reports to CARB by October 1 of each year beginning in 2025, developed following the *Blueprint 2.0* requirements, and including updates on the implementation of the CERP and measurable progress made regarding the additional actions required in this Executive Order. The annual reports should document community input and be developed in collaboration with the Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo CSC.

Be It Further Resolved, the CARB Executive Officer affirms the existing authority of CARB staff to review and interpret aspects of the community emissions reduction programs and affirms the existing authority of the Executive Officer, or his or her designee, the authority to approve District changes to the Plan, in a manner compliant with CEQA, that he or she deems necessary to enable effective implementation of the Plan, provided that such changes are consistent with the statute and the goals established by CARB's governing Board. CARB staff shall identify those changes when the CARB governing Board receives an update on the annual report on the Plan.

Executed at Sacramento, California this 7 day of November, 2024.



Steven S. Cliff, Ph.D.  
Executive Officer

**Attachment A : Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo Community Emissions Reduction Program (Path to Clean Air) Staff Report**