

**State of California
Air Resources Board
Board Item Summary**

**Item # 23-2-2: Public Meeting to Consider Fifth Annual
Community Recommendations and Update on the
Annual Assembly Bill 617 Implementation
Memorandum**

Staff Recommendation:

The California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) will consider the Fifth Annual Community Air Protection Program (Program) recommendations for the selection of additional communities for the development and implementation of air monitoring plans and/or community emissions reduction programs.

Discussion:

California's air quality programs continue to significantly improve public health statewide through various measures, such as regional air quality planning, advancements in technology-based solutions, and risk reduction efforts near industrial facilities. Despite these efforts across the State, certain impacted communities, particularly low-income and communities of color, continue to experience environmental and health inequities from air and other forms of pollution. For example, 91% of the population that make up the 10% most impacted census tracts, as ranked by the State's "California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool" (CalEnviroScreen), are people of color.

Communities near ports, rail yards, warehouses, and freeways continue to experience a higher burden of air pollution than other areas due to emissions from mobile sources, such as cars, trucks, locomotives, and ships. At the same time, many also experience pollution impacts from stationary facilities like oil refineries, oil and gas operations, chrome platers, and metal recycling facilities. Many rural communities contend with similar impacts as well as agricultural burning, fugitive dust, and high pesticide use. Residents in these communities are also more vulnerable to the effects of cumulative exposure, as indicated by disparities in health and socio-economic indicators.

AB 617 (C. Garcia, Stats. 2017, Ch. 136) requires that the Board "shall adopt a statewide strategy to reduce emissions of toxic air contaminants and criteria air pollutants in communities affected by a high cumulative exposure burden." (Health and Safety Code § 44391.2(b).) The statute also requires CARB to annually consider the selection of communities for the development and implementation of community air monitoring plans and/or community emissions reduction programs. In response to this statutory charge, CARB established the Community Air Protection Program (Program). Annual consideration of

communities has followed a similar process since the first 10 communities were selected in 2018. Seventeen communities have been selected by the CARB Board and are currently implementing the Program.

At the Board Meeting on February 23, 2023, the Board will hear staff’s recommendations for selection of additional communities into the Program. CARB staff’s recommendation is based on statutory requirements, the Board’s prior direction, community nominations received to date, lessons learned from communities in the Program, and funding levels provided by the Legislature for Program implementation.

Air districts and community members, often in coordination, recommended communities for consideration in 2022. Staff released a pre-recorded webinar in August 2022 to describe the community recommendation and selection process. In December 2022, staff held a virtual meeting to discuss draft community recommendations. Staff released the *Fifth Annual Community Air Protection Program Recommendations Staff Report* for Board consideration on January 24, 2023.

Table 1 provides staff’s recommendations, key sources, and rationale for selection.

Community (Air District)	Key Emission Sources	Rationale
Bayview Hunters Point/Southeast San Francisco (Bay Area) Develop a Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP)	Industrial facilities include organic recovery and waste, concrete batch plants, animal rendering plant, large diesel generators, toxic waste, federally designated Superfund sites, major freeways, and nearby Port of San Francisco.	Consistent with CARB Board support to prioritize communities recommended by community-based organizations in previous years but not yet selected. Bayview Hunters Point/Southeast San Francisco is a priority community for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Self-nomination supported by the Bayview Hunters Point Advocates and the Marie Harrison Community Foundation.

Community (Air District)	Key Emission Sources	Rationale
<p>Westmorland, Brawley, and Calipatria Community - North End Phase 1 Community</p> <p>(Imperial County in partnership with Comite Civico del Valle, Inc (CCV)</p> <p>Develop a Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) and CERP</p>	<p>Heavy-duty vehicles, agricultural equipment, and operations- which include truck idling and harvest transportation, utility fleet vehicles and residential vehicles traveling on unpaved roads, the Salton Sea, and fugitive emissions from south of the U.S./Mexico border.</p>	<p>Consistent with CARB Board support to prioritize communities recommended by community-based organizations in previous years but not yet selected.</p> <p>The North End of Imperial was nominated in 2019, 2020, and 2021 by Imperial County Air Pollution Control District in partnership with CCV. In 2021, the nomination was withdrawn due to limited resources.</p> <p>This year’s nomination was modified to only include the cities of Westmorland, Brawley, and Calipatria. These are cities in the north end of Imperial County and are known as the North End Phase 1 Community.</p>

The Board will also receive an update on Staff’s plans to use the Annual AB 617 Implementation Memorandum as an opportunity to enhance engagement opportunities this year by providing a draft report online for public comment. Once finalized, the update will be provided by CARB’s EO to the Board no later than April 28, 2023. The draft progress report will highlight progress in program implementation.

Summary and Impacts:

New communities selected by the Board will see additional focused action through the development and implementation of community emissions reduction programs and/or community air monitoring plans. The communities that are selected by the Board will have the boundaries refined by the community steering committee that will be convened to develop the community-specific plans. In addition, broader Program implementation will result in new strategies and resources to help reduce the cumulative air pollution exposure burden in communities throughout the State. Future Board items will focus on an update to the statewide strategy, including plans for developing actions to expand program benefits to additional communities.