# Community Air Protection Consultation Group
# September 8, 2026 Ad Hoc (Virtual) Meeting Summary to Plan for October 29, 2026 Study Session #2


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## Summary


The meeting focused on planning the October 29 virtual Study Session for the full Consultation Group, which will focus on refining the Community Air Grants (CAG) program for Cycle 6. Two major areas were discussed: (1) refining project types and priorities for CAG Cycle 6, and (2) enhancing the application process—particularly through a proposed two-phase system to strengthen partnerships and submission quality. Members highlighted the need for clarity in the process, clear communication, support for a diverse range of community organizations and provided feedback on the proposed project types. California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff also briefed the Members on the program budget update. The notes below reflect action items, discussion highlights, themes and upcoming meetings and topics.


## Discussion Highlights

1. **September 14 Virtual Study Session.** CARB staff shared a reminder to the group of the upcoming virtual study session to discuss CARB's Air Toxics Roadmap and introduce the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)'s ECHO-AIR model to assess the health impacts of CARB climate investments.
2. **Community Air Protection Program (CAPP) Budget Update.** CARB staff are committed to providing the Consultation Group with a budget update at each meeting and share a slide with updated fund amounts. This slide will be shared at the September 14 study session. Staff shared available information on the $20M new program element and elevated the importance of securing $150M for CAPP from the General Fund.
3. **Community Air Grants Discussion Topic.** Staff introduced the topic of Community Air Grants and their role in the Assembly Bill (AB) 617 Program. The Consultation Group were asked how to best structure the conversation about CAGs at the October 29 virtual study session. Members also discussed proposed priorities for Cycle 6, project types, the Air District's role in supporting communities, new knowledge transfer project type, and application process updates. The Consultation Group requested CAG background information to prepare for the October study session, suggested improving clarity, and potential improvements to the CAG process.

4. **Preparing for the December CG Meeting.** Staff acknowledged that the discussions that come from the ad hoc meetings and virtual study sessions are in preparation for the December 2, 2026 Consultation Group meeting.

## Action Items

| # | Action Item | Owner | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| P2.1 | Post agenda for the October 29 virtual study session.<br>Share supporting meeting materials at least 10 business days in advance with all Consultation Group members. | CARB staff | **Done.** Posted to CG webpage on October 16.<br>The agenda must be posted at at least 10 business days before the study session. |
| P2.2 | Refine the presentation for clarity to reflect the feedback received during the ad hoc meeting. | CARB staff | **Done.** CARB staff incorporated feedback into planning for Member discussion for the Dec 2 meeting.<br>• Consistent terminology between presentations and website.<br>• Clearer framing of "proposed vs existing" terms for project types.<br>• Visual clean up (e.g., improve flow and graphics). |
| P2.3 | Provide materials with background information on CAGs to the CG members ahead of the study session | CARB staff | **Done.** Included in 10/29 CG meeting slide deck and found here: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/capp/fund/cag/community-air-grants |
| P2.4 | Determine final Cycle 6 grant award amounts and share with CG once ready. | CARB staff | CARB will provide list of C6 awards in 2028. |
| P2.5 | Ad Hoc member will give a report-out about the discussion from the ad hoc meeting to the Consultation Group at the October study session. | Dr. Jonathan London | CARB will provide notes to CG members for report out on the September 8 Ad hoc meeting discussion. |
| P2.6 | Review materials ahead of the October 29 Study Session and be prepared to provide feedback. | Consultation Group | Be prepared to provide feedback to CARB staff at October 29 study session on:<br>• Knowledge Transfer project type<br>• Two phase application process<br>• Cycle 6 RFA |

| # | Action Item | Owner | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| P2.7 | Review materials ahead of the October Study Session and be prepared to provide feedback. | Air District Partners | Be prepared to provide feedback to CARB staff at October 29 study session on:<br>• Clarify availability and expectations for supporting applicants earlier in the process.<br>• Identify opportunities to assist with technical validation or capacity building. |

## Topic – Community Air Grants

**Context and Discussion of the Community Air Grants.** Members focused on how to structure the conversation about CAGs at the October 29 virtual study session. The Consultation Group members focused on preparing for the October 29 study session related to Community Air Grants (CAG) under AB 617 and broader program planning for Blueprint 3.0. Members reviewed the meeting objectives, clarified scope, and discussed two major areas: (1) refining project types and priorities for CAG Cycle 6, and (2) enhancing the application process, particularly through a proposed two-phase system to strengthen partnerships and submission quality.

CARB staff guided members through questions about supporting communities interested in participating in the CAG program. Questions centered around how to best support those who may need additional technical assistance or capacity building. CARB staff clarified that support could be needed for applying to the grant program and implementation to conduct activities once awarded. The Consultation Group members suggested being clear about the full CAG process from beginning to end and contextualizing how CAGs fit into the broader AB 617 implementation context.

The Consultation Group Members reviewed proposed updates to CAG priorities, project types, and application process aimed at strengthening community capacity, improving clarity, and ensuring meaningful engagement across diverse organizations. Key strategic changes include a refined set of Cycle 6 priorities (e.g., equity, partnerships, capacity building, workforce development, youth engagement) and updated project types, most notably the introduction of a "Knowledge Transfer" project category aimed to build long-term community technical and organizational strength.

The Consultation Group Members emphasized the need for clearer terminology, better alignment between program language, public-facing materials, and meeting content. The Consultation Group Members also asked for improved background materials for members in advance of meetings to be better prepared for discussion.

**Community Air Grant Discussion Themes:** Members raised the following highlights for the study session:

**Proposed Priorities for Cycle 6.** CARB staff shared the draft priorities for Cycle 6: equity and environmental justice, partnerships and resource leveraging, community capacity building, workforce development, and youth engagement. The Consultation Group

members reviewed the proposed Cycle 6 priorities and found these priorities relevant and clear, but suggested clarifying how specific priorities relate to project success and how communities should interpret them.

**Review of Project Types (Existing and Proposed).** CARB staff presented a revised set of project types. The project types are Education, Data and Air Monitoring (formerly "Technical"), local-community emissions reduction plans (L-CERP) projects (formerly "Focused"), Community Solutions (formerly "Emission Reductions Strategies"), and the new project type: Knowledge Transfer. Members reviewed updates to existing project types and discussed the rationale behind newly proposed categories, emphasizing the importance of clarity and consistency across materials. Members noted the possible pathway from a building and planning category to a direct-action category and how the two project types (L-CERP and Community Solutions) could be applied towards those communities implementing post year-5 CERPs.

**New Knowledge Transfer Project Type.** This new category would support mentorship, organizational development, shared learning, and long-term community capacity. Members supported the concept, but advised to limit eligibility to experienced community based-organizations (CBOs)/tribes that have participated meaningfully in CAG/AB 617 work, recognize "anchor institutions" as key mentors, allow partnering with academics, air districts, or technical experts as sub-awardees, and consider small planning grants for partnership formation.

**CAG Funding Landscape Review.** CARB staff showed historic funding distributions by project type and region. Members stressed adding context to avoid misinterpreting district-level differences and asked to analyze applicant "washout rates" by geography, type, and capacity to better understand equity gaps.

**Proposed Two-Phase Application Process.** CARB staff proposed shifting from a single, full application to a two-stage process. Phase 1: Letter of Interest (LOI) to identify project concept and potential partners and Phase 2: Full Application with detailed Letters of Commitment. The goal is to strengthen project design, encourage early partnership building, and reduce rushed submissions. Members strongly supported the change, noting it improves partnership quality, helps applicants avoid wasting effort, gives CARB insight into demand by project type, and allows targeted outreach if certain categories are underrepresented. They also encouraged CARB to provide feedback on rejected LOIs and to clearly define timelines.

## Upcoming Meetings and Topics

1. October 29, 2026 – Virtual Study Session #2: CAG Cycle 6, Reducing Air Pollution, Program Improvement and Health Impact Assessment (Part 2). This meeting will be virtual and will be held from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.
2. December 2, 2026 – Consultation Group Meeting #5. This meeting will be held from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the CARB Headquarters Building in Riverside.